

S. HRG. 117-???

**NOMINATIONS OF THE 117th  
CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION**

---

---

**HEARINGS**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—————  
JANUARY 3, 2021 TO JANUARY 3, 2022  
—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



Available via the World Wide Web:  
<http://www.govinfo.gov>

**NOMINATIONS OF THE 117TH CONGRESS,  
FIRST SESSION**

**NOMINATIONS OF THE 117TH  
CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION**

---

---

**HEARINGS**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

—————  
JANUARY 3, 2021 TO JANUARY 3, 2022  
—————

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.govinfo.gov>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

??-0??? PDF

WASHINGTON : 2022

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

ROBERT MENENDEZ, New Jersey, *Chairman*

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, Maryland  
JEANNE SHAHEEN, New Hampshire  
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, Delaware  
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, Connecticut  
TIM Kaine, Virginia  
EDWARD J. MARKEY, Massachusetts  
JEFF MERKLEY, Oregon  
CORY A. BOOKER, New Jersey  
BRIAN SCHATZ, Hawaii  
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, Maryland

JAMES E. RISCH, Idaho  
MARCO RUBIO, Florida  
RON JOHNSON, Wisconsin  
MITT ROMNEY, Utah  
ROB PORTMAN, Ohio  
RAND PAUL, Kentucky  
TODD YOUNG, Indiana  
JOHN BARRASSO, Wyoming  
TED CRUZ, Texas  
MIKE ROUNDS, South Dakota  
BILL HAGERTY, Tennessee

JESSICA LEWIS, *Staff Director*  
CHRISTOPHER M. SOCHA, *Republican Staff Director*  
JOHN DUTTON, *Chief Clerk*

## CONTENTS

---

Responses to additional questions from the committee and any other material submitted for the record are located at the end of each hearing transcript.



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present. Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Rubio, Romney, Paul, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider nominees for two critical positions, Wendy Sherman, to be Deputy Secretary of State and Brian McKeon to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

They are both foreign policy veterans with deep experience in Congress and the executive branch. Ms. Sherman has held a series of positions at the State Department and is well versed in international affairs.

And I would be remiss if I did not mention Mr. McKeon's long service as chief counsel and deputy staff director of this committee under then-Chairman Biden. And we appreciate your willingness to return to government service.

We thank your families as well because, inevitably they are part of the sacrifice. And I understand before I begin my opening comments that Senator Cardin would like to introduce Ambassador Sherman.

So I will recognize him for that purpose.  
Senator Cardin?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and Ranking Member Risch, thank you for the opportunity for me to introduce a fellow Marylander, a person I deeply admire, a seasoned diplomat, and, I think a person eminently qualified to take on the responsibilities as Deputy Secretary of State, and that is Wendy Sherman.

On a personal note, I have known Wendy Sherman and her family for my entire adult life. Her family represents the values of giving back to the community, and Wendy has chosen a career in public service for all the right reasons: to make our nation and world safer and to enhance opportunities for all.

So first, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Wendy Sherman and her family for their willingness to continue in public life. We recognize the sacrifices and we thank you for being willing to serve our country.

Ambassador Sherman is extraordinarily qualified to be the Deputy Secretary of State. She started as a social worker and rose to become the chief of staff for Senator Barbara Mikulski.

She knows how to work with senators.

She was the Secretary for Children and Youth in Maryland, and also in Maryland the director of the Maryland Office of Child Welfare. She has executive experience. She knows how to manage and she knows how to lead.

She has incredible experience in the State Department as the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, a counselor for State under Secretary Albright with the rank of ambassador, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, the first woman to hold that position.

And if confirmed, she would be the first woman to hold the Deputy Secretary of State position. She knows the strength of diplomacy and how to use it to advance U.S. interests. I cannot think of a person better suited for this position at this moment.

We are at a critical junction. We have the opportunity to rebuild America's diplomacy, to strengthen relations with allies around the world, and to promote our reputation as a global leader for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

In order to seize this opportunity, we need competent compassionate leaders with deep expertise and integrity at the helm of the U.S. foreign policy. Ambassador Sherman is just such a leader. She is, first and foremost, a dedicated public servant.

Ambassador Sherman has spent her career advocating for people and the public good. Ambassador Sherman is a tested diplomat with particular experience in many of the most urgent challenges that face our global community today. She has gone toe to toe with our adversaries from North Koreans to Iranians, and represented the United States with dignity, strength, and poise.

Her achievements in community organizing and her experience in both the public and private sector give her the knowledge that she needs to carry out these responsibilities.

I want to just mention one example of why I think Ambassador Sherman is the right person for this position, and that is the Iran nuclear agreement. I was ranking member in 2015 when we took up the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, and let me just set the stage because I think many of us knew at that time that there was the threatened veto by the Obama administration.

There was a deep partisan division in the Senate as to how we should review the act. And we worked together, Democrats and Republicans, with the Obama administration. Ambassador Sherman was extremely helpful in making this a reality.



And at the end of the day, that Review Act passed the United States Senate by a 98 to 1 vote and Ambassador Sherman was key in involving Congress as we reviewed that Act. She gave each of us, Democrats and Republicans, a meaningful role in how we could improve the Iran nuclear agreement. She was totally engaged with complete transparency and trust.

Ambassador Sherman and I came out with different sides on the final agreement. But I could not stress enough how impressed I was of her commitment to include all of us in the process. She gave us the opportunity to fully participate in the best traditions of the executive and legislative branches working together to strengthen U.S. foreign policy.

Ambassador Sherman is the type of leader we need at the State Department, who knows how to work with Congress and will always put the national security of America first.

I strongly endorse her nomination to be the next Deputy Secretary of State. And, Mr. Chairman, if I might, I would ask unanimous consent that a letter signed by a hundred former ambassadors endorsing Ambassador Sherman's nomination to be Deputy Secretary of State be made part of our record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information referred to is located at the end of this transcript.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

As an esteemed and respected senior member of the committee, you are well served, Ambassador, by that glowing introduction. So thank you, Senator Cardin.

Let me start off with a few remarks to set the scene and then I will turn to the distinguished ranking member.

Ambassador Sherman and Mr. McKeon, before diving into some of the many regional and global issues we face, I want to address the serious challenges facing the department and its workforce. Our career Foreign and Civil Service are an invaluable resource for this nation. Their dedication, professionalism, and sacrifice deserve our gratitude and our support.

But the last few years have been trying for the department. There has been a stunning loss of expertise, steep declines in morale, little accountability for those at the top, and the department still has not achieved a workforce that reflects the diversity of this great country.

It is clear that Secretary Blinken is setting a tone and, critically, an example that will help restore trust and empower career experts. In particular, I appreciate his commitment to ensuring the department's leadership and workforce reflect the diversity of our nation, including the recent announcement of a chief diversity officer.

It will, of course, take more than just a good example and hard work from the Secretary to rebuild the department and its workforce. So I look forward to hearing from both of you how you will contribute to that cause.

You also both know the importance of a strong relationship between the department and Congress, and the value of engaging and securing congressional support on major foreign policy decisions.

In recent years, that relationship has suffered. I appreciate the Secretary's acknowledgement of the problem and commitment to productive engagement with this committee.

I expect to work with him and you to solidify this relationship so it does not vacillate from one administration to another.

While restoring and rebuilding the department, it is essential we face a series of pressing challenges around the world, and I will just highlight a few.

Iran. As I am sure you remember, I was not a proponent of the JCPOA. But I also believe that the Trump administration's decision to withdraw without a serious strategy involving our allies would, ultimately, leave us less safe and Iran emboldened.

Unfortunately, my belief has been realized by Iran's continuing aggression across the Middle East, and the recent IAEA report that Iran's enriched uranium stockpile is now more than 14 times over the JCPOA limit.

Public reports suggest that they are three months away from crossing the nuclear threshold. I support this administration's plan to return to diplomacy. But returning to the JCPOA without concrete actions to address Iran's other dangerous and destabilizing activities will be insufficient.

I believe there is bipartisan support to find a comprehensive diplomatic approach with Iran that includes working closely with our European and regional partners, and I urge you to do everything possible to find this sweet spot because without bipartisan support, no deal will be durable.

Russia continues to challenge the U.S. and our allies around the world. I welcome the President's commitment to lead again on areas requiring cooperation like strategic stability and arms control.

But the U.S. is also obligated to counter the Kremlin as it uses its military to attack neighbors, its media to lie to the world, its oligarchs to corrupt our economies, and its security forces to repress peaceful democratic opposition.

Many on this committee are focused on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. I have supported the legislation to stop the pipeline. It is the congressional will as is evidenced by its passage, and I urge the administration to act with urgency to block this effort.

In our own hemisphere, democratic governance is under deep strain. Cuba remains under the rule of an entrenched dictatorship, Venezuela has been kidnapped by a brutal criminal regime, and fraudulent deeply flawed presidential elections have led to political crises in multiple countries.

Across the region, irregular migration has skyrocketed as citizens face diminished prospects, crime, and lose hope in their home countries. More than 5 million people have fled Venezuela, and hundreds of thousands are abandoning El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Addressing these crises require effective leadership.

I am very concerned about the viability of the peace process in Afghanistan. The Taliban is, clearly, not abiding by all of its commitments under the February 29th agreement, calling into question the future of Afghan security and governance. We need senior level focused attention from the department.

On Africa, this was another casualty, in my view, of the previous administration. We are losing the Sahel. The 2020 Global Terrorism Index found that seven of the 10 countries with the largest increase in terrorism were in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Fragile democratic transitions are in jeopardy in Ethiopia and Sudan, while there is significant democratic backsliding in Uganda, Tanzania, Mali, and the Ivory Coast. Here, too, we need senior level attention and an effective strategy.

I will save China for questions, but it is, clearly, the single most significant foreign policy challenge to the United States. We must not only confront China, but we must compete with it, and I look forward to hearing some of your views in that regard.

Finally, I would be remiss not to note that there are American citizens being held hostage or otherwise unlawfully or wrongfully detained in many countries around the world. Iran is among the worst offenders, including the wrongful detention of Siamak Nimazi, and more recently, Emad Sharghi.

As the lead sponsor of the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage Taking Accountability Act, which was signed into law last year, I want and expect to work with you to make sure the administration is doing everything possible to bring these Americans home now and to implement the Levinson Act quickly and effectively. There is nothing more critical to our foreign policy than the safety of Americans abroad.

With that, I look forward to hearing your remarks and I turn to the distinguished Ranking Member, Senator Risch, for his comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I sincerely appreciate that. And thank you to our two nominees. I want to thank you both personally for spending the time you did meeting with me.

Mr. McKeon, I really—on a personal note, I really appreciate your personal history of my office, since your attachment to that office goes back a long ways, and the way we open the closets and find things in there, your history has helped explain a lot of things as we occupy that office.

So thank you for that. I understand you worked there with then Senator, now President Biden in that office and it was—the history was interesting. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Ranking Member, can you expound upon what you meant?

Senator RISCH. I will not.

[Laughter.]

Senator RISCH. But that is a question for you—Senator Lott also had that office, and I have had many interesting conversations with Senator Lott about the office and attributing certain things to certain people is important to me. So that is why I have appreciated Mr. McKeon's enlightenment in that regard and it explains a lot of things.

Well, the two nominations that we have before us today are really of considerable importance to our foreign policy and to the effectiveness, certainly, of the State Department. The Deputy Secretary

of State will serve as chief advisor to Secretary Blinken and serve as Secretary in his absence.

The Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources will serve as the lead officer for the management of personnel and resources at the department. We all know on this committee how important that is.

Neither job is a small task, but both serve critical functions. While the deputy secretaries will face a broad array of foreign policy issues during their tenure at the department, there is a few pressing matters I would like to talk about and I would like to focus on specifically today.

Obviously, I am not going to touch on them all. I think Senator Menendez did an outstanding job of underscoring the hotspots around the world and places that are of real concern to us.

I also want to say that I fully agree with Senator Menendez that China and the Indo-Pacific are critically important regions in the world for United States interests and are going to be the challenge of the 21st century.

The region is home to some of our strongest alliances and partnerships, and it also is the primary arena of competition with the People's Republic of China. The Chinese Communist Party routinely engages in actions that deliberately undermine U.S. interests and values, as well as the world order based on free markets and the rule of law.

This includes anti-competitive economic statecraft, aggressive military posture and coercion, and undermining the tenets of free and open societies.

These are huge challenges for you and for all Americans.

The State Department's highest priority must be to prioritize resource and respond to the challenges posed by the Chinese Government.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is currently negotiating a legislative package on China. There are a number of bills kicking around already on the issue. Both sides of the aisle are robustly engaged, and the American people deserve a bill that is truly bipartisan and includes concrete and effective proposals.

I look forward to continue working with Senator Menendez, my other colleagues on the committee and off of the committee as they are—the jurisdiction cuts across several committees on the bill that would strengthen the U.S. position in this competition, and I hope we can put forward a strong final product.

China is not and cannot be a partisan issue. It is a common issue for all Americans. A central theme for this administration is rebuilding U.S. alliances in the Indo-Pacific. The Biden team has, in fact, already inheriting strong relationships, including with Japan, India, Australia, Taiwan, and other nations.

In addition to the lofty discussions by the current administration on that, I would really like to hear specific steps that the administration is pursuing to support and strengthen U.S. alliances.

One area that is particularly important to our alliances is extended deterrence, which is fundamental and foundational to the health and strength of U.S. alliances. The Biden administration should commit to our declaratory policy and nuclear posture will continue to reflect that reality. A failure to modernize or an em-

brace of policies that dilute or reduce our extended deterrence commitments will make the Indo-Pacific more dangerous for us and for our allies.

Finally, on the Indo-Pacific, North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs continue to threaten both regional stability and U.S. forces and allies in the region.

Ms. Sherman, I would appreciate your assessment of the North Korea issue and your views on sanctions, the role of high-level diplomacy, and other matters relevant to the Biden administration's North Korea strategy, at least as much as we can in an open setting like this. We did not get a chance to talk about that much when we met. So I will be interested in hearing that from you.

Another issue of acute concern for all of us is Iran. It is really unfortunate that the Iran issue has divided us frequently more than it has brought us together, and it is absolutely critical to our relations in the region.

And my views on Iran are well known. I was robustly engaged, as Mr. Chairman knows, when we talked about this years ago, and several of my colleagues joined me in a letter to President Biden last week outlining the Republican consensus on an appropriate policy, moving forward.

I do not know if you have seen that or not, Ms. Sherman, but it does detail mine and other members of this committee's views on that. Those of us that signed it were Republican, but that does not mean that those views are strictly Republican. There are a number of us that have worked across the aisle on this issue.

The Iranians are testing this administration. They tested it again this morning, as most of you know, with an attack on American facilities in the region, and the response at the outset is going to be very important.

I have no doubt that all of you are at the present time discussing that and, I would hope, creating a very worthwhile appropriate response to the testing that is done. This testing, I think, that the Iranians are doing is emblematic of the mindset of these people. We are at a juncture here when people are talking more and more about sitting down and trying to resolve the issues and what do they do but ratchet up actual kinetic attacks against Americans.

These people, as you told me, Ms. Sherman, are not to be trusted and I agree with you on that, in that regard, and I doubt there is many people sitting around the table here that would think otherwise.

Rejoining the old nuclear accord is a nonstarter, as far as I am concerned, and it does not meet U.S. national security interest. The scope is too narrow and the sunsets have passed or remain dangerously close.

Any new deal with Iran must address its regional terrorism, ballistic missiles, and detention of U.S. persons, issues that should be addressed now while the United States has leverage.

Additionally, there must be no sanctions relief or unfreezing of assets as a precondition for negotiation. Negotiations—I am troubled by what I hear are discussions between the administration and South Korea, as far as unfreezing some of those assets. That will not be helpful, I do not believe.

To think you can enter into so-called follow-up agreements on the issues that I just discussed—terrorism, ballistic missiles, and detention of U.S. persons—anyone who would think that you could enter into follow-up agreements with Iran after a nuclear agreement I really believe is delusional.

We were—it has been proven in the past that that did not work. It did not work then. It is not going to work now, and it is all because of the Iranian mindset on these issues.

If you enter into a nuclear deal without dealing with these other malign activities, that is a delusional activity, and I believe, once again, we will walk away bamboozled by the Iranians.

I assure you, Chinese, Russian, and diplomats—excuse me.

Finally, I want to—I want to address and I hope that the Biden administration has demonstrated it has learned from the mistakes of the past. I know we are going to struggle again with if we get to an agreement point how that agreement is ratified by America.

I know everyone here has seen what has happened in the past. If, indeed, this is a partisan agreement, three years from now we will see a cadre of Republicans trying to get the nominee for the—to run as the party standard bearer, and once again, you will go along the line and they are going to say, what will you do with it, and they will say, well, I am going to set it on fire. The next guy will say, well, I am going to shred it. The next guy will say, well, I am going to put it on the floor and stomp on it.

That is what happened last time and, of course, we wound up where we wound up with that. This needs to be something that is embraced by all of us, not one of the parties, and we will wind up again where we are.

When I was—I cannot tell you how many times—I think all of us had this experience—where our European partners and others would come in and say, well, you know, America, you breached your agreement that you entered into.

And I kept telling them, you did not have an agreement with America. You had an agreement with Barack Obama and with John Kerry. An agreement with America is a treaty that goes through the United States Senate and is ratified by a vote by the United States Senate.

Now, I understand that they have already—the administration has already said that is a nonstarter. I am unhappy to hear that. But, hopefully, at least we will have very close to unanimous agreement on—agreement that—as we go forward.

Well, finally, I want to briefly address the administrative role of Deputy Secretary positions. If we did not appreciate the importance of U.S. global health security before, we certainly must now.

As the deputy is charged with coordinating policy and resources, it will be incumbent upon you to ensure that the department is organized and resourced to lead global health diplomacy and coordinate the implementation of a coherent global health security strategy overseas.

I cannot underscore enough how important this is on global health.

It will also be imperative that you seek reforms to the department where necessary. My staff and I have heard from numerous current and former diplomats over the last few years about how

difficult it is to get outside of our embassies and consulates abroad to meet with the locals.

The department's approach has been so cautious that it often stops our diplomats from doing their jobs. I assure you, the Chinese, Russian, and Iranian diplomats are not having these issues, and in order to stay ahead of our adversaries and advance our interests, the State Department needs to rebalance its risk tolerance as far as ambassadors and other people being able to get out from the embassies to do their jobs.

I also look forward to working with you as the department establishes an Office of Sanctions Coordination pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. That should strengthen the role of the department in development and implementation of sanctions policy.

This has been a matter of tension between the first and second branch for some time. Hopefully, the Act will smooth that out.

I welcome your views on all these important issues. Again, I thank you both for being here today and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these important matters.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

We will now proceed to the testimony of both of our nominees for the committee's information. At some point, Senator Cardin and I will rotate here because we have a vote in the Senate Finance Committee for the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

So if we get up at one point, it is not because of what you said but because we need to go cast a vote.

So we will turn to our nominees.

Ambassador Sherman, as to both of you, your full statement will be entered for the record. We ask you to summarize it more or less in about five minutes. And then we will get to a pre-agreed with the ranking member round of seven-minute questions for each member.

Ambassador Sherman?

**STATEMENT OF HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN OF MARYLAND,  
NOMINATED TO BE THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and thank you, Senator Cardin for your very kind and generous introduction.

I am grateful to my husband, Bruce, who sits behind me, for his love and support, and my daughter, Sarah, who inspires me with her work. Bruce, Sarah, my grandsons, Ezra and Oscar, seven and five, watching in Boston, and my sister, Andrea, her husband, Kevin, their son, Eric, along with numerous friends and colleagues have sustained me in their love and counsel.

I am also deeply grateful to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for their trust in nominating me to be Deputy Secretary of State.

If confirmed, I pledge to work every day to sustain that trust and the trust of this committee and the Senate. President Biden has

outlined a foreign policy vision that puts diplomacy center stage where we lead not just by the example of our power but the power of our example, and where our foreign policy benefits and serves the American people.

This vision is one that is deeply personal to me. In 1945, my parents were present at the founding of the United Nations. My father, then an active duty Marine still recovering from injuries he suffered at Guadalcanal, thought it was important that he and my mother attend the founding of a forum to prevent war and spare future generations from suffering their generation endured.

This same sentiment led him to help found what later became the American Veterans Committee. My parents instilled in me a profound commitment to making a safer better world for the American people. That commitment led me to social work and community advocacy, and later to politics and public service as a means of providing improving the lives of my fellow citizens.

As the President has emphasized, diplomacy must be the tool of first resort of American leadership in a more interconnected and competitive world. From the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation, the challenges that threaten the prosperity and security of the American people will only be solved by working together in common purpose with our allies and partners.

To do so, we have to rebuild alliances and partnerships, strengthen our democratic institutions, increase economic opportunity, and enhance respect for democratic principles, including freedom of the press, religious liberty, human rights, and the rule of law.

Engaging in the broadest way possible not only with government officials but with the private sector and all of civil society—youth, women and girls, journalists, and opinion leaders—is critical to our success in this effort.

When I served as the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, I traveled to 54 countries to advance Americans' interests and values. I went to Burma in support of further democratic and economic reforms, and met with both Aung San Suu Kyi and Min Aung Hlaing.

I traveled to Bangladesh after the horrific garment factory accidents to press on worker safety and labor rights. In Africa, I pushed on countering Chinese investment and welcomed rising leaders on the continent as part of the Young African Leaders Initiative.

I traveled to almost every conflict zone and engaged extensively with our transatlantic and Indo-Pacific allies and international partners who work with us to resolve those conflicts.

If confirmed, I will bring a breadth of experience and relationships to bear on the challenges that face our country today. Among all of these challenges posed by the ambitions of China to rival the United States, the determination of Russia to damage and disrupt our democracy, and the nuclear and other threats posed by Iran and North Korea, to compete and win the strategic competition with China we have to invest in America and confront and challenge Beijing where we must, including on human rights and democratic values.

We will act firmly in defense of our national interests in response to actions by Russia that harm us or our allies.



If I may, Mr. Chairman, ask for one more moment. Thank you. With respect to Iran, as the lead of the U.S. negotiating team for the JCPOA, I remain clear eyed about the threat that Iran poses to our interests and those of our allies.

I am ready to address your questions about the JCPOA. But I would note that 2021 is not 2015 when the deal was agreed, nor 2016 when it was implemented. The facts on the ground have changed, the geopolitics of the region have changed, and the way forward must similarly change.

Moving forward on the challenges that our country faces will not be easy. But I firmly believe in the capacity of the United States to meet those challenges through renewed global leadership and the exceptionally talented staff of the State Department.

During my prior service, I experienced the unparalleled professionalism of the State Department civil servants, Foreign Service officers, locally engaged staff, and contractors. I also saw the personal sacrifices and contributions of their families. I hope I will have the opportunity again to work with these extraordinary women and men.

Of course, our diplomacy to be successful in any issue we must engage with you, with Congress. I am honored to now be participating in my fourth nomination hearing before this committee. The first time was as the nominee to be the State Department's Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs in 1993.

I have learned firsthand the need for close and constructive coordination with Congress with consultation, not just with notification. As a former congressional chief of staff, I have a deep appreciation for the role of the Congress and the executive branch.

Secretary Blinken has spoken to this committee of his and the President's commitment to restoring Congress' traditional role as a partner in our foreign policy making, and if confirmed, I pledge to play a leading role in that effort.

With that commitment, I welcome your questions and look forward to our discussion today. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Sherman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

And thank you Senator Cardin for your kind introduction.

I am grateful to my husband Bruce for his love and support and my daughter Sarah, who inspires me with her work. Bruce, Sarah, my grandsons Ezra and Oscar, and my sister Andrea, her husband Kevin, their son Erik, along with numerous friends and colleagues, have sustained me in their love and counsel.

I am also deeply grateful to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for their trust in me in nominating me to be Deputy Secretary of State. If confirmed, I pledge to work every day to sustain that trust and the trust of this committee and the Senate.

President Biden has outlined a foreign policy vision that puts diplomacy center stage, where we lead not just by the example of our power but the power of our example, and where our foreign policy benefits and serves the American people. This vision is one that is deeply personal to me. In 1945, my parents were present at the founding of the United Nations. My father, then an active-duty Marine still recovering from injuries he suffered at Guadalcanal, felt it was important that he and my mother attend the founding of a forum to prevent war and spare future generations from the suffering their generation endured. This same sentiment led him to help found what later became the American Veterans Committee.

My parents instilled in me a profound commitment to making a safer, better world for the American people. That commitment led me to social work and community advocacy, and later, to politics and public service as a means of improving the lives of my fellow citizens.

As the President has emphasized, diplomacy must be the tool of first resort of American leadership in a more interconnected and competitive world. From the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation, the challenges that threaten the prosperity and security of the American people will only be solved by working together and in common purpose with our allies and partners.

To do so, we have to rebuild alliances and partnerships; strengthen our democratic institutions; increase economic opportunity; and enhance respect for democratic principles, including freedom of the press, religious liberty, human rights, and the rule of law. Engaging in the broadest way possible, not only with government officials, but with the private sector and all of civil society—youth, women and girls, journalists and opinion leaders—is critical to our success in these efforts.

When I served as Under Secretary of State, I travelled to 54 countries to advance American interests and values. I went to Burma in support of further democratic and economic reforms and met with both Aung San Suu Kyi and Min Aung Hlaing. I traveled to Bangladesh after the horrific garment factory accidents to press on worker safety and labor rights. In Africa, I pushed on countering Chinese investment, and welcomed rising leaders on the continent as part of the Young African Leaders Initiative. I traveled to almost every major conflict zone, and engaged extensively with our Transatlantic and Indo-Pacific allies and international partners who work with us to resolve those conflicts. If confirmed, I will bring a breadth of experience and relationships to bear on the challenges that face our country today.

Among those challenges are those posed by the ambitions of China to rival the United States, the determination of Russia to damage and disrupt our democracy, and the nuclear and other threats posed by Iran and North Korea. To compete and win the strategic competition with China, we have to invest in America and confront and challenge Beijing where we must, including on human rights and democratic values. We will act firmly in defense of our national interests in response to actions by Russia that harm us or our allies. With respect to Iran, as the lead of the U.S. negotiating team for the JCPOA, I remain clear-eyed about the threat that Iran poses to our interests and those of our allies. I am ready to address your questions about the JCPOA, but would note that 2021 is not 2015 when the deal was agreed, nor 2016 when it was implemented. The facts on the ground have changed, the geopolitics of the region have changed, and the way forward must similarly change.

Moving forward on the challenges our country faces will not be easy, but I firmly believe in the capacity of the United States to meet these challenges through renewed global leadership and the exceptionally talented staff of the State Department. During my prior service, I experienced the unparalleled professionalism of the State Department's civil servants, foreign service officers, locally engaged staff, and contractors. I also saw the personal sacrifices and contributions their families make for our nation. I am grateful that, if confirmed, I will again have the opportunity to benefit from the expertise and dedication of all of the women and men who advance American interests every day in all of the 180 countries with which we have diplomatic relations.

Of course, for our diplomacy to be successful on any issue, we must engage with Congress. I am honored to now be participating in my fourth nomination hearing before this committee. The first time was as the nominee to be the State Department's Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs in 1993.

Since then, in three decades of work in foreign policy and national security, I have learned first-hand the need for close and constructive coordination with Congress. As a former Congressional Chief of Staff, I gained a deep appreciation of the Senate's responsibility to provide oversight of the Executive Branch. Secretary Blinken has spoken to this committee of his and the President's commitment to restoring Congress's traditional role as a partner in our foreign policy making, and if confirmed, I pledge to play a leading role in that effort.

With that commitment, I welcome your questions and look forward to our discussion today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador Sherman.  
Mr. McKeon?

**STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN MCKEON OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES**

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you as the President's nominee to be the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

I want to start by thanking President Biden, Secretary of State Blinken, for selecting me for this position. It is particularly gratifying to appear before this committee, which was my professional home for 12 years when I worked for the Democratic staff supporting then Senator Biden when he was chairman or ranking member from 1997 to 2009.

I spent a lot of hours sitting in confirmation hearings up in 419 and I never imagined I would be on the side of the dais as the President's nominee.

I would not be here without the strong support of my family, particularly my parents and my wife. My parents were both children of the Depression. They are no longer with us, but they taught us the value of hard work and perseverance.

My father, who was a lawyer by training but spent most of his time in politics, sparked my interest in public service and taught me that politics is a noble profession.

My wife, Liz, who worked in this chamber for 25 years for five different senators, has, simply put, made me a better person, giving me unstinting love and support and advice and helping me in tolerating all the long hours that go with government service.

My over 20 years of service in this chamber and eight years in the executive branch have given me a strong appreciation for the many challenges confronting our country, long experience in national security, and a deep knowledge of how the two political branches operate.

I believe I have demonstrated an ability to manage large organizations to get things done and to work across party lines, including on this committee with the staffs of Senator Helms and Senator Lugar.

I also have a great respect for the role of Congress and foreign affairs. The debates in this chamber on the Gulf War, the Iraq War, the Balkans conflicts, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the expansion of the North Atlantic Alliance were, for me, among the most memorable and important of my time here, because in a democratic society matters of war and peace must be publicly debated and require the informed consent of the American people through their representatives here in Congress.

I know from this experience that not all wisdom resides in the executive branch. I firmly believe that we share the same commitment to protecting and advancing the security and well being of our country, although I know we will always—not always agree.

As Secretary Blinken has made clear in his recent message to the workforce, the department must consider Congress to be a full partner in its work.

My first priority, if confirmed, is to help the department build back better to meet the diplomatic and security challenges of this century.

This starts with investing in our greatest asset, the over 75,000 public servants who work in Washington at over 270 posts around the world and in dozens of facilities in the United States.

Our diplomats are on the frontlines of America's security and interests, and they deserve our support and efforts to strengthen their ranks. We must ensure that we recruit, develop, and retain a diverse and professional workforce that is prepared and empowered to advance not only our traditional diplomatic interests but also to address the pressing challenges of this era, such as climate change, global health security, irregular migration, advanced technology, increased economic competitiveness, threats to democratic governance, and not least the long-term strategic competition with China.

Let me say a few words about diversity, which will be a top priority for all of our senior leadership. Stated simply, the Department of State cannot fully represent America unless the workforce is fully representative of America.

We must make real gains in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion through concrete actions to dismantle structural barriers at the department. Meaningful change requires sustained focus on three key areas: talent management, transparency, and accountability.

Secretary Blinken has made clear he will have such a focus and so will I, if confirmed. If confirmed, I also intend to devote considerable attention to ensuring that we are aligning our resources with our policy priorities, both investments in State operations and in State and USAID foreign assistance programs, and that we are good stewards of the taxpayer dollars.

For the last several years, Congress has, on a bipartisan basis, protected the international affairs budget from requested cuts, which has, thankfully, provided a solid foundation on which to build.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to ensure the department has the resources and authorities it needs to meet the challenges we face.

I am committed to ensuring the effective management of these resources. But we will need your help to make necessary investments in our workforce and information technology, and building and maintaining safe and secure embassies and in our foreign assistance programs.

With that, I appreciate the opportunity to be here today and look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McKeon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN P. McKEON

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you as the President's nominee to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

I would like to start by thanking President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken for selecting me for this position. It is particularly gratifying to appear before this committee, which was my professional home for 12 years, when I worked on the Democratic staff supporting then-Senator Biden during his tenure as Chairman or

Ranking Member from 1997 to 2009. I spent many hours sitting in confirmation hearings; I am not sure that I ever imagined sitting on this side of the dais as the President's nominee.

I would not be here without the strong support of my family, particularly my parents and my wife. My parents, both children of the Depression, taught me the value of hard work and perseverance. My father, a lawyer by training whose main avocation was politics, sparked my interest in public service, and taught me that politics is a noble profession. My wife, who spent 25 years working in this chamber for five different senators, has, simply put, made me a better person. She provided unstinting love, support, and advice, and patiently endured the long hours that I spent away from home over the years, for which I am deeply grateful.

My over 20 years of service working in the Senate, and eight years in the Executive branch, have given me a strong appreciation for the many challenges that confront our country, long experience in international affairs and national security policy, and a deep knowledge of how the two political branches operate. I believe I have demonstrated an ability to manage large organizations, to get things done, and to work across party lines, including through close collaboration with the staffs of Senators Helms and Lugar on this committee.

I also greatly respect the role of Congress in foreign affairs. The debates in this chamber on the Gulf War, the Iraq War, the Balkan conflicts, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the expansion of the North Atlantic Alliance were among the most memorable and important of my time here—because in a democratic society, matters of war and peace must be publicly debated and require the informed consent of the American people, through their representatives in the Congress.

I know intuitively from this experience that not all wisdom resides in the Executive Branch. I firmly believe that we share the same commitment to protecting and advancing the security and well-being of our country, and that we must work together. As Secretary Blinken made clear in a recent message to the workforce, the Department of State must consider the Congress a full partner in its work.

My first priority, if confirmed, is to help the Department of State build back better to meet the diplomatic and security challenges of the 21st century. That starts with investing in its greatest asset—the over 75,000 public servants who work in Washington, at over 270 posts around the world, and in dozens of facilities around the United States. Our diplomats are on the front lines of America's security and interests. They deserve our support and efforts to strengthen their ranks. We must ensure that we recruit, develop and retain a diverse and professional workforce that is prepared and empowered to advance not only our traditional diplomatic interests, but also to address the pressing challenges of this era, such as climate change, global health security, irregular migration, advanced technology, increased economic competitiveness, threats to democratic governance, and, not least, long-term strategic competition with China.

Let me say a few words in particular about diversity, which will be a top priority for all of the senior leadership. Stated simply, the Department of State cannot fully represent America unless its workforce is fully representative of America. We must make real gains in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion through concrete actions to dismantle structural barriers at the Department. Meaningful change will require sustained focus on three key areas: talent management, transparency, and accountability. Secretary Blinken has made clear he will have such a focus, and so will I, if confirmed. As an initial action, the Secretary has followed through on his commitment to this committee by creating a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Office, reporting directly to him.

If confirmed, I also intend to devote considerable attention to ensuring that we are aligning our resources with our policy priorities—both investments in our operations and in State and USAID foreign assistance programs—and that we are good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

For the last several years, the Congress has, on a bipartisan basis, protected the international affairs budget from requested cuts, which has thankfully provided a solid foundation on which to build as we undertake the collective work to revitalize the Department of State. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to ensure the Department has the resources and authorities it needs to meet the many challenges we face. I am committed to ensuring the effective management of the resources made available to us, but we will need your help to make the necessary investments in our workforce, in information technology, in building and maintaining safe and secure embassies, and in our foreign assistance programs that seek to advance our national interests.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear here today. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you both.

We will start our round of seven minutes for members. I am just going to ask you some generic questions on behalf of the full committee, and I will reserve the balance of my time to intercede as I believe is appropriate.

When I met with both of you, we discussed the department will need to rebuild and repair its relationship with the committee after the last few years.

Based on our discussion and the points that you have made in your opening statement, I am confident you understand the importance of a constructive relationship between the department and Congress. So I have a few quick questions along these lines and I would just appreciate a yes or no answer to them.

Do you agree that the State Department is accountable to Congress and the American people?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

Mr. MCKEON. I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit that the department will keep this committee fully and currently informed on the department's activities?

Ms. SHERMAN. I do.

Mr. MCKEON. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you understand and agree that a constructive relationship between the department and this committee requires meaningful engagement and consultation with the committee while policies are being developed, not after the fact, and do you commit to ensuring that type of meaningful engagement?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

Mr. MCKEON. Yes, I do.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you commit to working with this committee to provide answers on outstanding requests that your predecessors withheld from Congress through years of stonewalling?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes, to the extent that I know what they are, Senator.

Mr. MCKEON. Same answer, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

With that, I will turn to Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

Ms. Sherman, let us get right to the heart of the thing to begin with. Your comments about this not being 2015 are greatly appreciated.

I think we all understand that. You say you are clear eyed about the challenge in front of you and I—in your defense, I will say that you are carrying water for different people this time than you were last time. I and a lot of my colleagues here were deeply, deeply disappointed, as you know, in your performance in negotiating in getting to the JCPOA, and I got to tell you, one of the most surreal experiences I have had in the United States Senate is the hearing we had where I was asking you about the annexes or whatever you call them, the supplements to the JCPOA, and you would not tell me what was in them.

And as you know, I serve on the Intelligence Committee so I got the same national security clearance that you do and did at the

time. And yet, you wanted me to support the agreement but would not tell me what was in part of the agreement.

And I could not do that and I will not do that, and I will not do that in the future.

So what—you say you are clear eyed on this. We are all clear eyed, we hope. But tell me, what are your thoughts about putting in front of us another agreement that has got annexes or agreements that we cannot see, and yet you want us to support them? Are we headed down that road again?

Ms. SHERMAN. Well, Senator, thank you very much for your candor and for recalling a situation that was uncomfortable all the way around.

Senator RISCH. I bet it was.[Laughter.]

Ms. SHERMAN. What I want to say to you and to all the members of the committee today is that President Biden has been very clear about what he wants to achieve as has Secretary Blinken with regards to Iran, and it is along the lines of both the letter that you and Republicans sent as well as the sentiments that have been expressed by the Democrats.

And that is that we have to ensure that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon, that there be compliance-for-compliance, as the President has said, and Iran is a long way from compliance, as we all know.

The President and the Secretary have also said that we must work with you and with our partners and allies to address all the other issues of concern regarding Iran, and there are many. their ballistic missile production, their state sponsorship of terrorism, their really concerning behavior in the region, their arms sales, their human rights abuses of their own people, putting American citizens in Evin Prison. I can go on and on about all of the range of concerns.

So, in my view, Senator, and I do not have access to intelligence right now, which is considerably important in this situation. I do not have access to all of the thinking of the administration because I am not in it.

But if confirmed, I would want to learn all of that. So in the Deputies Committee, I can bring my experience. But the decisions that need to be taken will be along the lines of those laid out by the President of the United States and the Secretary of State, and indeed have to be decided on the merits of where we are today, not nostalgia for what might have been.

I think this is a very tough problem set. I think it will require serious discussions, as the chairman said, with the United States Senate on both sides of the aisle to get your views, to understand.

I do think we have the same objectives and I think the issue is how to achieve them, how to sequence various steps to get there, how to work with our allies and partners to make it real.

So I think we have a tough road ahead. You will be very important to that policymaking, as the chairman laid out and as you and I discussed in your office, and I look forward to those conversations and to working in this administration, if confirmed, to deal with what is a very difficult challenge.

Senator RISCH. Well, I agree it is a difficult challenge. As you and I discussed when you were in my office, I consider the malign activity of Iran just as important as the nuclear aspects of it.

And as I told you, the nuclear aspects of it, for me, become less important when I know that there is a country on this planet which has a tolerance that is substantially lower than ours for Iran developing a nuclear weapon.

Indeed, they consider it existential and they have said to me over and over and over again they will never allow that to happen. You guys can sign any agreements you want. You can do whatever you want. But Iran is not going to have a nuclear agreement, and these people mean it when they say it.

So, to me, it is all well and good to talk about enrichment and all that sort of thing. But the other thing is the terrorism, the ballistic missiles, the human rights, and on and on and on, as you have said to me are equally important to the nuclear aspects of this.

The enrichment thing really bothers me. We argued about this last time, and I could not believe that the JCPOA allowed enrichment. There is only one reason that Iran wants to do enrichment and that is if it eventually wants to pursue a nuclear weapon.

I do not believe them when they say, oh, well, this is for peaceful nuclear energy. I know you do not believe them in that regard. I do not think anybody believes them in that regard. But they say those kinds of things frequently.

Is it still the position of the—of the administration that they are going to go it alone and you are not going to submit an agreement as a treaty under the Constitution of the United States to the Congress?

Ms. SHERMAN. I do not know what the ultimate decision will be, Senator, because I do not know where we will be. I think that the Biden administration is absolutely committed to following the law and doing what is appropriate and necessary to whatever gets decided.

But since I do not know, none of us today know what the ultimate outcome will be here, it is hard to make a commitment in advance. And I am not in a position—I am not an administration official. Hope to be, if confirmed by this committee and by the United States Senate, to give you a definitive answer.

Senator RISCH. My time is up. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. McKeon, thank you for your willingness to serve, continue to serve, returning to the political life. We appreciate it very much. I appreciate the opportunity that we had to talk about the management at the State Department.

I want to give you an opportunity to talk about the commitment, if confirmed, to deal with the diversity at the State Department. This committee has for many years been concerned about the opportunities within the State Department for all people, diversity, so our State Department looks like our nation and can represent a global community more effectively.



I was pleased to hear that Secretary Blinken announced a new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer. I do not believe that person has been named yet.

Could you just share with the committee your commitment and strategies to improve diversity at the State Department if you are confirmed?

Mr. MCKEON. Yes. Thank you very much, Senator Cardin.

The President has made his commitment and he has made it clear that he wants to have a government that looks like America and that, of course, includes the Department of State.

The department does okay in recruiting underrepresented communities. It is not doing well in retention and promotion, and the data of officials at senior levels bear that out.

The GAO just did a report, I believe, for this committee in the House committee that emphasizes that once again. As you said, the Secretary has appointed or he has announced he will have a Chief Diversity Office. There is, I believe, a person who has tentatively been chosen and is probably embedding. So I hope that announcement will be made soon.

We really need to make it a priority across the board in everything that we are doing and emphasize to all of our leaderships that this has to be a priority in the bureaus and in overseas missions.

What we really need to focus on, among other things, on the retention and promotion side is transparency, giving people opportunities to advance in a fair and objective way and making opportunities available for people to show that they have leadership skills and the capabilities.

And we need to understand why are people leaving, why are they not finding the Foreign Service to be a good professional home.

So the department has done some work on that. There is a lot more that needs to be done, and you can be sure that I am going to spend a lot of time with the Chief Diversity Officer drilling down on this and working to make material progress.

Senator CARDIN. I can assure you that there is great interest in this committee in this, your efforts, and I would ask that, if confirmed, you share with us your strategies and work with us, so we can have accountability at the end of the day.

Mr. MCKEON. Definitely will do that, Senator. As the Secretary said in his confirmation hearing, we will be measured in significant part on this issue if we have succeeded or failed to make significant progress in the next few years.

Senator CARDIN. Ambassador Sherman, I want to talk about one of the issues that we have talked about before and that is President Biden's commitment to embrace our values in our foreign policy. We just saw with the report released in regards to the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi some transparency, which I think was very much appreciated.

But there is also frustration that because of the position of the Crown Prince, there may not be full sanctions imposed against him under—using Magnitsky sanctions or the like.

So I want to give you an opportunity to express how we will advance U.S. values. There is legislation that Senator Wicker and I

have put in to make the Global Magnitsky statute a permanent statute. It is, certainly, gaining global credibility.

We have also, with Senator Young, introduced legislation that would provide a clearer direction on dealing with anti-corruption around the globe.

Can you just share with me your commitment to advance U.S. values as we embrace countries that we have to have strategic relations with? We recognize that. But it needs to be under the umbrella of advancing U.S. values.

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Cardin, and thank you for your leadership and working with Senator Young as well on both the Global Magnitsky Act and trying to figure out how to better deal with the challenge of corruption around the world, which is, certainly, a very difficult and very critical challenge in so many ways.

Where the horrifying murder of Jamal Khashoggi is concerned, the administration, the Biden/Harris administration, has made it very clear from the start, as has Secretary Blinken, that the administration is recalibrating its relationship with Saudi Arabia.

It has done that by making public the report that had been kept nonpublic for so long about the murder and the accountability for that murder. The President took a very important step by saying that we would no longer sell offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia because we want to see an end to the Yemen war, which is, in fact, a very bipartisan view up here in the Senate, that that conflict should end, that it is a humanitarian disaster.

I think that we will, in other ways, and I think that when the President spoke to the King of Saudi Arabia he was quite clear that we will not be silent on human rights. We will speak up and we have, in fact, sanctioned many people in Saudi Arabia and we have said that many are barred from visas, though that visa list is not made public, Senator, given the rules of privacy around visas.

Senator CARDIN. And I understand that, and the Magnitsky statute is a statute that involves the Congress and the executive branch together, and we will be making recommendations to the administration. In many cases, this will be nonpublic correspondence in order to investigate before sanctions are considered or imposed.

Will you commit to consider the names that we present to you for sanctions in a deliberative manner and work with us to make sure that the intent of the Global Magnitsky statute is in fact carried out?

Ms. SHERMAN. I certainly believe, Senator, that on all issues we should make a commitment to be open to your ideas, your thoughts, your counsel, your advice, and so yes.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Rubio?

Senator RUBIO. Thank you. Thank you both for being here, for your willingness to serve.

Ms. Sherman, let me just ask you quickly as we start out, what is your understanding of former Secretary Kerry's role? Is he going to be involved in Israeli-Palestinian issues? Is he going to be in-

volved in negotiating the Iran issue? Or is he solely going to be focused on the climate issues?

Ms. SHERMAN. My understanding, Senator, is that former Secretary Kerry is the President's Special Envoy on climate and that is his sole responsibility and it is quite a large one. Should take up most of his time.

Senator RUBIO. Since January 2017, have you met with any Iranian Government officials?

Ms. SHERMAN. I have met with Iranian officials. I cannot remember the last time that it happened, Senator.

Senator RUBIO. Who did you meet with?

Ms. SHERMAN. I have met with Foreign Minister Zarif. I have met with my former counterparts, Abbas Araghchi and Majid Ravanchi, who is now the ambassador to the United Nations.

And when I had such meetings, they were on the margins of the Munich Security Conference, where, as you know, everyone attends from all over the world.

Before and after these meetings, Senator, I was, I think, most of the time if not every time in touch with then Under Secretary for Political Affairs Hale to let him know that I was having such a meeting and to let him know that I would certainly stay in touch.

I would represent America's policies, whether I agreed with them or not, and in those meetings my sole purpose was to urge the Iranians not to take actions that were against the deal that would escalate the security situation.

And most importantly, Senator, I am appealed to by almost every family who has someone detained in Evin Prison, and so my major purpose, quite frankly, in those meetings was to urge the Iranians that I know to get Americans out of Evin Prison because it is the most heartbreaking set of meetings anyone can have is to sit with families and hear how horrifying the situation is.

Senator RUBIO. And I would agree with that, and I appreciate your work on that and I appreciate your answer on having been in touch with members of the previous administration.

And let me—you did write an article in July of 2020 where you wrote, among other things, an area I care about is, as a result of Trump's failure people, you know, inside—the people of Cuba and Venezuela face a bitter future.

So I wanted to explore, in particular, just a number of the changes that were made under the Trump administration to see if you think that those were bad ideas. One of them was a measure that prohibited doing business with entities controlled, owned, and operated by the Cuban military, and in particular, one of them was the one that controls all the remittances. They take 10 percent right off the top.

So you can send remittances to Cuba. You just have to do it through a bank. It just cannot be through the hands of this—that takes—skims off 10 percent and you can do business with individual private Cubans. You just cannot do business with entities controlled by the Cuban military and the regime.

Was that a bad idea?

Ms. SHERMAN. I do not know the details well enough, Senator, but I do agree that we should take measures that say to the Cuban

Government that we do not support their way forward and that we support the freedom of the Cuban people.

Senator RUBIO. Well, I only—the details are as follows. The goal of this strategy was to say, if you want to do business with an individual, a private Cuban, in fact, the Trump administration made it easier to send remittances to Cubans who are using that money to open up a private business, to the extent that they are allowed to do it. You are allowed to send remittances.

If they can do it through a bank you can, obviously, take the cash in yourself as an individual. The one thing they said is you cannot send it through this entity, which skims 10 percent off the top. And that is just the beginning of how they take the money that you also have to spend it at their stores. And you cannot do business, not even with the Ministry of Tourism, per se, in some cases, but with the entities controlled by the Cuban military.

The gist of it is if individual Cubans are allowed to engage in commercial activity, the United States can do a lot of things with them. But if it is going to be run through the clearing house of an entity controlled by the military in Cuba, they cannot. That is the prohibited entity.

So I am curious. I mean, that was the heart and soul of the Trump policy. Yet, you say somehow it leads to a bleak future for the Cuban people. And so I am curious of those things you thought were bad ideas as I have described it to you.

Ms. SHERMAN. So, Senator, I believe that it is very important that we support the Cuban people and that we take actions that increase their chances for freedom, their chances for private commercial activity, their ability to get remittances, which increases their own economic power.

The ability that—the primary objectives, is my understanding of the Biden/Harris administration, is to move forward on the freedom and the need for democracy in Cuba, and the greatest emissaries for that are the American people led by Cuban Americans.

And, quite frankly, Senator, you and I have not had a chance to talk. I know how much you know about Cuba. I know how much you know about what we need to do to help support the Cuban people, and I look forward to further discussions with you about that.

So yes, if there are ways to support the Cuban people, I am all for it.

Senator RUBIO. Okay. And you also mentioned Venezuela in that piece. The cornerstone of the Trump approach was the recognition of Juan Guaido, the legitimately elected president or the President of the legitimately elected National Assembly, and imposing sanctions that he and almost the entire opposition supported, which sanctioned how the regime stole money.

Was that a bad idea?

Ms. SHERMAN. I think it was a very good idea to support Guaido as the legitimate leader of Venezuela. What I would have hoped for, Senator, difficult to do, is that we would have done more work to bring together our allies and partners in the region and around the world, quite frankly, not just in Latin America but around the world, to increase the pressure and to support and recognize Guaido to try to end the horrible saga for the Venezuelan people and --

Senator RUBIO. Well, the overwhelming majority of countries in the region did recognize Guaido and did come together via the Lima Group.

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes, indeed, and beyond the Lima Group and around the world. I just think there were more steps that we could have taken. It is a very difficult situation and, again, you and I have not had a chance to talk about this and I look forward to your counsel. I know we share the same objective, and that is for the people of Venezuela to have a life, and right now they do not.

Senator RUBIO. Well, I will just close by saying this. Beyond the Lima Group, the only countries really left at that point at that time were Nicaragua, Cuba, and Argentina under—and Bolivia under Morales. Good luck with that.

Ms. SHERMAN. Beyond Latin America, Senator.

Senator RUBIO. Well, that is—the EU just sanctioned Venezuela as well, and many of those countries did. So thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you both for being here this morning, for your willingness to be considered for these very important posts and for your ongoing willingness to serve this country.

I think you are both the perfect choices for this difficult time, based on your understanding of both the executive branch and Congress, of the State Department, and your commitment to restoring America's role in the world.

So I want to begin and, really, appreciate both of you taking the opportunity to talk with me before we got to this hearing, and one of the issues that I discussed with both of you was how we are going to continue to treat those public servants from the State Department and other parts of our Government who have been affected by what is known as the Havana Syndrome, the attacks against our diplomats in Cuba, China, and other parts of the world.

And there are—as I see it, there are two parts to this problem. One is to ensure that those people who have been attacked are treated properly, are believed, and that they get the medical attention and benefits that they deserve, and Congress has worked on that. We passed legislation in the last Defense Authorization Act to try and better level the playing field for those people who were affected.

But the other piece of that is ensuring that we get to the bottom of who is responsible, and I hope the State Department will work with DOD, who, as I understand, has been designated the lead agency to try and come to understand what is happening.

So I would ask that, if confirmed, will you both commit to addressing the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences report, and more generally, to providing more transparency with Congress and the public on this issue?

Mr. MCKEON. Senator Shaheen, as we discussed yesterday, protecting the people we send overseas is our top priority. We have to take care of them. We send them out on behalf of the United States.

And so we are very grateful for the work that you have done and the committee has done and the Congress has done to make sure that benefits are being provided to those who have suffered.

But we do, obviously, need to do work to find out what is the cause of this. I do not really understand why, between the FBI and the CIA and DOD and State Department, we have not been able to figure it out. That is not a slight against anybody who is doing the work. It is just—it is kind of confounding.

So, as you know, the Accountability Review Board on this matter pointed out there was not leadership at the top of the department paying attention to this issue.

So I intend to take on this issue in coordination with Ambassador Sherman. But this will be a high priority to get after this and we will be happy to continue to talk to you about this.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Ambassador Sherman?

Ms. SHERMAN. I completely agree with what Mr. McKeon has said, and I must say, Senator, it is very disturbing that we have personnel who have gone through this and continue to suffer from it.

It is critical that they get the medical attention that they deserve and that we find out what happened so that it does not happen again.

So thank you for your leadership on this, along with others across the aisle. And I know that Secretary Blinken is committed to getting to the bottom of this as well.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you both for that.

One of the challenges we continue to face is the ongoing war in Afghanistan. One of the reports that did not get as much attention as the Khashoggi report in recent weeks was the Afghanistan Study Group that made a number of recommendations that I think are particularly relevant as we see the recent assassination campaign against civil society leaders in Afghanistan and, particularly, against women.

But what that report recommended is that the administration should slow the withdrawal of troops in Afghanistan, abandon the May 1st exit deadline, reduce American forces further only as security conditions improve.

And I wonder if you could respond to that, Ambassador Sherman.

Ms. SHERMAN. Certainly. I have been briefed on the Iraq/Iran study—sorry, the Afghanistan Study Group. It is hard to keep all the study groups straight. And I think they just did extraordinary work that I am sure the administration will take into account as it is undertaking its own review.

There is no question that Secretary Blinken believes that diplomacy has to be at the core of a just and sustainable settlement in Afghanistan, that the role of our troops is really to ensure that we do not have the recreation of al-Qaeda in the future or even a new ISIS foothold as a safe haven.

And so there is very careful deliberation going on with our Defense Department colleagues, it is my understanding, and ultimately, a decision by the President as we approach May 1st about how to proceed.

To your point about women, and I told you this story --I will share it with the other senators—one of the most searing meetings

I have ever been in as a diplomat was with Secretary Albright in a Peshawar refugee camp after the Taliban had driven people out of Afghanistan.

And Secretary Albright and I were able to meet with the women in that camp because we were women, and my daughter was a teenager at the time and a teenager about her age told the story of watching her sister being raped and thrown out the window.

These were women who were doctors and teachers and professionals and homemakers and moms who are just trying to keep their family together, and I was horrified. And I know there is a deep commitment to ensure that whatever ultimately happens for the people of Afghanistan that women never find themselves in such a position again.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you for that. I think there is some anxiety around the administration's announcement of Zalmay Khalilzad continuing as the Special Representative for the U.S. in Afghanistan. He has been distinctly unresponsive to the need to include women in any of the negotiations.

Now, that may have been a function of the previous administration. But I can tell you, in my discussions with him he did not hear me at all when I said this needs to be a priority for the United States.

So I hope you will take that back to the State Department and to the Biden administration and make it clear that in any work that he is doing on our behalf that he is including women at the table.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. SHERMAN. Senator, if confirmed, there will be no doubt that in everything I do at the State Department on behalf of the people of this country, I will make sure women are included.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Senator CARDIN. [Presiding.] Senator Romney is recognized.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Sherman, as the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs under President Obama, you, obviously, were very much involved in the development of the JCPOA and negotiating the JCPOA.

You know that people like myself and many in my party were very, very concerned that that was not an agreement that was effective in preventing Iran from, ultimately, having a nuclear weapon.

As a matter of fact, my read of that agreement is that it would delay Iran from being able to develop a nuclear weapon but that, ultimately, they would be permitted to develop a nuclear weapon and have the missiles necessary to deliver that to targets of their interest.

Am I correct in that understanding that the agreement would delay but not prohibit Iran from ever having a nuclear weapon?

Ms. SHERMAN. Senator, people read the agreement differently. The objective of the agreement, and the—I believe the outcome of that agreement was that Iran would never obtain a nuclear weapon.

I do completely understand why many senators and many people in Congress and many people in the world believe that if Iran can

continue to create fissile material, the stuff that goes inside a nuclear weapon, that they would be concerned that having that ability gives them the option should they choose to go there.

So I see the problem quite clearly and what I have said this morning, I think, is very important, which is that we are now where we are, which is outside of the agreement.

The Iranians have increased their enrichment capacity. They have increased their development of ballistic missiles. They have increased their bad behavior. The Maximum Pressure campaign may have put chips on the table, but it has not stopped. In fact, they have gone further than they had at the end of the Obama administration.

So we will all have to work together on what is the best strategy, going forward. The President and the Secretary have said that they want to reenter the deal if there is compliance-for-compliance. The Iranians are far away from compliance so there is a long way to go here.

Senator ROMNEY. With time, I am anxious to get your perspective as to how it is this agreement prohibits Iran from ever having a nuclear weapon. My understanding is the agreement allows them to enrich and to create fissile material down the road, and that they, obviously, had the capacity at some point to use that fissile material to develop a nuclear weapon under that agreement.

It does strike me that the purpose of our strategy with regards to Iran's nuclear program is twofold. Number one is to try and to dissuade them from ever having a nuclear weapon and that that is the ultimate objective, and number two, to exact a very high price on Iran such that they, as well as other nations thinking of going nuclear, would understand the consequence of taking that step, that the price is going to be very, very heavy, indeed.

I do not understand how reentering the JCPOA in any way either, number one, dissuades Iran from ever having a nuclear weapon, or makes the price sufficiently high to keep them from pursuing that course.

So I guess I am anxious to get your perspective as to what the purpose would be of reentering an agreement which does not prohibit them from having a nuclear weapon.

Ms. SHERMAN. The Biden administration, is my understanding, Senator, has said that they want to create a deal that is longer and stronger, but is part of a comprehensive strategy that deals with all of the elements of concern with Iran, including delivery systems for a nuclear weapon, and to ensure that any agreement ensures that Iran will not obtain a nuclear weapon.

I would be glad to but I think it probably will get us into the weeds to talk about why the JCPOA did create the assurance that you are looking for. But it is really beside the point now because we are at a very different place. The geopolitics are very different in the region.

There were many things that I disagreed with the previous administration on. But the normalization of relations of countries with Israel, known as the Abraham Accords in the previous administration, was a very good thing. It has changed the geopolitics of the region, and that means that one has to think about this in a different way because there are different elements on the table.



So I think we have to start where we are now and figure out the best way forward, and I would hope that if I am confirmed that I have an opportunity to get your views on this.

And as was laid out at the beginning of this when the chairman asked for commitments from Mr. McKeon and me, that Congress and the Senate and this committee will be there at the takeoff, not just at the landing.

Senator ROMNEY. Do you have any optimism about the prospect of Iran bowing, if you will, to our demands to pull back from their enrichment program and otherwise return to the JCPOA as, perhaps, adjusted in some ways, making it tougher?

With the attack last night by Iranian-backed militias in Iraq, it would suggest that they are flexing their muscle, not showing their weakness. Are we reading that wrong? Is there any prospect for them agreeing to a course which is more consistent with our objectives?

Ms. SHERMAN. I hope so, Senator, but I do not know. I am not privy to intelligence. I am not privy to all of the deliberations in the administration.

But, if confirmed, one has to dig into the details and into the intelligence and into consultations with you, with our allies, with our partners, with Israel, with the Gulf Arab states, with countries around the world that might have information that is useful to making those assessments.

So I cannot give you a definitive answer today. I certainly hope so because the other routes the President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, all of us, all of you, are committed to ensuring that Iran does not present an existential threat to anyone not able to deter our and our allies and partners' actions, and if they had a nuclear weapon that would change that calculus in very significant and very bad ways.

Senator ROMNEY. Like you, Ambassador, I do not have access to that intelligence. I am not a member of the Intelligence Committee, as is Ranking Member Risch.

But I would hope you study very carefully the conditions there in Iran, the health and well being of their leadership, the state of their economy, the public attitudes there.

I think there is some prospect that the Maximum Pressure campaign is actually delivering the kind of impetus that we might be looking for, and that before we bend and provide to Iran the hoped for reduction of our sanctions that we might consider the option of continuing with the Maximum Pressure campaign. I offer that only as a request on my part.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Romney.

Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and thank you, Ambassador Sherman and Mr. McKeon. Thank you for your willingness to serve our nation again, and my thanks to your families as well.

I am particularly pleased to have the two of you with such experience, such skills, such background in the executive branch and State and DOD and the White House, and here in the Senate so that we can help work together to make sure that the foreign policy

priorities and agenda of the executive branch are supported or at least well understood, in close consultation with this committee, going forward.

And I look forward to being partners in demonstrating to the American people how foreign policy and the foreign policy of this administration actually improves their lives, advances their security and prosperity, whether it is from keeping COVID-19 variants from spreading through doing robust vaccination around the world to mitigating threats from our adversaries to addressing the existential threat of climate change.

And I hope you will be partners in working through some of our nation's most urgent national security challenges, from building an enduring and bipartisan strategy for confronting China, cooperating where necessary and possible but being prepared for a robust and sustained competition with China, addressing Iran's nuclear program and its other threats to the region and to the world, recalibrating the U.S.-Saudi relationship in light of the release of the ODNI report on the Crown Prince's role in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and reviewing authorizations of the use of military force to strengthen and ensure congressional oversight on critical issues of war and peace.

I look forward also in my new role as the chairman of the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee to aligning resources with policy and commitments, and prioritizing the protection of human rights, the defense of democracy, the revitalization of the State Department and promoting the diversity of the workforce.

It is my hope the President's budget request will increase funding to what has been a stagnant foreign affairs budget to restore our leadership by fulfilling climate pledges, strengthening global health and security, and addressing our arrears at the United Nations.

So, Ambassador Sherman, just a brief question. You will be called on to travel the world to continue your service overseas on behalf of the American people. I hope you will also spend time traveling within our nation, speaking to the American people.

Do you agree diplomats in Washington, leaders in the administration, have to do a better job of explaining foreign policy not just abroad but here at home?

Ms. SHERMAN. I quite agree with you, Senator.

When Secretary Blinken asked me and the President agreed for me to be nominated as Deputy Secretary of State, one of the things I said to the Secretary—he was not yet Secretary at that point—but said to the Secretary that I thought it was critical that not only he but myself, if confirmed, Mr. McKeon, if he was confirmed, anyone who was a leader in the State Department ought to be spending as much time in America talking to the American people as we did abroad.

Jake Sullivan, who is the National Security Advisor, said very early on that every day in consideration of national security and foreign policy we need to ask, what does this mean for the American people? What does this mean for working people? What does this mean for the middle class in America?

People do not understand why we do what we do and how it has anything to do with their day-to-day lives. So I thank you for laying out this very critical issue. I think this is something that Democrats and Republicans can agree on, which is that the American people deserve to hear from us why we are doing what we are doing and why it matters to them.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you. And I think as we work to combat the pandemic, we have right in front of us an example of how the health of the world impacts the health of the American people.

As we work to confront climate change, we have an opportunity to look at how our competition with China, our realignments around trade, may well end up also advancing our goal of combating the existential threat of climate change.

I know you have both heard of the Global Fragility Act. We discussed it in our constructive conversations before today. I just want to urge that this bipartisan tool that is available to address the real security challenges in the Sahel mentioned by the chairman in his comments is taken full advantage.

It is something that a group of us worked hard to get introduced and marked up and passed and signed into law, and it gives an opportunity for the State Department, along with AID and DOD, to really lead a strategy.

But it will only work if done in consultation with this committee and with robust funding from Congress. So it is my hope that you will let us know what you need to implement it effectively and that you will utilize, in particular, the multi-donor fund that it has authorized to leverage resources from public and private sector partners elsewhere.

If confirmed, you will have critical influence over whether we stand up for democracy and human rights at a time when China's authoritarian model is posing an increasing challenge to our principles.

How do we balance the need to impose consequences on Beijing for its horrific actions in Xinjiang and its oppression in Hong Kong while also, perhaps, cooperating in some areas like nonproliferation or climate change?

And in my view, our response to China has to bring in domestic policy, robust investments in manufacturing, IP protection, and labor, but include engagement with our allies.

I would be interested, Ambassador Sherman and Mr. McKeon, if you might, in the minute and a half I have left, just some brief comment on how the Foreign Relations Committee can best help in shaping a sustained bipartisan policy with regards to China.

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

I agree. I think this is an area where Democrats and Republicans agree. China is a major challenge for the United States, and I think there are three elements to it. We have to compete with China, and President Biden, Vice President Harris, the Secretary have said that begins with investment here at home in infrastructure and 5G and quantum computing and artificial intelligence and jobs for Americans that will take them into the next decades ahead.

We have to compete and win. That includes ensuring that China cannot hack our networks, cannot steal our trade secrets, and cannot steal our corporate secrets.

We need to challenge and confront China where we must in the South China Sea. Certainly, what they do on human rights. Secretary Blinken said, in his view, that the treatment of the Uighurs was genocide. I would agree with him on that and we should not shy away from saying things as they truly are.

And third, there will be some small areas in which we will have to cooperate, and as strange as it may sound, global health may be one of them, starting with getting the real facts about what happened in the pandemic.

And I will turn the last 15 seconds over to my colleague.

Mr. MCKEON. As you know, Senator Coons, the President said in the campaign and since that he wants to put democracy and human rights back at the center of our foreign policy. So that means it is integral and it will inform all the decisions we make.

At a minimum, we are going to speak out about China's outrageous behavior and treatment of its citizens in international fora or as well as directly, and we need to look at new tools to amplify what is happening there.

One of them is Radio Free Asia that is funded by the U.S. Agency for Global Media. You may not know that Senator Biden was the author of the legislation to create it and it is one of the things I am proud of having worked on.

So we definitely would want to collaborate with you on the best ways to come to grips with the China challenge because it is going to be a generational one.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you both.

And, Mr. Chairman, if I might just, in conclusion, across questioning and exchanges with a wide range of members of this committee, it is clear that close consultation, briefings both classified and open, and debate with this committee around the path forward on Iran, around the path forward on authorizations of the use of military force, are critical to our success and our ability to craft something that will win bipartisan support here.

And I look forward to working with you on Africa as well, something the chairman mentioned, and I know we have great promise for making progress in this administration.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. [Presiding.] Thank you.

Senator Paul?

Senator PAUL. One of the things I agreed with candidate Barack Obama on was that he said in an interview with a Boston paper we should not go to war without congressional authorization unless under imminent attack.

I had the chance to ask him about this after the administration chose to launch attacks on Libya and he said, well, I said unless under imminent attack and Benghazi was under imminent attack. And I said, really? You were talking about imminent attack of a foreign city, not the United States? I think nobody interprets the idea of a president going to war unless under imminent attack to be anything other than a U.S. city or a U.S. interest, at the very least.

So I was shocked by that. What was your position in the Obama administration about the Obama administration's decision to go to war in Libya, Ms. Sherman?

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

These decisions, as you know, are incredibly difficult to make, and when Libya began I was the Under Secretary for Political Affairs. And I think that most people thought that we were providing support to Europe for a humanitarian intervention.

It turned out to be quite something different. I am glad that today, some years later, we are now potentially facing elections in Libya, that Libya is getting back, perhaps, hopefully—fingers crossed—to a better place for Libyan people.

I will be the first to say, and I think President Obama has said so in his own memoir, that we did not have a full understanding—we have learned from this—that Gaddafi had not built any institutions. He had not created any government.

So when Gaddafi disappeared in Libya, there was nothing. There was absolutely nothing except the potential for a civil war and for an ongoing conflict. So I think we have to be very careful.

Senator PAUL. I appreciate the understanding. In retrospect, it may not have been the best activity. But one of the lessons we might learn, and we might learn from Iraq also, is that regime change does not work, that Thomas Jefferson is not waiting in the wings and American-style democracy is not going to blossom, and when we get rid of a tyrant maybe you get another tyrant.

But I guess the reason I question whether there was a lesson learned is that immediately many people in the Obama administration, the Hillary Clinton camp, et cetera, Samantha Power, Susan Rice, and I am not sure you, were then advocates of going into Syria in a big way.

In fact, your boss basically said, well, the problem was we just did not go in big enough into Syria. What was your opinion on Syria during the Obama administration on sending arms in and getting involved in their civil war?

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you, Senator. I want to correct the record a minute, as I was thinking about this. I was not actually in the Government at the time of the Libya decision. The reason it is so much in my mind is I was on the Defense Policy Board at the time and we had a big discussion about Libya. And the Policy Board believed we should not create a no-fly zone in Libya. We should not help out. We had breakfast with Secretary Gates on a Wednesday morning. He said, we are absolutely not going to do this. And on Thursday, we did it. So that is why it is very fresh in my mind. But I was not in government at the time.

On Syria, I was very torn. I thought there was a disaster happening in Syria and happening for the Syrian people. President Obama was very cautious because he understood that this was a slippery slope, that the American people were tired of war in the Middle East. And so he moved very, very carefully.

It is a struggle in those situations when you see terrible suffering of people, so not an easy decision. I think he tried to be very cautious.

Senator PAUL. But, you know, I think we have to learn some lessons sometime. I mean, many in the Democrat side of things learned the lesson very quickly. Maybe just for partisan reasons they did not like the Iraq war, and it was a disaster. But, really, it was a disaster. I mean, it is still an ongoing disaster. The whole

tipping of the balance between Iran and the rest of the Middle East was tipped by, you know, getting rid of the regime in Iraq.

And so it is this idea that we are going to make the world this great place for democracy, this Wilsonian idea of us, naivete that, you know, we are going to get rid of a regime and it is going to get better, even in Syria.

So we did not go all the way in, you know, with the full might of the U.S. We went partway in. But you could argue that had we not gotten involved and had we discouraged the other Arab nations from getting involved that it would have still been a disaster but maybe 10,000 people die instead of 500,000 people.

So I think the misguided notion that we helped anybody in Syria, it would be easy to argue. The evidence shows that a half a million people died and millions of people are dislocated because we did the half-ass approach to it. We went halfway in there.

And so then Blinken's response, in conclusion, is we should have gone all the way in there. And from my perspective, is we need to stay the hell out of these wars and toppling, you know, one strong man, one tribal leader, we get another one or we get worse.

And all along the Syrian civil war, the fiercest fighters, we would pretend that there were lawyers and doctors fighting, that there were these moderates over there fighting. Al Nusra were the fighters. Al-Qaeda were the fighters. The fiercest fighters were the jihadists.

And so I have never thought that the jihadists would be better than Assad, and I am not a fan of Assad either. But we have to learn some lessons, and I do not think we adequately learn the lessons. We go from Iraq and the power vacuum of Iraq. People say, oh, ISIS came about because we left too soon. Well, maybe ISIS came about because we got rid of Hussein. I mean, what is the original domino that leads to that? It is destabilizing in having no government.

You may be optimistic about Libya. But I see it as one of the biggest terrorist havens in the world. You got competing governments. The last administration was never really clear who they were supporting, whether it was this General Haftar or the U.N. government.

And the thing is, is it is muddled, and we have all these people we give arms to who are then giving arms to both—you know, to opposite sides in this Libyan civil war.

Maybe we would have been better off not getting involved, not bombing Gaddafi into oblivion, not thinking that he was some great saint but knowing that there was at least some stability there. And I wonder if chaos is worse, you know, a worse scenario.

And all I would ask is that we have got to learn these lessons. And I am not so positive—I do not think Blinken has. He is already sending us back into Syria. What do you think of sending more convoys into the conflict in Syria?

Ms. SHERMAN. Well, my understanding, Senator, is that is not what Secretary Blinken is about. What he is about is looking at what our interests are regarding ISIS and a de-ISIS campaign, and to make sure that we have a very small footprint and an appropriate one that is only in our interests.

But I do appreciate, Senator, the issues you raise. These are very hard decisions. You are correct that we should learn lessons of history and try not to repeat them, that regime change is rarely, if ever, successful.

So on some of your points, I would agree with you. I think, nonetheless, we do have American interests that compel us sometimes to use very precious blood and treasure.

But no President, no Secretary of State, no Secretary of Defense, makes these decisions without enormous consideration, and I hope as this administration goes forward with more and more consultation with Congress, as I think the chairman knows, finally, long overdue, there are now Title 10 notifications—pre-notifications to this committee, and I think that is a step in the right direction.

Senator PAUL. I hope you will be a constructive voice. All I will say is that we are bombing now again in Syria without congressional approval and we are sending more convoys in there without congressional approval to a messy war.

It has been going on forever. There is nothing good that is going to come out of our involvement. People say, well, U.S. lives are at risk. Yeah, because we put them there. You know, we put them in the middle of a civil war that is, largely, over, but can continue if we keep putting troops there—to put our troops as a tripwire to get involved in a further escalation of this war.

So I hope there will be sane voices and I hope you will be one of those. But I do not have a great deal of confidence that we have actually gone away from John Bolton. I think we have gone to a liberal form of John Bolton with your new boss and that is something I am very concerned with.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to you both for your continued willingness to serve your country. Senator Paul and I do not always agree on the answers to these weighty questions but I do think he brings a healthy caution regarding American hubris, particularly in the Middle East and I appreciate his line of questioning.

I am hoping to squeeze in three questions here, two, for you, Ambassador Sherman, one for you, Mr. McKeon.

I wanted to come back to the topic of Venezuela. I remember shortly after Elliott Abrams was appointed to be President Trump's envoy, he came into my office and he talked about the big chance that the administration was taking, essentially, sort of playing all of our cards right at the outset, including the recognition of Juan Guaido, and he predicted that if Maduro had not fallen, had not left power by May of 2019, then our chance that we had taken would have been perceived as a mistake.

Last week, the Europeans, essentially, de-recognized Juan Guaido as the leader of Venezuela, essentially confirming that two years later our policy has not worked.

Maduro is still in power. Russia, China, and Cuba are more deeply involved in Venezuela and the United States, having played all those cards early on, we look feckless, not just in Venezuela but throughout the region.

And so does it make sense to continue a policy that by all objective measures has not worked and, if not, what should a new policy look like?

Ms. SHERMAN. If I knew the answer this morning to that question, Senator, you should confirm me quickly without hesitation.[Laughter.]

Ms. SHERMAN. I think this is a very thorny and very difficult situation. I think that the United States and the world community was right to recognize Juan Guaido. I do not think that the previous administration took advantage of all of the things that it might have to try to push that agenda forward.

I do not think we have supported Colombia in the way that we perhaps needed to for taking in all of the refugees out of Venezuela. I think that we have given Maduro a platform to, in fact, say that everybody is feckless and he gets to do whatever he wants to do.

There are ways, perhaps, that we can communicate with the Venezuelan people that we have not. But I do not—I will be the first to say I do not this morning—I am filled with humility in saying that I do not know that there is an easy answer to this problem.

What I can say to you, Senator, is I think it is a very critical one. It is absolutely wrapped up in China's investment in Latin America, Russia's investment in Latin America, about sort of the triad with Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, and we have to think through what a strategy going forward might be.

And, if confirmed, I look forward to speaking with you and with everyone on this committee with your ideas and thoughts about the best way we might crack this very difficult challenge.

Senator MURPHY. I hope it is also a prism through which the administration can take a review of American sanctions policy. I think there is an argument to be made that in this case the sanctions may have, ultimately, accrued to the benefit of Maduro to the detriment of Venezuelan citizens, and not gotten us the political return that we had hoped and still hoped for.

On Iran—I know we keep on coming back to this, but I just wanted to clarify an answer that you gave to Senator Romney in your exchange with him. You listed out a number of malevolent behaviors by the Iranians, the things that we hope that they eventually come to the table on.

But I just wanted to confirm that it is still your understanding that the administration's position is that we should get back into the nuclear deal, get back on the same page with the P5+1 and use that as a platform through which to put pressure on the Iranians with respect to its ballistic missile programs, its support for terrorist groups.

I think the Maximum Pressure campaign was built on a fantasy, this idea that we could have a comprehensive negotiation where the Iranians would come to the table on everything all at once. In fact, during the last four years, despite these intense sanctions the Iranians came to the table on none of Secretary Pompeo's list of 12 demands.

So it is still our belief that we should get back into the nuclear agreement and as quickly as possible, understanding that that will



take negotiation, and use that as a platform with which to bring together the world community around other behaviors that we object to by Tehran.

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes, it is my understanding that the Biden/Harris administration, Secretary Blinken, want to get back into the deal but to make it longer and stronger, and to use it as a platform to have negotiations on the other issues of concern that we have with Iran.

Senator MURPHY. And it makes me a little nervous when we sort of hear terms like longer and stronger. Again, I think many of us supported that deal on its terms. We understand that we always had to have a follow-on negotiation to make sure it was lengthened.

But by expanding out the number of things that we want to talk about at this negotiating table, I worry that, you know, we may be setting ourselves up for failure. But I look forward to continuing that discussion with you.

Thank you again for your service. I am really looking forward to supporting your nomination and working with you.

Mr. McKeon, I wanted to expand the conversation that you and I had privately and that is the question about the effectiveness of our diplomacy abroad when we have such difficulty getting outside the wire.

Diplomacy does not just happen in embassies. It needs to happen in communities. And in the wake of Benghazi, we have become much shyer, much more reluctant, much more cautious about putting our diplomats out, especially in dangerous places, and the work that Senator Coons has done on fragile states, I think, is part of the answer here.

But, you know, we also have a review process for incidences abroad that tends to, you know, make people very, very hesitant to do anything that might put any diplomat at risk.

The risk tolerance in State is fundamentally different than the risk tolerance we have in the Department of Defense, and I think that is a mistake.

I think we should pursue some congressional reforms to the Accountability Review Board process to make people less fearful of punitive action and more willing to learn from mistakes.

What is your thoughts on how we can try to push diplomacy back outside our embassy compound walls?

Mr. MCKEON. Senator Murphy, thank you. It is a hard challenge, and I appreciate you being willing to dive into it.

You know, there is no such thing as perfect security. The diplomats that work for our country are in a dangerous business, and evidence of that is on the walls of the C Street lobby in the State Department, the names of those who have been killed while serving the government overseas.

As you said, we have the statute that mandates accountability review. Our board process was enacted in the mid '80s. It does not apply in the same way to DOD or the intelligence community. So I appreciate if you and other members of committee are willing to take a look at that. We should have a conversation about it.

The department began a review under the last Secretary, being led by very senior diplomat, to look at this question which they put

it under the framework of risk mitigation. Though I do not know the timing of his work, but that will also inform our conversation.

Senator MURPHY. Great. I look forward to working with you on that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY. Put your microphone on, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. There we go. I was saying thank you very much for scheduling this important hearing for two very important positions in the State Department.

Also, Ambassador Sherman, I appreciate your acknowledgement of the success of the Abraham Accords. A tremendous amount of work went into that. I know you had been critical of the previous administration about this earlier.

But I appreciate your acknowledgement of the success because, indeed, it has changed the dynamic in the region. And I encourage the Biden administration to strongly consult with our allies in the Middle East as you consider reentry into the JCPOA.

I would like to turn now, Ambassador Sherman, to a discussion on the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, if I might. You mentioned earlier that the Biden administration will follow the law. I would just like to follow up on Ranking Member Risch's comments here, if I might, because I think it is very important that we talk about the oversight dynamic here.

The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 requires the executive branch to submit to Congress any and all agreements that are related to the nuclear program of Iran. Those need to be submitted for congressional review.

Ambassador Sherman, can you imagine any scenario in which the Biden administration would decide to participate again in the JCPOA concerning Iran's nuclear program or modifies any aspect of the current sanctions regime on Iran and you would not submit this to Congress for review?

Ms. SHERMAN. It is always hard, Senator. I am not a lawyer. But any lawyer would tell you and has told me never to make a completely universal comment about such a question.

But what I will say to you is that this administration, the Biden/Harris administration, Secretary Blinken, are committed to following the law. And if, indeed, whatever is decided falls within the terms of INARA, then we must, indeed, come to Congress.

Senator HAGERTY. I think this is the concern that Ranking Member Risch and I have right now and that is looking at a very specific legal interpretation of the document and not looking at the purpose of the Act.

The purpose of the Act is to ensure congressional review, not to find weasel words or ways to get out of complying with it. So I encourage this administration and you, if you are confirmed, to find a way to comply with the purpose of this Act.

Ms. SHERMAN. I think that is a fair point that the intent is to make sure that Congress has a say, and I think what is and, as Senator Cardin pointed out earlier, I was very engaged with both Senator Cardin and Senator Corker to ensure that INARA, in fact, happened, and that there was a congressional review process. I thought it was terribly important, and very grateful to then Chair-

man Corker and Senator Cardin, who was ranking at the time, for moving forward on a congressional review process.

What I would hope this time is that we have happen what is happening here, which is that you all are there at the takeoff that you are reviewing the considerations of this administration throughout the process, and that the review does not just come at the end but the review happens throughout any process that goes forward.

And if I am confirmed, you have my commitment, not just regarding any agreement with Iran but with what we are doing in foreign policy and national security, writ large.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Ambassador.

Can we turn to the Central Bank of Iran now? That is another source of concern. U.S. policy has sought to deny the Iranian regime, including the Central Bank of Iran, the money, especially the hard currency that it uses to fund terrorism and many other malign activities that threaten the national security of the United States, of Israel, and our partners in the Gulf.

The Treasury Department has concluded that, since at least 2016, Iran's IRGC Quds Force, the terror outfit that exists there, has received the vast majority of its foreign currency from the Central Bank of Iran.

Ambassador Sherman, do you commit to maintaining sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran and hold it accountable for its activities to support terrorism, including any secondary sanctions that are now in place?

Ms. SHERMAN. Senator, I do not know all the ins and outs of the current sanctions that are in place because I have been out of government now for some time.

But I, certainly, do not want to do anything that supports the IRGC to continue its activities in the region that are vastly destabilizing and put our allies and our partners and ourselves at tremendous risk.

Senator HAGERTY. I think these sanctions have taken a great deal of time and effort. I was personally involved in some of the aspects of this. And I would encourage you and I would encourage the Biden administration not to grant sanctions relief to the Central Bank of Iran without a thorough review and make certain that these sanctions are—continue to stay in place until they have stopped in all aspects supporting terrorism.

A further question, Ambassador Sherman. The Iranian regime, clearly, wants the United States to lift sanctions against the Central Bank of Iran. Please, and I would love for your commitment on this to not provide any form of sanctions relief, including through the use of waivers or licenses to the Central Bank of Iran unless we can verifiably ensure that they cease all of their malign activities.

Ms. SHERMAN. I appreciate your view and I will, certainly, want to talk with you further, if confirmed, and as I learn more about the sanctions that are currently in place and how they affect different activities by Iran. Thank you for that.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much.

Turn to North Korea for just a minute, you and I have spoken about this before. As you know, when I was ambassador to Japan,

I was there when Kim Jong-un launched two intercontinental ballistic missiles over Japan and, at a different time, tested a hydrogen bomb.

I have no doubt that North Korea is going to remain one of the most critical national security challenges that the United States will have to face this decade. And as we learned during the Trump administration, subordinates come and go in the negotiations, sometimes permanently, perhaps.

Kim Jong-un takes the decisions on the nuclear program. It is critical to strengthen the Maximum Pressure campaign to sharpen the choices for the Kim regime.

Ambassador Sherman, do you support additional sanctions against the Chinese companies that are doing business with North Korea?

Ms. SHERMAN. Again, because I have been out of government, I do not know all that is in place now. But, certainly, we do want to ensure that North Korea understands that unless it comes to the table to really make progress in denuclearization that we will use every tool that we have to prevent them from doing so and, certainly, want China not to be playing an adverse role in that process.

Senator HAGERTY. Yeah, they have been playing a tremendous role, as you and I both know, and I hope we can continue to work toward that goal.

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you. I look forward to it, Senator, if confirmed.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator KAINE?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the witnesses. I want to follow up on Senator Hagerty's line of questions with respect to congressional approval of forward steps on Iran.

I have a very different opinion about the JCPOA than the Republican members of this body, and Senator Risch and I have done this often. But I have exactly the same opinion as all the members of the body about congressional review, and I was the original—sort of one of the original drafters of INARA. Because the Obama administration—the plan was to do a deal with Iran and do it pursuant to waiver authority under the congressional sanctions and not bring it to Congress for eight years.

Eventually, at year eight, they would have to come to Congress to have a statutory lifting of the sanctions. That was the original plan. And even though I thought the negotiation was coming up with a deal that I thought was much better than the status quo ante, and Senator Corker did not think so, we both thought because congressional sanctions were being used as leverage to get the deal that Congress had to be involved. And whatever the forward steps on the deal might be, Congress needs to be involved because you are using a congressional statute that imposes sanctions as leverage in this topic. So I just want to associate myself with the comments that he made.

Now I will go to associating myself with topics raised by Senator Paul. You talked about your parents being there at the founding of the U.N. because your dad was a Marine veteran who had suf-

fered war injuries at Guadalcanal, and he wanted to be there at the founding of an organization that was designed to prevent war.

Sadly, we, as humans, cannot prevent war. No organization can. But we should try to prevent unnecessary war.

And it is interesting the way the Framers of the Constitution and then even the architects of Senate procedures have tried to help us figure out a way to prevent unnecessary war.

So the United States, unlike virtually anywhere else in the world, has a founding document, the Constitution, that says it is not for the executive to decide to go to war. It is for the legislative branch.

Nobody does that. I mean, war is for the king, the monarch, the emperor, the dictator. But not here. The initiation of war is supposed to be by Congress with the President then managing the war because the last thing you need is 535 commanders in chief.

And then within the rules of this body decisions about going to war come out of the Foreign Relations Committee, not out of the Armed Services. I am on the Armed Services Committee.

Most people guess that that is where war resolutions start. They do not, because as you said, prefer diplomacy first, and if diplomacy fails, war can be a sad necessity. But prefer diplomacy first. So it has to start in the Foreign Relations Committee.

Let me ask you this, Ms. Sherman, and I have very high regard for both of you and I will support both your nominations. Iraq right now, are they an enemy or are they a partner?

Ms. SHERMAN. I hope they are a partner, Senator.

Senator Kaine. Yeah, they are a partner. They are not an enemy anymore. There are some challenges with our partner, with Iraq, especially the activities of these Iranian-backed militia groups, which the successive prime ministers have tried to figure out how to control without completely satisfying us.

But they are not an enemy. We still have two war authorizations against the nation of Iraq that have not been repealed. Gulf War 1991, Iraq War Resolution 2002. Boy, how is that to treat a partner and have a war authorization against them?

Today, Senators Lee, Paul, Young, Grassley, Kaine, Durbin, Coons, Duckworth, we are introducing a bill to repeal the two Iraq AUMFs.

And I am not going to ask you for a commitment on that. You are not part of the administration yet. But I would think Congress should not just allow war authorizations to exist in perpetuity.

But we often do. We pass them and then they are just out there and they can be used in mischievous ways.

The President undertook on his own initiation without congressional approval missile strikes against militia positions in Syria that are connected to Iran last Thursday.

At the same time that this happened, the U.S. had an offer on the table with Europeans for Iran to come back to a table for a no-preconditions discussion about what do we do about the JCPOA. Iran was considering that offer.

The administration, from my conversations, was actually pretty optimistic that Iran was going to accept that offer. Then missile strikes happened on Thursday, and then Iran turned down the offer on Sunday.

The President asserted, as a rationale for the missile strikes, that he had unilateral power under Article 2 to do them. He did not refer to the AUMFs, which was good because those would be fig leaves. He just said, I have Article 2 power.

But the challenge is if you allow presidents unilaterally to do things, even things that are prudent, okay, president takes a step with a missile strike. Iran then turns down an opportunity to explore diplomacy.

I cannot imagine anybody at the Pentagon or at the State Department was surprised with the militia airstrikes back at the Air Force—at the Air Force Base where U.S.-led coalition forces were yesterday.

When one side decides, I can do this unilaterally, then the other side decides, I can do this unilaterally because you started it. No, you started it. No, you started it. And then we are in the midst, potentially, of a significant military engagement of war without a discussion in Congress.

I do not care how prudent unilateral executive action is. It can lead to counteraction and counteraction and reaction, and then suddenly, we are in the middle of something that has not been discussed in front of Congress, has not been discussed in front of the American people.

And I just think, again, even the events of the last couple of days since, Ms. Sherman, you and I talked on our Zoom call have demonstrated that the Framers were not really wrong when they said decisions about war and the initiation of war should be sort of aired before the people's legislative body and have an imprimatur. If we are going to do it, it should have an imprimatur on it of more than just one person.

I have shared this view about the missile strikes last Thursday and about the at least temporary collapse of this diplomatic opportunity Sunday, and then the Iraqi strikes against the base with the U.S.-led coalition.

This is the kind of thing that happens and there is no guarantee it will not happen if you have more dialogue with Congress and the public. But you reduce the risk. I think you reduce the risk of unnecessary and un contemplated escalation if you have the kind of consultation that, I think, both Democrats and Republicans on this committee would expect of you.

I know you believe that and I am confident you will push for that to all your might, and that is one of the reasons that I have the confidence that I will support you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. McKeon, I enjoyed visiting this week. When we spoke, you outlined how examining the resourcing of America's development enterprise and our foreign assistance would be one of your top priorities, if confirmed.

This is an area of particular interest to me. It dates back several years. In fact, I co-chaired a CSIS task force in 2017 with Senator Shaheen on reforming our foreign assistance programming.

And one of the recommendations that we made in that convening of former career Foreign Service officers and USAID professionals and other experts was to take a hard look at the overlapping responsibilities and, thus, the duplicative efforts and budgets of the State Department, USAID, and various development finance organizations and to empower USAID to have a bigger voice in the conversation and more of a leading role in American foreign policy.

So that starts with strategic direction from the top. From the outside, what do you find, sir, most concerning about how our foreign assistance is organized?

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Senator. I will have to dig out the task force report from 2017 because I am not familiar with it.

As you know, the USAID administrator reports to and is under the direct authority of the Secretary of State. But I think, from experience in the last 20 years, that relationship has probably had more—marked more by tension than collaboration.

So I think one of the first priorities would be to try to reset that working with Ambassador Power, if she is confirmed. She is going to be a great spokesperson for the mission and is not shy.

So I am sure that she will assert her views about the relationship and the direction of our program. So I think first priority is to get the relationship between State and AID in the right place and make sure that the programs are aligned and not duplicative.

Then, as you mentioned, the other agencies. The Secretary of State chairs the board of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the Development Finance Corporation.

And so we, at the State Department, if I am confirmed and the Secretary, we need to make sure we are using that role to ensure that everyone is rowing in the same direction on our programs and are aligned with the President's priorities and strategies.

You have given us great tools with the—with these agencies, the DFC being the newest one, but we need to put them to greatest effect, and I would like to talk to you more about it as I dig into it, if I get into the job.

Senator YOUNG. While I move to our diverse array of various agencies that are tasked with foreign assistance, it is one of the things I discovered when I became a member of this committee is just the constellation of different agencies.

And one avenue to explore is how we can task some of these agencies with operating in countries with lower incomes or worse health outcomes while directing others to specifically address more developed economies and societies, rather than throwing our resources from the various agencies at the same countries.

For instance, how can the United States better utilize our more independent development organizations like the Millennium Challenge Corporation or the Development Finance Corporation and make them more strategic in their investments?

I would like you to sort of speak to that generally, and then answer this specifically. Can the Development Finance Corporation be more focused on middle income countries that face more pressure from Russian and Chinese influence?

Mr. MCKEON. Senator I need to dig into the DFC statute. My understanding from a briefing paper is they are supposed to prioritize their investments in lower income countries. I think there is some

exception for middle or higher income countries in some respects. But the primary focus is supposed to be on the lower income countries. If I have that wrong, please tell me.

Senator YOUNG. Respectfully, I think that is just been the construction of the statute. The statute actually does call for development assistance to lower income countries, and then there is—in the same charge, it indicates that the resources may also be deployed strategically.

So it is like so many of our statutes. It is a vaguely written statute, which I lament, but my own views, which you might have sort of inferred by the question, is that we have an opportunity here to perhaps use DFC in a more strategic fashion vis-&-vis some of our strategic competitors, like Russia and China.

So I would look forward to working with you or others within the administration to—on that effort.

Ambassador Sherman, I do not want to neglect you, and I am grateful for your long-standing service and for your appearance here today.

President Biden has signaled that working with our partners and allies is going to be a foundation of his foreign policy and that he will seek to renew relations with our European partners.

In fact, in his recent address before the Munich Security Conference, he called the transatlantic relationship the cornerstone of all we hope to accomplish in the 21st century.

I agree that we must be engaging with our democratic allies in order to reach agreements on security and trade and technology development and health resiliency and all manner of other things.

But we also have to be willing to embrace our own ability to shape these areas and not the other way around, right. So there is a balance to be struck.

So if the leaders of Europe are unwilling to confront the threats emanating from around the globe, most especially the threats emanating from China and Russia, how would you recommend the United States adjust its strategy to engage with them?

In 10 seconds or less, please.

Ms. SHERMAN. I think it is absolutely critical that we engage with the transatlantic relationship around China and Russia. We are so much stronger together than we are apart, and I think that it will take vigorous diplomacy, which Secretary Blinken is going to lead, and, if confirmed, I hope to help him do exactly what you are suggesting, that we help to drive that agenda.

Europe is not always excited about us being back at the table because they are wary, given some years of us being away. But they also respect and understand the power of the United States of America, and I think that it is time that we lead by our example by what we are doing to compete and build our own infrastructure to do that competition.

But doing it together will make us much more powerful in challenging China, competing with China, and dealing with all of the threats that are put forward by Russia.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

I understand we have Senator Markey virtually.



Senator MARKEY. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much, and thank both of you for your long-term service to our country and we hope that you will be given the opportunity to continue because I think you would be enormous assets to ensuring that we have a safer better world that we are living in for everyone in our society.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, just want to go through a few bits of facts from the past so that we can just establish it as part of this hearing record.

Before you helped to get the world's major powers and Iran to the negotiating table, Iran was about two months away from producing enough highly-enriched uranium for its first nuclear bomb.

Is that correct?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes, that was the assessment.

Senator MARKEY. And after all sides began implementing the Iran nuclear deal, that breakout time extended to more than a year. Is that correct?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

Senator MARKEY. And Senator Risch asked you about enrichment, so I would like to go back to that. As part of the Iran nuclear deal, Iran reduced, reduced, its stock of low-enriched uranium by 98 percent to 300 kilograms.

But as a result of the Trump administration's unilateral exit from the Iran nuclear deal, that number increased to 12 times over that 300-kilogram limit.

Is that correct?

Ms. SHERMAN. That is my understanding. Yes, sir.

Senator MARKEY. Okay. So, again, while many of my colleagues have spent time criticizing the Iran deal, the effect of that arrangement did dramatically reduce the ability of Iran to have a quick breakout time towards producing a nuclear weapon.

And I just want to make sure that all of that is out on the table, and again, you played an instrumental role in ensuring that that would be part of that agreement.

So compliance-for-compliance is what President Biden is now saying his goal is. So can you just, again, expand a little bit more on what the Biden administration's policy will be in terms of compliance-for-compliance in ensuring that we do go back to a position where Iran's breakout time is lessened dramatically?

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you, Senator.

It is my understanding what the Biden/Harris administration hopes to do is to get Iran to come back into full compliance with the deal.

Then we would be in compliance with the deal and that we would build from that to get a longer and stronger agreement, given that the deal is now some years old and, as you have pointed out, Iran has now increased its stockpile, increased the depth of its enrichment, increased many of its capabilities more—using more sophisticated centrifuges as a result of our leaving the deal, and that we would not only get back to where we were but we would build a better, stronger, longer platform. And then we would address the other issues of concern.

And as you pointed out, Senator, that one-year breakout time is critical because it allows us if for some reason Iran is able to cheat,

though there were the most extraordinary verification and monitoring mechanisms, we would have time to slap back on sanctions or even to take military action.

So we would maintain all of our options to ensure that Iran not obtain a nuclear weapon.

Senator MARKEY. Yeah, and I agree with you. A one-year breakout time gives us time to put additional pressure on, but if it goes down to only two months or one month as a breakout time, our capacity to respond is, obviously, diminished dramatically.

So I think the approach which the Biden administration is taking is the correct one.

If I could just move over to Burma, that recent coup carried out by the Burmese military against the democratically-elected civilian government has been condemned by the Biden administration, and I welcome the steps which the administration has already taken, including imposing targeted sanctions against the military.

What role do you think China should play in partnering with the United States and do we have a capacity to get China to partner with us in order to put pressure on the military in Burma to allow for the civilian democratically-elected government to return to power?

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you for that really important question, Senator.

It is my understanding that Linda Thomas-Greenfield, our ambassador now to the United Nations, is going to use our platform since we are in the presidency in the month of March to have a more serious discussion in the U.N. Security Council about Burma and encouraging China to urge a return to a democratically-elected government and to end the military coup, which in its wake is just having a horrifying impact on the rights and the freedoms of the Burmese people.

We have lots of issues with Burma even before this coup, given the treatment of the Rohingya. But now it is of great concern for all of the people of Burma and their freedom and their way forward.

I applaud Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield for taking this subject up as one of the first things that she does, and Secretary Blinken has made it very clear this is a very high priority for him and to not only look at those sanctions but see that we get everyone engaged in ensuring that we return the government.

Senator MARKEY. Okay, thank you. And I do believe we have to put much more pressure on those military leaders and I hope that that is part of the Biden plan. And no one has done more thinking about the North Korean nuclear program than you have, historically. You have just a rich history of the three generations of the Kim family and their attitudes about this issue.

Could you give us your sense of what the steps should be that are taken by the Biden administration in conjunction with the regional allies, especially in order to reduce this ever-increasing nuclear threat from North Korea?

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you, Senator. It is my understanding that a review is going on in the administration to decide on how best to proceed with North Korea. Very tough challenge.

Quite agree with you it needs to be done with partners and allies in the region, particularly Japan and South Korea. But with everyone who has a stake in ensuring that Kim Jong-un does not develop even more nuclear weapons, greater delivery systems, and pose even a greater threat to the region and to the world.

So I understand that review is ongoing and, if confirmed, I would be glad to be talking with everyone here more about it to get your views and ideas as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator MARKEY. Do you—okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to the both of you. Congratulations on your nominations.

In the last six weeks, the Biden administration has embraced China, has bombed Syria, has empowered Russia and Putin, has refused to stand with Israel on the Golan Heights, and has lifted sanctions on Iranian-backed terrorists.

That is not an encouraging opening for the foreign policy of this country for the next four years. I want to focus on a couple of those areas.

Let us start with an area that should be a potential for bipartisan cooperation. It is a topic that I discussed with both of you at length in the past week, and that is Nord Stream 2.

Nord Stream 2, in the last year, was an incredible bipartisan victory for the United States. The pipeline was over 90 percent completed from Russia to Germany. Congress acted not once but twice, passing strong bipartisan sanctions.

Sanctions supported by Republicans and Democrats on this committee passed it into law, and despite mountains of Russian disinformation, the pipeline ceased minutes before those sanctions were signed into law.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration has been sending mixed signals and those signals have been heard by Putin. And so Putin, after ceasing building the pipeline for a year, has gone back to building the pipeline because Putin and Russia believe the Biden administration will not hold them accountable, will allow them to complete this pipeline, which would put billions of dollars in Putin's pockets to be used against America, against Europe.

The European Parliament, by the way, in December 2018 voted 433 to 105 to oppose Nord Stream 2, and in January 2021, after Putin attempted to murder Navalny, they voted again to condemn it, this time 581 to 50.

Let me start with both of you. Do both of you agree that allowing Nord Stream 2 to be completed would be terrible policy for the United States?

Ms. SHERMAN. Senator, the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, have both said they oppose Nord Stream 2 and do not believe it should be completed.

Mr. MCKEON. Senator that is my understanding as well. The President has said it is a bad deal.

Senator CRUZ. Well, if they oppose it, they are not very effective at opposing it because when their administration came into office,

suddenly it commenced, and to be particular, last month the State Department transmitted a mandatory and overdue report to Congress about who is helping Putin build the pipeline. The report included one ship and its owner, which the Trump administration had already sanctioned.

So it simply reiterated what the Trump administration had done. It did not include any entities that are plainly in violation, not even the company that is actually constructing the pipeline Congress has instructed the President to sanction.

Then, yesterday, the Biden administration imposed sanctions for the poisoning of Russian dissident Alexei Navalny, but those sanctions went out of their way not to touch the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

That was not an accident. Now that construction is resumed, we have precious little time. I told both of you that if the Biden administration does not change course, we are going to wake up in six months or a year and this pipeline is going to be built because the Biden administration failed to act.

And so I want to ask you, Ms. Sherman, if confirmed, will you move immediately to ensure that the Biden administration meets its mandatory obligation imposed by Congress to name and sanction all of the entities that are engaged in pipe laying, pipe laying activities, certification, or insurance related to Nord Stream 2?

Ms. SHERMAN. Well, Senator, even if confirmed, I will not have the authority to make those decisions unilaterally. But I can say to you that I will do everything I possibly can to ensure that Nord Stream 2 does not go forward, and I know that the administration will welcome advice and counsel from you and from the Senate and we will move forward on everything that they can do legally to stop the pipeline.

Senator CRUZ. Well, I want to be very clear so that no one in the administration is surprised. This was an incredible victory for U.S. foreign policy and an incredible loss for Putin and Russia.

The sanctions legislation was supported by virtually the entirety of the committee when we voted on it. The vote was 20 to 2, an overwhelming bipartisan majority.

The administration has all of the tools to stop the pipeline, as evidenced by the fact that we stopped it for a year that it worked, that we know it worked.

And it has only been in the last few weeks with the new administration that Putin has felt he has the green light to go ahead. I understand that the Germans want the pipeline built, that the German Government does.

But going soft on Russia is a serious mistake, and once it is built, it likely is impossible to unwind. So the window and the urgency is now.

Ms. SHERMAN. Senator, we share the sense of urgency, and I just want to say although I am not yet a part of the administration and will not be unless confirmed by the Senate, that I do not believe that the Biden/Harris administration has been soft on Russia in any way, shape, or form.

I know we disagree when it comes to Nord Stream 2. But they are very clear. As we heard, Ambassador Burns, who is, I hope, about to be confirmed to be the director of the CIA, said and who

is our ambassador to Russia, that we all should be very clear eyed about Russia being an adversary. Secretary Blinken has spoken at length about ways in which Russia threaten our country and I think there is a commitment to move in a tough way.

Senator CRUZ. Ambassador Sherman, with all due respect—with all due respect, words are cheap. And so if the Biden administration wishes to not be soft on Russia, rather than saying we do not want to be soft on Russia they could actually follow the mandatory law and stop the pipeline.

The test is going to be real simple. If Putin has billions of dollars and Europe is energy dependent on Russia because the Biden administration refused to comply with mandatory bipartisan sanctions, that will be the test and not any political rhetoric about we are tough on Putin.

If you are tough on Putin, do not give him billions of dollars. The State Department needs to file a supplemental interim report on Nord Stream 2 that sanctions every entity and they are refusing to do so.

And if this pipeline gets completed, it will be the fault of this administration. I do not want this to happen. I want that to be a bipartisan victory and a victory for the United States. You both have the opportunity to make sure that happens and so I implore you to do that.

Thank you.

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Just since the chairman reserved his time I am going to take a moment of that time.

President Trump could have used sanctions for the course of his four years in office on Nord Stream. He did not need congressionally-approved sanctions to affect the pipeline. Would that be from your experience a fair statement?

Ms. SHERMAN. That is a fair statement, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. And yet he did not do that. So I join my colleague in my concern for Nord Stream. I mentioned it in my opening remarks, and I urge the administration to do everything they can to stop Nord Stream.

But it would be intellectually unfair to suggest that the Biden administration is going to be the reason why Nord Stream gets built when four years were lost with no sanctions whatsoever.

I understand that Senator Schatz is up next virtually.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to both of you for being willing to serve again.

My first question is for Ambassador Sherman. You know, as people think of Asia, the mind races across the Pacific to China and not the nations in between us and them, and so I want to talk a little bit about Oceania.

It has got 12 million people, 14 island states, 17 territories, and 6 percent of the votes that we may need at the United Nations. And so how do we step up engagement in Oceania?

Ms. SHERMAN. It is a great question, Senator, and you probably understand this part of the world better than most of us do, representing Hawaii, where it is very much a part of your neighborhood in many ways.

I think that it is critical to engage with Oceania and with the island states. They are often, as you point out, critical votes at the United Nations and, certainly, in the General Assembly.

And I know that in the Obama administration we, in fact, created a special forum to have those conversations and to ensure that we had diplomats who traveled to those island nations. That often does not happen because they are far away. Sometimes the travel is difficult. But it is quite critical.

So I thank you very much for raising it and, if confirmed, I certainly will commit to you to pay attention to what is often a swing vote.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you. And I think one area for potential cooperation, you know, we think of climate action as an objective of American foreign policy.

But climate action is a shared response to the climate crisis, especially in the disaster preparation, disaster response space, and as we look at more long-term impacts of sea level rise, especially in island nations and coastal nations, there are opportunities to step up what USAID is doing and other sort of, as you like to use the term, avenues of smart power.

And so I am particularly excited about the opportunities for us to deploy those resources throughout island nations for selfish reasons but also for good humanitarian reasons.

Can you talk a little bit about what is going to be the climate action strategy? I know we have got, you know, a lot of horsepower behind this, including the President of the United States, the former Secretary of State.

But how does that get operationalized in the international context? And I am particularly interested not just in Paris but how we use shared climate response as a tool of diplomacy.

Ms. SHERMAN. So let me make a couple of comments and then Mr. McKeon may want to add to it as well in terms of how we are organizing to tackle this very critical challenge.

The President of the United States, the Secretary, the vice president have made clear that climate and our response to the changing climate is a whole-of-government approach and it is also a whole of State Department approach.

So as much as we have a special presidential envoy for climate in former Secretary Kerry, every part of the department, every bureau of the department, will have a focus on climate as well because, as you well know, some of these island nations are at risk of even disappearing, let alone the changes in the ecosystem of the oceans, which affects fishermen and the ability to have maritime and fishery economies. So it is a critical issue that we will all have to pay attention to.

And your point, Senator, about disaster preparedness is often a place where countries even with whom we do not agree on everything can work together because it is such a necessity, and the United States brings, really, unparalleled capabilities in disaster preparedness and response.

Mr. McKeon, I do not know if you want to add to that.

Senator SCHATZ. Mr. McKeon, before you answer, I would like you to perhaps provide some emphasis on those areas where we can make some permanent structural change within the depart-

ment so that our climate strategy becomes so embedded into American foreign policy objectives that it does not swing in one direction or the other depending on the partisan affiliation of the President herself or himself.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Senator.

As Ambassador Sherman said, we really have to integrate the emphasis on climate action throughout the department. It is not just going to be Secretary Kerry's team, but, of course, they will be leading the diplomacy.

But it has to be front of mind for the work of everyone in the department in all of the regional and functional bureaus to think about how in pursuit of their programs and their planning they are integrating a climate action dimension to it, not just in our diplomacy but also in our assistance programs, as you suggested.

So I think we owe you more thinking on this and I am not sure what planning has gone on already because we are not in the department.

But we will come back to you once we are—once we are in the seat, if confirmed, to give you more detail about how we are moving forward on this.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

My final question for Ambassador Sherman, global press freedom is on the decline. Reporters Without Borders found that the protection of rights for journalists has decreased 12 percent since it started reporting on such things in 2013.

What can we do to reverse this trend?

Ms. SHERMAN. Really important, Senator, and we have already had some discussion here this morning about our response on the horrifying death of Jamal Khashoggi. I think it is critical that we engage with journalists around the world, that we talk about press freedom wherever we go.

Yes, journalists are separate and apart, and they are part of holding us accountable and administration accountable. But they are also citizens. They are also standing for freedom.

And, in fact, one of the great parts of the United States is when we find ourselves challenged, as we have in many ways over the last years, it is often the press who hold all of us accountable for what we are doing.

And so we have heard Secretary Blinken speak of the importance of press freedom and making it essential to our human rights agenda around the world and our agenda on democracy.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you to you both for testifying, for being willing to serve again. And I just want to thank the chair and the ranking member and all the staff for welcoming me on to the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. It is very good to have you with us, Senator Schatz.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, and I want to thank both of you for your prior public service and your willingness to serve again.

Mr. McKeon, I want to associate myself with the remarks from my fellow Maryland senator, Senator Cardin, about the importance

of your commitment to greater diversity in the Foreign Service and the State Department.

Senator Sullivan and I are the co-chairs of the Foreign Service Caucus and will soon be reintroducing legislation we introduced last year, the Foreign Service Families Act.

It is to provide Foreign Service spouses and families serving overseas with the same opportunities that we rightly provide now to military spouses and families serving overseas.

I am just looking for your commitment that you will review this legislation and provide us with your feedback as soon as possible.

Mr. MCKEON. Senator, you definitely—you have that commitment. I have already looked at the bill and it looks, on its face, very straightforward. I am sure colleagues in the department will tell me we might need a tweak here or there to make it more workable for—from the perspective of the department. But we can work with you on that.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. One of the benefits of going last here is you also get to associate yourself with some of the prior comments, and I do want to associate myself with the comments of Senator Young and Senator Coons, and I know the chairman shares this, about better coordinating all the tools available in our both diplomatic arsenal and our development arsenal. USAID, the International Development Finance Corporation. You and I spoke about that and I look forward to working with you on that as well.

Ambassador Sherman, I teamed up with Senator Toomey to pass two pieces of legislation. One is the BRINK Act, to apply secondary sanctions against entities doing business with the North Korean regime, and the Hong Kong Accountability Act to apply sanctions to those Chinese officials who are tasked with implementing the crackdown on democracy and human rights in Hong Kong.

I would like your commitment to work with us to both fully and effectively apply the sanctions under both those pieces of legislation.

Ms. SHERMAN. It is an easy commitment to make, to make sure that whatever sanctions we have we use them effectively and efficiently.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So let me turn now to a little bit of the Middle East, and JCPOA has been well covered here. President Biden has made clear that he supports what had been for a long time a bipartisan objective of U.S. foreign policy, which is a secure State of Israel and a viable Palestinian state—a two-state solution.

The Biden administration has also indicated that it would oppose unilateral steps by either party that undermines the prospects of a two-state solution, and we need to hold everybody accountable there.

You would agree with, would you not, that expanding settlements in East Jerusalem of the West Bank are unilateral measures that do not serve the interests of protecting the prospects of a two-state solution, would you not?

Ms. SHERMAN. It has been a long-standing position that settlements, in my understanding, do not help to achieve a two-state solution when they go beyond the current outlines of the two states—the potential for two state.



Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate it. Well, one of them under consideration is an area called E-1, which the Bush administration made clear, Secretary Condoleezza Rice made clear would be a very clear violation of our efforts to preserve the opportunity for a two-state solution. So I hope you will look into that right away.

While ISIS no longer controls any substantial territory, you would agree that it remains a very potent threat to the United States and our allies, would you not?

Ms. SHERMAN. I do agree it remains a threat.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And you would also agree, I believe, that our Syrian Kurdish allies have been absolutely essential partners in our fight against ISIS and have been a major part of why we have been able to diminish ISIS' influence in the region, would you not?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So can you commit to working with us to work with Turkey to stop trying to, essentially, kill and destroy our Syrian Kurdish allies who have been such key partners in that fight against ISIS?

Ms. SHERMAN. You know, Senator, I certainly understand why—Turkey's concerns. But, nonetheless, I agree with you that the Kurds have been immensely helpful partners to us and that we need to work with Turkey to find a way forward for them to understand that that partnership does not threaten them if we all manage it in a sane kind of way.

Our relationship with Turkey is very complicated and one in which I think, if confirmed, I would certainly pay some considerable attention to.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that, and the chairman and the ranking member and I have been very involved in the legislation to impose the CAATSA sanctions on Turkey for their purchase and deployment of the S-400. Turkey is talking about another round of purchasing S-400 from Russia. So I hope you will work with us and with Turkey to discourage them from moving forward there.

On the JCPOA, I just want to underscore the fundamental principle behind it, which is it is our policy to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, right?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And it is also our view, your view, my view, that resolving that through diplomatic means is better than going to war with Iran, right?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And the United States has lots of troops in Iraq right now, do we not?

Ms. SHERMAN. We do indeed.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And I actually agree with Senator Paul's analysis of the consequence of the—our actions with respect to Iraq, which is the biggest geopolitical winner was Iran, which, of course, neighbors Iraq.

If we were to go to war with Iran, our troops in Iraq would be put in grave danger, would they not?

Ms. SHERMAN. It is my belief that they would be, yes, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I think it is pretty clear that they would be right in the line of fire. So I encourage you to continue your efforts with respect to JCPOA compliance-for-compliance and I hope that we can get to that position as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Booker?

Senator BOOKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.

I would like to jump in. Ms. Sherman, I am grateful to see you here and very excited to support your nomination on the floor of the Senate.

You and I talked a lot about the Horn of Africa and some of the challenges we see going on within Ethiopia that are really painful and discouraging. Amnesty International said over the weekend and CNN has reported that there have been massacres by Eritrean forces, which have killed hundreds of civilians in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

It is really a point that I think we are at the level of a major humanitarian crisis affecting millions of people, and that there is the possibility of a famine, and I know you are aware of it.

I really did appreciate Secretary Blinken's receptiveness to appointing a special envoy to the Horn of Africa in a statement last week, and I really do hope that we move forward in that direction.

But the Government of Ethiopia continues to deny that there is even ongoing fighting there, and this puts us in a difficult situation. They are even putting out a lot of misinformation that makes it hard to understand what is happening.

And so understanding that the U.S.-Ethiopia relationship is important, as we know, could you just maybe give some more, publicly in this hearing, some more thoughts on how you would engage Prime Minister Abiy to cease hostilities and ensure that humanitarian access is in the region and how we create better governmental accountability?

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you very much, Senator, and thank you for your concern about the Horn of Africa and about what is happening in Ethiopia, which is quite horrifying.

Secretary Blinken, in my understanding, spoke to the prime minister yesterday and made it very clear that we expect him to ensure humanitarian access.

He had said that he would, but the Secretary wanted to make sure that he understood that there would be consequences if he did not, that he has responsibility for ensuring peace in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, that Eritrean troops should leave and others who are not helpful actors should not be in the region.

I think we will have to follow this up, working with our diplomatic presence in Ethiopia, to ensure that that humanitarian access continues, that this conflict ends, and the Ethiopian prime minister understands that the United States is not only watching but we will take action.

And I am very grateful as a citizen, as a person who cares about the rights of people around the world, that Secretary Blinken was so forthright yesterday with the prime minister.

Senator BOOKER. I am really grateful. Can we shift to Libya and Somalia as well, another really difficult area of conflict?

*[Senator Booker requested and was granted permission to submit the material referenced above for inclusion in the hearing record. That information is located at the end of this transcript beginning on page 144.]*

And we can see that this was an internationalized conflict with more countries being involved. Libya, UAE, Russia, Turkey, have all fueled this conflict that I believe is another strike point on the continent.

In Somalia, you see these other groups that are pursuing, really, their own interests that are really to the detriment of Somalia's Government and federalized system.

And so could you maybe give some insights on what you will do to address the issues of foreign interference in a situation that is really fragile and could destabilize even more, and how you will help the regional bureaus of the State Department cross between their silos?

That is the challenge you have in the Near East and Africa bureaus that I am a little concerned about, that structurally we are not really organizationally prepared for the conflict that we are seeing there.

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you, Senator. On Libya, I actually have a small sliver of hope, given the pending elections and the peace process that has begun in Libya. It is very fragile, as you say, led by the Europeans.

And yes, I agree with you there. Lots of it became a proxy place for conflict, and that those who represent those proxies should be out of Libya and let the Libyan people decide their own future.

I was in Libya right at the point where Hadi was about to run as the only presidential candidate. It was fragile then. It remains fragile now, and—I am sorry, Hadi is Yemen. Long in the process here. I apologize.

But I was in Libya at the point of the conflict and before we had to shut down our embassy in Libya. So I hope that there is a more—a chance for peace in Libya, led by Europe with our support.

In terms of Somalia, which I also visited when I was Under Secretary for Political Affairs, and I thought we were on the road to a better future for the Somali people. It has, clearly, gone backwards in just terrible ways.

And so I think we have to engage across bureaus, as you suggest, to make sure that we bring all of our resources to bear. I know that our ambassador to the U.N. will also play a role both in the Libyan and the Somalia circumstances.

And I do not know whether my colleague has something he wants to add on sort of how we are organized to become a better matrix organization and less siloed.

Senator BOOKER. I appreciate you opening the door to Mr. McKeon and maybe I will turn to him. I had this incredible couple paragraphs written here, knowing you are a Notre Dame graduate, to remind you of my exploits as a football player against your school and defeating them soundly. But I am going to—

Mr. MCKEON. After we talked the other day, I watched the video of you making that catch and avoiding tackle from the all-star NFL star.

Senator BOOKER. I appreciate you saying that because my chairman, I am not sure if he even knows that I played.

Mr. MCKEON. I texted some friends, and they were just wondering how you got away from Lou Holtz.

[Laughter.]

Mr. MCKEON. So they would like to hear the story.

The CHAIRMAN. The chairman recognizes that the junior senator from New Jersey excels in everything.[Laughter.]

Senator BOOKER. Thank you very much. I am actually going to just ask you—I just want to maybe say it on the record. You were so gracious. But I have a lot of concerns about diversity, paid internships.

I am going to introduce a bill today about paid internships in the State Department because that is just an issue to me that has always troubled me, as I have traveled around the world, seeing our State Department, these amazing heroic frontline folks, but they do not really reflect the diversity of our country.

And I just would love to just maybe get in the five, 10 seconds I have left maybe some thoughts from you on that effort.

Mr. MCKEON. Yes, thank you.

As I said to you the other day, the department has scraped together a few million dollars to start paying interns. It is not for the entire program. And it appears that I need to dig into it some more.

We might need some legislative authority to facilitate this in addition to the resources. So we will come back to you and look forward to working with you on this legislation.

Senator BOOKER. I look forward to supporting you as well on the Senate floor, and thank you both for your extraordinary service to our nation.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Booker.

So the Chair will reclaim his time, and we appreciate that you have been through two and a half hours without relief. So we will try not to make this too prolonged.

But, Ambassador, is it fair to say that the Trump administration's maximum effort campaigns did cause economic consequences to Iran?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes, I would say that it did.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. But it is also fair to say that Iran is now closer to crossing the nuclear threshold than it was before and during the Maximum Pressure campaign?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes, it is.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it also fair to say that we could not get one vote for many of our major allies at the United Nations to extend the arms embargo that ceased?

Ms. SHERMAN. That is my understanding, Senator. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it also fair to say that the Maximum Pressure campaign has done nothing, ultimately, to get Iran to stop its nefarious activities throughout the region?

Ms. SHERMAN. That is my assessment as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Or, for that fact, to diminish its support for terrorism in the world?

Ms. SHERMAN. It appears so, yes, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. So I say these only because I recognize that the Maximum Pressure campaign cost Iran financially, but it did not meet the goals that I think we, collectively, want. So let me ask you this.

There is no question—well, let me ask you, do you believe that a nuclear-armed Iran is an existential threat to the State of Israel?

Ms. SHERMAN. I do.

The CHAIRMAN. And I share that view, and I also believe that it is a threat to the United States of America, not just about Israel or our allies in the region. So, therefore, I believe that it is President Biden's view that Iran cannot be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon.

Ms. SHERMAN. That is correct.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, in that regard, how we achieve that goal is really the question, and so I appreciate the phrase "stronger and longer." Longer, I get what it means. Stronger, I am hoping for definition.

Because the reality is if all—from my perspective, and I have heard my colleagues on both sides here—from my perspective, if all we do is return to the JCPOA, that certainly is not stronger.

And if we extend it, it might be longer, but it is not stronger because there are still sunset issues that are now more prevalent today than they were in 2016 when the agreement went into effect.

And so it also will not have dealt with the ballistic missiles. It will not have dealt with the destabilization of the region. It will not have dealt with its support for terrorism or the violation of its own people's human rights.

And so, you know, the question in my mind is not so much JCPOA. The question is, what is the JCPOA Plus or what do we do, but how do we, in fact, ensure that we have more than illusory promise in terms of what comes, the follow-on, and the connection between any return to some form of the JCPOA with some clearly determined process to deal with these other issues.

Otherwise, my own view will be that we will have failed. And so this—I drive this because while I also, in fairness, for the record, you are not going to be the lead on the Iran portfolio. That has already been designated to others.

But upon confirmation as a deputy you are going to be in all the deputy meetings, and you also have expertise and experience in this regard and you will be called upon to express both the Secretary and the administration's view but also on your expertise.

So could you give me a sense of what that would be in broad strokes, understanding—and I appreciate your comments in response to other questions about looking at the intelligence when you have access to it again because I think a deep dive into the intelligence will be very important to understand what Iran has and has not complied with in its actions and its intentions.

Ms. SHERMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

I do not know all of the answers at this point because not only have I not made a deep dive into the intelligence because I am not in the administration, I do not know what deliberations have gone on so far in the administration as they try to think through the strategy that is best here.

You know, I have seen what others see from press reports about our offer to open diplomacy, which I think should be the first resort always. I have seen the strike in Syria in retaliation for the threat against Americans.

I have seen the response, perhaps, or just a separate action against Al Asad Airbase. I, you know, read in some of the Iranian press what is going on politically in their country. But I do not know all the pieces of the puzzle anymore. You have to be really inside to get the fingertips for what is going on.

But I do agree with you, Senator, that there has to be very careful deliberations which will include, and I hope already have begun to include, you and the members of this committee and other senators who have interest in this arena to get your advice and counsel, as I have said in this hearing, at the takeoff, not just at the landing, to have true consultation, not just notification, how we sequence sanctions, how we sequence any lifting of sanctions, what we expect from the Iranians, what those who are in the negotiation and in the JCPOA yet believe we need to do going forward.

So there are a myriad of puzzle pieces here and, if confirmed, I would look forward to extensive discussion with you and with others who have interest in this to sort through how the administration goes forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me ask you this. If we were still in the agreement and Iran had done what it has done today, would that not be subject to snap back?

Ms. SHERMAN. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. And I would consider that it would be a set of actions that would require snap back, from my own perspective.

Let me ask you this. Sanctions relief for whatever deal may come forward, clearly, we have to be very careful. There are sanctions which I helped fashion that are not about the nuclear portfolio and issue, but about terrorism and other things.

Iran likes to try to claim that all sanctions that we levy are just about their nuclear portfolio. We cannot tolerate that or else we will have nothing in our arsenal of peaceful diplomacy to deal with Iran's other nefarious activities.

Is that a fair statement?

Ms. SHERMAN. It is a fair statement that we have to keep sanctions on that deal with human rights abuses, state sponsorship of terrorism, arms sales, et cetera, what we have done in terms of Hezbollah and Hamas.

So, yes, I think there are many things that need to stay in place.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me turn to another subject for a moment. First of all, my dear friend and colleague, Senator Rubio, on Venezuela, you know, I agree with him and our cause in Venezuela.

I think what you meant in response to his question, and correct me if I am wrong, that one of the things you thought should have been done is to take the international recognition of Guaido and, ultimately, maximize that recognition beyond simple recognition, but an effort to multilateralize sanctions against the Maduro regime. Or am I wrong?

Ms. SHERMAN. No, very well said. Wish I had said it as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. So, but—and let me refer to Senator Murphy, who said that the European Union no longer recognizes Guaido.

The European Union never recognized Guaido. Individual member states of the European Union recognized Guaido and some of them have a concern because the basis of that recognition was under the Venezuelan Constitution.

The President of the National Assembly, in the absence of the President or a legitimate president, ultimately is recognized as the interim president of Venezuela.

He is, according to the view of some, no longer the President of the National Assembly because we had an internationally-condemned false elections in Venezuela that elected a new National Assembly.

But it is not because he lost his title. It is because they had an election that has been internationally condemned. Is that a fair statement?

Ms. SHERMAN. I believe so, yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And so how we internationalize this is incredibly important.

Let me turn to Cuba for a moment, which is, along with Iran, one of my passions. You know, do you know that a Cuban worker in Cuba cannot be employed directly by a foreign entity?

Ms. SHERMAN. I did not.

The CHAIRMAN. Hotels in Cuba, or a U.S. company that gets created in Cuba, cannot directly hire a Cuban worker. They go to the state employment agency controlled by the regime. The regime sends the worker, for example, to the hotel. The regime gets paid in dollars by the foreign company and then gives the worker a fraction of their wages in return.

Do you know that Cuban doctors that are sent abroad, ultimately, have their passports taken from them so that they cannot leave the country they are sent to, and that payment for their service by that country is sent to the regime and not paid to a Cuban doctor?

Ms. SHERMAN. I had been aware about the passport issue and I better understand now from you how the payment system works.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you understand that when we talk about we want to help the Cuban people, of which I am all in favor, but when we send a remittance to Cuba as a U.S. citizen for one of our family members that the regime takes 10 percent of it right off the bat, and you do realize that?

Ms. SHERMAN. I had heard of that.

The CHAIRMAN. And then after that, they turn the balance of the remittance not in dollars, which have a far more vibrant buying ability within the island, but they turn it into worthless pesos.

So when we send money, we allow money to be sent under these circumstances, what we are doing is empowering the regime.

Do you realize that a U.S. company that wants to open up in Cuba has to go through one of Castro's two relatives in order to be able to open up and the state becomes a co-owner with them?

Ms. SHERMAN. I had not realized that, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. That is exactly what happens, in tourism and whatnot. You have Castro's son and son-in-law. Both heads of the

Cuban military are parts of the Cuban military and they direct the two corporate entities that do all these.

So I share these with you because I find it interesting, you know, lying on the beach in Veradero and sipping a Cuba Libre, which is an oxymoron, is not going to liberate the Cuban people.

Have you heard of the San Isidro movement?

Ms. SHERMAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. The San Isidro movement is a bunch of artists and writers who just want freedom of their expression. The Government cracked down on all of those, and so they started a movement in what is a black majority part of Havana to, ultimately, denounce their artistic and freedom of expression movement.

The Government has viciously attacked them and arrested them. These are the realities of Castro's Cuba, not the romanticism that some people seem to have, and I personally have a problem—I like to be consistent. In this town, consistency is not a great virtue. But I like—I try to be consistent.

My advocacy for human rights and democracy globally is not subject to where it lies. So whether it be in Burma, whether it be in Venezuela, whether it be on the Uyghurs and human rights in China, whether it be about the Rohingya, my view is pretty universal.

And the problem I have with some is that when it comes to certain places in the world they are enormous advocates of democracy and human rights; but when it comes to other places in the world, they are willing to look totally the other way and act in a different way than we would seek to act in other places. And I think that is problematic.

I understand the world. There is not a single way we can—do not get to treat everybody in a cookie cutter fashion.

By the same token, when we send different messages—that here is where we will promote human rights and democracy, here is where we will not, here is where we will sanction the consequences of violations of human rights and here is where we will not—then it becomes a really problematic area to stand up for what I believe President Biden is about, which is about standing up for democracy and human rights—based upon the time I served with him on this committee.

So I hope we are thinking about that, whether it is about Cuba or any other place. I want to help the Cuban people, ultimately, live a better life. I would like them to be free. I would like them to choose who governs them. I would like them to be able to worship at the altar that they choose.

But that is not, for the most part, the reality of life in Cuba. So we need to understand the realities, not the romanticism, and when we seek to help; what we cannot do is, ultimately, help a regime that oppresses them.

Finally, I hope you will pay some attention to, upon your confirmation, to the eastern Mediterranean region. I passed into law with Senator Rubio the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act of 2019. It is incredibly important that we look at Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and others in an eastern Mediterranean strategy that is both about energy, but at the—and that can



diversify and, therefore, not have the pipeline issue as important as issue as it is, but at the same time deals with security.

Several of these countries host us in very significant ways, are our security partners. With Turkey being under Erdogan, the—not the reliable NATO ally that we have aspired it to be, not to be the bridge between East and West, not to be—you know, there are more lawyers and journalists jailed in Turkey than in any other place in the world. That is an extraordinary statement about a NATO ally.

And so what we do as it relates to Turkey but also in our own interest. Even if Turkey was a perfect partner, which it is not, the East Med is an incredibly important area and I want to commend that to your attention as you look forward to take duty.

And then, very finally, I hope the President will keep his commitment to recognize the Armenian genocide. The United States Senate by unanimous consent passed it last year. I was proud to sponsor that. The House of Representatives has passed it.

It is time for the President of the United States to do what the rest of the Congress of the United States has represented to the American people, which is to recognize the genocide. Let us call history for what it is.

And in that regard, I also hope that we will look to help the people of Armenia and help to facilitate the release of POWs that the Azerbaijanis have. It is in violation of international law what they are doing.

We need to speak out, which the previous administration did not, and we need to work to try to get that region to look forward to what the Minsk process was. There is some suggestion that this is all over. No, it is not, and we need to get—released the POWs and we have to help Armenia as it gets all of these people, refugees, back into their country.

With that, before I close, I am introducing into the record a letter written by 19 of Brian McKeon's former Republican colleagues during his time on this committee expressing enthusiastic support for his nomination and complete confidence in his character and abilities.

I am quoting from the letter. They note their deep respect for Brian as a leader who exhibits unfailing integrity, fairness, professionalism, devotion to our national interest.

[The information referred to is located at the end of this transcript.]

The CHAIRMAN. Due to COVID precautions, my staff will email the letter directly to the clerk.

With that, and thanks to the committee for your attendance, the record will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, March the 4th.

I urge both of you, if there are questions for the record, to respond to them in—as quickly as possible so that your nominations can be considered at a business meeting of the committee.

And with the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:02 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

## **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

---

### **Letter in Support of Hon. Wendy R. Sherman's Nomination, Signed by Former Ambassadors and National Security Of- ficials**

Page 1 of 5

March 1, 2021

U.S. Senator Robert Menendez  
528 Hart Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

U.S. Senator James E. Risch  
483 Russell Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch,

We, the undersigned, write to express our strong and enthusiastic support for the nomination of Ambassador Wendy Sherman to be Deputy Secretary of State.

It would be hard to think of a more qualified candidate for the second-ranking position in the State Department than Ambassador Sherman. She brings to the position long experience in foreign affairs and at the State Department particularly. Under President Clinton, she served as Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs (1993-1996) and then as Counselor of the State Department (1997-2001). She was also the Clinton administration's policy coordinator for North Korea and head of North Korea negotiation policy. During the presidency of Barack Obama, Ambassador Sherman returned to the State Department's third-ranking position as Under Secretary for Political Affairs. She has served with distinction in all these positions. Dealing with North Korea and Iran is not for the faint-hearted but Ambassador Sherman proved herself many times over to be a shrewd, persistent and tough negotiator. In the State Department, she is remembered as someone who worked closely with its career employees, made good use of their talents and mentored many. She earned their loyalty and respect. Ambassador Sherman's long and distinguished career of public service make her, in our view, exceptionally well qualified to serve as Deputy Secretary of the State Department.

Page 2 of 5

In addition to her time at the State Department, Ambassador Sherman has occupied prestigious positions in the non-governmental sector, including director of the Fannie Mae Foundation and director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Last but not least, we welcome Ambassador Sherman's appointment as proof of the Biden Administration's strong commitment to diversity at the top levels of the U.S. government.

We urge the Committee to give favorable consideration to her nomination at the earliest possible time.

All of us signing this letter are former diplomats or national security officials. We are also members of the American Academy of Diplomacy but we write in an individual capacity and not in the name of the Academy, which as a matter of policy does not formally endorse candidates for State Department or diplomatic positions.

With best regards,

Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley (former Ambassador)  
Bernard Aronson (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
Brian Atwood (former Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development (AID)  
and Under Secretary of State for Management)  
Liliana Ayalde (former Ambassador)  
Joyce Barr (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Adrian Basora (former Ambassador)  
Robert Beecroft (former Ambassador)  
Robert Blake (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Peter Bodde (former Ambassador)  
Barbara Bodine (former Ambassador)  
Avis Bohlen (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Michele Bond (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Eric Boswell (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)

Page 3 of 5

Richard Boucher (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Thomas Boyatt (former Ambassador and President of the American Foreign Service Association)  
Aurelia Brazeal (former Ambassador)  
Ken Brill (former Ambassador)  
Kenneth Brown (former Ambassador)  
Peter Burleigh (former Ambassador)  
Johnnie Carson (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Robert Cekuta (former Ambassador)  
Wendy Chamberlin (former Ambassador)  
James Collins (former Ambassador)  
Thomas Countryman (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
William Courtney (former Ambassador)  
Ryan Crocker (former Ambassador)  
Glyn Davies (former Ambassador)  
Ruth Davis (former Ambassador, and Foreign Service Director General)  
Jeffrey DeLaurentis (former Ambassador)  
Elizabeth Dibble (former Senior Foreign Service Officer)  
James Dobbins (former Ambassador)  
Paula Dobriansky (former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs)  
Charles Dunbar (former Ambassador)  
Alan Eastham (former Ambassador)  
Robert Einhorn (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
Harriet Elam-Thomas (former Ambassador)  
Susan Elliott (former Ambassador)  
Jeffrey Feltman (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Harold Geisel (former Ambassador, and acting Inspector General)  
Robert Gelbard (former Ambassador)  
Edward Gnehm (former Ambassador and Foreign Service Director General)  
Rose Gottemoeller (former Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security and NATO Deputy Secretary General)  
Lino Gutierrez (former Ambassador)  
Thomas Hubbard (former Ambassador)  
Robert Jackson (former Ambassador)  
Janice Jacobs (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Susan Jacobs (former Ambassador)  
Tracey Jacobson (former Ambassador)  
James Jeffrey (former Ambassador)  
Howard Jeter (former Ambassador)  
Deborah Jones (former Ambassador)

Page 4 of 5

James Jones (former Ambassador)  
Theodore Kattouf (former Ambassador)  
James Keith (former Ambassador)  
Kenton Keith (former Ambassador)  
Laura Kennedy (former Ambassador)  
Patrick Kennedy (former Assistant Secretary of State and Under Secretary of State for Management)  
Kristie Kenney (former Ambassador)  
Michael Klosson (former Ambassador)  
John Kornblum (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Daniel Kurtzer (former Ambassador)  
Dawn Liberi (former Ambassador)  
Frank Loy (former Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs)  
William Luers (former Ambassador)  
Deborah Malac (former Ambassador)  
Deborah McCarthy (former Ambassador)  
Donald McHenry (former Ambassador)  
Thomas E. McNamara (former Ambassador)  
William Milam (former Ambassador)  
Richard Miles (former Ambassador)  
Cameron Munter (former Ambassador)  
Larry Napper (former Ambassador)  
Ronald Neumann (former Ambassador)  
Thomas Nides (former Deputy Secretary of State)  
Joseph Nye (former deputy Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology)  
Phyllis Oakley (former Assistant Secretary)  
Anne Patterson (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Douglas Peterson (former Ambassador)  
Thomas Pickering (former Ambassador and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs)  
Steven Pifer (former Ambassador)  
Michael Polt (former Ambassador)  
Nancy Powell (former Ambassador and Foreign Service Director General)  
Charles Ray (former Ambassador)  
Charles Ries (former Ambassador)  
Marcie Ries (former Ambassador)  
Peter Romero (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
William Rugh (former Ambassador)  
Janet Sanderson (former Ambassador)

Page 5 of 5

Eric Schwartz (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
Teresita Shaffer (former Ambassador)  
Thomas Shannon (former Ambassador, Assistant Secretary and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs)  
Doug Silliman (former Ambassador)  
Joan Spero (former Under Secretary of State for Economics, Business and Agriculture)  
Pamela L. Spratlen (former Ambassador)  
Sylvia G. Stanfield (former Ambassador)  
Gregory Starr (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
William Swing (former Ambassador and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for the Congo)  
Francis X. Taylor (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
Arturo Valenzuela (former Assistant Secretary of State)  
Michael Van Dusen (former Vice-President of the Woodrow Wilson International Center and Democratic Chief of Staff for the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives)  
Alexander Vershbow (former Ambassador and NATO Deputy Secretary General)  
Jenonne Walker (former Ambassador)  
Alexander Watson (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Earl Anthony Wayne (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Bruce Wharton (former Ambassador)  
Phillip Wilcox (former Ambassador)  
Frank Wisner (former Ambassador and Under Secretary of State for International Security)  
William Wood (former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State)  
Marie Yovanovitch (former Ambassador)

---

CC: Senator John A. Barrasso, Senator Cory A. Booker, Senator Benjamin Cardin, Senator Christopher Coons, Senator Ted Cruz, Senator Bill Hagerty, Senator Ron Johnson, Senator Tim Kaine, Senator Edward J. Markey, Senator Jeff Merkley, Senator Christopher S. Murphy, Senator Rand Paul, Senator Rob Portman, Senator Mitt Romney, Senator Mike Rounds, Senator Marco Rubio, Senator Brian Schatz, Senator Jeanne Shaheen, Senator Chris Van Hollen, Senator Todd Young.

**Letter in Support of Hon. Brian McKeon's Nomination,  
Signed by 19 Republican Former SFRC Staff Members**

January 29, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez, Incoming Chairman  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are all former Republican staff members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) who served under Senator Richard G. Lugar after 2003 when he was Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee. Each of us had the opportunity to work with Brian McKeon during this period when he was Democratic chief counsel on the SFRC. We write on our own initiative to express our enthusiastic support for Brian's confirmation as Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources at the U.S. Department of State. We are motivated by our deep respect for Brian as a leader who exhibits unflinching integrity, fairness, professionalism, and devotion to our national interests.

As you know, the relationship between Democratic and Republican staff members on a committee can be adversarial at times. Brian was a faithful and vigorous defender of the policies and views of Senator Biden and Democratic members of the committee. But he also was a partner who consistently worked with us to find bipartisan solutions to matters before the committee. We trusted Brian's word and frequently counted on his expansive knowledge of global affairs and the mechanisms of U.S. national security decision-making. Our own work and the accomplishments of the committee were enhanced greatly by Brian's leadership.

We are proud to have served with Brian and have complete confidence in his character and abilities. We highly recommend Brian to the Foreign Relations Committee, and have full confidence that he will be a tremendous asset to the State Department and our nation's security in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Daniel Diller, Republican Deputy Staff Director, 2003-2013

Kristen Armitage, Republican Administrative Director, 2003-2007

Jay Branegan, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, 2003-2013

Shellie Bressler, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, Global Health Affairs, 2007-2013

Neil Brown, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, 2005-2013

Paul Clayman, Republican Chief Counsel, 2003-2007

Brooke Daley, Republican Legislative Assistant, 2005-2008.

Ellona Fritschie, Republican Professional Staff Member, 2003-2006

Patrick Garvey, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, Middle Eastern Affairs, 2003-2012

Chris Ann Keehner, Republican Deputy Chief Counsel, Global Health Affairs, 2003-2007

Mary Locke, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, State Department and Foreign Assistance Affairs, 2003-2008

Keith Luse, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2003-2013

Kate Maloney, Republican Administrative Director, 2003-2005

Alison McCormick, Republican Legislative Assistant, 2006-2008

Carl Meacham, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, Western Hemisphere Affairs, 2003-2013

Ken Myers III, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, European and National Security Affairs, 2003-2009

Michael Phelan, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, African and Afghanistan/Pakistan Affairs, 2003-2019

Nilmini Rubin, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, International Economic Affairs, 2003-2011

Kim Kavrell Savit, Republican Senior Professional Staff Member, Middle Eastern and Central and South Asian Affairs, 2003-2006



## Responses to Additional Questions Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* The FY21 NDAA includes a requirement for the Secretary of State to develop and implement a strategy for countering white identity terrorism globally. The attack on Congress earlier this month underscores the importance of this issue. Do I have your commitment that you will submit this strategy on time if confirmed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to developing a Department of State strategy for countering white identity terrorism globally, in line with the NDAA requirement. Countering white identity terrorism and other Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism (REMVE) is a top priority for the Biden-Harris Administration. The State Department has an important role to play on these issues, as we are seeing increasing transnational links between white identity terrorists and other REMVE actors. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with the interagency and our partners around the world to address the threat of white identity terrorism and other REMVE, as well as all forms of terrorism and violent extremism—offline and online.

*Question.* How specifically will you ensure that the State Department prioritizes this issue?

*Answer.* “white identity” terrorism, including terrorism designations as appropriate, and foreign partner engagement. The United States developed effective tools to counter the spread of ISIS and al-Qa’ida that can be adapted to address this threat. Among these tools, public diplomacy programs that promote people-to-people engagement help increase awareness and build international consensus to counter white identity terrorism.

*Question.* I am a strong supporter of the U.S.-India relationship, which will be critical in addressing 21st century challenges ranging from climate change to China. In light of this, I introduced the Prioritizing Clean Energy and Climate Cooperation with India Act to boost U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy. If confirmed, what aspects of the Trump Administration’s work on energy in India will you continue and what will you change?

*Answer.* In view of Prime Minister Modi’s announced target of installing 450 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, if confirmed, I would support the work advancing cost-effective strategies to enhance the flexibility and robustness of India’s electricity grid to encourage India’s clean energy transition over the next decade. In contrast to the previous administration’s approach, in order to support India raising its climate ambition, if confirmed, I would prioritize lower cost alternatives to carbon-intensive energy such as coal-fired power, including by promoting renewable energy, battery storage, and load shifting.

*Question.* I also believe that the U.S.-India partnership is strongest when based on shared democratic values, and I am concerned by the recent trend away from those values in India. From the recent crackdowns on farmers peacefully protesting the new farming laws and corresponding intimidation of journalists and government critics, to the rising anti-Muslim sentiment and related government actions like the Citizenship Amendment Act, to the continued repression in Kashmir nearly a year and a half after the abrogation of Article 370, there are a significant number of human rights and democracy issues facing India. Do I have your commitment that you will actively raise human rights and democracy issues with the Indian Government, at your level and all levels of the Department?

*Answer.* I share your belief that the U.S.-India relationship is underpinned by a common commitment to democracy and democratic institutions. The Biden-Harris administration will ensure human rights and religious freedom remain core pillars of U.S. foreign policy, and if confirmed, my engagement with the Indian Government will reflect our values and commitment to human rights.

*Question.* What is your plan for ensuring that discussion of these important issues does not get lost amidst other priorities in the bilateral relationship?

*Answer.* The U.S.-India strategic partnership is one of our most critical relationships in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will work with counterparts in the U.S. and Indian Government to deepen our comprehensive partnership based on mutual interests including regional security and economic growth, promoting shared values of democracy and human rights, and cooperation on shared challenges including cli-

mate change, COVID-19 response efforts, and trafficking in persons. By prioritizing our shared interests and values, we can advance broader U.S. national security interests for regional peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* A democratic, stable and resilient Ukraine is in the national security interest of the United States, and efforts towards that end receive broad bipartisan support in the Senate. If confirmed, how will your policy approach to Ukraine differ from the approach taken during the Obama and Trump Administrations?

*Answer.* I am committed to revitalizing our bilateral relationship with Ukraine. If confirmed, I will continue to oppose Russia's occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea and support diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Sanctions on Russia will remain in place until Russia ends its occupation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine. Further, if confirmed I will work with Congress to continue providing the security assistance, including lethal defensive weapons, Ukraine requires to defend itself against Russia's aggression. I will support Ukraine's chosen Euro-Atlantic path, including by pushing for progress on rule of law and economic reforms that strengthen Ukraine's institutions and lead to a brighter future for all Ukrainians.

*Question.* Do you support the provision of lethal security assistance for Ukraine, beyond providing Javelin missiles?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to continue providing the assistance Ukraine requires to defend itself against Russia's aggression, including lethal weapons, based on a U.S. and Ukrainian assessment of Ukraine's defense requirements. This includes the provision of defensive lethal assistance that has already expanded beyond Javelin missiles, such as armed Mark VI patrol boats this year, for instance.

*Question.* How will you work to urge Ukrainian officials and its private sector to deny Chinese efforts to take over significant military production capabilities in the country?

*Answer.* The United States is prepared to work with our Ukrainian partners to advance our shared interests and protect Ukraine's sensitive industries. I was pleased to see Ukraine's decisive action to sanction Chinese firm Skyrizon, which has attempted to take control of Motor Sich, on January 29. This action protects U.S. and Ukrainian national security. The administration has urged and will continue to urge Ukraine to remain vigilant about People's Republic of China (PRC) influence in its strategic industries and to pass legislation creating a mechanism for reviewing investment. If confirmed, I would work closely with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation to support U.S. investors as alternatives to predatory PRC investors.

*Question.* Do you believe that our Indo-Pacific strategy ought to be a function of our China policy, as was the case with the Trump administration, or that our China policy ought to be a function of our Indo-Pacific strategy? Put another way, can we get China "right" if we don't get the region right, first?

*Answer.* Our global policy to compete with China and the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific are complementary strategies. Our relationship with China will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. The common denominator is the need to engage China from a position of strength. To do that, the United States needs to support a free and open Indo-Pacific, where our engagement builds broad cooperation with allies and partners in pursuit of common interests, including advancing COVID-19 recovery and returning to sustained economic prosperity, dealing with the climate crisis, upholding international law and multilateral institutions, and reinforcing democracy, human rights, and good governance. As the President has said, how the United States and Asia work together to secure the peace, defend our shared values, and advance our prosperity across the Indo-Pacific, including how we address the China challenge, will be among the most consequential efforts we undertake.

*Question.* With regards to China and the broader Indo-Pacific region, aside from words of condemnation and economic sanctions: What other tools does the Biden Administration have to counterbalance China's growing influence around the world, including in contentious regions such as the South China Sea, Hong Kong, and Tibet?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will promote Department efforts to re-engage with allies, partners, and international organizations to create a level playing field for U.S. businesses across the globe, support those who fight for democracy and human rights in China and across the Indo-Pacific, maintain our technological edge, protect U.S. intellectual property from theft, promote freedom of navigation and overflight

and other lawful uses of the sea, and continue to work with Congress to spotlight and combat malign PRC actions and human rights violations, including in Hong Kong, Tibet, and Xinjiang.

*Question.* There is little question that the Trump administration's failed North Korea policy has left us worse off than we were before. North Korea's nuclear and missile programs are unconstrained, our alliance with the Republic of Korea has been put under great stress, and the sanctions regime is in tatters. President Trump's diplomatic failure with North Korea is the latest in a long-line of failed efforts to achieve a denuclearized North Korea. How will the Biden administration approach North Korea?

*Answer.* North Korea's weapons of mass destruction program and proliferation activities constitute a serious threat to international peace and security and undermine global nonproliferation efforts. If confirmed, I plan to join the Biden-Harris Administration's ongoing policy review, in consultation with our allies, of the state of play on North Korea. I support the U.S. commitment over the long term to the complete denuclearization of North Korea, while also focusing in the near term on limiting the threat to the United States and our allies.

*Question.* What is the pathway to denuclearization and a stable, peaceful and prosperous Korean Peninsula?

*Answer.* Denuclearization of North Korea must remain a top national security priority for the United States. I support the Administration's plan to evaluate and adopt, in consultation with our allies, a strategy to keep the American people and our allies safe and that takes into account pressure options and the potential for future diplomacy with North Korea. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on efforts to limit the dangers posed by North Korea's WMD and ballistic missile programs.

*Question.* What does success with North Korea look like?

*Answer.* Foremost, success entails achieving the complete denuclearization of North Korea and a durable peace on the Korean Peninsula, which would promote stability for our allies, the region, and the world. Further, success would entail an end to malign North Korea-linked actions globally, including cyber-enabled malicious activities and arms trafficking, and involve greater respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in North Korea. If confirmed, I plan to join the Biden-Harris Administration's ongoing policy review, in consultation with our allies, of the current state of play on North Korea.

*Question.* The war in Yemen is about to enter its 6th year and, in spite of the efforts of UN special envoy Martin Griffiths, little progress has been made toward ending a conflict that has killed more than 17,000 civilians and created the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Iran continues to ship weapons, including ballistic missiles, which have allowed the Houthis to menace Saudi Arabia and continue their war against the internationally recognized Yemeni Government. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia continues to hit civilian targets in Yemen with U.S.-made warplanes and munitions. I am pleased to see that the Administration shares my concerns about the civilian casualties resulting from Saudi Arabia's use of U.S. munitions, and is reviewing arms sales to both Saudi Arabia and the UAE, while ending U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen. What evidence will the Administration need to see regarding the improved use of offensive U.S. weapons systems by those countries before it is comfortable with further sales?

*Answer.* As President Biden said, the Administration is committed to reinvigorating diplomatic efforts, alongside the UN and others, to achieve a ceasefire and end the war in Yemen. The Administration is recalibrating our relationship with Saudi Arabia to reflect U.S. values. The President announced the ending of U.S. support for offensive operations in Yemen, including relevant arms sales, and appointed Special Envoy Tim Lenderking to spearhead our diplomatic efforts and support to the UN. The Administration paused two arms sales with Saudi Arabia, and, if confirmed, I will support efforts to evaluate other potential sales to help ensure they are consistent with our values and that Congress will be consulted. The Administration will work with our partners to help them reduce the risk of civilian harm.

*Question.* I am under no illusions about the Houthi's malevolent role in the conflict, but Secretary Blinken's reversal of his predecessor's poorly thought-out FTO designation of the Houthis has prevented Yemen's humanitarian crises from exponentially worsening. At the same time, I am also deeply concerned by the previous administration's freeze on assistance to Northern Yemen. Will the Biden Administration lift this freeze? What steps will the Administration take, alongside the UN

and other international donors, to ensure that the Houthis are not able to divert or place unacceptable conditions on international assistance?

Answer. USAID was forced to partially suspend some assistance to NGOs in northern Yemen in March 2020 due to Houthi interference in partners' operations. This decision is currently under review. As with all humanitarian programs, the United States aims to ensure our partners can deliver assistance in a timely manner without undue interference. Without proper oversight of taxpayer money, we adjust or terminate funding to specific programs as necessary. Over the last year, the U.S. has worked closely with our partners, including the UN and other donors, to advocate with the Houthis to cease interference in aid operations, and there have been some positive changes. The Administration continues to press all parties to allow for the unhindered provision of aid.

*Question.* I am also concerned by the recent Houthi advance into Marib province, which threatens to displace hundreds of thousands of Yemenis, many for the second or third time. How will the Biden Administration build leverage to push all warring parties to agree to a nationwide ceasefire in Yemen and begin talks aimed at a sustainable political solution to the conflict?

Answer. The President committed to ending all support for the Saudi-led Coalition's offensive operations in Yemen, including relevant arms sales. There is no military solution to the conflict and the Department redoubled its diplomatic efforts to find a political end to the war and address the dire humanitarian crisis. The Secretary named a U.S. Special Envoy for Yemen in order to redouble U.S. efforts to find a peaceful resolution as soon as possible. If confirmed, I will support efforts towards a nationwide ceasefire that quickly moves to negotiations and increases international pressure against the Houthis to convince them to halt their assault on Marib.

*Question.* The Taliban's commitments on counterterrorism are an indispensable part of the February 29th agreement. Its compliance with those commitments, or lack thereof, must inform the decisions the U.S. makes regarding our future in Afghanistan and will certainly be the basis of future congressional support for assistance to Afghanistan. Do you commit to make the Taliban's compliance with the February 29th Agreement, especially with the counterterrorism provisions, the basis of any decisions the U.S. makes regarding our future in Afghanistan?

Answer. I agree it is important to ensure Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for terrorist groups that threaten the security of the United States and our Allies. To this end, I support the Administration's ongoing review of compliance by all parties with their commitments in the February 29 U.S.-Taliban Agreement and the February 29 U.S.-Afghanistan Joint Declaration. This review includes assessing whether the Taliban are fulfilling their commitments relating to counterterrorism, reducing violence, and engaging in meaningful negotiations with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

*Question.* Our relationship with Mexico is one of the most important in the world. However, I have serious concerns over the growing challenges to the rule of law in Mexico by armed criminal organizations—especially when certain groups increasingly appear to be equipped with military-grade arms and vehicles. While the Mexican Government rightfully raises concerns about international arms trafficking from the U.S. to Mexico, that only tells half the story. The arrest and botched release of former Mexican Defense Minister Cienfuegos last year, as well as other high profile cases, suggest that criminal organizations have coopted certain officials and institutions at various levels of the Mexican Government. And, despite these challenges, the Lopez Obrador Government has taken steps to complicate bilateral law enforcement cooperation. What is your assessment of challenges to the rule of law in Mexico and how will you work with Mexican authorities on these issues?

Answer. U.S.-Mexico security cooperation remains a top national security priority. It is critical that U.S. efforts to dismantle transnational criminal organizations, reduce impunity and corruption, and strengthen the rule of law in Mexico receive the full cooperation of the Mexican Government. If confirmed, I look forward to comprehensive conversations with the Mexican Government so that this cooperation deepens and works for the benefit of both nations. In the context of those conversations, I will not hesitate to raise any issues with the Mexican Government that I believe to be obstacles to our bilateral security cooperation.

*Question.* The U.S. has a long-running strategic interest in the stability of the East Africa region, given its proximity to the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Western Indian Ocean. The last administration never developed a holistic plan to consolidate democratic gains, prevent democratic backsliding and pursue our

geostrategic interests. I am working on legislation to develop such an approach, and I hope you will work closely with me on that effort. Ethiopia is one country that will be impacted by my efforts. The transition to democracy there is jeopardized by an ongoing conflict in Tigray, communal violence in other parts of the country and closing political space. Prominent political opposition figures are in jail, along with thousands of opposition supporters, journalists, and others. Under the current circumstances, do you believe Ethiopia can hold credible elections in June? What action should the USG consider in addressing the deep humanitarian, political, and security crisis that is now impacting Ethiopia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the State Department develops and implements a comprehensive strategy for the Red Sea region. One critical element of this is a strategy to address the ongoing issues in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, and the ongoing border dispute with Sudan. A peaceful, stable, democratic Ethiopia at peace with its neighbors is essential for the Horn of Africa and the wider region. The Ethiopian Government has promised national elections in June. Inclusive dialogue among all political actors is a prerequisite to identifying and adopting necessary reforms. All detainees need to be afforded due process. The violence in Tigray must end; humanitarian and human rights workers must receive unhindered access; and independent investigations into reported human rights abuses and violations must proceed.

*Question.* Sudan, another country along the Red Sea Corridor, is undergoing a fragile transition as well. What specific steps will you take to ensure a successful transition?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support Sudan's democratic transition and Civilian-led Transitional Government, as well as efforts to promote economic reform and development. Further, if confirmed, I intend to ensure consistent engagement with Sudan's civilian leaders to encourage progress in taking the difficult, but necessary, next steps, including governance and security sector reforms, expanded protection of civilians in Darfur, resolution of ongoing conflicts, and accountability for past atrocities.

*Question.* As I told Undersecretary Hale over a year ago, we are losing the Sahel. The 2020 Global Terrorism Index found that seven of the ten countries with the largest increase in terrorism were in sub-Saharan Africa; Burkina Faso topped the list. But this is not just a security crisis; we need a comprehensive strategy that addresses Diplomatic, Development, and Defense issues (3Ds). Will you make the crisis in the Sahel a top priority for the State Department, and ensure that the interagency pursues a "3Ds" strategy in the region?

*Answer.* I agree with your concern about rising violent extremism, governance challenges, and humanitarian concerns in the Sahel. The path to lasting stability lies in accountable governance, providing services and economic opportunities, protecting the rule of law, and engaging communities in decisions. The Biden-Harris Administration has committed to undertake an interagency review of our diplomatic, security, and other assistance programs. As part of the review, the Administration will work to understand threats in the region and evaluate our overall approach to address the drivers of insecurity. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense, USAID, and other agencies to ensure that the U.S. Government has and implements a unified strategy to support sustained security and stability in the Sahel.

*Question.* As Deputy Secretary, how will you ensure close coordination between regional bureaus to develop strategies and integrated approaches to geographic regions such as the Sahel and the Red Sea?

*Answer.* The President's interim national security guidance underscores that we must be prepared to manage crises and challenges that do not respect borders. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department's regional and functional bureaus to make sure they understand the President and Secretary's policy imperatives in both the Sahel and the Red Sea region and that they work collaboratively through working groups, joint briefings, and persistent coordination to develop strategies around which we can organize our diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance. If confirmed, I will guide the Department to work across bureaucratic and geographic seams to address regional challenges by understanding, engaging, and cooperating with allies and partners; building strong partnerships; and strengthening long-standing connections.

*Question.* Multilateralism has long been a pillar of U.S. foreign policy, and an avenue for advancing international human rights. However, over the last four years, the U.S. Government went from being a strong champion of human rights and of

the rights of women, girls and LGBTQ individuals, to being an obstacle to those goals at the United Nations and other multilateral forums. It is vital that this Administration send an early signal that it is fully committed to reversing that, and to advancing human rights and gender equality globally. How will you demonstrate, through early action at the State Department, a renewed U.S. commitment and leadership to promote global gender equality, women's and girls' rights, and the rights of LGBTQ persons?

*Answer.* As President Biden has said, the promotion of democracy and human rights is central to this Administration's foreign policy and if confirmed, I will examine all options to address threats to gender equality and the human rights of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ persons. I fully support the objectives outlined in President Biden's memorandum on advancing the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons around the world. The work to promote gender equality and respect for the human rights of all women, girls, and LGBTQI+ persons is amplified when the United States works multilaterally and coordinates with international partners. If confirmed, I will support the Department's efforts to increase U.S. engagement on these issues bilaterally and across relevant UN fora and regional organizations, as appropriate.

*Question.* How will you use your role to immediately halt and reverse dangerous rollbacks on women's rights and LGBTQ rights in intergovernmental processes and multilateral forums?

*Answer.* Advancing the human rights of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ persons is essential to ensure just and equitable societies where all individuals can fully contribute. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with partner nations, civil society, and multilateral institutions, as appropriate, to advance women's health and human rights, including women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. I will also fully support the objectives outlined in President Biden's Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ persons around the world and will work with other governments and multilateral institutions to ensure that U.S. diplomacy and foreign assistance promote and protect these rights.

*Question.* On June 18, 2020, following a year-long investigation by my staff, I published a comprehensive report on the Global Forced Migration Crisis, which examined the urgent plight of millions of people forced to flee their homes due to conflict and persecution. It provided a blueprint for addressing this growing crisis. What actions will you take, including with our partners, to address the global forced migration crisis? How, specifically, will you work to address the root causes of displacement, such as new and unresolved conflicts, support populations on the move and those enduring lengthy displacement, and seek to assist the low-income countries who host the majority of refugees and displaced people?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure State and USAID are strengthening protection and durable solutions for the millions of forcibly displaced people across the globe by pursuing new strategies for addressing the root causes of migration, including climate change; rebuilding the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program; enhancing U.S. engagement in international institutions; and standing up for democratic values and human rights. The State Department will continue to work with our partners and the Department of the Treasury to engage multilateral development banks on support in protracted situations of displacement. In addition, the Department aims its diplomacy at continuing to strengthen the global humanitarian architecture, including through donor engagement, and at promoting respect for international humanitarian principles.

*Question.* Principled humanitarian action is under attack around the world. Violent conflict has reached record highs, and nearly 235 million people worldwide need emergency humanitarian assistance—a 40 percent increase from last year. There has also been a steep escalation in the deliberate, willful obstruction of humanitarian access to those in need, the targeting of innocent civilians and humanitarian aid workers, and an overall noncompliance with international law. What will you do to minimize the abuse of humanitarian assistance, including the blocking or diverting of humanitarian aid, and to minimize the targeting of civilians and humanitarian aid workers?

*Answer.* I support the United States taking a strong leadership role in support of principled humanitarian action. If confirmed, I intend to engage publicly and privately where necessary to promote the protection of civilians and humanitarian workers, and humanitarian access, working closely with our global and multilateral partners. Further, I will support the efforts of the State Department to prevent and immediately address any diversion or abuse of U.S. humanitarian assistance. The

Administration's commitment to these principles has already been clear in the Secretary's engagement on the protection of civilians and unhindered humanitarian access.

*Question.* How can the United States best hold accountable the perpetrators of such abuses, and promote accountability and compliance with the law of armed conflict and human rights law?

*Answer.* I support using all tools available to promote accountability for those responsible for targeting civilians, including humanitarian aid workers, consistent with international law. If confirmed, I would encourage all parties to armed conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and ensure the protection of those providing humanitarian aid. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the United States supports a variety of tools at our disposal, including investigations and prosecutions at appropriate international and national tribunals, targeted sanctions, and other mechanisms, to promote accountability for those responsible for targeting civilians, including humanitarian aid providers.

*Question.* We are in a 15-year democratic recession, and this past year has been among the worst we've seen for global democracy. For the first time since 2001, more people live under autocracies than democracies. The COVID-19 crisis has created new opportunities for authoritarians and those leaders who strive to consolidate power to cement their hold on government structures and erode the fundamental human rights of their countrymen. How will you address democratic backsliding and emerging global electoral challenges? These include foreign interference; the manipulation of new media platforms; advancements in artificial intelligence and sophisticated cyber threats; and corruption in electoral processes that undermines governance?

*Answer.* I share concerns over the need to defend democracy and counter growing authoritarianism globally, including authoritarian responses to the global pandemic that suspend or severely curtail democratic governance, rule of law, and human rights. President Biden committed to host a global summit to bring together democracies around a common agenda to defend and strengthen democratic institutions, including commitments on combating corruption, pushing back on authoritarianism, and advancing human rights, including online. If confirmed, I will support the Administration's goals of promoting good governance at home and abroad with all available diplomatic, programmatic, and other foreign policy tools to counter democratic backsliding and strengthen democratic resilience to malign influence.

*Question.* How will you invest in democracy programs, particularly in the context of the secondary impacts of COVID-19 on elections and democracies worldwide?

*Answer.* The United States has long been a leader in promoting democracy and human rights, including advancing civil and political rights abroad. Adhering to democratic principles is essential for an effective global response to COVID-19, and it is imperative that countries not use the pandemic as a means to suspend or severely curtail democratic governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights. If confirmed, I intend to ensure that democracy programs support civil society groups and governments in strengthening protections for human rights by fostering accountable, responsive and inclusive democratic institutions and processes that directly address the secondary impacts of COVID-19.

*Question.* The Department of Defense annually seeks to duplicate various security assistance authorities heretofore reserved to the Department of State, to the detriment of the Secretary of State's fundamental mission to oversee and direct U.S. foreign policy. If confirmed, will you personally and aggressively defend the Department of State's prerogatives in this area?

*Answer.* I am aware of the Defense Department efforts in this area and recall selectively supporting some security assistance authorities for Defense, where for example they provided clearly for the Secretary of State to "concur" in Defense's use of such authorities; were time-limited; did not duplicate State's authorities; and provided for joint formulation. If confirmed, I will certainly study this matter thoroughly, as I share your concerns. Among my key goals will be personally to uphold and defend prerogatives of the Secretary and the Department and to protect the fundamental and primary responsibility of the Secretary to carry out for the President the fundamental mission of overseeing and directing US foreign policy.

*Question.* Will you commit that you and your staff will work closely with this committee to protect the Secretary of State and the Department of State's primacy in this regard?

Answer. I look forward to working closely with you and the committee to protect the primacy of the Secretary of State and the Department in this regard. I also consider that protecting such primacy means also protecting and enhancing the tools to engage internationally, such as reserving to, or enhancing the broadest range of agile foreign assistance authorities of the Secretary of State. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with you to ensure that such authorities are robust and flexible, particularly given the view by some countries that Defense authorities may be less restrictive than those of the State Department.

*Question.* Section 10 U.S.C 127(e) allows the Secretary of Defense to provide undefined support to any foreign person that is in any undefined way supporting U.S. Special Forces operations in a country, so long as the Chief of Mission of such country concurs. There is no requirement in the law that the Secretary of State, nor the Department of State, be aware of such activities. Such “support” has included, at least, the provision of lethal defense articles to unknown foreign persons, who could be involved in criminal or even terrorism-supporting activities. It is vital that the Secretary of State be aware of this support. Secretary Blinken, when asked this question, confirmed that he would look into the current practices and procedures in the Department with respect to reporting and concurring with such transfers and, if necessary, make amendments. Will you, if confirmed, ensure that this issue is put to the Secretary for decision, or if delegated to you, that you will direct all Chiefs of Mission not to agree to any such request without first consulting with you or the Secretary of State?

Answer. The Departments of State and Defense are working closely to address the changing global threat environment. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with the Secretary of State and critical Department stakeholders to review the current Department practices and procedures related to Section 10 USC 127e. In the event this issue is delegated to me, I will take appropriate action to communicate Department procedures to chiefs of mission and will initiate a discussion with Department of Defense counterparts to clarify reporting and concurrence procedures and make amendments as necessary.

*Question.* It is no secret that the Department’s morale has sunk to historic lows over the past several years under President Trump and Secretary Pompeo. Secretary Blinken has already made great strides in addressing distrust and improving morale at the Department, but much work remains to make sure that the Department’s workforce is empowered and trusted to carry out its critical diplomatic work. What steps will you take to rebuild the morale of the people who serve at the Department and to ensure the Department has a workforce that is supported and empowered to carry out their mission to the best of their ability?

Answer. The people who work for the U.S. Department of State are committed public servants who uphold U.S. policies to protect Americans and their interests abroad. The marginalization and loss of career talent over the last four years coincides with declines in overall employee job satisfaction in annual workforce. That said, the nearly 77,000 State Department employees worldwide remain resilient. If confirmed, I am committed to improving and maintaining State Department to advance our security and prosperity, including by developing a diplomatic corps that fully represents America in all its talent and diversity. That means recruiting, retaining, and providing career development opportunities to officers with the skills to contend with 21st Century challenges and who represent the diversity of the country we represent. I will spare no effort, if confirmed, to ensure their safety and well-being and demand accountability for fostering a more diverse, inclusive and non-partisan workplace.

*Question.* Last year, I published a report *Diplomacy in Crisis*, which laid out the challenges facing the Department workforce. It cited employee survey data that showed some disturbing trends—for example, steep increases in the number of staff who said they feared reprisal or retribution if they were to report a violation of law. Does that concern you, and how do you plan to reverse that culture?

Answer. I agree that retaliation for participating in the EEO process or anti-harassment program, for requesting a reasonable accommodation, or for opposing discriminatory practices is unlawful, grounds for discipline, and counter to good management; employees do best when they have the ability to speak up and help us improve. If confirmed, I plan to amplify the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer’s, Bureau of Global Talent Management’s, and the Office of Civil Rights’ efforts to promote a culture of speaking up, free from fear of retaliation.

*Question.* A recent survey of executive-level staff at the State Department conducted by Executive Women at State found concerning trends that inhibit career ad-



vancement for women. More than half of the respondents ranked 15 of the 22 barriers measured in the survey as having a huge or significant impact on the advancement of women at the Department; 75 percent of respondents described gender-related bias as having substantial impact on their career. Do you commit to reviewing this report and its recommendations, and prioritizing a review of how the Department can reduce barriers for women to increase retention and help more women serve in senior roles?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that women have equal opportunities for career advancement and professional development. Throughout my career, I have benefitted from strong mentors and leaders who have helped me shape my career, and I have worked to mentor others. If confirmed, I will ask those who report to me to serve as models for the Department on mentorship and promulgating the tenets of fairness and transparency in building their teams. I will hold my senior leadership responsible for creating environments where everyone's contribution is valued. I will also prioritize reviewing recommendations on initiatives to help address the gender gap in the Department from our employee affinity groups and associations.

*Question.* As you know, Ahlam Tamimi is responsible for masterminding a terrorist attack that killed 15 people, including two Americans at a restaurant in Israel in 2001. She has been living in Jordan since 2011 and the United States has continued to try to bring her to justice. Do you commit to pursuing justice for Americans murdered in this brazen attack?

Answer. If confirmed, I will explore all options to bring Ahlam Al-Tamimi to justice. The Department will continue to ask that the Government of Jordan extradite Al-Tamimi, and will continue to raise this issue at the highest levels. The Department will also engage Jordanian officials at all levels on the extradition treaty, which is in force.

*Question.* Will the administration continue to pressure Jordan to publicly condemn Tamimi and her actions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will explore all options to bring Ahlam Al-Tamimi to justice. The Department will continue to ask that the Government of Jordan extradite Al-Tamimi, and will continue to raise this issue at the highest levels. The Department will also engage Jordanian officials at all levels on the extradition treaty, which is in force.

*Question.* Will the administration press Jordan to seek parliamentary ratification of the 1995 extradition treaty?

Answer. If confirmed, I will explore all options to bring Ahlam Al-Tamimi to justice. The Department will continue to ask that the Government of Jordan extradite Al-Tamimi, and will continue to raise this issue at the highest levels. The Department will also engage Jordanian officials at all levels on the extradition treaty, which is in force.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In your view, are the Maduro regime's involvement in transnational organized crime and its poor economic and political policies in Venezuela to blame for region's most significant security and humanitarian crisis? Can humanitarian conditions improve on the regime's watch?

Answer. The illegitimate Maduro regime's corruption and repression are responsible for the economic collapse and the resulting humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. Maduro and his enablers tolerate and often cooperate and collude with criminal and terrorist networks, non-state armed groups, and many malign actors that perpetrate human rights abuses and human trafficking. Instead of applying Venezuela's resources to respond to its humanitarian crisis, Maduro and those allied with him pilage state coffers.

I understand the impact the current crisis in Venezuela is having on the region, and the pain it is inflicting on Venezuelans and their families. If confirmed, I am committed to addressing the humanitarian situation affecting millions of Venezuelans both inside the country and the millions who have fled to neighboring countries, pressing for a peaceful, stable, democratic outcome in Venezuela through free and fair elections and helping the Venezuelan people rebuild their lives and their country.

*Question.* Please describe your views on what would constitute adequate conditions under which free and fair presidential, legislative, and local elections could be conducted in Venezuela.

*Answer.* There are several conditions that should be met before we can consider any Venezuelan elections free and fair. The illegitimate Maduro regime should free all political prisoners, return political party organizations to their duly chosen leaders, and remove all undue restrictions on individuals and political parties to allow their free participation. All candidates, political parties, and the electorate should have unrestricted access to independent news sources and other sources of information. An independent National Electoral Council should be appointed and allowed to organize the elections free from undue influence. Finally, consistent with the bipartisan Venezuela Emergency Relief, Democracy Assistance, and Development Act (VERDAD) of 2019, elections should be observed and certified as free and fair by an independent electoral observation mission comprised of domestic and international experts.

*Question.* Please describe the conditions under which you would recommend the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

*Answer.* The United States continues to maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba, which provides an opportunity to communicate directly with the Cuban Government regarding matters of human rights. The Biden-Harris administration's Cuba policy will be governed by two principles. First, support for democracy and human rights will be at the core of our efforts through empowering the Cuban people to determine their own future. Second, Americans—especially Cuban-Americans—are the best ambassadors for freedom and prosperity in Cuba. We have serious differences with Cuba on a range of issues, including Venezuela and human rights, but the administration will engage directly on those differences and on other issues that are in the interest of the United States.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to conduct meaningful consultations with me, my office, and the rest of the committee before and during any negotiations with Cuba?

*Answer.* Through three decades of work in foreign policy and national security, I have learned firsthand the need for close and constructive coordination with Congress. I recognize there are many different views in Congress on what our approach to Cuba should be. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on a range of policy topics, including Cuba.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that U.S. public and private engagement in Cuba does not disproportionately benefit the Cuban military, intelligence, or security services or personnel at the expense of the Cuban people?

*Answer.* The administration committed to carefully reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, including our posture regarding economic sanctions on Cuba, to ensure they advance the goals the administration is trying to achieve in empowering the Cuban people to determine their future. If confirmed, I will support the Department's review of the policy with an eye toward assessing its impact on the political and economic well-being of the Cuban people and look forward to consulting with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* In December 2020, Mexico approved reforms to its national security law, limiting the power of foreign law enforcement agents in the country and restricting their ability to operate. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure effective law enforcement cooperation with Mexico?

*Answer.* It is critical that the United States and Mexico work together to dismantle transnational criminal organizations and their operations, reduce impunity and corruption, and strengthen the rule of law in Mexico. If confirmed, I look forward to comprehensive conversations with the Mexican Government, and I will not hesitate to raise any concerns I believe to be obstacles to our bilateral law enforcement cooperation.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you prioritize the recommendations of the Bureau of International Organizations as compared to the regional bureaus?

*Answer.* I have long appreciated and valued the expertise available from the Bureau of International Organizations. If confirmed, I will ensure the bureau's perspective is solicited, whenever appropriate, and in all circumstances welcome its recommendations. The bureau's voice and role in U.S. foreign policy is crucial as the administration re-engages with international organizations, restores its partnerships, and returns to its traditional alliances.

*Question.* Will you support the creation of an Office of Integrity in the United Nations System within the Bureau of International Organizations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to ensure the State Department is organized and resourced effectively to push back against the rising influence of China and others in the UN system and other international organizations and to select qualified and independent candidates to lead and staff these bodies, including highly specialized agencies.

*Question.* Nations have increasingly used hostage diplomacy in an attempt to gain leverage through coercion. Multiple Americans are victims of this trend, and Americans are currently wrongfully detained in Russia, China, Iran, and Venezuela, among other countries. What role do you believe the Deputy Secretary has in returning Americans and preventing hostage diplomacy?

*Answer.* Bringing home U.S. hostages and wrongful detainees is a top priority for the administration and the Department of State. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs to make every effort to quickly recover all U.S. nationals held hostage or wrongfully detained abroad. Additionally, it will be of the utmost importance to closely coordinate with, and lend support to, family members of hostages and wrongful detainees.

*Question.* If confirmed as Deputy Secretary of State, in what concrete ways will you work to bring home Americans wrongfully detained abroad and support the work of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs?

*Answer.* The safety and security of U.S. citizens is one of the highest priorities of the Department of State. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to use all the diplomatic means at our disposal to work for the release of those U.S. citizens wrongfully detained or held hostage and provide support to their families. Specifically, I will support the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs and the interagency in implementing the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-taking Accountability Act. The Levinson Act is critical for harnessing all of the U.S. Government's capabilities to resolve these cases quickly and provide support to families.

*Question.* The Iranian regime received billions in sanctions relief as a result of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The Obama administration argued that "our best analysts expect the bulk of this revenue to go into spending that improves the economy and benefits the lives of the Iranian people." However, a vast body of follow-on reporting indicates that a majority of sanctions relief was, instead, funneled to the regime's defense budget and to its proxies in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.

- Do you believe that sanctions relief provided to Iran as a part of the JCPOA improved the economy and the lives of the Iranian people?

*Answer.* While the DIA testified in 2017 that the majority of sanctions relief was used for domestic purposes, the Biden-Harris administration is under no illusions about Iran's destabilizing activities in the region and about its government's willingness to divert funding that should be used to better the lives of its citizens to those purposes. It is also clear that the reimposition of sanctions has not had the effect of drying up Iran's proliferation of missiles, support for terrorism, and regional activities.

We need to address all of these activities using a variety of tools—deterrence, sanctions on Iranian entities providing support to violent groups and militias in the region, and, in the event we rejoin the JCPOA, in any follow-on talks with Iran—in close consultation and coordination with our allies and partners. If confirmed, I am committed to consulting closely with Congress on the path forward.

*Question.* What tools and safeguards exist that would prevent Iran from directing future sanctions relief to malign activities?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government maintains a range of tools to combat terrorist financing, and we will continue to use these to counter Iran's destabilizing activities and support for terrorism.

We will continue to maintain and impose sanctions on Iranian entities and individuals providing support to terrorist groups in the region. The Biden-Harris administration will take action, in coordination with our allies and partners, to both deter and counter Iran's destabilizing activities and to vigorously pursue talks on these critical issues. If confirmed, I am committed to consulting closely with Congress on the path forward.

*Question.* Do you commit not to pursue sanctions relief or unfreezing of Iranian assets as a precondition for nuclear negotiations with the Iranian regime?

*Answer.* We are ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. Our first order of business is consulting with Congress and our allies on the path forward.

*Question.* You have previously expressed skepticism over the prospects of U.S. re-entry into the JCPOA, indicating that if such a development were to take place, the United States would need to be willing to put “more on the table.” Please describe in detail the prospects for U.S. re-entry into the JCPOA, to include views of UNSCR 2231-mandated Transition Day in 2023 and Termination Day in 2025.

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to ensuring that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon and to addressing the many other issues of concern related to Iran. The administration remains ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments as a first step, but the work will not end there. The administration intends to build on the JCPOA and use it as a platform to lengthen and strengthen the constraints on Iran’s nuclear program and to address other critical issues.

*Question.* Exactly what form should “more on the table” take in your view? What do you see as being acceptable to both the United States and Iran?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration remains ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments. While it is too early to speculate on the specific details, if confirmed, I commit to robust consultation with Congress and our P5+1 partners on the best way forward.

*Question.* The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (P.L. 114-17) (“INARA”) requires the President to provide to Congress the text and related materials of any agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran within five days of reaching the agreement. Additionally, INARA stipulates that the administration certify that such an agreement is not “inimical to or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security.”

- Would the requirements of INARA cited above apply to any future nuclear deal with Iran?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran’s nuclear program as called for under INARA and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its transmission and certification requirements.

*Question.* Would the requirements of INARA cited above apply to any process of rejoining or reaffirming U.S. participation in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran’s nuclear program as called for under INARA. The JCPOA was submitted under INARA in 2015 and underwent close Congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

*Question.* Would any agreement between the United States and Iran regarding how the United States and Iran might return to compliance with the JCPOA constitute an “agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran”?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran’s nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was submitted under INARA in 2015 and underwent close Congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

*Question.* What are the reporting requirements of INARA that you believe that the administration is currently subject to?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult within the administration to identify and confirm those requirements. I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its reporting requirements.

*Question.* In 2014, in your capacity as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, you hosted a roundtable in which you suggested that the JCPOA contained “in one way or another, all the concerns that must be addressed.” While the 2015 agreement did secure time-limited curbs on Tehran’s nuclear program, it failed to address Iran’s destabilizing support for proxy militias and its ballistic missile development. Further, it failed to secure the release of American hostages, like Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaei, who remained illegally detained by the Iranian regime until January 2016.

- Is it still your position that the 2015 nuclear agreement contained a sufficient basis for the United States to address all of its most pressing national security concerns?

Answer. The objective of the JCPOA was to ensure that Iran would never obtain a nuclear weapon, which is just one of the myriad issues of national security concern the United States and our allies and partners face regarding Iran. The situation we face in 2021, however, is different from the situation in 2015. The facts on the ground have changed, and our path forward must take this into account. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to addressing not only the concerns about Iran's nuclear program, but also broader concerns, including Iran's unjust detentions of U.S. citizens, its ballistic missile program, and destabilizing regional activities.

*Question.* Would you recommend the United States pursue re-entry into the 2015 nuclear agreement absent the release of American hostages, including Morad Tahbaz, Baquer Namazi, and Siamak Namazi?

Answer. The safety of U.S. citizens overseas is a top priority for the U.S. Government. The continued unjust detention of U.S. citizens in Iran is atrocious. I have spoken with family members of U.S. citizens detained in Evin Prison and their stories are horrific. As President Biden has said, the administration will aggressively work for the release and return of all our unjustly detained U.S. citizens.

*Question.* The Biden administration has indicated that it will attempt to address Iran's regional terrorism and ballistic missile activity in follow-on agreements after rejoining the JCPOA. Assuming the United States grants nuclear-related sanctions relief as a part of U.S. re-entry into the JCPOA, what leverage would the Biden administration retain to ensure Iran engages in meaningful discussions on its support of regional terrorism and ballistic missile program? Please be specific.

Answer. As President Biden has said, we are ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and then use that as a platform to lengthen and strengthen the constraints on Iran's nuclear program and address other issues of concern. The framework of U.S. sanctions on Iran remains robust, and there are many layers of that sanctions architecture that would remain in place, even in the event of a U.S. return to the JCPOA. This certainly includes the primary U.S. embargo on Iran, and many other U.S. sanctions on Iran. Working with allies and partners, we also have other avenues to place pressure on Iran.

*Question.* The Abraham Accords have the potential to fundamentally change the Middle East for the better. The previous administration had an empowered agent in the White House, Jared Kushner, to pursue normalization agreements. We understand that the Biden administration will push this role back down to the State Department—currently at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level. Given the importance of the Abraham Accords, how do you plan to expand and strengthen the Accords without a similar empowered staff?

Answer. The 2020 normalization agreements are an important contribution to peace and security in the Middle East. The Biden-Harris administration will seek to build on the agreements to expand the circle of peace between Israel and its neighbors. If confirmed, we will also closely monitor the status of the normalization efforts to date, encouraging the states that have signed such agreements with Israel to uphold their commitments to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel.

*Question.* Will you assign responsibility for additional normalization agreements to more senior staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the normalization agreements with the relevant subject matter experts and determining the best way forward, including with respect to staffing responsibilities.

*Question.* In your hearing testimony, you referenced a number of meetings that you had with Iranian officials after you had concluded your service at the Department of State in 2015. What meetings did you have with any Iranian officials since leaving the State Department in 2015? Were these meetings scheduled ahead of time? If so, by whom?

Answer. To the best of my recollection, I met with Foreign Minister Zarif twice on the margins of the Munich Security Conference, in 2018 and 2019. I also participated in two bipartisan group meetings in New York on the margins of UNGA: in 2018 with President Rouhani, and in 2019 with FM Zarif. Those meetings were facilitated by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2018) and the International Crisis Group (2019). Finally, in October 2017 I participated in a panel with

Deputy FM Abbas Araghchi at a nonproliferation conference sponsored by the Center for Energy and Security Studies in Moscow, and we spoke on the margins.

In every meeting, I urged Iran to stay in full compliance with the JCPOA, even after U.S. withdrawal, and pressed for Iran to end its regional violence and to release American prisoners. I consistently kept Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale apprised of meetings and offered to convey any useful information back to him.

*Question.* Who were the participants in those meetings? When and where did those meetings occur? In what capacity did you engage in those meetings?

*Answer.* As noted in the previous answer, the meetings were principally with Foreign Minister Zarif. At the Munich Security Conference, I believe he was accompanied by DFM Abbas Araghchi. When I saw FM Zarif in New York he was also accompanied by the DFM and by Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations. When I saw DFM Araghchi in Moscow, he was alone.

*Question.* Please describe in detail the purpose of the meetings, the scope of the discussions that occurred in the meetings, the positions you took in those discussions, and how those discussions inform your views on Iran policy issues.

*Answer.* As I stated in my confirmation hearing, I kept Under Secretary Hale apprised of the meetings and committed to sharing any useful information with him. I attended meetings to urge Iran to not escalate the situation, to stay compliant with the JCPOA, to cease its regional violence, and to release U.S. citizens who had been unjustly detained. As I noted, families have continued to call me and urge me to do whatever I can to help gain release of their loved ones. My views on Iran policy were offered in the confirmation hearing and were not changed by the meetings.

*Question.* Did you inform any sitting U.S. official that you had planned or were likely to have each of these meetings? If so, please provide details for each meeting.

*Answer.* As noted, I kept Under Secretary David Hale apprised of the meetings.

*Question.* After each of these meetings occurred, did you inform any sitting U.S. official that the meetings had taken place and/or share what was discussed? If so, please provide details for each meeting.

*Answer.* As noted, I offered to apprise Under Secretary Hale of any useful information and did so as appropriate.

*Question.* Outside of these meetings, have you had any other contacts with any Iranian officials since leaving the State Department in 2015? Please provide details.

*Answer.* None that I recall.

*Question.* What are the tools and strategies the Department can best employ to address cross-regional security, political, and economic challenges in the Red Sea, Horn of Africa, Sahel, and Maghreb regions of Africa?

*Answer.* It is essential that we bring an end to deadly conflicts and prevent the onset of new ones; help African nations address climate change; violent extremism; promote development, health security, environmental sustainability, democratic progress, responsive and responsible governance, and rule of law; assist countries facing economic distress, including health and food insecurity; and support economic and political independence in the face of undue foreign influence. If confirmed, I will ensure we work across bureaucratic and geographic seams to address these regional challenges by cooperating with allies and partners, building strong partnerships, investing in civil society, and strengthening long-standing political, economic, and cultural connections.

*Question.* Do you believe Special Envoys are the most effective tool in confronting such complex regional issues?

*Answer.* Special Envoys have been an important tool for responding to complex security and political challenges, in certain cases where sustained, high-level diplomatic engagement is needed. When well-coordinated with regional and functional bureaus and embassies, envoys can help to integrate and lead cross-regional policy efforts, such as building international coalitions to counter transnational threats. Envoys can play an important role in responding to conflicts of a cross-border and cross-regional nature that require complex, negotiated solutions with buy-in from multiple states and actors. If confirmed, I intend to play an active role in the policy discussions surrounding the potential deployment of future envoys.

*Question.* What other tools should the United States consider?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration recognizes that many of the biggest threats we face are transnational in nature and must be addressed collectively, in-

cluding through international organizations. Nowhere is this more true than in Africa—the African Union (AU) and sub-regional institutions play an important role on governance, economic, and security issues across the continent. If confirmed, I will ensure increased U.S. engagement with the AU and other sub-regional bodies. Additionally, I will work to pursue mutually beneficial partnerships across Africa. Coordination and collaboration are essential, and we must work to align our approaches to holistically address security and governance challenges.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to building greater interagency coordination and strategy regarding U.S. security policy and programs in Africa, namely between the Department of State and the Department of Defense, and specifically with the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM)?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department of Defense and AFRICOM to make sure we are united in our efforts to implement the President and the Secretary's policy imperatives in sub-Saharan Africa and that we work collaboratively to develop unified U.S. Government policies around which we can organize our diplomatic, security, and development engagement.

*Question.* The U.S.-Germany relationship has been increasingly strained in recent years. Among our points of disagreement are the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, military spending, attitudes towards China, and questions of the use of nuclear weapons. What steps will you hope to take to improve the United States' relationship with Germany?

*Answer.* Reinvigorating and modernizing relations with U.S. Allies, including Germany, is one of this administration's highest priorities. The administration has already begun this process by conducting extensive consultations with the German Government on a range of issues of mutual concern. The administration also halted the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Germany and lifted the cap on the number of U.S. troops that can be stationed in Germany. If confirmed, I look forward to further strengthening the U.S.-German relationship, consulting closely on our common security priorities, especially at NATO, and partnering based on our shared values on challenges, including climate change, recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, and addressing threats posed by China, Russia, and Iran. We will not always agree, but we will look to manage those differences constructively as Allies.

*Question.* Under German leadership, the European Union just concluded an investment deal with China. How do you view the German Government's attitudes towards China, doing business with China, and their recently published Indo-Pacific Strategy?

*Answer.* The EU's investment deal with China is a demonstration of the amount of work we have before us to reinvigorate our Transatlantic alliance and develop a more unified response to the challenge posed by China. If confirmed, I will engage actively with the EU, Germany, and other European partners on shared concerns about China. My engagements will include discussions on how to advance our shared economic interests and counter China's aggressive and coercive actions, prevent goods made with forced labor from entering global markets, create a level playing field and promote private enterprise, and highlight China's failure to uphold its international commitments.

The Biden-Harris administration will work jointly with Germany, NATO, the EU, and other partners to address China's predatory economic practices, the challenges China poses to our collective security, and its human rights violations. Ultimately, the onus will be on China to show that its new pledges on forced labor, state-owned enterprises, and subsidies in its new agreement with the EU are not just cheap talk. The United States welcomes Germany's support for a rules-based international order, including in the Indo-Pacific, where Berlin recently announced it will send a naval vessel to demonstrate Germany's active engagement in the region.

*Question.* Former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder recently wrote in *Handelsblatt* that "a moralizing foreign policy" towards China, implying that, when it comes to China, human rights should be placed after economic interests. Do you agree?

*Answer.* China has engaged in gross human rights violations that shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences. The President has been clear that the administration will put our democratic values back at the center of our foreign policy and stand up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. The United States will work with Germany and other allies and partners to condemn human rights violations by China in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and elsewhere. Promoting respect for human rights will be a pillar of U.S. engagement with Germany and other allies with respect to China both in bilateral and multilateral settings.

*Question.* How do you and the Biden administration intend to work with those European voices and actors that fall on either side of the human rights-economics divide?

*Answer.* The President has made it clear that revitalizing our ties with allies and partners, including in Europe, is an administration priority. The administration is working to demonstrate that democracies that protect human rights deliver for their people and that human rights, democracy, and the rule of law are essential to meet the challenges of our time. Vibrant democracies that protect human rights are more stable, more open, better partners to us, and more dependable markets for our goods and services. If confirmed, I will strengthen our relations with our allies, work with likeminded partners, and pool our collective strength to promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline should be completed?

*Answer.* The President has made clear his belief that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline is a bad deal and that the administration will oppose it, and I strongly agree with this position. Nord Stream 2 expands Russian malign influence, threatens Europe's energy security, makes Allies and partners more vulnerable, and divides Europe. This project has the potential to destabilize Europe and embolden Russian aggression toward the West. I understand that the Department and our embassies in the region are carefully monitoring any activities taken to construct the pipeline and will respond in accordance with our obligations under PEESA and CAATSA. The administration continues to engage with Germany to express the United States' continued opposition to the pipeline and to highlight our concerns. If confirmed, I will continue to use all available tools to counter Russian malign influence, to work with Allies and partners in the region, and to support Transatlantic energy security goals.

*Question.* Do you commit to following the law and fully implementing the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act and the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act?

*Answer.* Yes. The State Department submits a report to Congress every 90 days on vessels engaged in pipe-laying and pipe-laying activities, and various entities providing and supporting those vessels, for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, as required by the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, with the next report due to Congress in mid-May. I understand the Department submitted the first report required by PEESA, as amended, in February. If confirmed, I will continue to use all available tools to counter Russian malign influence and to work with Allies and partners in the region to support Transatlantic energy security goals. The administration will continue to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional entities as appropriate.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should entertain potential proposals from the German Government that might allow the Nord Stream 2 pipeline be completed?

*Answer.* The administration has made clear to Germany and other European partners that Nord Stream 2 is not just a commercial deal. The administration views Nord Stream 2 as a geo-political project that is a threat not only to Europe's energy security, but to strategic stability on the continent. The United States will continue to work with allies and partners, including Germany, Denmark, Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic states, to ensure Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances, rather than undermines, its collective security.

*Question.* Do you believe that it would be worthwhile to allow the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline in hopes of improving the U.S.-German relationship?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has clearly stated that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline should not be completed and has consistently conveyed this to German officials. Germany is an important economic and security ally and, if confirmed, reinvigorating and modernizing relations with U.S. allies will be among my highest priorities. Close friends and allies should be able to talk frankly to one another about disagreements, as we do with German officials on Nord Stream 2. The administration remains hopeful that through diplomatic engagement, bolstered by the tools provided by Congress, Germany will address our concerns raised by the pipeline related to energy security, Ukraine, and malign Russian influence.

*Question.* Are such proposals currently being entertained?

*Answer.* The administration continues to engage Germany to make clear our view that Nord Stream 2 is a bad deal and should not be completed. The administration



has not received any formal proposals from the German Government related to Nord Stream 2.

*Question.* The Biden administration has stated its intent to achieve “a carbon pollution-free power sector by 2035” that puts the United States “on an irreversible path to a net-zero economy by 2050.” To this end, President Biden has ordered that federal agencies move to a fully electric vehicle fleet for automotive transportation needs and begin to use the federal procurement system for smaller equipment to drive demand for low energy-use appliances. What specific steps will you take to achieve these goals at the Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to comply with relevant authorities of Energy Policy Act of 2005 (PL 109-58), in full consideration of the administration’s net-zero goal and Federal Acquisition Regulations.

*Question.* Will these environmental goals impede other Department missions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the Department’s operations, logistics and procurement experts to implement relevant policies, strategies and plans in a manner consistent with federal laws and regulations and as outlined in the President’s Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad.

*Question.* Will the Department be expected to offset carbon emissions from activities such as air travel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department supports the administration’s goals, which may include future carbon offsets.

*Question.* Do you agree that extended nuclear deterrence is foundational to U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific, and to the strength of U.S. alliances?

*Answer.* Extended deterrence plays a foundational role in advancing U.S. national security objectives, including ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific. It does so by providing assurance to allies and partners, which are our greatest strategic asset, and promoting nonproliferation. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress, allies, and partners on this important issue.

*Question.* Do you believe that adoption of a sole purpose doctrine, a no first use policy, or a posture that fails to modernize U.S. nuclear forces would serve U.S. and allied interests in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* The United States will ensure our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible. As directed by the President, this administration will conduct reviews of various nuclear policies. In that process, we will consult with our allies and partners, including those in the Indo-Pacific, as well as with Congress.

*Question.* The Trump administration advanced a “free and open” Indo-Pacific strategy, which yielded a lot of concrete cooperation, especially with Japan, Australia, and Southeast Asia. If confirmed, what are the key principles, initiatives, and other elements of the previous administration’s Indo-Pacific strategy that will you continue?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with allies and partners to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific region. As President Biden has said, working with allies and partners to secure peace, defend our shared values, and advance our prosperity across the Indo-Pacific will be among the most consequential efforts we undertake. If confirmed, I will join the administration’s review of our Indo-Pacific policy, and I commit to working closely with Congress to make sure we have the right components in place.

*Question.* What major policy changes would the administration make in U.S. strategy towards the region?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with allies and partners to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The administration is conducting a review of our Indo-Pacific policy and, if confirmed, I commit to working closely with Congress to make sure we have the right components in place.

*Question.* The Obama administration failed to secure congressional support for the Iran nuclear deal. If confirmed, and if the Biden administration pursues an agreement with North Korea regarding its weapons programs, do you commit to regular briefings at both the member and staff levels in advance of and following negotiations with North Korea?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with Congress on efforts to limit the dangers posed by North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs.

*Question.* If confirmed, and if the Biden administration pursues an agreement with North Korea regarding its weapons programs, do you personally commit to appear before this committee prior to the completion of any such agreement for public hearings on the matter?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress on efforts to limit the dangers posed by North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs.

*Question.* Do you believe that an agreement with North Korea regarding its weapons programs should be submitted to the Senate as a treaty for the Senate's consent to ratification? If no, please explain in detail.

*Answer.* Denuclearization of North Korea remains a top national security priority for the United States. I understand the administration, in consultation with our allies, will evaluate and adopt a strategy to keep the American people and our allies safe and that takes into account pressure options and the potential for future diplomacy with North Korea. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on efforts to limit the dangers posed by North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs, including through any agreements that may be negotiated.

*Question.* The Indo-Pacific is the most important region for U.S. security and economic growth. It represents nearly half of the global population and is home to some of the most dynamic economies in the world, but is also home to security challenges that threaten to undermine U.S. national security interests, regional peace, and global stability. The Trump administration articulated a strategy to advance a "free and open Indo-Pacific," and has expanded partnerships with regional countries and implemented multiple initiatives in the region to support this goal. Do you agree with the core tenants of a vision for the "free and open Indo-Pacific" strategy advanced over the last several years?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* If so, what should the State Department's role be in this strategy? If not, why not?

*Answer.* While our Indo-Pacific policy is still under review, the State Department will have a major role in supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific, including by reinvigorating our alliances and partnerships, helping the region recover from the global pandemic, promoting democratic resilience, and confronting climate change. As the President has said, we will work with partners in the Indo-Pacific and across the world to protect the free exchange of ideas in open, democratic societies and to ensure the benefits of growth are shared broadly and equitably.

*Question.* Chinese influence in Europe continues to grow. It has invested billions across Europe and has sought to acquire strategic infrastructure and companies in Europe. European countries are starting to take a much more robust approach to China across the board, including on investment and human rights. What is your assessment of China's objectives in Europe and with regard to the transatlantic alliance?

*Answer.* The objective of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) is to make Europe more reliant and compliant, by dividing and weakening alliances forged through the European Union and NATO. They attempt this through abusive, unfair, and illegal economic and trade practices, including market-distorting subsidies, intellectual property theft, forced technology transfers, and predatory investments. With economic leverage comes political influence, security vulnerabilities, and the ability to coerce countries. This weakens countries' willingness to oppose the PRC's efforts to reshape the international order, creating a threat to the transatlantic alliance itself.

*Question.* How should the United States respond to growing Chinese influence in Europe?

*Answer.* Our engagement with Europe to counter the growing influence of the People's Republic of China should begin with a common understanding of the threats facing our mutual prosperity and national security and must include collaboration with NATO. Working with our Allies and partners, we will address vulnerabilities to Transatlantic security, promote technology innovation, information sharing, and energy security within the Alliance. We will support transparent economic growth and fair labor practices. We are developing foreign assistance programs to reach 24 countries that focus on transaction advisory, cybersecurity, and strategic infrastructure protection.

*Question.* Last year, I published a report on how the United States and Europe can cooperate on shared challenges related to China, including a chapter on contending with China's anti-competitive economic practices. I argued that the United States and Europe should revitalize trade negotiations, continue important initiatives at the World Trade Organizations such U.S.-EU-Japan efforts on subsidies, fix current sticking points like ongoing disputes between Boeing and Airbus, coordinate on export controls, and strengthen supply chain resilience. How would you advance these goals?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to rebuilding and revitalizing relations with our European allies and working with them as using the full array of tools to counter China's abusive economic practices, both in bilateral and multilateral fora, including the WTO. The administration will work with our allies and partners to ensure the resilience of the United States, as well as global supply chains, particularly under the February 24, 2021, Executive Order on America's Supply Chains. As of March 5, the administration announced a four-month suspension of tariffs on the UK and EU with the goal of a permanent settlement, under the Section 301 Boeing-Airbus case. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts to take on the challenge of China's abusive and illegal economic practices.

*Question.* What additional areas would you prioritize?

*Answer.* In addition to those issues discussed in the previous question, presenting positive alternatives to China, which showcase the value of the U.S. model against the techno-authoritarian model proliferated by Beijing, is critical. If confirmed, I will work with our European allies and partners on a coordinated approach to China's abusive economic practices, human rights violations, and other challenges. The EU has made it clear it is willing to cooperate with the Biden-Harris administration on China. The administration will work in bilateral and multilateral fora, including the UN and others, to ensure U.S. national security is protected with respect to investments in critical infrastructure and sensitive technologies, and to push back against PRC attempts to weaken standards, rules, and institutions that support our economic prosperity.

*Question.* The incoming administration has stated that global health cooperation with China will be a major priority. The United States invested a lot of resources and personnel over many years to pursue health cooperation with China. That included a close relationship between the U.S. CDC and China's CDC, including co-location arrangements where they worked side-by-side for many years. While co-location arrangements ceased because of concerns about the physical security of U.S. diplomats, cooperation still continued. However, in the world's hour of need at the beginning of a serious pandemic originating in China, the Chinese Government's response proved that global health cooperation would always take a back seat to the standing and reputation of the CCP. While some level of cooperation may be necessary, how can we have confidence in these initiatives without reciprocal good faith efforts by Chinese Government interlocutors?

*Answer.* It is important that we get to the bottom of the early days of the pandemic in China so that we can take steps to prevent future pandemics. The Biden-Harris administration will rebuild and expand the systems to prevent, detect, and respond to biological threats globally, including in China. The administration will work to get our experts back into China so that our scientists have the access and relationships needed to prepare for and respond to the emergence and spread of potential future outbreaks around the globe. If confirmed, I will test whether China is willing to play a constructive role on certain issues, including on global health, but will be guided by a clear-eyed assessment of China's intentions.

*Question.* How will you overcome this fundamental challenge, and why should the American people trust that use of taxpayer dollars and other resources will bear fruit?

*Answer.* China poses the most significant challenge of any nation state to the United States and our interests. There are competitive, cooperative, and adversarial aspects to the U.S.-China relationship. We must advance our economic interests, counter China's aggressive and coercive actions, sustain our key military advantages, defend democratic values, and restore our vital security partnerships as we also conduct results-oriented diplomacy with China on shared challenges such as global health. The Biden-Harris administration will test whether China is willing to play a constructive role on certain issues, including on global health, but will be clear-eyed about China's intentions.

*Question.* What areas of health cooperation will the incoming administration prioritize with China?

*Answer.* Promoting global health is in China's interests as well as ours. The Biden-Harris administration is willing to test whether China is willing to play a constructive role in certain areas where we may share interests but will be clear-eyed about China's intentions. We will not trade off our core interests or values in discussions with China or any other country.

*Question.* What will be the role of the State Department in this regard?

*Answer.* The State Department can play a leading role in elevating global health diplomacy to identify potential global health risks, to work with the international community to detect and prevent epidemics and pandemics before they occur, and to ensure effective international responses when they do. This includes addressing the root causes of these events and strengthening the prevention and response capabilities of local health systems. If confirmed, I will strengthen the Department of State's diplomatic engagement in support of the COVID-19 health and humanitarian response, as well as global health security more broadly, in close alignment with USAID, HHS, CDC, and other agencies involved in this space.

*Question.* Would you advise the President to send high-level visitors to Taiwan, boost defense ties, explore negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement, strengthen the economic partnership set up by the Trump administration, and advocate for Taiwan in international organizations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I support sending senior-level visitors to Taiwan to deepen and broaden our relationship. I support boosting defense ties and strengthening the economic partnership with Taiwan, as well as advocating for Taiwan's participation in international organizations. I understand that USTR is the lead agency on trade, and pending confirmation of the new USTR, I will work with the office of the USTR on a review of trade policy toward Taiwan.

*Question.* The previous administration authorized many critical capabilities via arms sales to Taiwan over the last several years, including fighters to replace and augment those being worn out from Chinese Air Force incursions, ground-launched anti-ship missiles, mobile artillery rocket systems, and surveillance drones. Do you commit to fulfilling these arms sales with speed and urgency so that the capabilities get to Taiwan in a timely manner?

*Answer.* My support for Taiwan is rock solid. Taiwan is a leading democracy, a major economy, and a critical security partner. I support a peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people on Taiwan. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to make available defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to defend itself, consistent with the law, U.S. export regulations, and nonproliferation policy.

Taiwan remains a priority for this administration. In my position at the Department of State, working together with the Department of Defense, I will implement that priority wherever feasible to assist Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

*Question.* Do you commit to ensuring that the Department of State adheres to a regularized process with regard to Taiwan arms sales, including avoiding the practice of bundling?

*Answer.* Yes, that would be my intent, if confirmed. Consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our One China Policy, the United States continues to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. This longstanding policy contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

If confirmed, I will continue to support U.S. policy to assist Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. Doing so increases stability both across the Taiwan Strait and within the region.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Throughout my life, my most important contribution has been to help open doors for women and to advocate for their human rights, and I have sought to stand for any group of marginalized people in the United States and around the world. In politics, I ran Barbara Mikulski's successful campaign for the Senate, helping her to become the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own

right. I was also Executive Director of EMILY's List, helping Democratic women get elected to the U.S. House and Senate. As Undersecretary of State, on virtually every overseas trip, I made it a point to meet with women leaders, women business owners, and women crafts persons to give women visibility and press coverage and regularly spoke out about ensuring that half of the world should be included.

As I traveled as a diplomat, I met with LGBTQI+ youth in Nepal, the first country to allow citizens to check 'other' on their passport, and I met with LGBTQI+ advocates in other countries as they sought their rights. I met with the Rohingya in Bangladesh and had a frank conversation in Burma with Aung San Suu Kyi. I have also worked to help free those unlawfully detained and imprisoned, particularly in Iran, and helped achieve some releases over the years.

*Question.* Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

*Answer.* Studies show how diverse teams outperform other teams based on their ability to innovate and address new challenges creatively. Diversity is America's competitive advantage on the global stage. Addressing today's challenges across the globe will require the Department to harness the wealth of diversity and experiences in our workforce to address increasingly complex challenges impacting our foreign policy as well as the lives of the American people. If confirmed, I commit to fostering an inclusive workplace throughout the Department so that every employee's contribution is valued. If confirmed, I will hold our senior leadership accountable for the conduct of their teams and for perpetuating an environment where each individual is heard and seen.

*Question.* What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Department of State is fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that my team upholds the values of diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect by setting that example myself and cultivating an environment where every contribution is valued and considered, regardless of differences in race, gender, ethnicity, or other attributes. I will ensure my team takes the proper training to cultivate an office environment that creates opportunity for dialogue and for innovation across diverse backgrounds. If confirmed, I will hold my leadership accountable and will work with the Department's new Chief Diversity and Inclusion officer to ensure our administrative and foreign policies support the values of diversity and inclusion.

*Question.* Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

*Answer.* I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

*Answer.* I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any foreign country?

*Answer.* My spouse's and my investment portfolio includes mutual funds that may hold interests in companies with an international presence, but these mutual funds are exempt from conflict of interest laws. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and remaining vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations. I will divest any investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* Do you agree that Iran is the world's leading exporter and supporter of terrorism?

**Answer.** Iran remains the foremost state sponsor of terrorism. Its support for terrorism threatens international security, our forces, diplomatic personnel, and partners in the region and elsewhere. The administration is committed to countering any Iranian threat to our personnel and our vital interests and will respond to any such threat using all appropriate means.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States should trust the world's leading exporter of terrorism to honor any international agreements?

**Answer.** The administration is ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA does not rely on trust; it provides the most intrusive nuclear verification and monitoring procedures ever negotiated. Diplomacy is a tool; it is not a reward or concession. It is a means to advance U.S. interests. I remain clear-eyed about the threat Iran poses to us and our allies.

*Question.* What policies will you be pressing for to address Iran's non-nuclear threats?

**Answer.** The administration is ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and then use that as a platform to build a longer and stronger deal and also address other areas of concern. The administration also intends to pursue full implementation of relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions involving Iran.

*Question.* Regarding "compliance for compliance" with the Iranians, can you commit today that you will not be counseling the administration to take the first step or dilute its existing leverage vis-a-vis the Iranians amid this process? Could you please explain to us how you define compliance by the Iranians with the JCPOA?

**Answer.** The administration is ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. There are many steps in the process to getting there that we will need to evaluate. If confirmed, I am committed to consulting with Congress and our allies on the path forward.

*Question.* Do you believe that for any Iran policy to be sustainable, it needs to have bipartisan support?

**Answer.** The administration agrees that a bipartisan approach to Iran is the strongest way to safeguard U.S. interests for the long term, and if confirmed I will work to engage with Congress on this and other issues. As the Biden-Harris administration develops its Iran policy, it is committed to consulting closely and regularly with Congress, as well as U.S. allies and regional partners, to listen to their ideas and concerns.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is a terrorist organization?

**Answer.** The Iran Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and it is a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224. I believe Iran remains a state sponsor of terrorism and that, as the IRGC branch focused on extraterritorial activities, the IRGC-Quds Force has been directly involved in planning, directing, and supporting terrorist acts outside of Iran. Iran's support for terrorism threatens U.S. forces, diplomatic personnel, and partners in the region and elsewhere. The administration is committed to countering any Iranian threat to our forces, personnel, and our vital interests, and will respond to any such threat using all appropriate means.

*Question.* Are you committed to strict enforcement of sanctions against the IRGC and its subsidiaries and affiliates?

**Answer.** The Biden-Harris administration is committed to countering Iran's destabilizing activities, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorist groups and violent proxies in the region. The Biden-Harris administration will continue to maintain and impose sanctions on Iranian entities and individuals supporting terrorist activity or responsible for serious human rights abuses, and will work with our allies promote accountability for those involved.

*Question.* During your nominations hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 3, 2021, you acknowledged that you met with officials of the Iranian regime—a regime that is a U.S.-designated State Sponsor of Terrorism—during your time out of government since 2017. You also stated that you coordinated directly with Under Secretary for Political Affairs Ambassador David Hale concerning your interactions with Iranian regime officials.

- Did you also coordinate directly with any of the following senior U.S. State Department officials who handled Iran in their portfolio: Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Schenker, Special Representative for Iran Brian Hook, Special Representative for Iran Elliott Abrams, Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun, or Secretary of State Michael Pompeo?
- If yes, please identify dates of consultation? If not, why not?

Answer. I did not engage with any of the named individuals beyond Undersecretary for Political Affairs David Hale.

*Question.* Besides in-person meetings, have you otherwise been in contact with any Iranian regime officials, including via e-mail, text exchange, or secure messaging platforms, between January 20, 2017, and today? If yes, please identify dates of contact and the text of the exchanges.

Answer. To the best of my recollection, since January 2017 I have not had additional contact with Iranian officials beyond the meetings discussed, other than to arrange logistical details for those in-person meetings. I do not have records of those exchanges.

*Question.* Do you agree that a credible option to use military force is an important component of U.S. policy to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and to deter Iran's regional ambitions?

Answer. Should Iran threaten U.S. personnel, the United States will respond in a way that is calculated, on our timetable, consistent with all applicable domestic and international law, and using a mix of tools seen and unseen.

*Question.* Do you believe there were gaps in the JCPOA that must be addressed to truly stop Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon?

Answer. As a non-nuclear-weapon state party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Under the JCPOA, Iran reaffirmed that under no circumstances would it ever seek, develop, or acquire any nuclear weapons and committed to a series of limits on its nuclear activities that would verifiably block any path to producing nuclear material for weapons for their duration. The Biden-Harris administration has made clear it is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* You have previously stated that the JCPOA provided the most comprehensive inspection regime ever negotiated. But in 2018, Israel revealed Iran's nuclear archive—which was unknown to the IAEA. Do you agree Iran lied to the IAEA about the possible military dimension (PMD) of its nuclear program?

Answer. The IAEA has made clear that it takes no information provided by Iran on its nuclear program at face value. The IAEA has previously reported that it found evidence of possible military dimensions of Iran's program to be credible, and that a "range of activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device were conducted in Iran prior to the end of 2003 as a coordinated effort, and some activities took place after 2003." The administration will not take Iran at its word regarding assertions about its nuclear program, and fully supports the IAEA as it uses its verification authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

*Question.* Can you describe your understanding of the regime's financial system with respect to terrorism finance, money laundering, corruption, and other illicit activity? Did the JCPOA change this behavior?

Answer. Iran remains the foremost state sponsor of terrorism. Its support for terrorism threatens our forces and partners in the region. President Biden is committed to countering Iran's destabilizing activities, including its ballistic missile program and support for terrorist groups and violent proxies in the region. The United States and our partners negotiated a deal that verifiably prevented Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and subjected it to the most intrusive inspection regime ever negotiated. It was working. The President has made clear that the United States will be prepared to resume participation in the deal if Iran resumes strict compliance, as a starting point for follow-on negotiations to lengthen and strengthen these nuclear constraints, and address other issues of concern, including Iran's ballistic missile program and its destabilizing regional activity.

*Question.* Do you agree that the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (INARA) is permanent law and is binding on the Biden administration?

**Answer.** The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) is binding law. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to implementing the requirements of INARA.

**Question.** Do you agree that because INARA requires any agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran to be submitted to Congress for review “regardless of the form it takes”, “whether a political commitment or otherwise”, and “regardless of whether it is legally binding or not”, that any informal agreement, including even an unwritten oral understanding, reached about how the United States and Iran will return to compliance with the JCPOA, or move in the direction of returning to compliance with the JCPOA, must be submitted to Congress for review pursuant to INARA?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran’s nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was submitted under INARA in 2015 and underwent close Congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including with respect to the transmission requirement.

**Question.** Do you agree that prior to and during the period for transmission of an agreement to Congress for review pursuant to INARA, and during the period for congressional review provided in INARA, “the President may not waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under any provision of law or refrain from applying any such sanctions pursuant to an agreement” required to be transmitted to Congress for review pursuant to INARA?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran’s nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was submitted under INARA in 2015 and underwent close Congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including with respect to the transmission requirement.

**Question.** Do you agree that the sanctions that may not be waived, suspended or otherwise obviated under the circumstances described in the preceding question include sanctions that may have been waived, suspended or otherwise obviated pursuant to the JCPOA following congressional review of that agreement pursuant to INARA, but which were subsequently re-imposed by the United States Government?

**Answer.** I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to implementing the requirements of INARA and if confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including with respect to limitations during any congressional review period.

**Question.** Are you personally committed to upholding the spirit of INARA’s restrictions on sanctions relief for Iran referred to in the preceding two questions by not seeking to extend sanctions relief to Iran in circumvention of those restrictions?

**Answer.** I am aware that the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) contains certain limitations on sanctions relief during the congressional review period. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to implementing the requirements of INARA. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

**Question.** Are you personally committed to ensuring that Congress will be able to review pursuant to INARA any agreement that is hereafter reached with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, irrespective of the level of formality or politically or legally binding nature of such agreement, to include any agreement providing for return to compliance with the JCPOA, as well as any agreement that amends, augments, or supersedes the JCPOA?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran’s nuclear program as called for under Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its transmission requirement.

**Question.** Do you agree that INARA requires the President to “keep the appropriate congressional committees and leadership fully and currently informed of any initiative or negotiations with Iran relating to Iran’s nuclear program, including any new or amended agreement”?



Answer. I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I commit to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA.

*Question.* Are you personally committed to keeping the appropriate congressional committees and leadership fully and currently informed of any initiative or negotiations with Iran relating to Iran's nuclear program, including any new or amended agreement?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA.

*Question.* Do you agree that INARA requires the President to submit a report to Congress not less frequently than every 180 calendar days "on Iran's nuclear program and the compliance of Iran with the [JCPOA] during the period covered by the report"?

Answer. I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA, and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its reporting requirements.

*Question.* Do you agree that INARA requires the President to make a determination and certification to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership not less than every 90 calendar days regarding Iran's compliance with the JCPOA?

Answer. I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA, and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including the requirement to determine whether to make the certification called for in Section 135(d)(6).

*Question.* Do you agree that, should any new agreement or agreements be reached with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, INARA will require the President to submit a report to Congress not less frequently than every 180 calendar days "on Iran's nuclear program and the compliance of Iran with [each such new agreement] during the period covered by the report"?

Answer. I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA, and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its semi-annual reporting requirements.

*Question.* Do you agree that, should any new agreement or agreements be reached with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, INARA will require the President to make a determination and certification to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership not less than every 90 calendar days regarding Iran's compliance with each such new agreement?

Answer. I am aware of reporting and certification requirements of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program, as called for under INARA, and to ensuring the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including the requirement to determine whether to make the certification called for in Section 135(d)(6).

*Question.* Do you agree that the Biden administration will be required under INARA to resume submitting reports and certifications to Congress that are mandated under INARA should the administration announce that the United States has returned to the JCPOA, or is returning to the JCPOA?

Answer. I am aware of the reporting and certification requirements of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program, as called for under INARA, and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its reporting requirements.

*Question.* If you agree that the Biden administration will be required under INARA to resume submitting such reports and certifications to Congress should it announce that the United States has returned to the JCPOA, or is returning to the JCPOA, on what date will the first such report be due, and on what date will the first such certification be due? If you are not able at this time to specify the dates on which such reports and certifications will be due, please specify the method or formula you will use to calculate the respective due dates.

*Answer.* I am aware of the reporting and certification requirements of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The United States has not announced it has returned to the JCPOA, and I am not able to specify dates for potential future reporting requirements. If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program, as called for under INARA, and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including meeting its reporting requirements in a timely manner.

*Question.* Can you assure the committee that there are no circumstances under which the Biden administration will not abide by the understandings about compliance with INARA spelled out in your responses to the foregoing questions?

*Answer.* I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to implementing the requirements of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

*Question.* Do you agree that U.S. policy in the region is best advanced when working closely with our ally Israel?

*Answer.* President Biden has been one of Israel's strongest supporters over the last fifty years. The U.S.-Israel relationship is deeply personal to him and he has met and worked closely with every Israeli Prime Minister since Golda Meir. The President believes the ties between our two countries, rooted in strategic interests and shared values, should transcend domestic politics. In this vein, his administration will not only further strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship, but also ensure that it enjoys bipartisan backing. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals to work closely with Israel, to include building on normalization agreements to strengthen cooperation between Israel and its neighbors.

*Question.* Do you believe Israel is and should always remain a Jewish State?

*Answer.* President Biden supports Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state. He continues to believe the two-state solution is the best way to ensure that Israel remains both Jewish and democratic. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's efforts to restore credible U.S. engagement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and look for opportunities for the type of diplomatic progress that can protect Israel's long-term security.

*Question.* Do you agree with United States policy (and law) that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel?

*Answer.* This administration recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and its ultimate status is a final status issue, which will need to be resolved by the parties in the context of direct negotiations. The administration will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you agree the United States Embassy in Israel should remain in Jerusalem?

*Answer.* The U.S. position is that our embassy will remain in Jerusalem, which we recognize as Israel's capital. The ultimate status of Jerusalem is a final status issue, which will need to be resolved by the parties in the context of direct negotiations.

*Question.* Do you support full funding for United States security assistance to Israel as laid out in the current 10-year Memorandum of Understanding?

*Answer.* President Biden's commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. As you know, the President played an important role in helping to negotiate the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on security assistance, among the largest aid packages in U.S. history. If confirmed, I will support the administration's pledge to preserve the terms of the MOU without reservation.

*Question.* The MOU is a comprehensive agreement that outlined the terms and conditions of this assistance to Israel. If confirmed, will you oppose efforts to impose additional conditions or restrictions on this aid?

*Answer.* The administration will continue to uphold President Biden's strong commitment to Israel and its security. If confirmed, I will advance the administration's position that we oppose efforts to place additional conditions on U.S. military assistance to Israel.

*Question.* Do you support the United States' commitment to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge?

**Answer.** The United States is required by law to help preserve Israel's Qualitative Military Edge in the Middle East. If confirmed, I will champion President Biden's priorities related to Israel's security, including our commitment to maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you make ensuring Israel's Qualitative Military Edge is maintained a priority?

**Answer.** President Biden's commitment to Israel's security is inviolable. If confirmed, I will support the administration's objective to continue U.S. military assistance to Israel and uphold Israel's Qualitative Military Edge, which is critical to ensuring Israel has the means to defend itself.

*Question.* Do you agree that the only way to reach a lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is through direct, bilateral negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians rather than one imposed by outside actors?

**Answer.** The United States is working toward a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous future for the people of the Middle East. As part of this, the United States seeks to advance the possibility of achieving a negotiated two-state solution, in which Israel lives in peace and security alongside a viable Palestinian state. If confirmed, I will support direct negotiations between the two parties to advance this goal. I will also support the administration's goals of working closely with Israel, engaging the Palestinians, and consulting with partners in the region who have a common interest in supporting efforts to advance lasting peace.

*Question.* Israel constantly faces terrorist attacks and threats—including rocket attacks by Hamas in Gaza and attacks from Iranian-backed groups in Lebanon and Syria. Do you fully support Israel's right to defend itself from terrorist attacks, including taking pre-emptive action to disrupt weapons shipments from Iran to its terrorist proxies?

**Answer.** President Biden's commitment to Israel's security is a key foreign policy tenet. The administration will continue U.S. military assistance to Israel and uphold Israel's Qualitative Military Edge, which is critical to ensuring Israel has the means to defend itself. The administration will take action, in coordination with our allies and partners, to both deter and counter Iran's destabilizing activities. There should be no doubt that the President has Israel's back. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals regarding Israel's security.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you make it a priority to counter the global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) campaign against Israel? Will you work to expand Israel's inclusion in the international community and ensure our ally is treated as a normal nation?

**Answer.** President Biden, Secretary Blinken, and I firmly oppose the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel. This movement unfairly singles out Israel and too often veers into anti-Semitism. While the Biden-Harris administration will respect the American people's First Amendment rights, it will not hesitate to voice our disapproval of the BDS campaign or to fight efforts to delegitimize Israel on the world stage. The administration will work tirelessly to support Israel's further integration into the international community.

*Question.* The International Criminal Court over the last several years has taken actions potentially leading to the prosecution of American and Israeli nationals despite neither country being a member of the court. If confirmed, will you oppose and work to prevent ICC prosecutions of Americans or Israelis?

**Answer.** The United States shares the goals of the ICC in promoting accountability, respect for human rights, and justice for victims of atrocities. However, the United States has always objected to any attempt by the ICC to investigate U.S. personnel, as the United States is not a State Party to the Rome Statute. If confirmed, I will work to protect U.S. personnel from legal jeopardy before the ICC. I share the administration's serious concerns about the ICC's attempts to exercise jurisdiction over Israeli personnel. Israel is not a State Party, and Palestine is not a State.

*Question.* Hezbollah's arsenal, particularly its precision guided munitions (PGM), represents a clear threat to U.S. and allied forces across the Middle East. If confirmed, what specific actions will you recommend the U.S. take to address the PGM threat from Hezbollah?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States uses all the tools at its disposal to push back on Hezbollah's terrorist and illicit activities. Hezbollah's actions threaten regional stability, as well as Lebanon's security, stability, and sov-

ereignty. Hezbollah's actions demonstrate it is more interested in advancing its own interests than those of the Lebanese people. If confirmed, I will also consult closely with Israel on how to address threats to regional security and stability.

*Question.* What actions will you take to press all our European allies and the United Nations to designate Hezbollah in its entirety as a terrorist entity?

*Answer.* Hezbollah has been designated by the State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization since 1997 and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist since 2001. The Department remains concerned about Hezbollah's terrorist and illicit activities around the world and its destabilizing actions in Lebanon. If confirmed, I will continue to advance our long-standing diplomatic efforts to press countries and the European Union to fully designate, ban, or restrict Hezbollah from operating in their territory. Thirteen governments around the world, including in Europe, took significant domestic action along these lines against Hezbollah in recent years. The administration will encourage others to follow suit.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work to ensure that the U.S. continues support for the Kurds of Syria during the Biden administration?

*Answer.* I am committed to supporting our local partners, the Syrian Democratic Forces. They cannot continue to root out ISIS terrorists or guard the tens of thousands of ISIS detainees and families who are still in their custody without U.S. support. If confirmed, I will also support renewed U.S. efforts to stabilize areas of northeast Syria liberated from ISIS, to include an ongoing Syrian Intra-Kurdish Dialogue, which aims to de-escalate tensions with the Syrian opposition and advance more inclusive governance in northeast Syria.

*Question.* In a July 2020 piece in Foreign Policy titled "The Total Destruction of U.S. Foreign Policy Under Trump", you criticized the Trump administration for having "made no effort to find areas of cooperation with China, such as climate change." Should cooperation or competition be the dominant U.S. policy approach to Beijing?

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken has said, "our relationship with China will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. The common denominator is the need to engage China from a position of strength." China has been growing more authoritarian at home and more assertive abroad. Beijing is now challenging our security, prosperity, and values in significant ways that require a new U.S. approach. If confirmed, I will be committed to meeting this challenge.

*Question.* If you seek to cooperate with the PRC, do you believe that the Chinese Communist Party will cooperate in good-faith?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration approaches China through the lens of strategic competition and recognizes there are adversarial and cooperative aspects to the U.S.-China relationship. The administration is willing to test whether China is willing to play a constructive role on certain issues but will be clear-eyed about China's intentions. China's failure to act consistently with its international obligations and commitments will significantly factor into how the U.S. approaches China on issues where our interests may align. If confirmed, I will keep these past shortcomings in mind in future dealings with Beijing and will consult with Congress on any potential areas of cooperation.

*Question.* Can you name bilateral agreements between the United States and the PRC that Beijing has honored in full and without later renegeing? How do you plan to ensure that Beijing fulfills its part of any agreement on climate change given its long record of broken promises?

*Answer.* China poses the most significant challenge of any nation-state to the interests of the American people. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working closely with our allies and partners to press China to act more constructively. If confirmed, I will be unflinching in our diplomacy with China on climate change. Given Beijing's track record of failing to honor its international obligations, the United States will keep eyes wide open and not limit its options in addressing the China challenge just because Beijing makes offers of cooperation. The administration will judge Beijing by its actions, not its words.

*Question.* Does China have more or fewer coal-fired power plants today than in 2016?

*Answer.* China has more coal-fired power plants now than it did in 2016. China currently has approximately 1,005 gigawatts (GW) of installed coal power generation capacity, which is roughly half of the world's total. According to the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air, China also accounts for 41 percent of planned

coal-power construction, approximately 200 GW over the next five to ten years. Although China has made efforts to decommission old coal plants and curtail future builds, it has continued to expand its coal-fired power fleet and added a net 36.8 GW and 29.8 GW of coal-fired generation capacity in 2019 and 2020, respectively. Media report that, in 2020, alone China built more than three times the amount built elsewhere around the world.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will the State Department, under your leadership, push for international transparency and accountability to ensure we learn what caused the COVID-19 pandemic and how to prevent the next pandemic?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration recognizes COVID-19 is a global challenge that requires a global response and will engage globally to respond to and recover from COVID-19, as well as to prepare for the next threat. The administration will work with allies and partners to strengthen and reform the WHO, push for a transparent investigation into the emergence and spread of COVID-19 to better prepare for future outbreaks, and support multilateral efforts to end the COVID-19 pandemic. The commitment to combat COVID-19, promote public health, and advance global health security, as embodied in National Security Memorandum-1, will save lives, foster economic recovery, and build better resilience against future biological threats.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit that the State Department will follow up on the Department's January 2021 disclosure of new information on activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology? Will you commit to sharing with Congress—and with the public as appropriate—further details on the disclosures including the names of the Wuhan Institute of Virology researchers who were sick in the fall of 2019?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has made clear it supports a robust and transparent investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. An impartial public health investigation into the origins and early spread of any novel outbreak is vital to protecting against future health security threats. The administration will review all information available to us about the origins of SARS-COV-2. It is imperative to have transparency on the early events of the pandemic and determine how COVID-19 spread, so future emergence events with pandemic potential can be averted. If confirmed, I commit to follow up—with Congress and with the public—on disclosures of new information and relevant diplomatic reporting.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you support the suspension of U.S. funding to research institutions in China engaged in virological studies, including the Wuhan Institute of Virology and all branches of the PRC Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and discontinue all joint research projects involving Chinese scientists and U.S. scientists that receive funding from the U.S. taxpayers so long as none of this impacts U.S. national security, until PRC authorities allow a credible and unfettered international investigation into the origin of SARS-COV-2?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing the current policy and funding priorities for any programs the Department may have for joint research projects with China.

*Question.* On April 3, 2020, you signed a statement entitled “Saving Lives in America, China, and Around the World,” which read in part: “No effort against the coronavirus—whether to save American lives at home or combat the disease abroad—will be successful without some degree of cooperation between the United States and China. China’s factories can make the protective gear and medicines needed to fight the virus; its medical personnel can share their valuable clinical experience in treating it; and its scientists can work with ours to develop the vaccine urgently needed to vanquish it.” Do you still believe today that the same regime that infected the world with this deadly virus, and then lied to cover it up, can really be part of the solution?

*Answer.* Promoting global health is in China’s interests as well as ours. It is not a favor to be bargained for, but a challenge best addressed with China’s cooperation. The Biden-Harris administration will test whether China is willing to play a constructive role on certain issues where we may share interests, such as global health, but will be clear-eyed about Chinese intentions. The administration will not trade off U.S. core interests or values in discussions with China or any other country.

*Question.* How would you characterize the nature of the Chinese Communist Party? Do you believe their worldview and value system are compatible with our own?

*Answer.* The Chinese Communist Party is illiberal, authoritarian, and increasingly aggressive. Under the Biden-Harris administration, the United States will ad-

vance an alternative world view that promotes democratic governance and transparency.

*Question.* What are the ambitions of the Chinese Communist Party? Are they purely domestic in scope? Regional? Global? If global, how do they challenge U.S. interests?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) seeks to expand its domestic, regional, and global influence and drive wedges between the United States and our partners and allies. The PRC's coercive economic activity and aggressive acquisition of critical technologies through licit and illicit means—coupled with a corresponding expansion of its military footprint and collection capabilities—seek to expand Chinese influence around the globe. These actions pose a threat to U.S. interests and undermine our own military, diplomatic, and economic influence. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense, other national security agencies, and Congress to address this challenge.

*Question.* In what areas do you think the United States should try to frustrate the CCP's ambitions and undermine the party's ability to achieve their international ambitions?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to working with our allies and partners to counter China's malign actions around the world. The U.S. should engage in international institutions and make the necessary investments in our military to ensure we can deter any aggression. Economically, we can and must out-compete China, including by preventing U.S. intellectual property and technology from being used in ways that could undermine our competitiveness and security. If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and partners to confront the challenges posed by China from a position of strength.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Chinese Communist Party's united front and intelligence activities inside the borders of the United States, as well as inside the borders of our allies and partners, challenge the integrity of our policymaking? Why?

*Answer.* It is important that we bring greater transparency to bear on malign People's Republic of China influence activities in the United States. China's use of information operations and other coercive and corrupting efforts to undermine and interfere in democracies poses a threat to the United States and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I will push back on Beijing's attempts to write the rules of the information age by working with allies and likeminded partners to support an affirmative, democratic vision for the global information space, while building resilience against these threats and exposing China's malign activity. Further, if confirmed, I will also work to educate important U.S. constituencies, including state and local governments, on these threats.

*Question.* Do you agree that the goal of the Chinese Communist Party is not merely to make China stronger and more developed, but rather for China to ultimately supplant the United States as the world's dominant economic, political, and military power?

*Answer.* The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) intends for the People's Republic of China, which is growing increasingly illiberal, authoritarian, and aggressive, to become a dominant world power. Its values are often at odds with our own. The administration is committed to working with our partners and allies to address the challenges the CCP poses to democratic values from a position of strength. The Department will communicate this clearly and directly in our public diplomacy efforts. The Department will confront the CCP's growing authoritarianism and escalating efforts to divide and manipulate others and write the rules of the information age. It will work with allies and partners to define an affirmative, democratic vision for the world.

*Question.* Is Xi Jinping's "Community of Common Destiny for Humanity" compatible with your views of the international order and the ways in which countries conduct diplomacy? If not, why not?

*Answer.* China seeks to make America and its allies more dependent on China and erode the international system that has provided peace and stability since the end of World War II. Xi's "Community of Common Destiny for Humanity" policy framework is no exception. If confirmed, I will prioritize renewed engagement with our allies and partners. I will rally their support to push back against China, including its attempts to reshape the international order and assert a set of values inconsistent with our own.

*Question.* How would you assess the United States' policy of engagement with Beijing from 1979 to 2017? In retrospect, did that policy effectively protect and advance of our most vital national interests? Do you support a return to that policy?

*Answer.* The strategic environment has changed significantly in recent years, as has China itself. While there was once a broad consensus that economic liberalization in China would lead to political liberalization, that has not happened. China has grown more authoritarian at home and more assertive abroad. The CCP is illiberal, authoritarian, and intends for China to become a dominant world power. Beijing is working across the spectrum to compete with and challenge the United States. This necessitates a new U.S. approach. If confirmed, I will commit to addressing China from a position of strength in coordination with allies and partners.

*Question.* Please explain how you believe the United States should act to defend our national interests when challenged by the Chinese authorities, even if our allies and partners are reluctant to join us.

*Answer.* The most effective way to defend our national interests when challenged by Chinese authorities is to build positions of strength with U.S. allies and partners. On its own, the United States represents about a quarter of global GDP. When we join with fellow democracies that share more than doubles. China cannot afford to ignore more than half the global economy.

When it is in the United States' interest to act on our own, we will do so. It is essential to confront directly China's economic abuses, defend our values, and protect the long-term prosperity and security of the United States.

*Question.* While multilateral efforts are preferable, do you support unilateral action to counter China's malign activities if diplomatic efforts to secure multilateral action should fail?

*Answer.* The challenges that China poses to our security, prosperity, and values, and how we conduct this competition in coordination with our allies and partners, will be crucial for defining the 21st century. PRC actions hurt American workers, blunt our technological edge, threaten our alliances, and undermine international organizations. If confirmed, I will work with partners and allies to counter Beijing's aggressive and coercive actions, sustain our military and economic advantages, and defend our democratic values from a position of strength. However, when it is in the United States' interest to act on our own, we should do so.

*Question.* If confirmed, in future dialogue with Beijing, will you press for meaningful progress as a precondition for further rounds of dialogue? Do you commit to supporting the administration and Secretary in raising issues that Beijing deems "sensitive"—such as human rights, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet, and the Uyghurs—regardless of whether doing so may affect the CCP's willingness to engage in further dialogue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will stand up for our values when human rights are being abused in Xinjiang and Tibet—or elsewhere in China—or when autonomy is being assaulted in Hong Kong. The administration is willing to test whether the Chinese Government is willing to play a constructive role on certain issues but will be clear-eyed about U.S. interests. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) failure to uphold its international commitments will significantly factor into how we develop our approach to the PRC. If confirmed, I will keep these past shortcomings in mind in future dealings with Beijing. The Biden-Harris administration will put our democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and stand up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity.

*Question.* Do you support the Trump administration's designation of the National Association for China's Peaceful Unification as a foreign mission of the PRC? What steps will you take to ensure other such front organizations are properly designated, and to inform relevant stakeholders within the U.S.—including state and local governments, universities, and business associations—of the nature and mission of such front organizations?

*Answer.* China's use of coercive and corrupting tools of influence to undermine and interfere in democracies is a concern for the United States and our allies and partners around the world. The Biden-Harris administration will take action to counter this malign Chinese influence, including by increasing transparency and accountability. The administration will work with our allies and likeminded partners to build resilience against these threats, to expose China's malign activity and, when appropriate, to impose costs. The administration will also work with important U.S. constituencies, including state and local governments and academic institutions, to address these threats.

*Question.* Do you support the Trump administration's reciprocity requirements that PRC diplomats report certain categories of meetings to the U.S. Government, including meetings with educational institutions and Chinese community groups?

*Answer.* The United States seeks for our diplomats in China the same open access PRC officials enjoy in the United States. For years, Beijing has systematically obstructed access by U.S. officials. The administration will use all the tools at our disposal to achieve reciprocal access for our diplomats in China.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that human rights concerns are integrated in every senior bilateral engagement, and that specific prisoner cases are raised at the highest levels, both publicly and privately, with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will put our democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and stand up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. Effective diplomacy on human rights issues requires not only general statements but also targeted engagement on specific cases. If confirmed, I will integrate advocacy on specific cases into our human rights diplomacy.

*Question.* Do you see the link between China's pervasive, egregious human rights abuses and its failure on so many other fronts to be a responsible global actor?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China seeks international acceptance of its authoritarian alternative to the rules-based international system that has been the mainstay of global security and prosperity over the course of decades. At the same time, Beijing denies or obfuscates that it has an alarming record of violations and abuses of international human rights. If confirmed, I will work with the Department to challenge authoritarian governance and stand up for the human rights of all individuals, including by calling on PRC authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms consistent with China's international obligations and commitments.

*Question.* In December 2018, Chinese authorities detained Pastor Wang Yi of the Autumn Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, and one year later, sentenced him to nine years in prison for refusing to accept the CCP controls of his congregation described above. If confirmed, will you agree to raise Pastor Wang's case with leaders in Beijing and advocate for his immediate and unconditional release until they do so?

*Answer.* I share your concerns regarding the deterioration of freedom of religion and belief in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Religious leaders are at particular risk of PRC repression and are pressured to join state-run religious organizations, as we have seen in the cases of Buddhist lamas, Muslim imams, Protestant pastors, and Catholic bishops and priests. Pastor Wang Yi is no exception and, if confirmed, I will continue the Department's advocacy for his release. Effective diplomatic engagement on human rights issues requires not only general statements but also engagement on specific cases. If confirmed, I will advocate on specific human rights cases.

*Question.* Former Secretary of State Pompeo rightly determined that the People's Republic of China is committing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities. Secretary Blinken agreed with this determination. Do you concur with former Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Blinken?

*Answer.* Yes. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has committed crimes against humanity and genocide in Xinjiang. Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups have suffered unspeakable oppression at the hands of China's authoritarian government. The PRC is engaged in atrocities that shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences. If confirmed, I will speak out consistently with allies and partners to condemn these atrocities, and I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and to deter future abuses.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work toward getting like-minded countries to join the United States in a genocide determination?

*Answer.* Secretary Blinken said in his judgment that the People's Republic of China (PRC) has committed genocide against Uyghurs, and I agree. The PRC also has committed crimes against humanity in Xinjiang against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, including imprisonment, torture, enforced sterilization, and persecution. The associated abuses in Xinjiang are particularly devastating to ethnic minority women and girls. These atrocities shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences. If confirmed, I will speak out consistently and jointly with allies and



partners to condemn these atrocities and will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and deter future abuses.

*Question.* Will you endorse the Rubio-McGovern Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act to prevent Beijing from profiting from its abuse of Uyghur and other persecuted groups' labor?

*Answer.* While I cannot comment on pending legislation, I can confirm that the Biden-Harris administration stands against forced labor and abuses targeting Uyghurs and other minority groups carried out by the People's Republic of China (PRC). If confirmed, I will work with international partners to promote accountability for the PRC's atrocities in Xinjiang, press for the immediate and unconditional release of all those arbitrarily detained, the abolition of the internment camps and an end to forced labor, as well as the cessation of all other human rights abuses in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China. In addition, if confirmed, I will support efforts across the government to limit the profits China gains from forced labor.

*Question.* Do you believe that the National Liberation Army (ELN) is a terrorist organization?

*Answer.* The National Liberation Army (ELN) is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is a terrorist organization?

*Answer.* The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224.

*Question.* Cuba harbors terrorists groups like the ELN. Do you support keeping Cuba on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has committed to carefully reviewing decisions made in the prior administration, including the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. The administration will also carefully review policy related to Cuba and will provide further information at the appropriate time. The administration does not discuss deliberations or potential deliberations regarding designations.

*Question.* The Cuban regime denies the Cuban people essential liberties such as free association, expression, belief, and access to information. How would you characterize the Cuban regime's human rights record?

*Answer.* Cuba has a poor human rights record. The Cuban Government has increased its practice of arbitrary arrest and harassment of human rights defenders, journalists, and anyone who criticizes the Government. If confirmed, I will follow through on the Biden-Harris administration's promise to ensure that democracy and human rights remain at the core of our policy efforts toward Cuba. The administration will engage directly with a large swath of Cuban civil society, with the goal of empowering the Cuban people to determine their own future. The administration will also engage directly the Cuban Government to denounce abuses and push for reform.

*Question.* The Cuban military plays a large role in controlling the flow of money in the Cuban economy. They use this control to support the Cuban Communist Party and ensure regime survival. Do you support restricting financial transactions with the Cuban military as a way to promote freedom in Cuba?

*Answer.* The Cuban people face great hardship as they deal with the pandemic, economic upheaval caused by the country's recent monetary measures, and decades of living under an oppressive government that has failed to responsibly manage Cuba's economy. The administration has committed to carefully reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, including our posture regarding economic sanctions on Cuba, to ensure they advance the administration's goal of empowering the Cuban people to determine their future. If confirmed, I will support the Department's review of the policy with an eye toward assessing its impact on the political and economic well-being of the Cuban people, and I look forward to consulting with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* Do you agree that Americans should be compensated for property that was confiscated by the Castro regime?

*Answer.* Many Americans waited decades for compensation due to the Cuban Government's confiscation of their or their family's property. The Department will explore the best ways to support claimants and resolve outstanding claims. The ad-

ministration committed to carefully reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, including the best way to advance U.S. nationals' claims against the Cuban Government. The administration recognizes the varied views in Congress, and if confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress in developing a path forward.

*Question.* Do you agree with Secretary Pompeo's decision to no longer exercise the suspension authority in the LIBERTAD Act, which allows Americans to sue in U.S. courts, companies trafficking in their stolen properties?

*Answer.* The administration has committed to carefully reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, including U.S. posture regarding the suspension authority in Title III of the LIBERTAD Act. I understand that the administration is exploring ways to best support U.S. nationals' claims. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* Do you agree we should maintain strong sanctions against Cuba and Venezuela as the Cuban regime provides intelligence and other vital support to the Maduro regime in Caracas in exchange for subsidized or free oil?

*Answer.* The United States should maintain strong sanctions targeting the illegitimate Maduro regime and its enablers, including those complicit in human rights abuses and corruptly siphoning wealth and resources from the Venezuelan people. The administration is also committed to taking all appropriate steps to prevent our sanctions from impacting humanitarian access and delivery.

*Question.* Do you support Interim President Juan Guaido in the pursuit of the restoration of democracy in Venezuela?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration continues to recognize Juan Guaido as the interim President of Venezuela. If confirmed, I will press for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela through holding of free and fair elections.

*Question.* Do you support democracy assistance to the Cuban people to promote democracy, civil society and human rights in Cuba pursuant to U.S. law?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will follow through on the Biden-Harris administration's promise to ensure that the advancement of democracy and human rights remains at the core of our policy efforts toward Cuba. The Biden-Harris administration will engage directly with a large swath of Cuban civil society, with the goal of empowering the Cuban people to determine their own future. The administration will also engage with the Cuban Government to denounce abuses and push for reform. I am committed to consulting closely with Congress about Cuba policy, if confirmed.

*Question.* The Helms amendment states, "No foreign assistance funds may be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions." If confirmed, can you guarantee there will be a strict adherence to the Helms amendment in the administration of U.S. foreign assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will take the Helms Amendment and other legislative restrictions, including other restrictions related to abortion, very seriously and will work with partners to ensure compliance.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* March 15 will mark the 10th anniversary of the brutal crackdown by Syrian president Bashar al-Assad against peaceful protestors, resulting in a violent and protracted civil war. I am concerned that U.S. actions in Syria in the last four years have not reflected a robust decision-making process focused on supporting our allies and countering malign actors. Having visited our Kurdish partners in 2018, I have seen first-hand the value of an engaged U.S. policy on Syria. What actions are available for the United States to take now to improve the outcome in Syria?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration's policy goals in Syria include achieving a comprehensive political resolution under the parameters of UNSCR 2254, ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS, and promoting the provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to Syrians in need. The administration will use a variety of tools, across a coordinated whole-of-government approach, to push for a sustainable end to the Syrian people's suffering. Any political settlement must address the factors that drive violence and instability in Syria. Additionally, the humanitarian situation is

dire. If confirmed, I will work within the administration to do more to aid vulnerable Syrians displaced within Syria, as well as refugees who fled abroad.

*Question.* How should the U.S. balance Turkey, the Kurds and Russia in responding to the situation in Northeastern Syria?

*Answer.* Preventing an ISIS resurgence in Iraq and Syria demands revitalized U.S. engagement. The administration is committed to supporting our local partners, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The United States has shared interests with Turkey in countering terrorism and ending the conflict in Syria and understands Turkey's concerns about U.S. cooperation with the People's Protection Units (YPG) as part of the SDF in the Defeat-ISIS campaign, which we will continue to address. The administration will continue to consult with Turkey on Syria as it seeks areas for cooperation. The United States has always been open to dialogue with Russia on Syria, as long as the dialogue contributes to protecting civilians and to credibly moving forward on a political resolution to the conflict.

*Question.* I was pleased to see the Biden administration implementing a sanctions regime against those responsible for the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Aleksei Navalny and the continued construction on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. On Nord Stream 2, what next steps should the administration take to stop the Nord Stream 2 pipeline?

*Answer.* The administration believes the Nord Stream 2 pipeline is a bad deal and a threat to European energy security, including Ukraine and other vulnerable partners. The administration welcomes Congress's interest and appreciates Congressional efforts to provide the tools needed to combat Russian aggressive actions. In a February 19 report to Congress, the Department identified Russia-based KVT-RUS as an entity knowingly selling, leasing, or providing the vessel FORTUNA for the construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project, as required by PEESA, as amended. I understand that the Department will continue to inform companies about the risks of doing business with Nord Stream 2 and use all available tools to examine entities potentially involved in sanctionable activity, as outlined by CAATSA and PEESA, as amended. It will also continue its diplomatic engagement with key European partners and allies to outline our serious concerns regarding the project's geopolitical implications for Europe's energy security.

*Question.* How do you view the timeline for the administration to act to stop the pipeline? Is there a point after which our options to stop the pipeline are limited?

*Answer.* The administration's efforts to date aimed at stopping the pipeline, aided by the authorities granted by Congress, have significantly slowed the pipeline's pace of construction. It is of the utmost importance to maintain this high level of engagement and diplomatic pressure to prevent the pipeline's completion. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department of State maintains this high level of engagement and diplomatic pressure.

*Question.* What should next steps for broad, coherent U.S. policy response to Russian aggression look like? How are the Navalny sanctions part of a wider strategy to respond to and deter Russia?

*Answer.* President Biden has made clear that the United States will act firmly in defense of its national interests in response to actions by Russia that harm us or our allies. On March 2, the administration took action to impose costs on the Russian Federation for the poisoning, arrest, and imprisonment of Aleksey Navalny. The United States will continue to take action to counter Russia's malign actions and will comply with the legal obligations to impose a second round of sanctions under the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991. As the administration works to advance U.S. interests, it will continue to hold Russia accountable for its destabilizing activity, disregard for international law, including its repeated use of chemical weapons in violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and human rights violations.

*Question.* What additional legal tools does the administration need to stop this pipeline?

*Answer.* I appreciate Congressional support to stop this pipeline. The administration has a number of sanctions tools at its disposal to stop Nord Stream 2, including the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), and the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). As you know, PEESA and CAATSA Section 232 provide more specific tools targeting Russian energy export pipelines, which can be supplemented by IEEPA if needed. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the ample tools Congress has already provided. I will also work to maintain the high

level of engagement with companies and diplomatic pressure to bring an end to the pipeline's construction.

*Question.* How can the administration better amplify the concerns of our central and eastern European allies to persuade Danish and German authorities to stop the pipeline?

*Answer.* The administration has made clear to Germany and other European partners that Nord Stream 2 is not just a commercial deal. It views this project as a threat not only to Europe's energy security but also to strategic stability on the continent. The German and Danish authorities are aware of the U.S. position from frequent and high-level interaction and statements, and the administration will continue all such efforts. The United States will also continue to work with our allies and partners, including Germany, Denmark, Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic states, to ensure Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that does not undermine collective security.

*Question.* From the administration's point of view, what aspects of the pipeline's construction are the most vulnerable to targeted sanctions that could stop the project?

*Answer.* To date, targeted outreach to Western insurers and certification, engineering, and construction firms, including companies providing pipe-laying vessels, have significantly affected the rate of the pipeline's construction with many entities winding down their operations and untold more refusing to engage with Nord Stream 2 AG given the risk of sanctions. The administration will continue to be clear that companies risk sanctions if they involve themselves in Nord Stream 2 construction and will continue to monitor companies involved in potentially sanctionable activities.

*Question.* Georgia has been on a dangerous backslide away from democracy for several years now. Recent developments, including the arrest and detention of Russian opposition leader Nika Melia, threats to further destabilize Georgia and the region. What policy responses are available to the United States? How should the U.S. work with European allies to develop an international consensus on Georgia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to support the Georgian people's choice to pursue closer ties with the EU and NATO and, as Congress has done, voice strong U.S. support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. In its messaging of support for Georgia's future in the context of recent developments, the Department has emphasized the importance of Georgian leaders and politicians modeling the values and norms of the Euro-Atlantic community they aspire to join. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and European allies to help identify opportunities to support Georgia's democratic development, including reforms to foster judicial independence and a level electoral playing field, as well as anticorruption and pro-business reforms. U.S. assistance directly supports these goals. I am committed to ensuring U.S. assistance to Georgia advances U.S. policy objectives.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*Question.* Last week I sent a letter cosigned by the other GOP ranking members of national security committees to provide our vision for a successful renegotiation with Iran over its nuclear program and its regional aggression. As you are probably aware, I was a vocal critic of the previous JCPOA and I believe that the Biden administration has a rare opportunity to fix the fatal flaws of the previous agreement.

Specifically, my colleagues and I would like to see that the nuclear issue and Tehran's regional aggression be addressed together. Iran remains the number one state sponsor of terror, and it would be a critical mistake to separate the two issues. Additionally, there should be no financial relief for Iran to meet their pre-conditions for diplomatic talks. This is a mistake that is often repeated time and again, not just in our negotiations with Iran, but with rogue regimes worldwide.

- If confirmed, do you commit to addressing Iran's nuclear program and regional aggression together in any future diplomatic negotiations, while opposing any such deal that includes one without the other? Do you agree to not grant concessions as a precondition to diplomatic talks?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration agrees that we need to supplement the JCPOA if we want a deal that is sustainable. There are several issues the deal did

not address, including Iran's ballistic missile development, proliferation, and destabilizing regional activities. Iran also remains the foremost state sponsor of terrorism, threatening international security and U.S. forces, diplomatic personnel, and partners in the region and elsewhere. The administration is ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA, and then use it as a platform to negotiate a longer, stronger nuclear deal, and other critical issues.

*Question.* Do you agree to not grant concessions as a precondition to diplomatic talks?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration will not make decisions based on artificial Iranian deadlines. The President made clear he is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and the administration believes diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal. The administration is ready to engage in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA and then use it as a platform to negotiate a longer, stronger nuclear deal and other areas of concern. Iran continues to exceed JCPOA limits on many fronts, so we are a long way from that point.

*Question.* Senator Cardin and I worked together to push back against the politically motivated global boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement unfairly targeting Israel. These efforts have achieved widespread bipartisan support in the Senate, and we look forward to working with your State Department to ensure that Israel is not unfairly targeted through these efforts.

- What is your view on the strategic US/Israel relationship and can we count on your support to oppose global BDS movements against Israel?

Answer. President Biden, Secretary Blinken, and I firmly oppose the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel. This movement unfairly singles out Israel and too often veers into anti-Semitism. While the Biden-Harris administration will respect the American people's First Amendment rights, the administration will not hesitate to voice our disapproval of the BDS campaign or to fight efforts to delegitimize Israel on the world stage.

#### *Anti-Normalization laws in the Middle East*

The Trump administration achieved major breakthroughs in Israel's relations with the Middle East. Senator Booker and I plan to re-introduce a bill called "Strengthening Reporting of Actions Taken Against the Normalization of Relations with Israel Act" to capitalize on this moment. This bill requires the Department of State to report instances of Arab Government efforts to undermine people-to-people engagement with Israeli citizens and residents. I believe it is imperative that the normalization of formal relations between Arab Governments and Israel is extended down to these countries' citizens.

- How crucial is it that instances of anti-normalization laws are documented publicly, and what further actions can the administration take to ensure that people are not punished for engaging with Israeli citizens?

Answer. The 2020 normalization agreements are an important contribution to peace and security in the Middle East. The Biden-Harris administration will seek to build on these efforts to expand the circle of peace between Israel and its neighbors, urging states and multilateral organizations with anti-normalization legislation or decrees to revoke them immediately so that negotiations can commence. The administration will also closely monitor the status of the existing agreements to encourage both sides to uphold their commitments to establish full diplomatic relations.

*Question.* Here in the Senate we have worked hard to provide the right framework for Ukrainian Security assistance-I am proud to have been a principle author of the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, a program that has provided the Ukrainians billions in military aid and training. Under the previous administration, we have provided increased amounts of lethal assistance, and I was glad to see in the NDAA that \$125 million is set aside for lethal assistance-all of this aid is appropriately tied to continued Ukrainian sector reforms, which I am glad to see President Zelensky is committed to.

- Can I get your commitment to continue the support of robust funding for USAI while supporting corruption and continued reforms in Ukraine?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to provide robust security assistance to Ukraine, including lethal defensive weapons, and to support continued reforms in Ukraine. The Department will oversee the execution of \$115 million in Foreign Military Financing (FMF), \$3 million in International Military Education and

Training (IMET), and \$6 million in Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) funds that Congress appropriated for Ukraine for FY 2021. Additionally, if confirmed, I will closely coordinate with the Department of Defense in the execution of \$275 million that Congress appropriated for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI) in FY 2021, including the process to certify that the Government of Ukraine has taken substantial actions to make defense institutional reforms before the final tranche of \$150 million in USAI funding is released.

*Question.* For two decades, the Chinese Government has systematically recruited U.S. researchers and sent Chinese military researchers to steal U.S. taxpayer-funded research and intellectual property at U.S. universities and institutes. This has led to the U.S. taxpayer unwittingly funding the rise of China's military and economy. This has to stop.

Last Congress, the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee passed Senator Carper's and I's Securing American Innovation Act. This bipartisan legislation will increase visibility on who is conducting our federally funded research, their potential conflicts of interest, and potentially problematic ties with our adversaries. More importantly, it will provide the State Department the authority to deny visas to foreign researchers whose problematic affiliations and access to export-controlled technologies through fundamental research raise national security concerns. We took a balanced approach with this bill. We need foreign researchers to work with our researchers here, but we need to take common-sense steps to prevent bad actors from coming to the United States.

- Do you agree that these new visa authorities are necessary, and how will they better protect taxpayer-funded research and intellectual property from foreign adversaries?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the Department guards against the transfer of sensitive technology to foreign adversaries. The Department will implement existing visa ineligibility grounds targeting this activity. Presidential Proclamation 10043, issued in May 2020, suspends the entry of the People's Republic of China (PRC) nationals to study or conduct research if the applicant is affiliated with an identified PRC entity that implements or supports China's military-civil fusion strategy. The United States continues to welcome legitimate students and scholars from China and around the world and promote the United States for international science and technology talent critical to our research enterprise. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on reviewing legislation to further State's work and role in these efforts.

#### *International Criminal Court Mandate*

*Question.* As you are aware, last year the appeals chamber of the ICC allowed a politically motivated investigation into alleged actions of US and allied personnel in Afghanistan to move forward. This court has no jurisdiction over the US as we are not a signatory to the Rome Statute. I was glad to see that the Trump administration responded with financial sanctions and the restriction of travel visas for foreign individuals assisting the ICC in this manner.

However, just last month, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber granted authorization for an investigation into alleged crimes in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem to move forward. Like the United States, Israel is not a signatory to the Rome Statute. This is not the first time that the ICC has conducted a politically motivated investigation. My good friend Senator Cardin and I led a bi-partisan letter on this issue along with 67 other Senators asking the State Department to push back on the ICC's decision to prosecute Israel for alleged war crimes in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza. And this month, we plan to send to the Biden administration a follow up to that letter asking for a firmer stance on these politically motivated investigations. Like us, Israel is not a signatory to the Rome Statute and in our view this is harmful to the peace process and again, outside of the ICC's jurisdiction.

- Do you agree that the ICC's expansion of their mandate is detrimental to prospects of a negotiated settlement between Israel and the Palestinian authority and what additional actions can be taken to push back against the expansion of the ICC's legal mandate?

*Answer.* I share the administration's serious concerns about the ICC's attempts to exercise jurisdiction over Israeli personnel. Israel is not a State Party, and Palestine is not a State. A peaceful, secure and more prosperous future for the people of the Middle East depends on building bridges and creating new avenues for dialogue and exchange, not unilateral judicial actions that exacerbate tensions and undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution.

*Question.* What steps would you take to protect U.S. service and allied coalition members from the ICC's jurisdiction?

*Answer.* I share the concerns and the objection by the United States to any attempt by the ICC to investigate U.S. personnel, as the United States is not a State Party to the Rome Statute. If confirmed, I will work to protect U.S. personnel from legal jeopardy before the ICC. I also share the administration's serious concerns about the ICC's attempts to exercise jurisdiction over Israeli personnel. We will continue to uphold our strong commitment to Israel and its security, including by opposing actions that seek to target Israel unfairly.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*Question.* For several months, tens of thousands of farmers have been camping out on the outskirts of New Delhi, demanding the repeal of three agricultural laws they say will drive down crop prices and negatively affect their earnings. Multiple rounds of talks between farm union leaders and the central government have taken place, but have not yet resulted in a resolution. As part of its response, Prime Minister Modi's Government has shut down internet service in several districts, impeding access to information and compromising protesters' fundamental right to freedom of expression. It has also arrested activists on suspicion of sedition for allegedly advocating for support of the farmer protests. Internet freedom in India continues to decline as the central government utilizes internet shutdowns to clamp down on dissent, including for these protests and in the Jammu and Kashmir region. As Deputy Secretary of State, what steps will you take to ensure digital access is not obstructed in India?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the growing use of government-imposed Internet shutdowns around the world, including in India, which restrict the rights of individuals online. If confirmed, I will speak out against this worrying global trend and use bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, including through U.N. bodies and the Freedom Online Coalition, to raise our concerns with governments that engage in this practice, including India. I will emphasize the need to protect freedom of expression, which includes the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information, both online and offline.

*Question.* Many of those protesting come from the northern Indian states of Punjab and Haryana, regions with a significant Sikh population. The Indian Government has labeled some of the farmers and their supporters as "anti-national" and questioned their allegiance to India. What will you do to encourage the Indian Government to respect the right to protest for all its citizens?

*Answer.* The freedoms of expression, association, religion or belief, and peaceful assembly are universal human rights. If confirmed, I will use the full array of diplomatic tools to encourage the Indian Government to respect these human rights.

*Question.* In 2019, then-Secretary Pompeo announced that the United States would "no longer recognize Israeli settlements as per se inconsistent with international law" and rescinded a 1978 legal opinion that then-Legal Adviser Herbert Hansell provided to Congress reaching a contrary conclusion that said, "civilian settlements in those territories is inconsistent with international law." This legal justification was never publicly released or provided to Congress. How do you view this issue?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration believes that the two-state solution is the best way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state and to give the Palestinians the state to which they are entitled. If confirmed, I will support the administration's focus on urging both Israel and the Palestinians to avoid unilateral steps, such as annexation of territory, settlement activity, demolitions, incitement to violence, and providing compensation for individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism, that exacerbate tensions and make it more difficult to preserve the viability of a two-state solution.

*Question.* If confirmed as Deputy Secretary, would you work to reverse that decision?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to urge both Israel and the Palestinians to refrain from unilateral steps that exacerbate tensions and undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution, such as annexation

of territory, settlement activity, demolitions, incitement to violence, and providing compensation for individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you provide Congress with the Trump administration's Hansell opinion to include its legal justification for the decision, and any new decision the Department may reach under Secretary Blinken?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the administration's focus on urging both Israel and the Palestinians to avoid unilateral steps that exacerbate tensions and make it more difficult to preserve the viability of a two-state solution. This will include engaging Congress on significant policy matters related to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Do you believe the EU's recent commercial agreement with China is already putting the United States on its back foot when seeking to bring a unified front?

*Answer.* It is a demonstration of the amount of work we have before us to reinvigorate our transatlantic alliance and develop a more unified response to the challenge posed by China. If confirmed, I will engage actively with our EU and other European partners on shared concerns about China. My engagements will include discussions on how to advance our shared economic interests and counter China's aggressive and coercive actions, prevent goods made with forced labor from entering global markets, create a level playing field and promote private enterprise, and highlight China's failure to uphold its international commitments.

Ultimately, the onus will be on China to show that its new pledges on forced labor, state-owned enterprises, and subsidies in the new agreement are not just cheap talk.

*Question.* Some U.S. partners with whom we will have to cooperate to best tackle the foreign policy challenges of the coming decades are not democracies or are illiberal ones. They occupy key positions in the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia, and we may find ourselves relying on them more. How do you believe the United States should be cooperating with the Governments of Vietnam, the Philippines, India, or our Gulf partners, even as we have concerns about human rights, democratic values, and good governance?

*Answer.* As you rightly point out, the United States cannot always choose the partners it must work with in addressing the most pressing foreign policy challenges we face. Further, there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to foreign policy, and no country has a perfect human rights record. I believe the United States should approach cooperation on a case-by-case basis, working to advance U.S. interests while also placing democracy and human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy. As President Biden said, "Diplomacy is back at the center of our foreign policy." The United States must repair our alliances and engage with the world once again to meet accelerating global challenges—from the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation—which will only be solved by nations working together. We cannot do it alone. If confirmed, I will seek to work in partnership with countries where we have a national security interest, while at the same time addressing human rights concerns, promoting good governance, and upholding our democratic values.

*Question.* The Biden administration has spoken of the need to work closely with allies and partners to develop a coordinated response to the China challenge. What specific differences in approach do you expect to be most difficult to resolve?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will put alliances and partnerships at the center of U.S. foreign policy to advance shared norms and values that underpin peace and security and compete with China from a position of strength. The United States will consult with allies and partners on a coordinated approach to the People's Republic of China's (PRC) coercive economic practices, human rights abuses, malign influence operations, and other key challenges. The administration will work with the EU, our Indo-Pacific and NATO allies, the Quad, and others to restore our vital security partnerships, secure the technologies of the future, re-engage in the U.N. system, and address attempts by the PRC to undermine the international rules-based system.



*Question.* The Biden administration has stated that it hopes to cooperate with China on such pressing global issues as climate change, proliferation, and global health. How would you respond to concerns that the administration might downplay areas of friction with China in order to make progress on these global priorities?

*Answer.* Combatting climate change; opposing the proliferation of sensitive goods and technology related to WMD, missile systems, and advanced conventional weapons; and promoting global health are in China's interest as well as ours. They are not favors to be bargained for. If confirmed, I will test whether China is willing to play a constructive role on certain issues where we may share interests but will be clear-eyed about Chinese intentions, while advancing the interests of the American people. Our core interests and values will not be traded off in discussions with China or any other country. Further, the Department of State will seek Congressional input on potential areas of cooperation.

*Question.* India is making great strides in developing renewable energy sources, but continues to rely heavily on coal-fired power generation. Will you seek to work with India on balancing its growing power consumption with a mutual interest in addressing climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

*Answer.* I fully support the administration's ongoing efforts, led by Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, to work with India on more ambitious climate commitments. As Secretary Blinken noted in his confirmation hearing, the Biden-Harris administration is committed to ensuring developing countries can meet their energy needs while also reducing their emissions and building resilience against the destabilizing impacts of climate change—both of which have clear benefits not only for the recipient countries, but also for the United States and the rest of the world. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to promote affordable energy in the developing world consistent with our nation's energy and climate goals.

In view of Prime Minister Modi's announced target of installing 450 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, if confirmed, I would support the work advancing cost-effective strategies to enhance the flexibility and robustness of India's electricity grid to encourage India's clean energy transition over the next decade. If confirmed, I would prioritize lower-cost alternatives to carbon-intensive energy such as coal-fired power, including by promoting renewable energy, battery storage, and load shifting.

*Question.* How do you intend to engage Pakistan as a player in U.S. strategy toward the Indo-Pacific region?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will push for an open and honest bilateral relationship with Pakistan that stands on its own merits based on our mutual interests. Despite a challenging relationship, I believe that continued cooperation with Pakistan is possible on shared priorities like securing a responsible end to the conflict in Afghanistan, advancing regional security and fighting terrorism, expanding bilateral commerce, and addressing climate change. By fostering productive ties with all countries in the Indo-Pacific region, we hope to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values.

*Question.* Do you view increasing Chinese influence in Pakistan as an obstacle to U.S. interests?

*Answer.* I have concerns about many of China's activities globally and will raise and take action on those concerns whenever appropriate. While in principle the United States welcomes investments in infrastructure and economic development that are sustainable and meet international standards, I am concerned PRC-sponsored projects often lack transparency and impose unsustainable debts. If confirmed, I will work to encourage Pakistan to pursue a sustainable development path involving good governance, long-term capacity building, and market principles. U.S. diplomacy and cooperation with Pakistan reflects a vision for a region of independent and prosperous nations at peace with each other and the rest of the world. If confirmed, I will continue to support that objective.

*Question.* To what extent will you prioritize cooperating with Islamabad in combatting Islamist militancy and stabilizing Afghanistan?

*Answer.* Cooperation with Islamabad in combatting terrorist groups in the region is a key part of U.S. efforts to seek a stable, peaceful Afghanistan through a just and durable political settlement, and success in this effort would be crucial to improved U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relations. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage the Pakistani Government to play a constructive role in advancing the Afghan peace process as a means to achieve a more stable and secure South Asia. Further, if con-

firmed, I will continue to work closely with Afghanistan's neighbors to press for a significant reduction in violence to facilitate progress in peace negotiations.

*Question.* Do you support the Abraham Accords and the landmark normalization agreements that occurred during the Trump administration?

Answer. Yes, I support the Abraham Accords and the Trump administration's role in negotiating them. The normalization agreements between Israel and its Arab neighbors are a positive step that reflect recognition among Israel and the states that have signed the agreements that they hold many interests in common and can most effectively address them through cooperation. The agreements are the product of years of quiet diplomacy between Israel and its neighbors supported by U.S. administrations from both parties.

*Question.* Do you intend to help Israel consolidate existing normalization arrangements and normalize its relations with other Arab states, and if so, how?

Answer. The 2020 normalization agreements are an important contribution to peace and security in the Middle East. The Biden-Harris administration will seek to build on the agreements to expand the circle of peace between Israel and its neighbors. The administration will also closely monitor the status of the normalization efforts to date, encouraging the states that have signed such agreements with Israel to uphold their commitments to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel.

*Question.* How will the administration approach arms sales and issues such as the Western Sahara impasse with Morocco in light of the normalization agreements to date?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration welcomes normalization agreements as an important contribution to regional peace and continues to review policy in numerous areas, including Western Sahara. The administration wants to see the appointment of a Personal Envoy of the U.N. Secretary-General and a renewed U.N.-led political process. Morocco is a major non-NATO ally, and our military-to-military partnership is a regional model. The administration looks forward to continued cooperation, including the upcoming Moroccan-hosted African Lion exercise, the largest joint military training and interoperability exercise in Africa. The State Department continues to ensure all arms sales meet U.S. national security objectives and reflect our values.

*Question.* Congress has passed two rounds of mandatory sanctions against Russia's Nord Stream 2 pipeline as part of the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) and Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act (PEESCA). These laws necessitate the imposition of sanctions against entities that engage in or support deep-sea pipe-laying for Nord Stream 2. As required under the laws, on February 19, 2021, the State Department submitted a report to Congress only identifying Russia's Fortuna vessel and its owner as engaging in sanctionable activities. However, media and other forms of public reporting, including visual data from reputable ship-tracking portals, indicate that numerous other vessels and companies are supporting the Fortuna's pipe-laying for Nord Stream 2. As required under PEESA and PEESCA, the State Department must immediately identify these entities to Congress and subject them to mandatory U.S. sanctions. When will the State Department submit an updated report to Congress that formally identifies these entities?

Answer. The State Department submits a report to Congress every 90 days on the provision of vessels engaged in pipe-laying and pipe-laying activities, and various entities providing and supporting those vessels, for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, as required by the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, with the next report due to Congress in mid-May. If confirmed, I will continue to use all available tools to counter Russian malign influence and to work with Allies and partners in the region to support Transatlantic energy security goals. I understand that the State Department is actively examining entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional persons and entities as appropriate.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* U.S. sanctions have taken a heavy toll on civilians in countries worldwide, particularly amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As a humanitarian matter and as a matter of global public health, would you consider strengthening humanitarian ex-

emptions through a worldwide temporary general license to ensure that sanctioned countries are able to obtain critical humanitarian resources, including the COVID-19 vaccine?

*Answer.* Many U.S. sanctions programs include provisions aimed at facilitating delivery of medical and other humanitarian supplies. If confirmed, I will continue the State Department's conversations with our allies and multinational and non-governmental organizations on these issues. I will also continue State's cooperation with the Department of the Treasury to use available tools, including issuance of clarifying guidance and expediting of license requests, to facilitate global delivery of humanitarian assistance particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. I would support initiatives by Treasury to explore additional options, which could include issuance of additional licenses to facilitate medical- or vaccine-related transactions.

*Question.* What specific recommended additional actions will the Biden administration pursue to hold Mohammed bin Salman, and senior Saudi officials, responsible for the murder of Mr. Khashoggi?

*Answer.* The administration has taken a number of concrete steps to recalibrate the relationship with Saudi Arabia. It followed the law and submitted an unclassified report to Congress on the horrific murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Under the Global Magnitsky Act, it sanctioned a former senior Saudi official and the group whose members were involved in the killing. The Department has taken action pursuant to a new visa restriction policy against 76 Saudi individuals believed to have been engaged in threatening dissidents overseas, including but not limited to the Khashoggi killing. The Department will report on any such extraterritorial activities by any government in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.

*Question.* We will not stop climate catastrophe here at home if we are supporting industries abroad engaging in ecocide. How will the Administration prioritize policies that dramatically reduce U.S. financial and diplomatic exposure in polluting industries abroad?

*Answer.* Dealing with climate change means investing in resilience and green energy here at home and leading a global effort to reduce carbon pollution. In his recent foreign policy speech, Secretary Blinken described these challenges as being simultaneously domestic and foreign. The administration is taking a whole-of-government approach to put climate change at the center of its domestic, national security and foreign policy, and to working with other nations to advance conservation promote green recovery; revitalize communities and cities; and secure environmental justice.

*Question.* Does U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, have specific instructions to make the return of Paul Overby—my constituent who went missing in Afghanistan/Pakistan in 2014—part of ongoing U.S. peace negotiations with the Taliban and the Government of Afghanistan?

*Answer.* I have been advised the Secretary specifically directed Ambassador Khalilzad to continue his efforts to press for the return of Paul Overby and of Mark Frerichs during engagements with the Taliban and with key regional partners.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

*Question.* On July 7, 2015, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee about Iran. He clearly stated, "Under no circumstances should we relieve pressure on Iran relative to ballistic missile capabilities and arms trafficking."

Only seven days later, you and the Obama-Biden Administration disregarded the views of the American commanders on the battlefield. As the lead negotiator of the Iran nuclear deal, you agreed to lift the arms embargo and restrictions on ballistic missile technologies.

- In any future negotiations, would you continue to disregard the advice our military commanders?

*Answer.* The President and his national security team will always take the advice of military commanders seriously. Iran's development and proliferation of ballistic missiles, as well as its delivery of weapons to violent proxies across the region, pose a threat to international security and remain significant challenges. These challenges existed despite the U.N. Security Council resolutions that aimed to address them.

The Biden-Harris administration will use a variety of nonproliferation tools to work to prevent the further advancement of Iran's missile program and its ability to proliferate technology to others, and will continue to enforce the U.S. arms embargo on Iran. The administration will also work with our partners to stop shipments of equipment and technology, seek to disrupt Iran's delivery of weapons to violent proxies, and use our engagement in multilateral fora to urge countries to take steps to address these activities.

*Question.* On October 18, 2020, the international arms embargo on Iran, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, was officially lifted.

- Considering the fact that you helped draft the agreement eliminating it in the first place, what specific steps, if any, will you take to reinstate the Iran arms embargo?

*Answer.* The administration will continue to push for full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions barring the unauthorized transfer of weapons to Lebanon and to the Houthis in Yemen, and also continue to use domestic authorities to dissuade countries from providing arms to Iran.

*Question.* What is your strategy to stop the dramatic increase of weapons flowing to terrorists and proxy groups in the region?

*Answer.* The administration will continue to use domestic authorities to dissuade countries from providing arms to Iran and continue to push for full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions barring the unauthorized transfer of weapons to Lebanon and to the Houthis in Yemen. The administration will also continue to use domestic authorities, including sanctions, to counter Iran's support for terrorism in the Middle East.

*Question.* The U.S. constitution provides the Senate the power to approve or reject treaties. Under your leadership, the Obama—Biden administration refused to submit the Iran nuclear deal to the Senate for its advice and consent. As one of the lead negotiators of the Iran nuclear deal, you played a major role in drafting the agreement in a way to avoid the ratification process.

- If confirmed, will you continue to disregard the will of the American people by negotiating international agreements and then refusing to submit them to the Senate?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee on matters related to treaties and other international agreements. The Supreme Court has long held that not all international agreements require approval as treaties pursuant to the procedures set out in Article II of the Constitution, and the Congress has recognized this through the enactment of the Case-Zablocki Act, which establishes procedures regarding legally binding international agreements other than treaties. Regardless of the form which particular agreements may take, however, I am committed to engaging with the Senate as a partner in the State Department's efforts to advance our national interests through international agreements.

*Question.* If the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is altered at all to include new provisions, would you advocate for the administration to submit the accord for congressional review under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act or other laws?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

*Question.* Authoritarian regimes continue to restrict religious freedoms and the rights of individuals. The violence, oppression and attacks on human dignity cannot be tolerated. It is critically important for the United States to stand up for those who are being persecuted whether it is Christians in Nigeria or Uyghurs in China.

- What additional efforts will you pursue at the State Department to promote international religious freedom?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to use the full range of diplomatic tools—both positive and punitive—to encourage governments to live up to their international obligations and commitments to respect religious freedom. This includes reforming outdated laws, ending abusive or discriminatory practices, releasing individuals imprisoned for their beliefs, and achieving justice for victims and accountability for perpetrators of religious freedom abuses. The State Department will also continue to fulfill its statutory requirements to produce its annual report and annually review

and designate countries and entities for engaging in or tolerating severe or particularly severe religious freedom violations.

*Question.* Defending human rights and the dignity of every person is a fundamental value for Americans. Yet, the United Nations Human Rights Council has refused to make serious reform to its organization. Efforts by previous administrations failed to achieve the reforms needed. Secretary Blinken recently admitted the council “is flawed and needs reform.”

- What are the flaws of the United Nations Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* The two principal flaws of the Human Rights Council are its disproportionate focus on Israel and the continued election of countries with problematic human rights records. The continued existence of a separate agenda item on Israel, Agenda Item 7, unduly focuses attention on Israel to the exclusion of the human rights records of every other country. The Administration believes that the Council should treat Israel the same as it does every other U.N. member state. Similarly, the membership on the Council must reflect high standards for upholding human rights. Those with the worst human rights records should not be members of the Council.

*Question.* What specific reforms does the administration believe need to be taken at the U.N. Human Rights Council and how do you plan to get the organization to make those reforms?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council’s disproportionate focus on Israel and its problematic membership. The United States has seen that when we play an active and constructive role, we can advocate more effectively on Israel’s behalf and engage with our allies and friends to keep some of the countries with the worst human rights records off the Council and to encourage countries with better records to run for seats. When we were previously on the Council, the United States was also able to help reduce the number of resolutions focused on Israel. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States prioritizes these specific reforms.

*Question.* Does the administration plan to demand any commitments from the United Nations Human Rights Council on making those reforms prior to rejoining?

*Answer.* The United States is pursuing reforms while re-engaging and seeking a seat on the Human Rights Council, as announced by Secretary Blinken during his speech to the Human Rights Council on February 24, 2021. The United States is most effective at the Human Rights Council (HRC) and in other U.N. bodies when we are at the table, in the room, in good financial standing, and use the full weight of our diplomatic might to lead and to pursue appropriate and needed reforms. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States prioritizes needed reforms as part of our re-engagement with the HRC.

*Question.* For years, the United Nations Human Rights Council has included human rights abusers and refusing to stand up for human rights taking place across the world. A recent example is the election of China and Russia to the United Nations Human Rights Council in October 2020. The Chinese Communist Party engages in torture, detention, and forced labor of religious and ethnic minorities. Russia tramples on free speech and the free press every day. Shockingly, Russia was elected to the council the same week that the EU sanctioned Russian officials for attempts to assassinate a Russian opposition figure. The United Nations should be condemning the actions of Russia and China not electing those responsible to this body.

- Would you advise the United States to vote in favor of Russia, China, or other human rights violators for membership on the United Nations Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* The continued election of countries with problematic human rights records to the Human Rights Council remains one of the principal flaws of the Council. If confirmed I will advise the United States to vote for nations with strong human rights records for the Council.

*Question.* During the Trump Administration, there were several historic developments between Israel and its regional Arab neighbors. The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan joined Egypt and Jordan in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. These agreements have created the path to peace through recognition and engagement rather than isolation and boycotts of Israel.

In January, Secretary Blinken stated, “We very much support the Abraham Accords, we think that Israel normalizing relations with its neighbors and other countries in the region is a very positive development, and so we applauded them. We

hope that there may be an opportunity to build on them in the coming months and years ahead.”

- Do you believe the Abraham Accords are a positive step forward for the region?

Answer. Yes, I firmly believe the normalization agreements are a positive step forward for Israel and the region and are in the United States’ best interest.

*Question.* What specific steps will you take to build upon these historic successes and create additional peace agreements between Israel and Arab nations?

Answer. The 2020 normalization agreements are an important contribution to peace and security in the Middle East. The Biden-Harris administration will seek to build on the agreements to expand the circle of peace between Israel and its neighbors. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the status of the normalization efforts to date, encouraging the states that have signed such agreements with Israel to uphold their commitments to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel.

*Question.* Congress continues to be deeply concerned with the Turkish Government’s purchase of the S-400 surface to air missile defense systems from Russia. This decision threatens a range of U.S. interests, including the strength of the NATO Alliance.

- Do you believe a weak U.S. response to Turkey’s actions would embolden other countries to consider buying advanced Russian military systems?

Answer. President Biden has promised to call out Turkish behavior that is inconsistent with its commitments as a NATO Ally. A top priority will be urging Turkey not to retain the S-400 and to refrain from additional Russian arms purchases. The CAATSA sanctions announced in December 2020 impose real costs on Turkey for acquiring the S-400 and advance our global efforts to deter and disrupt purchases of Russian weaponry, which bring Russia revenue, access, and influence. Turkey’s suspension from the F-35 partnership represents an additional significant cost. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to review the impact of the sanctions imposed in response to the S-400 acquisition and to determine whether additional measures are required or warranted.

*Question.* Are you committed to fully implementing the Countering America’s Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) with respect to Turkey’s S-400 acquisition and any related purchases by other foreign nations?

Answer. Yes. The imposition of CAATSA Section 231 sanctions on Turkish individuals and entities in December demonstrated the State Department’s continuing commitment to CAATSA. If confirmed, I will not only continue that commitment as it relates to Turkey’s S-400 acquisition but also with respect to any other country that may be considering similar transactions. I would strongly urge anyone considering potentially significant transactions with Russia’s defense or intelligence sectors, or persons operating for, or on behalf of either sector, to avoid such transactions, which may expose them to CAATSA sanctions.

*Question.* Are current U.S. and NATO efforts to deter Russian aggression in Europe adequate?

Answer. NATO has undertaken significant adaptation over the past decade in response to Russian aggression in the Euro-Atlantic area, including the illegal invasions of Ukraine and Georgia. The Alliance relies on both conventional and nuclear capabilities for deterrence and is also addressing growing gray area challenges. Allies will need to continue work toward meeting equitable burden sharing to maintain effective deterrence. Only with greater investment in defense across the Alliance can we ensure NATO is able to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness.

*Question.* What is your position on the administration maintaining or expanding sanctions intended to get Russia to change its policies with regard to Ukraine, cyberattacks, and other malign activities?

Answer. President Biden has made clear that the United States will act firmly in defense of its national interests in response to actions by Russia that harm us or our allies. On March 2, the administration took action to impose costs on the Russian Federation for the poisoning, arrest, and imprisonment of Aleksey Navalny. The United States will continue to take action to counter Russia’s malign actions and will comply with our legal obligations under the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991. As the administration works together with allies to advance our interests, it will continue to hold Russia accountable, including by sanctions, for its destabilizing activity, disregard for international

law, human rights violations, interference in our elections, unlawful cyber activity, and aggression in Ukraine and Georgia.

*Question.* How will you approach relations with Saudi Arabia?

Answer. President Biden has committed to recalibrating the U.S.-Saudi relationship to ensure it reflects U.S. interests and values. The Administration has elevated support for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which has already led to positive initial results, such as the conditional release of detained U.S. citizens and activists. Like Secretary Blinken, if confirmed, I will press Saudi Arabia for the removal of conditions on their release, including travel restrictions, and the implementation of reforms to avoid future such cases. Nonetheless, Saudi Arabia remains an important U.S. partner on regional security and counterterrorism, and the U.S. will continue to support Saudi Arabian efforts to defend its people and territory, which is home to thousands of U.S. citizens.

*Question.* How important of a role does Saudi Arabia play in our efforts regarding Iran, Yemen, Iraq, and the Israel-Palestinian issues?

Answer. Saudi Arabia is a critical partner for containing Iranian aggressive actions. The Biden-Harris administration strongly supports Saudi Arabia's outreach to the Government of Iraq, to include recently reopening its main border crossing with Iraq for the first time since 1990 and ongoing discussions to provide electricity to Iraq, both of which will help to reduce Iraq's dependence on Iran. In Yemen, the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis has contributed to Yemen's dire humanitarian crisis; Special Envoy Tim Lenderking is working with Saudi Arabia, regional partners, and the U.N. to resolve the conflict. With respect to Israel, Saudi Arabia supports a two-state solution and has allowed overflights of Israeli-registered aircraft through Saudi airspace to the UAE and Bahrain.

*Question.* What role, if any, do you see for Saudi Arabia and other regional U.S. partners in talks with Iran?

Answer. The administration is committed to consulting closely with our regional partners regarding U.S. policy on Iran, and in broad terms, it supports dialogue among the countries in the region on issues of regional security and stability.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* Section 15(b) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 states that "The Department of State shall keep the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives fully and currently informed with respect to all activities and responsibilities within the jurisdiction of these committees. Any Federal department, agency, or independent establishment shall furnish any information requested by either such committee relating to any such activity or responsibility." Can you commit to complying with this provision of law by ensuring that information requested by members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is provided expeditiously and transparently? If not, why not?

Answer. I am committed to working with Congress and this committee in accordance with the law to provide all information needed to perform traditional oversight functions as promptly as possible.

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF. Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

*Question.* Last month the State Department transmitted a mandatory and overdue report to Congress listing entities engaged in sanctionable activities because of their participation in the construction of the Nord Stream 2 (NS2) pipeline, pursuant to the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended. PEESA mandates the imposition of sanctions on entities listed in such reports. The report included only two entities, the Fortuna and KVT-RUS, both of which the Trump administration had already sanctioned. It did not include any entities which are plainly, publicly required to be listed under PEESA. Reportedly, State Department officials who spoke to Congressional staffers were unable to provide a justification why several entities - including the company responsible for the planning, construction, and operation of NS2 - were left off. This abdication is inexcusable. Can you commit to immediately ensuring the Biden administration meets its mandatory obligation to provide an interim report to Congress pursuant to PEESA and sanction all of the entities that are engaged in pipe-laying, pipe-laying activities, certification, and insurance sanctionable under PEESA? If not, why not?

*Answer.* The State Department submits a report to Congress every 90 days on vessels engaged in pipe-laying and pipe-laying activities, and various entities providing and supporting those vessels, for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, as required by the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, with the next report due to Congress in mid-May. I understand the Department of State submitted its first report on PEESA, as amended, in February. If confirmed, I will continue to use all available tools to counter Russian malign influence and to work with Allies and partners in the region to support Transatlantic energy security goals. I understand that the Department of State continues to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional persons as appropriate, and will comply with statutory reporting requirements.

*Question.* One of the most egregious dynamics in the initial implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) involved the way that the Obama administration circumvented Congressional deliberation and approval by first attempting to lock in the agreement as international law via United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 2231). After that resolution was passed - which occurred just as the Congressional review period mandated by the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) was beginning - officials from the Government of Iran and the Obama administration suggested that Congress would be abrogating the U.S.'s formal international obligations by rejecting the agreement. Can you commit to ensuring that any future nuclear agreement negotiated between State Department officials and Iran, which involves the suspension or waiver of Congressional sanctions, will only be negotiated in full consultation with Congress? If not, why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA.

*Question.* Can you commit to ensuring that any future nuclear agreement negotiated between State Department officials and Iran, which involves the suspension or waiver of Congressional sanctions, will not be implemented without Congressional approval? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I am aware that the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) contains certain limitations on sanctions relief during a congressional review period. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to complying with the requirements of INARA, and if confirmed, I am committed to doing so.

*Question.* It was recently announced that Iran and South Korea agreed to allow Tehran to access approximately \$1 billion of its assets that are frozen in South Korean banks due to US sanctions. Reports indicate that the South Koreans received approval from Biden administration officials to do so. Please transmit to the committee any waivers, decision memos, or other documents pertaining to this case, and confirm doing so.

*Answer.* I do not have access to Department records nor the authority on my own to give you Department records. I commit, if confirmed, to work with the committee to try to accommodate any official committee request for such Department information.

*Question.* On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On February 5 the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. Officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the "broad" designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian



grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen's population live under areas controlled by the group. They have not provided an explanation for the delisting of the three leaders, and in fact they have publicly, repeatedly, and falsely denied or downplayed the relief provided to these Iran-backed terrorists. For example, on February 11 State Department spokesman Ned Price falsely told journalists "there is no change" to the sanctions on these individuals. He was asked about the issue again the next day, and said "the Secretary had an intent to remove this broad designation of the movement." The public statement issued by the State Department did not mention the revocation of the SDGT designation on the Houthi leaders, but noted that they "remain sanctioned under E.O. 13611." Can you commit to ensuring that State Department officials stop publicly misleading journalists and the American public about sanctions relief provided by the Department and the Biden administration to Iran-backed terrorists? If not, why not?

Answer. I understand that the three Ansarallah leaders in question were designated under the U.N. Security Council's Yemen sanctions regime in 2015 and domestically under E.O. 13611, related to acts that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Yemen. Therefore, they remain on the Treasury Department's Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List and are subject to asset freezing and any attendant travel restrictions. As a consequence of the revocation of Ansarallah's Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) group designation under E.O. 13224, there was no longer a basis to retain the SDGT designations of these individuals as leaders of Ansarallah, which were derivative of the broader SDGT designation of the group. If confirmed, I intend to continue our support of U.N.-led efforts, including a robust implementation of the U.N. and E.O. 13611 sanctions, to call attention to and condemn Ansarallah's destabilizing activities. The State Department's emphasis will continue to be on using diplomacy to build international pressure on Ansarallah to change its behavior and ultimately end the war.

*Question.* Please describe why the State Department lifted the SDGT designations on Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim.

Answer. I understand that simultaneous with the designation of Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, these individuals were designated as SDGTs on the basis that they were leaders of an SDGT, namely Ansarallah. As a consequence of the revocation of Ansarallah's SDGT designation, there was no longer a basis to retain the designations of these individuals as leaders of an SDGT. However, they remain designated under the U.N. Security Council's Yemen sanctions regime and domestically under E.O. 13611 related to acts that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Yemen, and therefore remain on Treasury's Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List and are subject to asset freezing and any attendant travel restrictions.

*Question.* The Central Bank of Iran (CBI), has been designated as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SGT) pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 13224 for providing material support to terrorist organizations. Can you commit to not lift, rescind or significantly modify - or to agree within the interagency process to lift, rescind or significantly modify - this terrorism designation of the CBI, in the absence of a determination that the CBI has ceased providing material support to terrorist organizations? If not, why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to counter Iran's support for terrorism, including through the appropriate use of sanctions and regular coordination with our partners and allies. Iran is the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism, which poses a threat to security and stability in the Middle East, and we will continue to use all tools available to counter Iran's support for terrorism. The President has made clear that the United States will be prepared to resume participation in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) if Iran restores strict compliance, as a starting point for follow on negotiations to lengthen and strengthen constraints and address other issues of concern, including Iran's regional activity.

*Question.* Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is designated as a terrorist organization both as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and as an SDGT pursuant to EO 13224. Can you commit to not lift, rescind or significantly modify - or to agree within the interagency process to lift, rescind or significantly modify - these terrorism designations on the IRGC, in the , in the absence of a determination that the Government of Iran has ceased providing material support to terrorist organizations.

Answer. Iran's support for terrorism threatens our forces and partners in the region and elsewhere. If confirmed, I intend to continue working with our allies and partners to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region, including its support for terrorist groups and violent militias and its ballistic missile program, and maintain international, collective pressure on Iran. The President is committed to countering Iran's destabilizing activities using the array of tools at our disposal, including sanctions to deal with Iran's support for terrorism.

*Question.* You and other officials responsible for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have repeatedly described it as the most rigorous inspection regime ever negotiated. Despite this inspection regime, the IAEA was unable to locate the illicit Nuclear Archive subsequently seized by Israel, which included designs and materials relevant to the creation of nuclear weapons. They were also unable to find locations which, having been revealed by Israeli officials, subsequently proved to have evidence of nuclear work that the IAEA says Iran has not accounted for. Please describe what you perceive to have been the flaws in the JCPOA inspection regime do you believe were responsible for these failures by the IAEA?

Answer. The IAEA has a decades-long successful track record of monitoring the non-diversion of declared nuclear material globally. While the IAEA thoroughly investigates all available information, including based on its own verification and monitoring activities, it is not an intelligence organization. It can only act on information that is either acquired by it in the performance of its verification mandates or presented to it. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. The administration has full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any indications of undeclared or diverted nuclear material that could contribute to any renewed Iranian pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Please describe what new measures would you insist are included in any future nuclear agreement with Iran to ensure that the IAEA has the ability to identify such materials and activities?

Answer. The IAEA has said it has the tools it needs to perform its verification mandates in Iran so long as Iran fully implements its JCPOA commitments. This includes implementation of the Additional Protocol to Iran's NPT-required safeguards agreement that provides enhanced information and access regarding Iran's nuclear program, including with respect to undeclared locations about which the IAEA has questions. The JCPOA provides the IAEA with the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. The administration has full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any such indication.

*Question.* During your nominations hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 4, 2021, you acknowledged that you had met with officials of the Government of Iran during your time out of government. You also stated that you coordinated directly with Under Secretary for Political Affairs Ambassador David Hale concerning your interactions with Iranian regime officials. Please list any additional senior State Department officials responsible for Iran policy with whom you consulted or coordinated your engagement with Iranian officials, such as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Schenker, Special Representative for Iran Brian Hook, Special Representative for Iran Elliott Abrams, Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun, or Secretary of State Michael Pompeo.

Answer. I coordinated with Undersecretary Hale and did not engage with others listed in this question.

*Question.* Please identify the dates on which you coordinated or consulted with these officials.

Answer. To the best of my recollection, I met with Foreign Minister Zarif twice on the margins of the Munich Security Conference, in 2018 and 2019. I also participated in two bipartisan group meetings in New York on the margins of UNGA: in 2018 with President Rouhani, and in 2019 with FM Zarif. Those meetings were facilitated by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2018) and the International Crisis Group (2019). Finally, in October 2017 I participated in a panel with Deputy FM Abbas Aragchi at a nonproliferation conference sponsored by the Center for Energy and Security Studies in Moscow, and we spoke on the margins.

In every meeting, I urged Iran to stay in full compliance with the JCPOA, even after U.S. withdrawal, and pressed for Iran to end its regional violence and to release American prisoners. I consistently kept Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale apprised of meetings and offered to convey any useful information back to him.

*Question.* Please describe any additional contact you had with officials from the Government of Iran Besides in-person meetings, have you otherwise been in contact with any Iranian regime officials, including via e-mail, text exchange, or secure messaging platforms, between January 20, 2017, and today? If yes, please identify dates of contact and the text of the exchanges.

*Answer.* To the best of my recollection, since January 2017 I have not had additional contact with Iranian officials beyond the meetings referenced in the previous question, other than to arrange logistical details for those in-person meetings. I do not have records of those exchanges.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. WENDY R. SHERMAN BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* What is the status of the Clean Network Initiative at the U.S. Department of State? As of November 2020, over 50 countries, 180 telecommunications companies, and dozens of other leading tech companies had joined the State Department's Clean Networks Initiative and pledged to advance common principles with regard to securing 5G and other digital technologies against untrusted foreign vendors and suppliers. The Biden administration, however, appears to have removed any references to the Clean Network Initiative from the State Department's website.

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris Administration views 5G security as a high priority and is working with allies and partners to ensure their 5G networks are free of untrustworthy vendor equipment and to support a vibrant and diverse supply chain of trustworthy telecommunications equipment and services. The United States will pursue a comprehensive strategy that addresses the full range of these issues. As is routine practice, the Department archives webpages during the transition of administrations. Webpages from 2017 to 2021 remain available to the public at <https://2017-2021.state.gov/index.html>.

*Question.* What is the status of the Blue Dot Network at the U.S. Department of State? In November 2019, the United States joined Australia and Japan in launching the Blue Dot Network concept that seeks to bring together governments, the private sector, and civil society under shared standards for international infrastructure development. If the Blue Dot Network is fully realized to promote quality infrastructure investment that is open, transparent, and compliant with international standards—including by eventually mobilizing the deep capital markets of the United States and other market-based democracies—it can help to counter to China's predatory One Belt One Road (OBOR) infrastructure initiatives.

*Answer.* I understand that the Blue Dot Network seeks to promote the development of quality, sustainable infrastructure around the world by certifying projects that uphold global infrastructure principles. I understand that the State Department, USAID, and the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation continue to work with our Australian and Japanese partners to develop the technical details of the initiative, including a methodology and metrics for certifying quality infrastructure projects in the developing world.

*Question.* In any negotiations that may occur with the authoritarian regime in North Korea, do you commit to pursuing an end-state that achieves complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization? What do you perceive as the risks of further nuclear proliferation in East Asia if we fail to achieve that end-state?

*Answer.* North Korea's proliferation-related activities constitute a serious threat to international peace and security and undermine global nonproliferation efforts. If confirmed, I plan to join the Biden-Harris administration's ongoing policy review, in consultation with our allies, of the current state of play on North Korea. I support the U.S. commitment over the long term to the complete denuclearization of North Korea, while also focusing in the near term on limiting the threat to the United States and our allies.

*Question.* Do you concur that any U.S. international agreement to achieve the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea must also eliminate the threat of North Korean regime's ballistic missile program?

*Answer.* Denuclearization of North Korea remains a top national security priority for the United States. North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs constitute a serious threat to the United States and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I plan to join the administration in conducting a thorough policy review, in consultation with our allies, of the current state of play on North

Korea. I support the U.S. commitment over the long term to the complete denuclearization of North Korea, while also focusing in the near term on limiting the threat to the United States and our allies.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit that the State Department will consult closely and proactively with Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and their personal staff before providing humanitarian assistance in order to ensure that any such U.S. assistance benefits directly the suffering North Korean people and is not vulnerable to diversion by the Kim Jong Un regime?

*Answer.* As part of its North Korea policy review, the Biden-Harris administration will carefully consider the country's egregious human rights record and work closely with partners and allies to promote respect for human rights in the closed country. The administration remains deeply concerned by the humanitarian situation in North Korea and is committed to ensuring any humanitarian assistance benefits the most vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, children, and the elderly in detention, in North Korea, and not the Kim Jong Un regime. The administration will continue to press for monitoring and access necessary to ensure the assistance reaches its intended recipients. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this crucial issue.

*Question.* Does the Biden administration intend to appoint a new Special Representative for North Korea? If not, why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to join the administration's ongoing review, in consultation with our allies, of the current state of play on North Korea. I am not aware of any new personnel announcements at this time.

*Question.* Do you agree that the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 (INARA) is permanent law and is binding on the Biden administration?

*Answer.* The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) is binding law. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to implementing all of the requirements of INARA.

*Question.* Do you agree that any agreement-including any annexes or any informal agreement, even an unwritten oral understanding-involving the United States and Iran regarding how the two countries will return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or will move in the direction of returning to compliance with the JCPOA must be submitted to Congress for review pursuant to INARA?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was submitted under INARA in 2015 and underwent close Congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including with respect to the transmission requirement.

*Question.* Are you personally committed to ensuring that Congress will be able to review, pursuant to INARA, any agreement that is hereafter reached with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran-irrespective of the level of formality or of the politically or legally binding nature of such agreement-including any agreement providing for return to compliance with the JCPOA, as well as any agreement that amends, augments, or supersedes the JCPOA?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its transmission requirement.

*Question.* Do you agree that, should any new agreement or agreements be reached with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, including a decision to participate again in the JCPOA, INARA will require the President to submit a report to Congress not less frequently than every 180 calendar days "on Iran's nuclear program and the compliance of Iran with [each such new agreement] during the period covered by the report"?

*Answer.* I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including its reporting requirements.

*Question.* Do you agree that, should any new agreement or agreements be reached with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, including a decision to participate

again in the JCPOA, INARA will require the President to make a determination and certification to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership not less than every 90 calendar days regarding Iran's compliance with each such new agreement?

*Answer.* I am aware of this provision of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to fully consulting with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA and to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied, including the requirement to determine whether to make the certification called for in Section 135(d)(6).

*Question.* Can you provide an assurance that there are no circumstances under which the Biden administration will not abide by the understandings about compliance with INARA spelled out in your responses to the foregoing questions?

*Answer.* I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to implementing all of the requirements of Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

*Question.* When you were negotiating the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) during the Obama administration, were you aware at the time that the Iranian regime was concealing a nuclear weapons archive? I request you to begin your answer with a yes or no. The Government of Israel revealed the existence of this undeclared, covert nuclear weapons archive in April 2018.

*Answer.* No. However, the United States and others were well aware of Iran's long history of concealment regarding elements of its nuclear program, especially as related to its past military dimensions. That is why we worked with our allies and partners to ensure that the JCPOA provides the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran, as well as any information that came to light after implementation of the JCPOA. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

The IAEA has made clear that it takes no information provided by Iran on its nuclear program at face value. The IAEA has previously reported that it found evidence of possible military dimensions of Iran's program to be credible, and that a "range of activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device were conducted in Iran prior to the end of 2003 as a coordinated effort, and some activities took place after 2003." The administration will not take Iran at its word regarding assertions about its nuclear program, and fully supports the IAEA as it uses its verification authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

*Question.* When you were negotiating the JCPOA during the Obama administration, were you aware that the Iranian regime was storing undeclared nuclear material at a warehouse reportedly called Turqzabad? I request you to begin your answer with a yes or no. In May 2020, the State Department noted that in late 2018 "public allegations surfaced that Iran had been hiding material and equipment at a site in Tehran called Turqzabad, only three miles from where the infamous 'nuclear archive' had been stored."

*Answer.* No. The Turqzabad site was first publicly disclosed by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in late 2018. To date, the IAEA has detected particles of chemically processed uranium at the undeclared location but has not yet made any conclusion regarding the potential storage of nuclear material there. The IAEA continues to investigate the source of the detected particles. The JCPOA provides the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran, and the administration has made clear its strong support for the IAEA's investigation of safeguards-relevant information that has come to light after implementation of the JCPOA.

*Question.* When you were negotiating the JCPOA during the Obama administration, were you aware of any other undeclared sites under the control or influence of the Iranian regime where nuclear material may be present?

*Answer.* Iran has a long history of denial and concealment regarding its past nuclear weapons program. The JCPOA addressed potential undeclared locations by providing for the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

The IAEA has made clear that it takes no information provided by Iran on its nuclear program at face value. The IAEA has previously reported that it found evi-

dence of possible military dimensions of Iran's program to be credible, and that a "range of activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device were conducted in Iran prior to the end of 2003 as a coordinated effort, and some activities took place after 2003." The administration will not take Iran at its word regarding assertions about its nuclear program, and fully supports the IAEA as it uses its verification authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

*Question.* Did your Iranian regime counterparts disclose to you the existence of its nuclear weapons archive, the Turqzabad site, or any other undeclared Iranian regime nuclear-related site during the negotiations for the JCPOA?

*Answer.* Iran has never acknowledged its past nuclear weapons program. The JCPOA was concluded to ensure Iran never again pursues nuclear weapons and provides the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* President Biden says he will rejoin the JCPOA if the Iran regime first returns to "full compliance" with the JCPOA. Can the Iranian regime be in full compliance with the JCPOA if it is concealing undeclared nuclear material, sites, and/or activities?

*Answer.* Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. Under the JCPOA, Iran committed to strict limits on its nuclear program as well as enhanced verification and monitoring measures that go beyond its obligations under its safeguards agreement. The JCPOA provides the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. It is critical that Iran comply with both its safeguards obligations and its JCPOA commitments. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Is it your view that Iran must fully and verifiably account for all of its undeclared activities, sites, and materials before the United States would rejoin the JCPOA and lift any sanctions? I request you to begin your answer with a yes or no.

*Answer.* Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. The JCPOA provides the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. The Biden-Harris administration strongly supports the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, awaits the IAEA's conclusions in its ongoing safeguards investigations while expecting full Iranian cooperation with inspectors. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* During your nominations hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 4, 2021, you acknowledged that you had met with senior officials of the Iranian regime—a regime that is a U.S.-designated State Sponsor of Terrorism—during your time out of government. Besides in-person meetings, have you otherwise been in contact with any Iranian regime officials, including via phone, e-mail, text exchange, or secure messaging platforms, between January 20, 2017, and today? I request that you begin your response with a yes or no. If yes, please identify dates of contact and the text of the exchanges.

*Answer.* To the best of my recollection, since January 2017 I have not had additional contact with Iranian officials beyond the meetings discussed, other than to arrange logistical details for those in-person meetings. I do not have records of those exchanges.

*Question.* Besides in-person meetings, have you otherwise been in contact with any Iranian regime officials, including via e-mail, text exchange, or secure messaging platforms, between January 20, 2017, and today? If yes, please identify dates of contact and the text of the exchanges.

*Answer.* To the best of my recollection, since January 2017 I have not had additional contact with Iranian officials beyond the meetings discussed, other than to arrange logistical details for those in-person meetings. I do not have records of those exchanges.

*Question.* In “The Total Destruction of U.S. Foreign Policy Under Trump” (Foreign Policy, July 31, 2020), you wrote: “As a result of Trump’s failures, the Middle East is further from peace.” But soon thereafter, in September 2020, Israel signed the Abraham Accords that normalized bilateral relations with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, respectively. In December 2020, Morocco signed the Abraham Accords with Israel. And in January 2021, Sudan also signed the Abraham Accords with Israel. What is your current assessment about the Trump administration’s efforts to promote peace and normalization agreements between Israel and Arab nations? And what steps will you support to further the Abraham Accords peace process in the Middle East?

*Answer.* The 2020 normalization agreements are an important contribution to peace and security in the Middle East. The Biden-Harris administration will seek to build on the agreements to expand the circle of peace between Israel and its neighbors. If confirmed, the administration will also closely monitor the status of the normalization efforts to date, encouraging the states that have signed such agreements with Israel to uphold their commitments to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit that if the United States decides to participate again in the JCPOA, you will seek to prevent the Iranian regime or any other Iranian entity from being allowed to export oil to Syria either in defiance of U.S. sanctions under Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, Executive Order 13894, Executive 13582, and other relevant authorities, or by receiving a waiver or license to do so?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is under no illusions about Iran’s destabilizing activities in the region, nor has it forgotten about the atrocities committed by the Syrian regime. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to countering the threat posed by Iran, using the various tools at its disposal, including sanctions, and working in close coordination with our allies and partners. If confirmed, I commit that I will seek to enforce fully U.S. sanctions with respect to Syria.

*Question.* Will the Biden administration maintain existing sanctions designations against the Assad regime and continue imposing new sanctions designations against the Assad regime? The Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act has imposed significant economic pressure against the Syrian regime under Bashar al-Assad. Before January 2021, the U.S. Government imposed more than 100 sanctions designations against the Assad regime and its supporters since June 2020. Under the Biden administration, the U.S. Government has not yet imposed any new sanctions designations against the Assad regime and its allies.

*Answer.* The Caesar Act is an important tool, which seeks to limit the ability of Assad and others in the Syrian Government to profit from the ongoing conflict and any post-conflict reconstruction. Sanctions are also one way to press for accountability from the Assad regime for its atrocities, some of which amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. If confirmed, I will continue to work to ensure U.S. sanctions do not unnecessarily impede humanitarian access in Syria and that they remain targeted in a way that contributes to progress toward our political objectives.

*Question.* Does the Biden administration intend to appoint a new Special Envoy for Syria? If not, why not? Since closing the U.S. Embassy in Damascus in February 2012, the U.S. Government has maintained a Special Envoy for Syria to oversee diplomatic activities concerning Syria. The Biden administration has not appointed a new Special Envoy for Syria since the previous envoy left office in January 2021, leaving the position vacant.

*Answer.* I understand that the State Department does not have any appointments or nominations to announce at this time, but I am assured there is a very experienced team in place working on these issues. If confirmed, I will continue to advance our policy goals in Syria, which include achieving a comprehensive political resolution that addresses the factors that drive violence and instability in Syria, under the parameters of UNSCR 2254 and in close consultation with our allies, partners, and the UN; ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS; and promoting the provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to Syrians in need.

*Question.* Energy revenues account for approximately 80 percent of Russia’s exports, and the conclusion of the Nord Stream 2 (NS2) pipeline would provide a financial boon for Russia’s Putin regime. At the same time, Nord Stream 2 pipeline if finished would drastically increase Russia’s malign influence and coercive leverage over Europe especially by exposing Central and Eastern European allies to potential supply cutoffs and price manipulation by Russia. Does the State Department

continue to publicly maintain that Nord Stream 2 is a Russian malign influence project? This has been the position of the U.S. Government, including the Secretary of State and the State Department, for the last few years.

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has made clear that Nord Stream 2 is a geo-political project that threatens Europe's energy security. If confirmed, I support publicly addressing the ongoing threats to energy, geopolitical security, and European solidarity posed by Nord Stream2. Nord Stream 2 is a clear example of a tool that Russia uses for coercive actions in the region and provides the means to use gas, a critical natural resource, to advance its political goals and spread its malign influence within Europe.

*Question.* Why has the State Department not yet imposed sanctions against NS2 AG itself pursuant to mandatory sanctions against Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) and Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act (PEESCA)? NS2 AG expressly describes itself on its website as the "project company established for planning, construction and subsequent operation of the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. The company is based in Zug, Switzerland and owned by Public Joint Stock Company (PJSC) Gazprom."

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to use all available tools to counter Russian malign influence, to work with Allies and partners in the region, and to support Transatlantic energy security goals. I understand the Department of State is continuing to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional persons as appropriate. The administration has made clear to Germany and other European partners that it does not view Nord Stream 2 as just a commercial deal, but as a threat to Europe's energy security to strategic stability on the continent.

*Question.* During the Trump administration, the United States worked closely with the Government of Japan to facilitate an expedited process for Foreign Military Sales. Based on that experience, has the State Department created a best practices template or manual to facilitate and expedite further Foreign Military Sales to allies and partners? Please begin your answer with yes or no.

*Answer.* While the Department has not developed a specific manual or template for expediting Foreign Military Sales (FMS) to allies and partners, the State Department adjudicates almost all FMS cases within 48 hours. The Department also continually works with interagency colleagues and our foreign partners to facilitate and streamline the FMS process. If confirmed, I will ensure the FMS process works as smoothly as possible to advance the interests of the United States and for the benefit of our allies and partners around the world.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* U.S. consulates are a key tool for engaging with local populations, and I am concerned that the closures of the Vladivostok and Yekaterinburg consulates will negatively impact our ability to engage with the Russian people in those areas. What impact will the closures of those two consulates have on our ability to engage with Russians in those regions? If confirmed, how will you ensure that the U.S. continues to engage directly with the Russian people in these regions?

*Answer.* At this time, there has been no permanent change to the consulates' posture. Engaging with Russians, especially those outside Moscow, is critical to diplomacy. U.S. consulates provide a valuable platform to convey the deep concerns President Biden has expressed about the Russian Government's continued efforts to suppress freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and to share our values and insights from the U.S. experience in democracy. During the pandemic, Mission Russia has adopted a wide range of new virtual tools and hybrid engagements to maintain a connection with these audiences. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing, and finding ways to expand, the Department's virtual engagement.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to advocate for the release of locally employed consulate staff who remain unjustly detained in the aftermath of the Turkish coup attempt?

*Answer.* The Department of State continues to press the Government of Turkey on behalf of Mission Turkey's three wrongfully accused locally employed (LE) staff, including by supporting their legal cases and by calling for their releases and exonerations. Senior Department and Mission Turkey officials have publicly and pri-



vately condemned the unjust prosecution and conviction of these employees in discussions with senior Turkish officials, and the Department continues to call for the swift release of the employee who remains in detention. Department personnel regularly consult with the LE staff and their families, who remain appreciative of USG support, and respect their concerns that public USG statements are more likely to damage than assist their cases.

*Question.* More than four years after U.S. personnel overseas began suffering from a set of mysterious but in many cases debilitating symptoms, we have more questions than answers about who was behind these attacks, what the ongoing threat may be to personnel, and, going forward, what we need to do to protect diplomats and others serving overseas. Do I have your commitment to engage fully on this issue, to be transparent with this committee, and to work with relevant interagency partners to provide Congress all relevant information about these attacks?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* The Department of State faced deep budget cut proposals every year under the Trump administration. And, as they say, “if you show me your budget, I’ll tell you your priorities.” Congress pushed back repeatedly against these proposed cuts. But they were proposals that never should have been made to begin with. Do I have your commitment that you will seek and fight for a full and robustly-funded Function 150 International Affairs budget?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with you to ensure a function 150 budget that will allow us to “make diplomacy the tool of first resort for U.S. statecraft to achieve the administration’s top foreign policy priorities,” as the Secretary said on March 3. If confirmed, I will advocate for the necessary investments in our people and programs to support and cooperate with our allies and partners around the world to advance our interests and build back better, including by furthering the democratic values of prosperity, freedom, and peace.

*Question.* The Department of State has remained perilously behind the curve when it comes to tech innovation and cyber security. The recent SolarWinds hack is a stark reminder of the high risk of vulnerabilities in government systems. What do you see as the immediate priorities for State’s cyber infrastructure? What steps will the Department take in the future to prevent such intrusions and to mitigate the damage where these intrusions do occur?

Answer. The SolarWinds supply chain compromise is a serious cybersecurity issue for the federal government and private sector companies. Cybersecurity remains of paramount importance and if confirmed I intend to support the Department’s efforts to protect and maintain its cyber infrastructure. These efforts are focused on dedicated investments in infrastructure, talent, and planning to ensure the security and resilience of the Department’s networks and digital assets, thereby protecting its global workforce and the citizens we serve. We must also ensure that the Department’s internal governance structure for cybersecurity is properly aligned to protect the Department’s networks.

*Question.* How is the Department cooperating and coordinating with other relevant USG agencies and offices to address the intrusion and to repair any damage?

Answer. While a full assessment of the incident is ongoing, I will, if confirmed, support the Department’s continued cooperation and coordination with the joint Cyber Unified Coordination Group in addressing the SolarWinds vulnerability. It is critical that the federal government also work with private sector partners to address the ever-expanding landscape of threats.

*Question.* In September 2020, State’s Office of the Inspector General (OIG) identified \$200 million spent on Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership programs as potentially wasteful spending due to mismanagement and inadequate oversight from staff in the Africa Bureau. The OIG found that, among other contributing factors, the Africa Bureau continuously experiences staffing shortages, and that the State Department has not appropriately prioritized the Africa Bureau’s needs. As Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, what will you do to ensure that the Africa Bureau has adequate resources and staff, including a properly skilled, trained, and incentivized workforce equipped to meet the bureau’s needs and objectives?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Bureau of African Affairs to ensure it has the resources, including personnel, necessary to meet the bureau’s objectives. I recognize that the Bureau of African Affairs is chronically understaffed both in terms of positions and vacancies. If confirmed, I will review our staffing levels around the world to ensure that our embassies and bureaus are adequately staffed to meet our duties and advance our interests. Staffing must be aligned with our

most pressing interests, including oversight of critical programs like the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. If confirmed, I will explore enhancing incentives to serve at hardship posts, including those in Africa, and will look for other ways to ensure that our vacancies are filled, which would address elements of the OIG report related to field-based oversight.

*Question.* I understand that our embassy in Niger lacked both a political officer and an economic officer for months on end, at a time when that country was preparing for historic elections, chairing the Economic Community of West African States regional bloc, and engaging in counterterrorism operations in the increasingly insecure Sahel. Similarly, despite an armed uprising and a recent contentious election, our embassy in the Central African Republic reportedly lacks a political officer. As Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, what will you do to ensure that hard to fill posts, especially in Africa, are appropriately staffed by qualified Foreign Service Officers?

*Answer.* The Department offers a number of incentives for employees to serve voluntarily in difficult locations. These include hardship differential payments of 5 percent to 35 percent, and danger pay when appropriate. Service need differential provides an additional 15 percent of salary for employees who agree to serve an extra year at posts that are particularly difficult to staff. There are also procedural incentives, such as the ability to take “stretch” assignments into higher-ranking positions that may offer more challenging work and greater opportunities for promotion. If confirmed, I will continue to review these incentives and calibrate them to America’s national interests overseas.

*Question.* There are long-standing concerns among career civil service employees that the Department is “designed” for the career foreign service, with few career advancement pathways for the career civil service. The lack of such pathways can mean that the Department loses talent to outside industries or to another office or bureau with higher-graded positions available. How will you address these long-standing concerns among career civil service employees, and create intentional and transparent pathways to career advancement?

*Answer.* I am committed to listening to the workforce and ensuring we retain high performers by investing in their professional development and strengthening programs that mentor individuals for success, provide actionable feedback on performance, chart career progression, provide more interagency and other detail opportunities, and create viable pathways for those in the Civil Service who aspire to advance their careers. I support efforts to expand existing career development and detail opportunities for Civil Service employees.

*Question.* Some of the most successful businesses in the world have developed extensive employee training and career-long mentoring programs. The Department has a renowned facility in the Foreign Service Institute that plays a critical role in training both foreign and civil service employees. Unfortunately, there are very few classes focused on developing the management skills necessary to maximize the morale and effectiveness of Department employees. Do you believe the Department should develop a more robust management training initiative to ensure that sound management skills are viewed as a necessary skill not just for “management-coned” foreign service officers?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that management skills should be widely taught to all of our foreign affairs professionals, and that all training should reinforce the leadership skills needed to build up employees’ morale and effectiveness. If confirmed, I will continue to promote FSI’s commitment to providing world class training to employees across the Department. I will work to ensure FSI remains committed to seeking additional ways to expand its reach in these crucial areas.

*Question.* Do you commit to reviewing existing management trainings and reporting back to the committee with recommendations for improvement?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to a full review of current management skills training at FSI and will report back to the committee with recommendations for improvement as necessary.

*Question.* A recent survey of executive-level staff at the State Department conducted by Executive Women at State found concerning trends that inhibit career advancement for women. More than half of the respondents ranked 15 of the 22 barriers measured in the survey as having a huge or significant impact on the advancement of women at the Department; 75 percent of respondents described gender-related bias as having substantial impact on their careers. Do you commit to reviewing this report and its recommendations, and prioritizing a review of how the De-

partment can reduce barriers for women to increase retention and help more women serve in senior roles?

Answer. If confirmed, I will review this report, and will work to build upon the Department's ongoing initiatives and framework to increase flexibilities and support for our workforce. The Department instituted a number of policy changes designed to advance equal opportunity for women in the workforce and address barrier concerns raised by affinity groups and associations. In line with the recommendation of the January 2020 GAO report, "Additional Steps Are Needed to Identify Potential Barriers to Diversity," if confirmed, I commit to the Department's undertaking of further analysis to explore barriers to equal advancement for women and what remedies can be taken to mitigate those barriers to support the retention and career advancement of women at the State Department.

*Question.* It is no secret that the Department's morale has sunk to historic lows over the past several years under President Trump and Secretary Pompeo. Secretary Blinken has already made great strides in addressing distrust and improving morale at the Department, but much work remains to make sure that the Department's workforce is empowered and trusted to carry out its critical diplomatic work. What steps will you take to rebuild the morale of the people who serve at the Department and to ensure the Department has a workforce that is supported and empowered to carry out their mission to the best of their abilities?

Answer. The people who work for the Department of State are committed public servants who uphold U.S. policies to protect U.S. citizens and their interests abroad. The marginalization and loss of career talent over the last four years has coincided with declines in overall employee job satisfaction in annual workforce surveys. The report issued by your committee last July, "Diplomacy in Crisis," also chronicles the decline in morale at the Department, among other things. That said, the nearly 77,000 State Department employees worldwide remain resilient. If confirmed, I am committed to improving the State Department to advance our security and prosperity, including by investing in a diplomatic corps that fully represents the United States in all its talent and diversity. That means recruiting, retaining, and providing career development opportunities to officers with the skills to contend with 21st century challenges and who represent the diversity of the country we represent. I will spare no effort, if confirmed, to ensure their safety and well-being and demand accountability for fostering a more diverse, inclusive and non-partisan workplace.

*Question.* Last year, I published a report, *Diplomacy in Crisis*, which laid out the challenges facing the Department's workforce. It cited employee survey data that showed some disturbing trends—for example, steep increases in the number of staff who said they feared reprisal or retribution if they were to report a violation of law. Does that concern you, and how do you plan to reverse that culture?

Answer. I reviewed the committee's report prior to the confirmation hearing. These findings do concern me. I agree that retaliation for participating in the EEO process or anti-harassment program, requesting a reasonable accommodation, or for opposing discriminatory practices is unlawful, grounds for discipline, and counter to good management; employees do best when they have the ability to speak up and help the Department improve. The release of the forthcoming Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan will help guide a collective action approach to, among other things, fostering a culture that encourages people to speak up. If confirmed, as a senior leader in the Department, this work will be a priority.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* The COVID-19 pandemic originated and accelerated in higher-income countries, where USAID does not maintain a regular presence and where diplomatic engagement proved critical to securing access for global health experts on the one hand and the evacuation of American citizens on the other. Who is responsible for the execution of U.S. foreign policy at overseas posts, including diplomatic engagement to advance U.S. global health security interests in countries of all income categories: the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)?

Answer. At every overseas mission, the chief of mission is responsible for the execution of U.S. foreign policy. Multiple agencies have personnel on the ground under

chief of mission authority, and the State Department works closely with all relevant agencies to deliver on our robust U.S. Government foreign policy objectives.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you intend to organize and resource the Department to advance the global health security and diplomacy objectives of the United States overseas?

*Answer.* The Department of State is firmly committed to using diplomacy to advance global health security objectives. The Department has already begun to mobilize an international response to COVID-19 with an initial \$2 billion contribution to Gavi, which will support COVAX, along with a pledge to provide an additional \$2 billion through 2022. The State Department's efforts to address the full range of global health security threats are facilitated by the close coordination of bureaus across the Department and the interagency. I understand the State Department is reviewing options to structure its response to meet critical policy objectives and, if confirmed I look forward to being part of these efforts and working with Congress as planning progresses.

*Question.* The Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator was recently directed to suspend its Country Operating Plan (COP) process, which had already reached an advanced stage, in order to alleviate burdens on implementing partners during the COVID-19 outbreak. While sympathetic to the needs of implementing partners, the COP process and the data-driven approach it has institutionalized is vital to the effective planning and execution of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programs. If confirmed, will you ensure that the State Department-led COP process is restored and that the implementing agencies—USAID and CDC—adhere to such plans without unwarranted delays or deviations?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is fully committed to and supportive of PEPFAR. On March 5, 2021, the Department announced plans for the COP/ROP 2021 planning process to resume on April 1, 2021, and conclude no later than May 21, 2021. If confirmed, I will be firmly committed to ensuring that collaborative, transparent, and data-driven COP/ROP 2021 plans are completed in every PEPFAR-supported country and region and that there is no disruption in HIV services at the start of FY 2022. Following COP/ROP 2021 approvals, I understand that PEPFAR will move expeditiously through the required processes of Congressional notifications, approvals, and transfer of funds to implementing agencies in advance of the beginning of FY 2022.

*Question.* During his confirmation process, this committee asked Secretary Blinken: "Under your leadership as Secretary of State, what actions will you pursue to ensure that hard-to-fill posts in Sub-Saharan Africa are sufficiently and consistently staffed?" On January 19, he replied in writing: "If confirmed, I will work with the White House and relevant State Department bureaus and offices to ensure that all posts in Sub-Saharan Africa are sufficiently and consistently staffed with the appropriate personnel." Secretary Blinken's response was insufficient because it merely re-phrased the question into an answer and was non-specific on any action reflecting a change in priority from previous administrations. What do you view as the most pressing management and staffing challenges facing the Department's Bureau of African Affairs?

*Answer.* Advancing the State Department's diplomatic agenda and implementing innovative, effective foreign assistance programs depends on its personnel. The Bureau of African Affairs has been chronically understaffed both domestically and overseas, impeding the Department's ability to achieve the administration's goals, as well as to seize opportunities when they appear. Staffing must be aligned with our most pressing interests, including oversight of critical programs like the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. If confirmed I will explore enhancing incentives to serve at hardship posts, including those in Africa, and will look for other ways to ensure that our vacancies are filled.

The Department offers a number of incentives for employees to serve voluntarily in difficult locations. These include hardship differential payments of 5 percent to 35 percent, and danger pay when appropriate. Service need differential provides an additional 15 percent of salary for employees who agree to serve an extra year at posts that are particularly difficult to staff. There are also procedural incentives, such as the ability to take "stretch" assignments into higher-ranking positions that may offer more challenging work and greater opportunities for promotion. If confirmed, I will continue to review these incentives and calibrate them to America's national interests overseas.

*Question.* What specific actions will you prioritize in your role to ensure that the Africa Bureau's staffing efforts focus on building regional expertise, diversity, and

preparedness so the Department can sufficiently and consistently staff hard-to-fill posts in Africa?

*Answer.* I recognize that the Bureau of African Affairs is chronically understaffed, both in terms of positions and vacancies. If confirmed, I will review the State Department's staffing levels around the world to ensure that staffing is aligned with its most pressing interests. I will explore enhancing incentives to serve at hardship posts, including those in Africa, and will look for other ways to ensure that our vacancies are filled. I am committed to an inclusive workplace and, if confirmed, will support the Bureau of African Affairs' efforts as they work to implement management reforms for recruitment, hiring, and retention.

*Question.* Recently, legal restrictions—commonly referred to as “section 889”—have gone into effect that severely limit the types of telecommunications networks that U.S. Government departments and agencies can use overseas. These restrictions were an attempt to combat the Chinese Government's sale and use of Chinese companies' technological networks and equipment in other countries to engage in espionage. However, many countries' networks are so saturated by prohibited telecommunications equipment that complying with section 889, absent a waiver, may limit the ability of our posts to operate abroad. How do you assess the burden placed on the Department by these restrictions?

*Answer.* Compliance with FY2019 NDAA Section 889 places an extreme burden on the Department's ability to conduct diplomacy in those nations where access to trusted networks is limited or non-existent. The current ODNI national security interest waivers mitigate the impact of Section 889, enabling the State Department to continue to supply its posts with critical services. There are parts of the world where it is unlikely that any trusted vendor will be available. Current ODNI waivers expire in 2022. Without waiver extensions, changes to the compliance regimen, or unforeseen technical solutions, the Department will be severely impacted in its ability to conduct diplomacy overseas.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Department should be able to implement these restrictions fully without diminishing its ability to operate abroad?

*Answer.* While I strongly support the intent of Section 889 of the 2019 NDAA, I understand that the current global market upon which the Department relies cannot meet the provision's requirements without waivers while continuing to accomplish the Department's mission. Absent a waiver, critical mission area activities will cease or be seriously hindered.

*Question.* Are there costs associated with these restrictions?

*Answer.* As a result of the ODNI approved waivers, I understand that the initial cost of compliance has been manageable and mainly focused on administrative workloads. As alternatives and compliant sources are identified overseas, it is anticipated the cost of compliance will increase when transitioning overseas acquisitions to compliant services.

*Question.* Would the Department be able to operate without the waivers currently granted by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) to the Department?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department of State would not be able to operate without the waivers currently granted by the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). ODNI granted nine waivers under section 889(d)(2) until September 30, 2022, to allow the Department to continue contracting activities that would otherwise be prohibited under section 889(a)(1)(B). I understand that these waivers cover not only contracting for telecommunications services, but also contracting for security services and equipment and many other programs and services vital to the Department and potentially impacted by the breadth of section 889(a)(1)(B).

The Department will make use of these waivers until an offeror attests itself eligible under section 889(a) or until alternative sources eligible under section 889 can be identified and contractual arrangements and necessary transitions implemented.

*Question.* Do you plan to request an extension of waivers?

*Answer.* Without change to the current compliance requirements, I understand that the Department must pursue extensions of all waivers granted by ODNI. I am committed to protecting U.S. telecommunications and, if confirmed, will work across government agencies and in the international community to adopt networks based on trusted supply chains

*Question.* Do you commit to work with Congress to find a long-term solution that ensures secure, reliable communications while encouraging foreign governments to move away from prohibited technological networks?

*Answer.* Yes. I strongly support the intent of the FY 2019 NDAA Section 889 and concur that steps must be taken to contract with safe, reliable, and secure services. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with the Department's interagency partners to develop a unified long-term solution.

*Question.* One troubling trend my staff and I have identified during our travels over the previous Congress is that many of our diplomats are not getting out from behind embassy walls and meeting with the local population or even other diplomats. Frequently, we are told that the security requirements are too great to support regular traverses to and from embassy compounds. This intolerance of reasonable, voluntary risk sacrifices advancement of U.S. interests for airtight security and keeps our diplomats from being able to do their jobs. Does the inability of State Department diplomats to leave the embassies at which they are currently stationed put the Department at a strategic disadvantage?

*Answer.* Consistent in-person outreach remains essential to advancing U.S. foreign policy goals. Doing this work requires a diplomatic presence in some of the most difficult and dangerous environments in the world. The Department of State continues to prioritize people-to-people engagement and relationships while taking into account a wide range of threats, including the unique local circumstances at each post. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing the Department's current overseas operating posture and consulting with Congress and internal Department stakeholders such as the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to determine if current laws and our policies to mitigate operational risk should be modified.

*Question.* Do Chinese, Russian, and Iranian diplomats face similar restrictions to those placed on U.S. diplomats?

*Answer.* I am not currently in a position to answer the question of exactly what restrictions are now being placed on Chinese, Russian, and Iranian diplomats.

*Question.* Do you support getting our diplomats back outside posts? If yes, how so?

*Answer.* The Department of State strives to provide the most secure environment possible for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy while acknowledging that there is never a guarantee of complete safety. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) makes every effort to ensure that the Department's personnel and contractors are aware of potential risks and trained accordingly. State Department employees understand the risks but face them every day to advance U.S. national security and foreign policy interests on behalf of the American people. If confirmed, I will work with the DS to maximize the ability of our diplomats to work outside posts whenever possible through effective risk mitigation and management decisions.

*Question.* Do you intend to emphasize to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, regional security officers, and chiefs of mission your desire to do so? If yes, what specific steps will you take?

*Answer.* Engaging diplomatically outside posts whenever possible is paramount to the success of the Department. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to ensure our foreign affairs community can effectively achieve U.S. foreign policy goals with an acceptable level of risk.

*Question.* Should security concerns always take precedence over the ability of our diplomats to operate abroad?

*Answer.* Security conditions faced by our foreign affairs community overseas evolve, but the need to operate globally and carry out the State Department's diplomatic mission remains constant. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring the Department routinely assesses the threat environment in which its people live and work, mitigating risk with all the tools at our disposal, and making informed risk management decisions. My objective will always be to ensure personnel working in the Department's diplomatic missions overseas are able to carry out their duties in as safe and secure an environment as possible.

*Question.* How should diplomatic objectives be weighed in relation to security concerns, particularly with regard to embassy security?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department uses a variety of policies, training, and techniques to weigh diplomatic objectives in relation to security concerns. The Department sets a high baseline of security practices for all personnel and diplomatic facilities wherever they are located. If confirmed, I intend to continuously re-

view and improve the Department's global security standards without sacrificing our ability to effectively fulfill our diplomatic mission.

*Question.* Between late 2016 and May 2018, the State Department found that certain U.S. Embassy community members suffered a series of unexplained injuries, including hearing loss and cognitive issues. If confirmed, will you commit to continuing the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the sonic attacks?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be wholly committed to engaging in the ongoing investigation into circumstances surrounding the unexplained health incidents. The Department continues to work on determining what happened to our staff and their families and to ensure their well-being and health going forward. There is no higher priority than the safety and security of our U.S. personnel, their families, and U.S. citizens.

*Question.* Will you seek to ensure the safety and security of U.S. diplomatic personnel in Havana and other posts where personnel have been injured?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to working to ensure the safety and security of U.S. personnel and their families under Chief of Mission security responsibility. The Department is working to determine what happened to its staff and their families and to ensure the well-being and health of our officials going forward. That investigation is ongoing and is a high priority.

*Question.* Dozens of these cases were reported by personnel stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Havana, Cuba. To date, Cuba has refused to cooperate with investigations into these reports. Is it in the national interest of the United States to assign an ambassador to Cuba before the Cuban Government fully and credibly cooperates with these investigations and explains the targeted attacks on U.S. diplomats in Havana?

*Answer.* The Department of State has no higher priority than the safety and security of U.S. personnel, their families, and U.S. citizens. The Department continues to review its staffing posture to ensure that Embassy Havana can continue its core mission effectively and safely. The Department continually reminds the Cuban Government of its obligation under the Vienna Convention to take all appropriate steps to protect our diplomats.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to support all State Department employees and their families who were injured by these sonic attacks, including those employees who have since left the Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to supporting all State Department employees and their families who were injured by these unexplained health incidents, regardless of employment status. To ensure that affected personnel receive the appropriate care, the Department established the Senior Care Coordinator position to serve as an advocate for the affected personnel and provide administrative support including assistance in applying for workers' compensation. This position is an advocate for all affected personnel.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work constructively with other government agencies to find the cause of the attacks and determine the best ways to support those U.S. Government employees who have been injured?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be wholly committed to strengthening interagency cooperation on this issue. The Department has partnered with multiple agencies to help identify the source and cause of these injuries. Recently, the Department designated a senior-level official as the Senior Advisor to the Health Incidents Response Task Force who will advise senior Department leadership and coordinate the Department's response to the health incidents with the interagency.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to regularly share new information on this issue with Congress, including updates on any live investigations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to regularly share new information on this issue as appropriate.

*Question.* Do you support Congress passing a State Department authorization bill?

*Answer.* As you might imagine, given my years working with the President, including in his capacity as chairman of this committee, I have been very involved in and supportive of Congressional efforts to pass a State Department Authorization Act. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the committee on our shared interest in strengthening the capabilities of the Department, including through legislation as necessary.

*Question.* Do you believe it is important that the Department be explicitly authorized outside of the appropriations process?

Answer. I do think it is important. Given my past work on the staff of the committee, I appreciate the role of the Senate Foreign Relations committee, in considering and developing authorization legislation pertaining to Department operations. I recall, too, the challenges encountered at times in efforts to secure such authorization. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the committee on legislative proposals, particularly those providing needed authorizations.

*Question.* Do you believe that the role the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is important in providing congressional oversight?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit to making Department personnel under your purview available for timely briefings upon request?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department makes available personnel who are well-positioned to be responsive to your requests in a timely manner.

*Question.* In light of the massive cyber hack of the U.S. federal Government that was reported in December 2020, how important is cybersecurity to the State Department and U.S. diplomacy?

Answer. Cybersecurity is of paramount importance to the Department of State. The Department needs to ensure cybersecurity is an integral part of its efforts, including as it adopts new technologies to meet new global diplomacy demands. The continually evolving threat to the cyber landscape requires a dedicated investment in infrastructure, talent, and planning to ensure the security and resilience of our networks and digital assets while protecting its global workforce and the citizens we serve.

*Question.* What cybersecurity challenges does the Department currently face?

Answer. As with any global organization, the Department of State is an attractive target for malicious cyber activity. Therefore, the Department is always engaged in identifying cybersecurity threats and taking steps to counter any threats. Cyber threat actors will likely prioritize exploitation of the Department's maximum telework and global posture and attempt to target remote access solutions and devices to collect internal Department information. Threat actors will attempt to identify and exploit any new vulnerabilities in operations. Additionally, cyber threat actors may be more likely to target supply chain operations against the Department's software providers, inspired by the recent SolarWinds event. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department's cybersecurity efforts are geared toward addressing these challenges.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve cybersecurity at the Department?

Answer. The Department's approach to cybersecurity is rooted in a deep understanding of the operational nexus between malicious cyber activity and counterintelligence threats and the need to develop proactive solutions for managing the Department's global cyber exposure and ensuring a safe and reliable digital environment for performing the diplomatic mission. To proactively defend against current, emerging, and future cybersecurity threats, the Department should continue steps to consolidate network monitoring and infrastructure IT operations and maintenance as well as maximize network visibility, auditing, and configuration management. The Department must ensure rigorous vulnerability management and swift patch deployment, while leveraging a matrix of cybersecurity, security technology, and investigative capabilities to detect, analyze, and defend against all cyber threats.

*Question.* As with any workforce, high morale among the State Department's employees is vital to attracting and retaining talent. Is morale at the Department a problem?

Answer. The people who work for the Department of State are committed public servants who uphold U.S. policies to protect U.S. citizens and their interests abroad. The marginalization and loss of career talent over the last four years has coincided with declines in overall employee job satisfaction in annual workforce surveys, as well as a reduction in test takers for the Foreign Service exam. That said, the nearly 77,000 State Department employees worldwide remain resilient and work every day to advance the interests of the American people.

*Question.* If yes, how do you intend to improve and maintain morale at the Department?



**Answer.** If confirmed, I am committed to improving and maintaining a State Department workforce that advances our security and prosperity, including by developing a diplomatic corps that fully represents the United States in all its talent and diversity. That means recruiting, retaining, and providing career development opportunities to personnel with the skills to contend with 21st century challenges and who reflect our country's diversity. I will spare no effort, if confirmed, to ensure their safety and well-being and demand accountability for fostering a more diverse, inclusive and non-partisan workplace.

*Question.* Are there specific areas of morale (or bureaus) that you believe need immediate attention?

**Answer.** I am not currently in a position to speak to this question, but if confirmed, one of my first priorities will be to investigate the areas and bureaus that may need urgent attention. I commit to ensuring the safety and well-being of the entire workforce and demand accountability for fostering a more diverse, inclusive, and non-partisan workplace.

*Question.* In 2017, Congress passed a lateral entry pilot program for the Foreign Service which the Department has yet to implement. Do you commit to begin implementation of the program in 2021 and to design it as Congress intended?

**Answer.** I understand the Department developed and planned to roll out a new Lateral Entry Pilot Program for Foreign Service generalists in FY 2021. Implementation was delayed for Congressional consultation and notification requirements in the Department's annual appropriations act and by the Department's focus on responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I commit to resume implementation of the program when appropriate.

*Question.* Currently, Foreign Service oral assessments are only held in Washington, D.C., throughout the year and once a year in San Francisco, California. On February 24, 2021, Secretary Blinken issued a press statement saying that, in order to effectively represent the American people to the world, "we must recruit and retain a workforce that truly reflects America." Is geographic diversity important in building a Department that "truly reflects America"?

**Answer.** The Department administers the Foreign Service Oral Assessment outside of Washington, D.C. twice each year, in San Francisco in February and in Chicago in May. In addition, the Department maintains a national recruitment platform that includes geographic diversity in its strategic recruiting objectives. In 2020, the recruitment team conducted 1,500 events nationwide. Secretary Blinken is committed to increasing diversity, including geographic diversity, at all levels through recruitment and retention as a major priority. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to build a diverse workforce that is fully representative of our Nation.

*Question.* Do you think making it easier and more cost effective for Americans outside of Washington, D.C., and northern California to take the Foreign Service oral assessments would encourage a more geographically diverse Foreign Service?

**Answer.** Secretary Blinken and I are committed to building a diverse workforce representative of the American people—including geographically—and the Department will continue to expand the accessibility of the Foreign Service assessment process. If confirmed, I will dedicate resources to continue modernizing talent acquisition and support additional innovations to attract exceptional talent. The Department typically offers the Foreign Service Oral Assessment outside of Washington, D.C., twice each year in San Francisco (February) and Chicago (May). In response to COVID-19 disruptions, the Department successfully piloted a virtual oral assessment for Specialist candidates in June 2020. If confirmed, I will direct my team to resume in-person oral assessments outside Washington, D.C., as soon as conditions allow.

*Question.* Do you commit to expanding the number of locations where the Foreign Service oral assessments can be administered?

**Answer.** COVID-19 caused disruptions to the assessment process. To overcome this, in June 2020 the Department successfully piloted a virtual oral assessment for Foreign Service Specialist candidates. Although the Generalist Foreign Service Oral Assessment could not be adapted to a virtual format, the Department's prioritization of public health measures at the assessment facility will permit in-person oral assessments to resume in Washington, D.C., in late March. When health and safety conditions permit, the Department will again offer the Foreign Service Oral Assessment outside of Washington, D.C., twice each year, in San Francisco and in Chicago. If confirmed, I will dedicate resources to continue modernizing talent acquisition and support additional innovations to attract exceptional talent.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to briefing this committee on the administration's use of special envoys, including with respect to the constitutional and legal authority to appoint such officials?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to briefing this committee on the administration's use of special envoys, including with respect to the relevant appointment authorities.

*Question.* The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 establishes an Office of Sanctions Coordination within the Department of State. If confirmed, do you commit to work with my office and this committee to ensure that this office succeeds and fulfills its statutory mandate?

*Answer.* Yes, I am aware that this office has been re-established in statute, and that the law requires the administration to appoint a head of such office to have the rank of ambassador and with the advice and consent of the Senate. I understand that the Department is actively reviewing these new requirements. If confirmed, I believe there will be the opportunity for me to engage in this process, as we will want to ensure that any such official would have the expertise and stature, including political support, to operate effectively within the U.S. Government and internationally.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* While a Senate staffer working for then-Senator Biden—first in his Senate office as a foreign policy legislative assistant, and later as chief counsel on the staff of the Committee on Foreign Relations—I developed and executed on legislative and oversight efforts to protect and enhance the work of U.S. international broadcasting, which provides objective news and information to audiences around the world. In particular:

- Early in the Clinton administration, Senator Biden blocked an effort, proposed in the first budget submitted by President Clinton, to close Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL). Senator Biden believed, as I did, that it was premature to close the radio services, given that democratic governments and traditions in Europe and Eurasia after the collapse of the Soviet bloc were not firmly established. In that period, we also learned from testimony by leaders such as Poland's Lech Walesa of the power of these services during the Cold War in sustaining dissident movements. With the regression of democracy in the region since then, it is clear that the decision to preserve RFE/RL was well-founded.
- Based on the success of RFE/RL, Senator Biden authored the legislation that led to the creation of a similar 'surrogate' radio service to broadcast to China and other countries in East Asia. "Radio Free Asia (RFA)" was established by legislation enacted in 1994 and initiated broadcasts in 1996. Today, the service has a well-established reputation for its coverage of news in the countries to which it broadcasts and has earned numerous journalism awards. For example, in 2019, a journalist from RFA's Uyghur service received the Magnitsky Human Rights Award for her reporting on the humanitarian and human rights situation in China's Xinjiang region.

When legislation was proposed to consolidate U.S. foreign affairs agencies in the 1990s, Senator Biden insisted that the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)—then a part of the U.S. Information Agency—be maintained as an independent agency, and not merged into the Department of State, based on our concern that doing so would jeopardize the journalistic integrity of the broadcasting services supported by the BBG.

As chief counsel to the Committee on Foreign Relations, in coordination with a human rights organization, I initiated a standard set of questions for the record that were posed to every ambassadorial nominee about human rights issues in the country to which they had been nominated. We also later undertook to request follow-up reports from the ambassadors after they had been at post for a number of months. I believe this process helped to sensitize nominees to the importance of these issues and ensure that they were giving priority attention to human rights issues as part of their work.

*Question.* Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

*Answer.* Diversity is the key to unlocking an organization's potential as diverse teams consistently demonstrate high performance due to their creativity and innovation. If confirmed, I commit to upholding and fully implementing the Department's leadership and management tenets, including support for diversity and inclusion, to strengthen teams across the Department. I will hold senior leaders accountable for promulgating fairness and transparency in their day-to-day decisions and will seek progress reports, working with the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, on their continued commitment to championing diversity and inclusion.

*Question.* What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Department of State is fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ask those who report to me to provide updates on their initiatives and contributions to advance diversity and inclusion at the State Department. I will encourage leaders to prioritize innovation and creativity across teams, ensuring that all voices are heard and that their contributions matter. If confirmed, I will support, empower, and work with the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and bureau representatives to implement Department-wide diversity and inclusion policies, ensure transparency of these initiatives, and hold senior leadership accountable for progress.

*Question.* Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

*Answer.* I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

*Answer.* I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any foreign country?

*Answer.* My spouse does not have any financial interests in a foreign country. My investment portfolio, as set forth in my SF-278 submitted to the committee, includes mutual funds and exchange traded funds, including a foreign stock fund, which may hold interests in companies with an international presence, but these funds are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and remaining vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations. I will divest any investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* There is the proliferation of special envoys, who are often political appointees, and who tend to duplicate work that should belong to the regional bureaus and other permanent offices of the Department. This is not to say that special envoys cannot play a role in certain circumstances, but many career diplomats seem to think there have been too many in recent years. If confirmed, what will you do to streamline the Department, reduce wasteful spending, and do away with redundant positions?

*Answer.* I understand that the Secretary shares your concern about the proliferation of redundant positions. I also am aware that some special envoy positions are required by law. If confirmed, I will work toward accomplishing the Secretary's goals of efficient and effective management, including by examining the Department's use of special envoys.

*Question.* It is critically important that we have a Foreign Service that is designed to meet the needs of this century. The talent we have recruited to the Foreign Serv-

ice is impressive, but I think there are ways to further strengthen how we identify new talent and train the workforce that we have. To meet the challenges of this century, our Foreign Service must be structured to counter the malign influence of the Chinese Communist Party. The new regional China officer positions created during the last administration were a good step in this direction. If confirmed, what would you do to shift the focus of the Foreign Service toward developing regional expertise and advanced language skills, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region? If the generalist model is to be retained, are you prepared to carve out a separate track for political and economic officers who specialize in one region and/or critical language?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to examining the best ways to develop and advance the skills of Department employees so they are prepared to meet global challenges, including the challenges posed by China. In addition to operational and leadership effectiveness, officers wishing to get into the Senior Foreign Service must demonstrate language proficiency. The new Professional Development Program also gives officers the flexibility to focus on and build expertise in a specific region.

I understand in 2020 the State Department stood up a Mandarin Language Task Force to answer the continuing critical need for regional expertise and advanced Chinese language skills. The task force has already delivered an Advanced Mandarin Training Program, with students starting in-country, in-depth language training in Summer 2021.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to an evaluation of the personnel numbers in each region and adjust accordingly?

*Answer.* People are the most important State Department asset and properly aligning them to regions and posts is essential to achieving our mission objectives. If confirmed, I will work to make sure that the State Department has the appropriate people in the right place at the right time to achieve its objectives.

*Question.* Another perennial problem is that too many Foreign Service officers have traditionally regarded human rights and democracy promotion as the responsibility of civil servants in the Department of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), or USAID, but not the Foreign Service. If confirmed, what will you do to raise the importance of human rights and democracy issues in the Foreign Service?

*Answer.* The President and Secretary Blinken have made clear that America's cherished democratic values are at the center of this administration's foreign policy. If confirmed, I will ensure that this is reflected in human resources decisions as well as policy actions. I pledge to encourage Foreign Service Officers, most of whom passionately and skillfully carry the mantle of human rights and democracy promotion in the execution of their duties, to serve in DRL and to elevate their attention to these issues, wherever they serve. If confirmed, I look forward to working to better enable Foreign Service Officers to build a career around these important issues and to elevate the roles that human rights and labor officers play at our embassies.

*Question.* I hear from married couples in the Foreign Service that getting assignments in the same country is often difficult. It is important that we find creative ways to keep married couples together, both for morale reasons and to make the best use of the talent we have. If confirmed, what will you do to support Foreign Service families and tandem couples?

*Answer.* I strongly support efforts to help tandem couples find appropriate positions at the same post, while also ensuring that we meet service need, promote career development, and follow the law such that no advantage or disadvantage accrues to any employee on marital status grounds. If confirmed, I will look for ways to expand workplace flexibilities for tenured employees to increase opportunities for tandems to serve together, including identifying aligning tours of duty, expanding positions eligible for domestic employees teleworking overseas, and identifying more opportunities for in-country language training.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR TIM KAINÉ

*Question.* Sluggish State Department hiring procedures—including a pre-pandemic average of six months to complete a security clearance—contribute to recruitment challenges and poor morale, and create significant staffing gaps. This is particularly true overseas, where embassies rely on spouses, known as eligible family members (EFMs), to fulfill critical professional and support roles. These positions

can be vacant as often as one-third to one-half of the time due to the lengthy hiring and security process. If confirmed, what will you do to address sluggish State Department hiring procedures, particularly for eligible family members?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to support ongoing efforts of the Department's senior leadership to re-engineer the security clearance process for all employees, including EFMs. The government-wide Federal Investigative Standards, implemented in 2017, has increased the work that goes into completing background investigations, which impacts EFM onboarding. To streamline family member employment to fill available positions overseas, I am committed to expanding membership in the Foreign Service Family Reserve Corps (FSFRC), where eligible EFMs are appointed to a position that allow them to maintain their current security clearance during gaps in employment at posts. The FSFRC is a helpful tool in reducing the time needed to hire and onboard EFMs overseas.

*Question.* The pandemic has necessitated a swift move to remote work, highlighting possibilities for expanding the use of telework even after the current health emergency is under control. Would you support increasing the number of foreign and civil service domestic positions approved for telework overseas (i.e. DETO, domestically employed teleworking overseas) and opening them to EFMs and tandem spouses?

*Answer.* During the pandemic, Foreign Service personnel and employed family members teleworked from the United States to provide remote assistance to our missions around the world. The Department implemented new workplace flexibilities allowing domestic employees to telework remotely from other U.S. locations to maintain an agile workforce. In the past five years, the Department doubled the number of both Foreign and Civil Service DETOs, which allowed qualifying employees to perform their domestic work overseas for a defined period of time. Family members who encumber Civil Service and Foreign Service positions may enter DETO arrangements to perform work from the location of their spouse's overseas assignment. If confirmed, I will strongly support the Department's focus on enhancing employee workplace flexibilities, including telework and remote work.

*Question.* Would you instruct offices to re-examine policies that permit remote telework only after several months of in-office work, thereby eliminating eligible overseas applicants from applying?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support the Department's focus on enhancing employee workplace flexibilities, including telework and remote work. The pandemic has reinforced the need for such flexibilities and demonstrated that virtual work can be successful.

I understand in August 2020, the Department established a remote work policy, which permits employees in domestic positions to work full-time from an alternate worksite in the United States with supervisor and bureau approvals.

*Question.* Would you support expanding telework to allow for appropriate overseas positions to be filled by EFMs and tandem spouses who are stationed in the U.S. or at other posts?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support expanding employment opportunities overseas for spouses to work in the country to which their employee spouse is assigned and accredited. While the Department does not have authority to employ family members domestically using its overseas hiring authorities, family members with prior U.S. Government service who are currently residing in the United States may be eligible to apply non-competitively to Civil Service positions.

*Question.* Being assigned to the same post is a perpetual struggle for tandem couples. While the State Department is prohibited from discriminating based on marital status, 3 FAH-1 H-2425.8-7(A) states that State "will make a reasonable effort to assign both members of a tandem to the same post in positions appropriate to their class levels and qualifications." What actions will you take to ensure that this is implemented given current challenges that tandems face in being assigned to the same post?

*Answer.* I strongly support efforts to help tandem couples find positions at the same post that are appropriate to their skill codes, grade levels, and qualifications, while also ensuring that no advantage or disadvantage accrues to any employee on the grounds of marital status. I will look for ways to expand existing and new workplace flexibilities for tenured FS employees to increase opportunities for tandem spouses to serve together, including identifying aligning tours of duty, expanding positions eligible for domestic employees teleworking overseas (DETO), and identifying more opportunities for in-country language training.

*Question.* Will you work to align bidding timelines across different components of the State Department (e.g. Diplomatic Security and generalist/specialist cycles) and different foreign affairs agencies?

*Answer.* The Department has worked to bring bidding cycles in line over the past two years for all employees. The main cycle takes place in the fall, for positions that will be open the following summer. There are also bidding cycles for winter vacancies, for “priority staffing posts” in 11 countries, and for chiefs of mission, deputy chiefs of mission, and principal officers. I will continue to review the bidding cycles and process to ensure they meet our staffing and mission requirements. Other foreign affairs agencies manage their own bidding cycles and process to meet their mission needs.

*Question.* Will you direct the Entry Level Division of the Career Development and Assignments Office to make every reasonable effort to direct assignments for incoming officers and specialists to posts where their tandem spouse is already serving?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Career Development and Assignments Office (CDA) to follow the law when directing assignments for entry-level employees, so that no advantage or disadvantage accrues to any employee on the grounds of marital status. Further, if confirmed, I will direct CDA to make reasonable efforts to assign both members of a tandem to the same post or region within the bounds of the law. Entry-level employees have less flexibility due to tenure requirements and therefore are always the “lead bidder” when bidding with a mid- or senior-level spouse; more flexibilities exist for mid- and senior-level employees to align tours with an entry-level spouse. If both tandem spouses are entry-level, CDA will direct the entry-level employees according to service needs and career development.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*GEC/Global Disinformation*

Senator Chris Murphy and I have worked very closely over the last 4 years to strengthen the Global Engagement Center and through our efforts and have made important strides in countering global disinformation. I think this is one of the gravest threats we face internationally. Disinformation operations are cheap, deniable, and when combined with economic and political subversion can be a devastating to democracies. Thanks to the work of the GEC we now have an effective organization that can help our allies fight back.

However, there is more work to be done to ensure that the effort is sustained and strengthened through the work of the GEC. In particular, I would like to see:

- *A sustained funding level of at least \$138 million annually.* At its current amount of \$60 million, the Center continues to be under resourced, and is unable to expand into areas such as Africa where countries desperately need our assistance.
- *Extension of hiring authority.* It is critical that the Center be able to retain its talent within the Department as well as recruit outside expertise.
- *A commitment to continue the work of the GEC.* Foreign disinformation is a threat to our democracy and a tool our adversaries wield against us. It is critical that we have the resources, means, and capability to combat this threat, and the GEC located within the Department of State is the right organization to do it.

*Question.* Can I get your commitment to work with Senator Murphy and me to continue strengthening the capabilities and funding of the GEC so that we can continue the fight against state sponsored disinformation campaigns worldwide?

*Answer.* You have my commitment, if confirmed, to work with you and your colleagues, as well as the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, to continue strengthening the GEC and our full range of public diplomacy programs so that we are better able to counter disinformation campaigns of authoritarian regimes.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* Will you commit that the Department will make a robust State Department and USAID budget request in Fiscal Year 2022 to address the global pandemic and its secondary impacts?

*Answer.* If confirmed, and to the extent that decisions have not yet been made on the FY 2022 budget request by the time I am appointed, I am committed to making sure that the Department requests the necessary resources in FY 2022 to address the global pandemic and secondary impacts on Department operations and foreign assistance. I know Congress has already generously provided the Department with funding and expanded authorities in FY 2020 and 2021, which protected the health and safety of the American people and others worldwide, allowed for the timely and efficient repatriation of Americans stationed overseas in the early stages of the pandemic, supported global health security and pandemic preparedness, and sustained consular operations worldwide into FY 2021. I also understand there are significant resources for international pandemic response efforts in the American Rescue Plan, which the Congress is currently considering.

*Question.* Will you commit to the goal of working in cooperation with our international allies to ensure that every person, regardless of wealth, will gain access to a life-saving vaccine?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support the administration's commitment to multilateralism to surge broad and equitable global vaccine distribution. On December 22, 2020, Congress appropriated funds to contribute to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance to support the procurement and distribution of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, including through the COVAX Advance Market Commitment to facilitate vaccine distribution in 92 low- and middle-income countries. Last month, the Administration announced an initial \$2 billion contribution to Gavi, and that the additional \$2 billion provided by Congress will be released as the United States works with other donors to elevate their pledge commitments. I will encourage countries to consider vulnerable, marginalized, and at-risk populations in their national vaccination plans.

*Question.* What role can "vaccine diplomacy" play towards restoring the U.S. global image?

*Answer.* Most countries in the world are anxious to procure COVID-19 vaccines. In addition to meeting our primary responsibility and commitment to ensuring that all U.S. citizens have access to vaccines, therapeutics, and other resources, the United States will also lead in ensuring sufficient vaccines are available around the world, with a focus on protecting communities most at risk. The United States is supporting COVAX, a multilateral initiative to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines. The U.S. will work to expand global vaccination, including through encouraging others to donate to COVAX, and will work to support efforts to mitigate secondary impacts. If confirmed, I will work to leverage our technical, financial, diplomatic, and other assistance to support global vaccination efforts.

*Question.* What steps will you take to revitalize efforts to ensure that USG diplomatic and administrative personnel who identify as LGBTQI are able to receive visas for themselves and their families when assigned to U.S. diplomatic and consular facilities and bases abroad?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring that all of the Department's employees and their families are treated fairly and equitably. For employees assigned overseas, that commitment includes seeking accreditation, with all appropriate privileges and immunities, for our LGBTI employees and their families. The State Department has formed a dedicated senior working group to seek ways to gain full recognition for our LGBTI families in those countries that do not now extend such recognition.

*Question.* Will you commit to regular and personal oversight of these efforts?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be wholly committed to regular and personal oversight of these efforts.

*Question.* I was pleased to see the recent Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of LGBTQI Persons Around the World. The memorandum outlines a leadership role for the State Department to ensure the federal government's swift and meaningful response to incidents which threaten the human rights of LGBTQI persons abroad. Please articulate how you will mobilize our diplomatic corps to support LGBTQI equality worldwide.

**Answer.** In accordance with President Biden's Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons around the world, I am committed to working closely with our diplomatic corps in using the broad range of diplomatic and programmatic tools and resources to promote and protect the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons. If confirmed, I pledge to support the Department's efforts to empower civil society and local LGBTQI+ movements; combat criminalization of individuals on the basis of LGBTQI+ status or conduct; protect vulnerable LGBTQI+ refugees and asylum seekers; and allow swift U.S. responses to human rights violations of LGBTQI+ persons.

**Question.** How can the Department better use the insights and talents of its affinity groups to increase outreach to minority communities with a view to increasing diverse employment and better connecting U.S. foreign policy programs and goals to the needs of the American people?

**Answer.** The State Department encourages all employees to help recruit diverse talent by using their professional affiliations and networks to amplify Department career opportunities. The Department's 17 Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs) members can explain to future colleagues their unique roles and cooperation to create a culture of inclusion across the Department. The Department's Volunteer Recruiter Corps, launched in January 2021, will leverage employees' diverse insights and experiences to recruit for a more inclusive workforce; half of the 500 participants are EAG members. Outreach from members of underrepresented groups in the diplomatic workforce will be key to prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as a national security imperative.

**Question.** Specifically, will you consider encouraging domestic travel of U.S. diplomats, increasing the number of Pickering and Rangel Fellows, and increasing the number of Diplomats in Residence at U.S. colleges and universities in underserved areas?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will look forward to carefully reviewing this proposal. I will also continue the Department's efforts to build a more diverse workforce. Currently, 16 regional Diplomats in Residence are based around the country, including seven at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions. In 2020, the Department's virtual recruitment and career fairs opened new channels to reaching candidates. A new "sourcing unit" will identify highly skilled potential candidates from all backgrounds.

The Department increased the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship Programs by 50 percent in 2020 and will welcome a newly expanded cohort of 90 fellows in March. Additionally, in 2020, the Department recruited a record number of fellowship candidates. The Department is considering new fellowships to meet specialist career track hiring needs and diversity and inclusion initiatives, as we have done for Information Specialists with the Foreign Affairs IT Fellowship. If confirmed, I also look forward to continuing conversations with Congress to explore an expanded paid internship program.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

**Question.** Section 15(b) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 states that "The Department of State shall keep the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives fully and currently informed with respect to all activities and responsibilities within the jurisdiction of these committees. Any Federal department, agency, or independent establishment shall furnish any information requested by either such committee relating to any such activity or responsibility." Can you commit to complying with this provision of law by ensuring that information requested by members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is provided expeditiously and transparently? If not, why not?

**Answer.** I am committed to working with Congress and this committee in accordance with the law to provide all information needed to perform traditional oversight functions as promptly as possible.

**Question.** The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an



exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF. Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

*Question.* Last month the State Department transmitted a mandatory and overdue report to Congress listing entities engaged in sanctionable activities because of their participation in the construction of the Nord Stream 2 (NS2) pipeline, pursuant to the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended. PEESA mandates the imposition of sanctions on entities listed in such reports. The report included only two entities, the Fortuna and KVT-RUS, both of which the Trump administration had already sanctioned. It did not include any entities which are plainly, publicly required to be listed under PEESA. Reportedly, State Department officials who spoke to Congressional staffers were unable to provide a justification why several entities—including the company responsible for the planning, construction, and operation of NS2—were left off. This abdication is inexcusable. Can you commit to immediately ensuring the Biden administration meets its mandatory obligation to provide an interim report to Congress pursuant to PEESA and sanction all of the entities that are engaged in pipe-laying, pipe-laying activities, certification, and insurance sanctionable under PEESA? If not, why not?

Answer. The State Department submits a report to Congress every 90 days on vessels engaged in pipe-laying and pipe-laying activities, and various entities providing and supporting those vessels, for the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, as required by the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, with the next report due to Congress in mid-May. If confirmed, I will use all available tools to counter Russian malign influence and to work with Allies and partners in the region to support Transatlantic energy security goals. The Department of State will continue to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional persons as appropriate.

*Question.* One of the most egregious dynamics in the initial implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) involved the way that the Obama administration circumvented Congressional deliberation and approval by first attempting to lock in the agreement as international law via United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 2231). After that resolution was passed—which occurred just as the Congressional review period mandated by the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) was beginning—officials from the Government of Iran and the Obama administration suggested that Congress would be abrogating the U.S.'s formal international obligations by rejecting the agreement. Can you commit to ensuring that any future nuclear agreement negotiated between State Department officials and Iran, which involves the suspension or waiver of Congressional sanctions, will only be negotiated in full consultation with Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under INARA.

*Question.* Can you commit to ensuring that any future nuclear agreement negotiated between State Department officials and Iran, which involves the suspension or waiver of Congressional sanctions, will not be implemented without Congressional approval? If not, why not?

Answer. I am aware that the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA) contains certain limitations on sanctions relief during a congressional review period. I understand that the Biden administration is committed to complying with the requirements of INARA, and if confirmed, I am committed to doing so.

*Question.* It was recently announced that Iran and South Korea agreed to allow Tehran to access approximately \$1 billion of its assets that are frozen in South Korean banks due to U.S. sanctions. Reports indicate that the South Koreans received approval from Biden administration officials to do so. Please transmit to the committee any waivers, decision memos, or other documents pertaining to this case, and confirm doing so.

Answer. I do not have access to Department records nor the authority on my own to give you Department records. I commit, if confirmed, to work with the committee

to appropriately comply with an official committee request for such Department information.

*Question.* On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On February 5 the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. Officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the “broad” designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen’s population live under areas controlled by the group. They have not provided an explanation for the delisting of the three leaders, and in fact they have publicly, repeatedly, and falsely denied or downplayed the relief provided to these Iran-backed terrorists. For example, on February 11 State Department spokesman Ned Price falsely told journalists “there is no change” to the sanctions on these individuals. He was asked about the issue again the next day, and said “the Secretary had an intent to remove this broad designation of the movement.” The public statement issued by the State Department did not mention the revocation of the SDGT designation on the Houthi leaders, but noted that they “remain sanctioned under E.O. 13611.” Can you commit to ensuring that State Department officials stop publicly misleading journalists and the American public about sanctions relief provided by the Department and the Biden administration to Iran-backed terrorists? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I understand that the three Ansarallah leaders in question were designated under the U.N. Security Council’s Yemen sanctions regime in 2015 and domestically under E.O. 13611, related to acts that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Yemen. Therefore, they remain on the Treasury Department’s Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List and are subject to asset freezing and any attendant travel restrictions. As a consequence of the revocation of Ansarallah’s Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) group designation under E.O. 13224, there was no longer a basis to retain the SDGT designations of these individuals as leaders of Ansarallah, which were derivative of the broader SDGT designation of the group. If confirmed, I intend to continue our support of U.N.-led efforts, including a robust implementation of the U.N. and E.O. 13611 sanctions, to call attention to and condemn Ansarallah’s destabilizing activities. The State Department’s emphasis will continue to be on using diplomacy to build international pressure on Ansarallah to change its behavior and ultimately end the war.

*Question.* Please describe why the State Department lifted the SDGT designations on Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim.

*Answer.* I understand that simultaneous with the designation of Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive Order (E.O.) 13224, these individuals were designated as SDGTs on the basis that they were leaders of an SDGT, namely Ansarallah. As a consequence of the revocation of Ansarallah’s SDGT designation, there was no longer a basis to retain the designations of these individuals as leaders of an SDGT. However, they remain designated under the U.N. Security Council’s Yemen sanctions regime and domestically under E.O. 13611 related to acts that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Yemen and, therefore, remain on Treasury’s Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List and are subject to asset freezing and any attendant travel restrictions.

*Question.* The Central Bank of Iran (CBI), has been designated as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SGT) pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 13224 for providing material support to terrorist organizations. Can you commit to not lift, rescind or significantly modify—or to agree within the interagency process to lift, rescind or significantly modify—this terrorism designation of the CBI, in the absence of a determination that the CBI has ceased providing material support to terrorist organizations? If not, why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the administration’s efforts to counter Iran’s support for terrorism, including through the appropriate use of sanctions and regular coordination with our partners and allies. Iran is the world’s foremost state sponsor of terrorism, which poses a threat to security and stability in the Middle East, and the administration will continue to use all tools available to counter Iran’s support for terrorism.

*Question.* Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is designated as a terrorist organization both as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and as an SDGT pursu-

ant to EO 13224. Can you commit to not lift, rescind or significantly modify—or to agree within the interagency process to lift, rescind or significantly modify—these terrorism designations on the IRGC, in the absence of a determination that the Government of Iran has ceased providing material support to terrorist organizations.

Answer. Iran's support for terrorism threatens our forces and partners in the region and elsewhere. If confirmed, I intend to continue working with our allies and partners to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region, including its support for terrorist groups and violent militias and its ballistic missile program, and maintain international, collective pressure on Iran. The administration is committed to countering Iran's destabilizing activities using the array of tools at our disposal, including sanctions to deal with Iran's support for terrorism.

*Question.* You and other officials responsible for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have repeatedly described it as the most rigorous inspection regime ever negotiated. Despite this inspection regime, the IAEA was unable to locate the illicit Nuclear Archive subsequently seized by Israel, which included designs and materials relevant to the creation of nuclear weapons. They were also unable to find locations which, having been revealed by Israeli officials, subsequently proved to have evidence of nuclear work that the IAEA says Iran has not accounted for. Please describe what you perceive to have been the flaws in the JCPOA inspection regime do you believe were responsible for these failures by the IAEA?

Answer. I did not work on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action while serving in the Obama-Biden administration, but I did support the policy decision by President Obama to conclude it. The IAEA has a decades-long successful track record of monitoring the non-diversion of declared nuclear material globally. While the IAEA thoroughly investigates all available information, including based on its own verification and monitoring activities, it is not an intelligence organization. It can only act on information that is either acquired by it in the performance of its verification mandates or presented to it. The administration has full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any indications of undeclared or diverted nuclear material that could contribute to any renewed Iranian pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Please describe what new measures you would insist are included in any future nuclear agreement with Iran to ensure that the IAEA has the ability to identify such materials and activities?

Answer. The IAEA has said it has the tools it needs to perform its verification mandates in Iran so long as Iran fully implements its JCPOA commitments. This includes implementation of the Additional Protocol to Iran's NPT-required safeguards agreement that provides enhanced information and access regarding Iran's nuclear program, including with respect to undeclared locations about which the IAEA has questions. The JCPOA provides the IAEA with the most intrusive verification procedures ever negotiated, including to investigate any indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran. The administration has full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any such indication.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY

*Question.* In partnership with the State Department's New Chief Diversity Officer, what tangible steps will your office take to improve diversity across the State Department, including at the most senior levels of the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I will partner with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer to track the progress of the Department on performance metrics on diversity and inclusion as outlined in the soon-to-be released Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. I will hold officers who report to me accountable to promote a culture of inclusion—where every individual voice is heard, respected, and valued. The Department is taking a critical look at the current selection processes employed by the deputy chief of mission and principal officer selection panels. If confirmed, I will encourage hiring managers to identify opportunities that will allow the Department to reach a wider candidate pool to include more candidates from underrepresented backgrounds. Additionally, the Department is finalizing an Enterprise Data Strategy which will include an initial emphasis on supporting Department diversity and inclusion efforts.

*Question.* Why have women and minorities historically left the Foreign Service at significantly higher rates than white males, and what can you do to address that troubling trend?

*Answer.* Understanding why women and minorities leave the Department is a crucial step in increasing retention. If confirmed, I intend to ask Department experts to examine whether there is a significantly higher rate of attrition for certain populations. Consistent with the recommendation of the January 2020 GAO report, “Additional Steps Are Needed to Identify Potential Barriers to Diversity,” I commit to the Department’s undertaking of further analysis, including as part of its forthcoming Enterprise Data Strategy, to explore what interventions the Department can introduce to mitigate attrition, including of underrepresented minorities and women, ensuring the Department remains an employer of choice. If confirmed, I will focus on bringing accountability and transparency to this issue.

*Question.* Significant delays in the hiring process have impacted the State Department’s ability to bring on board talented Foreign and Civil Service Officers, as well as local staff and family members at many embassies abroad. Do these delays affect the State Department’s ability to deliver on its goals, and how will you approach implementing a more efficient hiring process?

*Answer.* I understand in FY 2020, the Department achieved a 20-percent reduction in Foreign Service assessment timelines, despite disruptions caused by COVID-19. A new virtual oral assessment and a remote-proctored Foreign Service Officer test allowed at-home testing. The Department’s Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM) created an entirely virtual Foreign Service onboarding process that met FY 2020-authorized Foreign Service hiring targets, including 414 Foreign Service staff hired virtually. The Department exceeded the Foreign Service Specialists target by 14 percent. The Department has experienced high Civil Service (CS) vacancy rates due to the extended hiring freeze; however, I understand the CS hiring backlog has been significantly reduced. If confirmed, I will dedicate resources to continue modernizing hiring strategies and support additional innovations to attract exceptional talent.

*Question.* With last year’s closure of the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu, the United States appears to be at a disadvantage in our diplomatic reach and representation in China. How will you approach re-positioning our diplomatic footprint in China to ensure that we have the broadest reach, including access to parts of the country in which we do not currently have representation?

*Answer.* I understand that the suspensions of operations at U.S. Consulate General Chengdu and U.S. Consulate General Wuhan significantly increased the workload for Embassy Beijing without adding additional staff, and that the Department is currently reviewing Mission China’s request for additional personnel. It is important that the Department is adequately resourced and positioned to know what is happening inside China. If confirmed, I will review the Department’s diplomatic presence there, including whether it should resume operations at U.S. Consulate General Wuhan.

*Question.* For many years, the State Department has relied on consular fees to fund most of its basic functions, a model that proved untenable over this last year. How will you approach working with Congress to find a more sustainable model for funding the Department?

*Answer.* The consular funding structure relies on visa fees and the growth in visa demand to fund the Department’s highest priority: the protection of U.S. citizens and their interests. The Department retains only 83 percent of all consular fees it collects. Retained fees are exclusively from passport and visa applications. The Department remits the remaining consular fees, primarily for overseas citizen services, to the Treasury. For FY 2021, Congress expanded expenditure authorities of certain retained fees which otherwise could not be used to support U.S. citizen services. I understand that the Bureau of Consular Affairs may continue to need appropriations without further changes to its fiscal structure. If confirmed, I would work with Congress to find a solution.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN MCKEON BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* In your prepared statement, you highlighted the importance of increasing diversity in the Department of State to ensure that it is “fully representative

of America.” If you are confirmed, what metrics will you develop to measure that all aspects of diversity, to include race, gender, ideology, regional, and socioeconomic differences are represented in the Department of State’s efforts to increase diversity?

Answer. Diversity is the key to unlocking an organization’s potential as diverse teams consistently demonstrate high performance due to their creativity and innovation. If confirmed, I commit to upholding and fully implementing the Department’s leadership and management tenets, including support for diversity and inclusion, to strengthen teams across the Department. I will hold senior leaders accountable for promulgating fairness and transparency in their day-to-day decisions and will seek progress reports, working with the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, on their continued commitment to championing diversity and inclusion.

In addition, I will work to ensure that our recruiting efforts target all regions of the country. The Department is also developing a program to begin to pay some interns, which will help our recruitment efforts with those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

*Question.* In the era of global connectivity and greater ease of movement, what is the purpose of an Embassy in the 21st century?

Answer. Maintaining a U.S. embassy presence allows the Department to cultivate personal relationships around the world to advance U.S. foreign policy, economic, and national security interests and to support U.S. citizens abroad, such as assisting and evacuating more than 100,000 U.S. citizens during the COVID–19 pandemic. While creative and effective pivots to virtual traditional and public diplomacy have allowed the Department’s missions to promote U.S. priorities during COVID–19, consistent in-person outreach remains the most effective way to achieve an understanding of host countries that strengthen our ability to assert U.S. influence. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to ensure Department resources and personnel are aligned to respond to 21st century challenges.

*Question.* Do you support reorganizing or abolishing aspects of the Department of State to prevent redundancy and overlapping areas of responsibility?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the Department’s organization and aligning available resources and staffing with strategic priorities, as well as ensuring clear lines of accountability and responsibility. I am committed to ensuring the effective and efficient use of U.S. taxpayer dollars.

*Question.* In your view, how can we reform the allocation and selection of career Ambassadors to ensure American interests are adequately represented?

Answer. The Department of State endeavors to ensure that U.S. interests are strongly represented by career ambassadors who embrace the diversity of the United States. There is a rigorous selection process in place which focuses on the candidate’s suitability, talents, skills, abilities, and experience, and the candidate is vetted by senior Department officials before being submitted for consideration by the White House. These positions are highly competitive, and the Department thoroughly reviews all qualified candidates. If confirmed, I will review the Department’s ambassadorial selection process to ensure we are choosing the best candidates for these positions.

*Question.* In your view, should any Ambassador be seated who has not met and counseled with the President of the United States?

Answer. The ambassador is the direct representative of the President of the United States. As such, it is beneficial for the United States for the ambassador to meet and counsel with the President. However, that is not always possible, given the number of ambassadors and the President’s schedule. As you know from your experience as Ambassador to Japan, ambassadors do receive a personal letter of instruction from the President that provides them guidance directly from the President in preparation for their assignment.

*Question.* In order to expand the pool of qualified candidates for senior positions in Embassy Tokyo, specifically the position of Deputy Chief of Mission, the Department of State previously removed as a requirement Japanese language proficiency at the level of 4/4. Is there a requirement for Japanese language proficiency at the level of 4/4 to be eligible to apply for the position of Deputy Chief of Mission in Embassy Tokyo? Please begin your answer with yes or no.

Answer. No. A 4/4 level in Japanese is exceedingly rare and would exceed the working-level requirement of 3/3 for most language-designated positions. Although

having Japanese language skills is certainly desirable, there is no specific language requirement for the selection of the Deputy Chief of Mission in Tokyo.

---

145

**Additional Material Submitted  
by Senator Cory A. Booker**

**Report by Amnesty International on the November 19, 2020  
Massacre at Axum (Ethiopia)**

**THE MASSACRE IN AXUM**



**Amnesty International is a movement of 10 million people which mobilizes the humanity in everyone and campaigns for change so we can all enjoy our human rights.**

**Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account.**

**We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and individual donations.**

**We believe that acting in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere can change our societies for the better**

© Amnesty International 2021  
Except where otherwise noted, content in this document is licensed under a Creative Commons  
(attribution, non-commercial, no derivatives, international 4.0) licence.  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>  
For more information please visit the permissions page on our website: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)  
Where material is attributed to a copyright owner other than Amnesty International this  
material is not subject to the Creative Commons licence.  
First published in 2021  
by Amnesty International Ltd  
Peter Benenson House, 1, Easton Street  
London WC1X 0ED, UK

**Index: AFR 25/3730/2021**  
**Original language: English**

**[amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)**

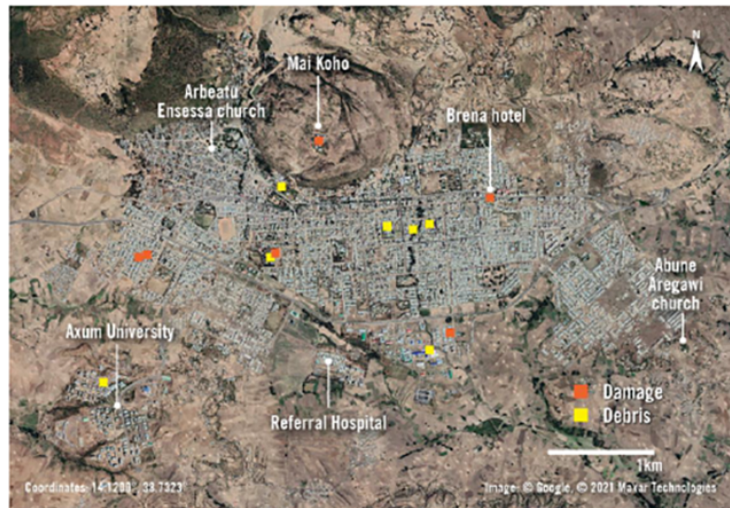




# CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INDISCRIMINATE SHELLING AND KILLING OF SUSPECTED TPLF MEMBERS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>THE MASSACRE</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MASS DETENTIONS AND THREATS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>BURIALS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>LOOTING, HUNGER AND THIRST</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>23</b>

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



*An overview of Axum shows key locations in the town. Structures damaged from shelling and airstrikes are shown with orange markers. Areas with significant debris – likely from looting – are shown with yellow markers.*

Between 19 and 29 November 2020, Eritrean troops operating in the Ethiopian city of Axum, Tigray, committed a series of human rights and humanitarian law violations, including killing hundreds of civilians. Over an approximately 24-hour period on 28-29 November, Eritrean soldiers deliberately shot civilians on the street and carried out systematic house-to-house searches, extrajudicially executing men and boys. The massacre was carried out in retaliation for an earlier attack by a small number of local militiamen, joined by local residents armed with sticks and stones.

In the immediate aftermath of the massacre, Eritrean troops shot at those who sought to remove bodies from the streets, but later allowed residents to collect the bodies and bury them. Men from the community led the collective effort, pulling carts piled with the bodies of relatives, friends, neighbours and strangers, which they brought to churches across the city for burial, many in mass graves.

The massacre was the culmination of a wave of violations carried out since 19 November, when Eritrean and Ethiopian forces entered Axum together, after indiscriminately shelling the city and firing at those who tried to flee. Witnesses say that Eritrean forces, in taking over the town, carried out extrajudicial executions and engaged in widespread looting. Following the 28-29 November massacre, Eritrean forces detained hundreds

of residents and threatened renewed killing in the event of new resistance. Looting by Eritrean soldiers escalated, and insecurity and hunger led many residents to flee.

The events in Axum — a city located on the road linking Shire to Adwa, some 187 kms north of Mekelle, the capital of Tigray Regional State — occurred during the ongoing armed conflict between Ethiopia's federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Previously Ethiopia's ruling party, the TPLF lost its dominant political position in 2018, but continued to govern the Tigray region under Ethiopia's federal structure until the outbreak of war in November 2020.

On 4 November 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed appeared on national TV and announced that he had ordered the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) — Ethiopia's military — to fight the Tigray regional paramilitary police and militia loyal to the TPLF. He said that the Tigray security forces had attacked the ENDF's Northern Command, based in Mekelle. In waging war against the TPLF, the ENDF has relied on the support of special forces and militias from the Amhara region, which borders on Tigray, and on the Eritrean Defence Force.

The Ethiopian authorities and Eritrean authorities have made contradictory statements regarding the involvement of Eritrean troops in the Tigray conflict, with some high-ranking officials denying their presence but others acknowledging it.<sup>1</sup> In this briefing, Amnesty International documents how the Eritrean military is responsible for serious violations against Tigrayan civilians in Axum. It concludes that the indiscriminate shelling of Axum by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops may amount to war crimes, and that the mass execution of Axum civilians by Eritrean troops may amount to crimes against humanity.

Amnesty International calls for an international investigation into the events in Axum, and for the Ethiopian government to grant full and unimpeded access to humanitarian, human rights, and media organizations.

This briefing is based on 11 days of research by Amnesty International at the refugee reception center in Hamdayet, eastern Sudan, in January 2021, as well as on numerous phone interviews with witnesses in Axum.<sup>2</sup> In all, Amnesty International interviewed 41 witnesses and survivors of the massacre, all ethnic Tigrayans, as well as 20 others with knowledge relevant to the situation.<sup>3</sup> Given security concerns of interviewees, all of their names have been omitted.

On 18 February, Amnesty International shared the research findings presented in this briefing with Ambassador Redwan Hussein, Ethiopia's State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Spokesperson for the Emergency Taskforce in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but had not received a response at the time of writing.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, "Ethiopian general says Eritrean troops entered Tigray - video clip," Reuters, 7 January 2021; "Complete lie: Ethiopia denies Eritrean army's involvement in Tigray," Al Jazeera, 12 November 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International is still trying to secure access to Tigray Regional State to conduct fact-finding on the ground, following a formal request made on 3 December 2020. Other international human rights investigators do not have formal access to Tigray either. In December 2020, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michele Bachelet called on the Ethiopian government to grant access to independent human rights monitors so that they could investigate allegations of abuses. "Provide unhindered access to whole of Tigray to protect civilians, Bachelet urges Ethiopia," UN News, 22 December 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Satellite imagery from 4 October, 16 October, 23 November and 13 December 2020 was also analysed to corroborate witness accounts of events. (The imagery from October was used for comparative purposes.)

# INDISCRIMINATE SHELLING AND KILLING OF SUSPECTED TPLF MEMBERS

The armed conflict between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF began on 4 November 2020. At some point during the second week of fighting, there was aerial bombing in and around Axum, and on the afternoon of 19 November, forces loyal to the Federal government started to shell the city indiscriminately.<sup>4</sup>

In an apparent joint operation to capture Axum, Ethiopian and Eritrean military forces began firing artillery on the city from the west, the direction from which they advanced. A witness recalled that the shelling continued for quite some time: "There was not any army or forces inside the city at that time but they shelled the people. That was very scary ... shelling and gunfire."<sup>5</sup>

Numerous residents described the terror that took hold of the city. A man recalled: "We were really scared because the sound was really huge. We never heard [anything] like that. And we saw the shells falling on buildings, houses."<sup>6</sup> A woman recalled: "I was shocked and saw everyone shocked and scared of what happened."<sup>7</sup>

"Everybody ran away, leaving shops, markets and offices," said one woman.<sup>8</sup> One man recalled that some people tried to flee the city while "others were hiding around bridges, buildings, drainage pipes."<sup>9</sup> Another said: "I saw people scared, running away. They tried to escape but some of them ran into the zone of shelling."<sup>10</sup> The shells were falling "continuously" that evening, one woman said.<sup>11</sup>

Shells landed on streets and on civilian buildings, killing and injuring residents. One man said a neighbour and three others were killed in a house in the Idaga Hamus neighbourhood. "My neighbour's house was destroyed," he said, "and the people inside died."<sup>12</sup> The neighbour was a woman in her mid-60s named Telets Abraha, he recalled. Killed with her were two of her cousins — young men who had found refuge in Axum after fleeing the conflict in Humera — as well as her maid, a woman aged 18 or 19. "After our neighbour died under her home, we got scared and ran," the man said.

<sup>4</sup> Amnesty International phone interviews (names withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 3-9 February 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

In another incident that day, a man said he saw a woman and her infant child killed when artillery shells fell near the woman's house, which was located close to the Atse Menelik high school. "She was outside the compound and moving, trying to find a safe place," he recalled. "Then [the] shell fell on her. She had three kids. Two of them ran but the third was a little kid [she] carried on her back. He was killed with her."<sup>13</sup>

Azbia (name changed) said she saw a family being killed in the Hamed Gebez neighbourhood in O2 Kebele: "The heavy weapon fell on one house and ... killed five people — mother, father, brother, sister and maid. I saw this myself."<sup>14</sup> Another witness said he saw five of his neighbours killed in the shelling in two separate incidents—a woman in her thirties, killed near the Damo hotel, and a woman in her fifties, killed alongside her two children and niece near the Remhai hotel.

Gebremeskel (name changed) described his experience that day:

**I was with my friends chilling out on the street, when the bombing started. We were scared and tried to hide underground or in buildings. We found a market and hid there. I saw three people who were friends with each other try to run on the street. Two of them got injured. The third one was killed: half of his face was removed. We also saw a building hit. Then, later, we went to check it and I saw an old woman [had been] killed by the fallen building.<sup>15</sup>**

This was near the stadium. The shelling, he said, "came from the direction of Shire."

Girmal (name changed) told Amnesty International that he watched the shelling from the top of a building, and that the bombardment started between 2 and 3 pm on 19 November. He said:

**There was a lot of bombardment in the town. Damo hotel, near the Axum University — I saw it with my eyes — Enda-Gaber area. I was watching from the top of the building while the artillery bombs were hitting in different parts of the city. Near the Menelik school, around 11 people were killed including a woman who came from Humera ... The school is close to the Damo Hotel. I attended the funeral for some of the dead the next day.<sup>16</sup>**

Luel (name changed) said he helped bring a 45- or 50-year-old woman to the hospital; she had been injured with shrapnel in her family compound. Some who were injured died because they did not receive treatment. A 15-year-old boy told Amnesty International that he fled to a neighbouring village, where he saw a man who had been injured in the shelling: "People told him that they will not give him any treatment because they don't know how. They told him to go to the Referral hospital in Axum but he was told that the soldiers already controlled the city, so he died in the village."<sup>17</sup>

Some local people, witnesses say, organized checkpoints, seeking to find artillery observers (i.e., spotters who help direct artillery and mortar fire onto targets). None of the witnesses to whom Amnesty International spoke, however, said that there was any armed resistance to the attack. "They [the incoming forces] didn't face any TPLF fighters; that's why they took control of the city within a day," one woman explained.<sup>18</sup>

When the shelling finished, Ethiopian and Eritrean forces entered Axum together. "They were shooting ... when they entered the city," Haftom (name changed) recalled. He said:

**The place where we stayed was my friend's home and they shot into the home. The window broke ... We were upstairs and could see soldiers very clearly. It was dark — it was nighttime. We saw that tanks and trucks [had] lights [on]. That's how we recognized they were Ethiopians and Eritreans ... My friend was sick [from fear] from the morning because of the shelling. He became more sick after they shot the heavy weapons.<sup>19</sup>**

Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers took control of the city that day. "The city became quiet and silent," one man recalled.<sup>20</sup>

Once in control of the city, soldiers generally identified as Eritrean searched for TPLF soldiers and militias. The soldiers "were looking for militias or anyone with a gun," said one woman. "There were a lot of ... house to house killings." Mimicking the soldiers, she added: "Where is your young man, woman? They killed a lot of young people that day."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>15</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 6 February 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 23 January 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

Another man described the killing of a neighbour, a woman aged around 30: "We were running; it was at midnight; we ran through China Road ... in the direction of Shire ... We were running in front of her. She was carrying a torch. After she turned it on, they saw her and they shot her. We didn't really see who or where they were."<sup>22</sup>

Witnesses told Amnesty International that killings of men suspected of being TPLF fighters and sympathizers were based on even the slightest possible clues. As one man explained:

**They started looking for people to kill, especially those who are militias or farmer fighters or [who have] any relation with TPLF soldiers. They would ask for your cell phone and if they see any of your pictures or a family member who are farmers or fighters, they would kill you ... They started killing people, especially those who wore *shirit* [a sarong-like wrap commonly associated with TPLF fighters] and also those who wore camouflage shirts, even if just for style.<sup>23</sup>**

Weyni (name changed), age 18, described such an incident on 20 November, in which she saw Eritrean soldiers extrajudicially execute two men. Near Yemane Garage, a petrol station in the east of the city, she saw "two people riding a motorbike." The driver, she said, was in his mid-twenties, while the passenger was in his fifties. "The driver wore a ranger's jacket ... The passenger wore a *shirit* scarf ... They ordered them to stop and asked them to show their phones and laid them down on the asphalt face down and shot them in the back."<sup>24</sup>

With her friends, she faced harassment from Eritrean soldiers:

**They would check your phone and if they see any Gebretzion picture or anything political, they can rob your mobile and beat you .... Eritrean soldiers started by robbing the mobiles of my friends. They asked to see the photo gallery on his phone and found pictures of TPLF leaders. It was a friend I was with. There was another [friend] with us. They robbed him of his money.<sup>25</sup>**

A 6 pm curfew, extending until morning, was imposed immediately.<sup>26</sup>

On 20 November, residents ventured out of their homes or returned from the surrounding villages and found dead neighbours on the street. One woman said she saw two bodies — a man and a woman — near her home on China Road. One man said he found the body of a neighbour, a barber in his thirties, on the street near the Bazin school.<sup>27</sup> A woman who had fled to a village during the shelling said she returned to Axum that day: "During the journey we saw a lot of dead bodies on the street killed by heavy weapons or bullets," she said.<sup>28</sup>

Soldiers continued carrying out beatings and extrajudicial executions in the following days, although, it appears, on a smaller scale.

Returning to Axum on 22 November after fleeing the shelling, one man said he saw on the streets, especially on China Road, the bullet-riddled bodies of over 10 people. He recognized a neighbour who owned a butcher's shop. Another man who had fled and who came back to the city around 25-26 November said:

**After I came back to the city, I ... saw the Brana Hotel ... really damaged ... It was very shocking because we saw a lot of dead bodies [on the street], so we were scared and tried to hide because it's not safe ... I saw my neighbour dead. His body had been shot by five bullets. We found him, took his body to his house ... He's an old man. Approximately [age] 50.<sup>29</sup>**

A man said he saw two men being killed in the Edaga Hamus neighbourhood on approximately 25 November: "we saw them riding a motorbike and [they] were shot, so we ran away." He said that the perpetrators could have been either Eritrean or Ethiopian soldiers. He explained: "They wore Ethiopian defense uniforms but could be Eritreans because many Eritrean soldiers wore that uniform."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021. The so-called China Road is a major thoroughfare cutting across the city.

<sup>23</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021. The farmers referred to are those given weapons and training by the TPLF.

<sup>24</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Gebretzion Gebremichael, mentioned by this woman, is the head of the TPLF. He is currently in hiding.

<sup>26</sup> Local residents interviewed by Amnesty International said they were informed of the curfew by soldiers, but they did not know how it was declared or its legal basis.

<sup>27</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.



Debris from shelling is visible in front of the Brama Hotel, on Asim's old main road, in this satellite imagery from 13 December 2020. A man who had fled and who came back to the city around 25-26 November said: "After I came back to the city, I ... saw the Brama Hotel ... really damaged."

# THE MASSACRE

## FIGHTING

On the morning of 28 November, a band of pro-TPLF fighters mounted an assault on a position that Eritrean soldiers had set up on a mountain known as Mai Koho. This mountain, located just east of the Axum Tsiion St Mary Church, sits a few hundred meters from many of the town's main hotels, banks, and churches, and overlooks the town.

The fighting started in the morning, several witnesses said, when TPLF fighters and/or pro-TPLF militiamen attacked the Eritrean position at Mai Koho. The group of assailants was reportedly small — witnesses said they saw perhaps 50-80 men armed with guns — but the offensive received local support. Some local youth rallied, joining the fight with improvised weapons, such as knives, sticks, and stones. Others brought food to the fighters, while an even larger number cheered in support.<sup>31</sup>

The Eritrean forces responded by firing automatic weapons and precision rifles. It is unclear how long the actual fighting lasted, though some said it went on into the afternoon. Some witnesses claimed that the militiamen succeeded in killing many Eritrean soldiers. Others described a dramatic imbalance between the two sides. A 26-year-old man who participated in the attack said:

**We expected that TPLF soldiers might come fight the Eritreans but it wasn't them. We heard it was some militiamen. We wanted to protect our city so we attempted to defend it especially from Eritrean soldiers ... The Eritrean soldiers were organized. They knew how to shoot and they had radios, communications. Even before we started fighting with them, they killed with snipers and Bren [machine guns] ... I didn't have a gun, just a stick.<sup>32</sup>**

A 22-year-old man who sought to bring food to the fighters described a similar scene: "The Eritrean soldiers were trained but the young residents didn't even know how to shoot. After that a lot of the fighters started running away and dropped their weapons."<sup>33</sup>

## DELIBERATE TARGETING OF CIVILIANS

From about 3 to 4 pm, lines of Eritrean trucks and tanks reportedly entered the city from the east. Their numbers bolstered by the new arrivals, Eritrean soldiers went on a rampage, shooting at civilian men and youths who were out on the streets attempting to flee in panic. The killing, which one witness said began around 4 pm, was carried out on a large scale and continued until the evening.

Kilfe (name changed), a university professor, described the beginning of the massacre. "Starting [at] 2 pm, the Eritrean soldiers started going home to home and killing men. When I heard that they [were] killing men, I ran out of the city."<sup>34</sup>

Kilfe (name changed), age 26, told Amnesty International about killings he witnessed on the city's main street. "I saw the Eritrean soldiers killing the youth who were on the street," he recalled. "I was on the second floor of a building and I watched, through the window, the Eritreans killing the youth on the street."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), 3 February 2021; Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 6 January 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 6 February 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 6 January 2021.



The shooting, one witness said, "was huge."<sup>36</sup> Another resident, a 21-year-old man, said: "I saw a lot of people dead on the street. Even my uncle's family. Six of his family members were killed. So many people were killed ... This was in the middle of the city, not at the entrance or in surrounding villages."<sup>37</sup> Some residents hid in buildings and witnessed killings through the windows. One man said:

**I was at home. I saw around my home what is happening when some soldiers targeted people with sniper rifles, killing people. I ... saw the people being shot on the ground when they were running. Approximately 10 people or more. All of them young men ... Everyone was scared and ran away.<sup>38</sup>**

Other witnesses echo this account, describing Eritrean soldiers shooting at men who posed no threat to them. The victims, residents said, carried no weapons and in many cases were running away from the soldiers when they were shot. One man who had found refuge in an unfinished building said he saw a group of six Eritrean soldiers kill a neighbour with a vehicle-mounted heavy machine-gun on the street near the Mana Hotel: "He was standing. I think he was confused. They were probably around 10 metres from him. They shot him in the head."<sup>39</sup>

Another man described two killings in the Tsele neighbourhood. In the first case, Eritrean soldiers shot a homeless man known as Oud who had suffered from mental health problems: "He was walking. After he started running, they shot him: he started running and then stopped and was lying on the incline of the asphalt. I saw when they shot him — his body shook. They were about 70 metres from him."<sup>40</sup> In the second incident, he saw a man being shot from behind while running.

One witness who was hiding in a forest just outside the city saw his neighbour, a farmer named Abreha, shot and killed by Eritrean soldiers: "He was in his field working. I saw Eritrean soldiers come up and get out of the car and they immediately shot at him."<sup>41</sup> When returning to see the body after the soldiers left, he saw that the bag of seeds that his neighbour had been preparing was gone: "[it] means probably that the Eritrean soldiers took them with them."<sup>42</sup> The victim, a father of three, was in his mid- to late-40s. That day, the man witnessed more men being killed: "I saw another two young men being shot in the head ... I saw them as they were shot from afar and falling on the street. It was around the preparatory school."

The mass killing left the townspeople in confusion and disbelief. One resident said: "During this day, I never thought that Eritrean soldiers were killing civilians. People told me but I didn't trust them. But after I saw that they had killed my neighbour. I understood that they were killing people and then I ran away from that."<sup>43</sup> Residents had two options: running or hiding, in both cases with uncertain results. One witness said: "I think the reason they attacked the people easily is because some people ran, others hid in the city and were easily found in random places in the city." Another man described the dilemma in similar terms: "When somebody is shot on the ground, you think you should run away because they will kill you, but when you run you are easily targeted."<sup>44</sup>

Those who hid at home were also vulnerable. A 23-year-old man said Eritrean soldiers noticed him after he opened the door of his home to observe what was happening:

**Before they saw me, they were shooting at people. When they saw me, they started shooting at me and when I closed my door, they kept shooting at me. I heard them when they knocked on the door and said in Tigrinya, "open the door." I kept quiet and silent, didn't open the door, and hid under the bed. They started shooting at the walls. I could see small bullet holes in the wall. After that they left me alone ... Then I started observing through the holes. During that day, I saw people falling, soldiers passing that way.<sup>45</sup>**

Eritrean troops deployed tanks in the middle of the city.<sup>46</sup> One resident who lived near the Kideste Maryam hospital said he heard and saw tank shells falling in his neighbourhood, destroying a nearby building. "I heard [the tank] when it's moving — you could hear the chains on the ground and the firing," he added.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>37</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>38</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>39</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>40</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>41</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>42</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>44</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>45</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>46</sup> Amnesty International phone interviews (names withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 6 January 2021.

<sup>47</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

Visibly traumatized, a young man who had joined the assault on May Koho, armed with a stick, told Amnesty International:

**I saw a lot of my friends killed. One of them asked me to help but I didn't do anything. The Eritrean soldiers were lying on the ground and shooting from a distance. Five of my friends were already dead. The sixth was injured on his abdomen and the blood was percolating like a fountain so he asked me to help. So I brought him a blanket and tried to tie it. They kept shooting at us and the bullets hit around me. And he kept asking "Can you please take me to the hospital?" And I didn't take him because the hospital had already been looted and they were killing the patients at the hospital. And then I saw him when he's dead. His final sentences were "I'm tired, I want to sleep. Just save your life and run away."<sup>48</sup>**

The killings left the city strewn with bodies.<sup>49</sup> One man who had run out of the city returned at night after the shooting stopped. "All we could see on the streets were dead bodies and people crying," he said.<sup>50</sup>

#### **KILLINGS DURING HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCHES**

Residents say that, in addition to the shooting on the streets, Eritrean soldiers carried out house-to-house raids in the afternoon of 28 November and the morning of 29 November to find and kill teenage and adult men.

Several women Amnesty International spoke to were hiding at home when Eritrean soldiers came, asking if there were men in the house.<sup>51</sup> A 28-year-old woman recalled: "They came up to my home and broke down the door and asked if we have young men — brothers or a father. We said 'no, we are just ladies,' and they kept going and checking our neighbours."<sup>52</sup>

A 23-year-old man interviewed by Amnesty International named six of his relatives killed in the massacre. He found the body of one of the relatives — a 23-year-old cousin — on China Road. The man had been shot with three bullets, he recalled.<sup>53</sup>

Habtom (name changed), a resident of Addis Ababa, said Eritrean soldiers killed four of his close relatives — Lisaneworq Laeke, Biniam Lisaneworq, Girmay Tekly and Birhane Weoday — near Axum's Abune Pentelwos Church.<sup>54</sup>

A woman said that Eritrean soldiers killed one of her neighbours, a mother of five. "I saw her dead body. She had been shot in the chest," the woman said. The woman also said that Eritrean soldiers arrested two young men they found at another neighbour's house, while their mother and her third son, who was hiding, remained. "They took them, I don't know where," she said.<sup>55</sup>

Bereket (name changed), a man who help bury the dead, including some of his friends, recalled:

**My neighbourhood is around the Sabian Hotel near the hill (Tarik Sefer). They killed Habtom Araya, Buzu Gonu, Guesh Amdom, and Ephrem. There are also other people I know who are not from my area, Yohannes and Wedi Da'ero Hfash (nickname), (who were) killed near Menaharia. The first two were killed in one home, while the other were killed in two separate homes. They were just civilians. They were killed during the evening of 28 November.<sup>56</sup>**

Another man said he watched through his window and saw six men killed, execution-style, outside of his house near the Abnet Hotel on 29 November:

**They lined them up and shot them in the back from behind. Two of them I knew. They're from my neighbourhood ... They asked "Where is your gun?" and they answered "We have no guns, we are civilians" ... One soldier went to his leader who was Beni-Amir [ethnicity] — he had three scars near each eye — and asked him, "shall we kill them or free them?" and he said, "just kill them," and they did.**

**They only shot twice for the six people ... They shot three people with one bullet. The first and second fell dead. The third one was injured, about to fall. They shot him a second time and killed the three others with the same bullet. They were lined up perfectly. They shot them with a Bren [light machine gun].**

<sup>48</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>49</sup> Amnesty International phone interviews (names withheld), 10 January to 15 February 2021; Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 6 January 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>51</sup> Amnesty International interviews (names withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 and 19 January 2021.

<sup>52</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>53</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 26 January 2021. This account is further corroborated by other witnesses in Axum who attended the burial of the deceased on 30 November.

<sup>55</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>56</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 6 February 2021.

One of them didn't die immediately. He pleaded for help. And one hour later he died.<sup>47</sup>

Another witness said that he saw five bodies of young men lined up on the ground near the Abnet Hotel.

#### IDENTIFYING THE PERPRETRATORS

Axum residents whom Amnesty International interviewed had no difficulty identifying the perpetrators as Eritrean soldiers. They described several tell-tale signs.

First, Eritrean soldiers often rode in trucks whose license plates read "Eritrea." Most wore a uniform that witnesses described as "beige" or a "mix of green and beige," easily distinguishable from that of Ethiopian soldiers. Some Eritrean soldiers, interviewees said, wore the uniform of the Ethiopian army, but could be easily identified because they wore plastic shoes known as *congo chama* or *shida*, which are popular in Eritrea. Ethiopian soldiers, on the other hand, wore standard-issue boots.

Cultural clues further helped people identify the perpetrators as Eritreans. Three scars on each temple, near the eye, marked some of the soldiers as Beni-Amir, an ethnic group that straddles Sudan and Eritrea but is absent from Ethiopia. While Ethiopian soldiers spoke Amharic, Eritrean soldiers spoke Arabic or Tigrinya, a language spoken by both Tigray people and Eritreans. Although the language is basically the same in both regions, the Tigrinya that Eritrean soldiers is a distinctive dialect, with its own words and accent. For example, as one woman explained, "They keep saying *ta'ale*, which in Tigrinya means 'move it.' But that's Eritrean Tigrinya. We use *laghak*."<sup>48</sup>

Finally, Eritrean soldiers made no mystery of who they were. "Some of them told us they are Eritrean soldiers," the woman said.

#### ATTACKS ON PEOPLE COLLECTING BODIES

Those who left their houses on 29 November said they found bodies on the streets of their neighbourhood, "in every street and at every turn."<sup>49</sup> They learned of dead relatives, friends and neighbours. Survivors described moments of panic as they ran away at the sight of Eritrean soldiers.

For most of the day, Eritrean soldiers attacked the survivors who sought to bury the dead. A 21-year-old man said he was part of a group which sought that morning to bury friends: "We wanted to take their bodies, got the carts and then carried them on the cart — three dead bodies — and then immediately they started shelling us ... The shelling came from near the St Micheal church and fell about 10 metres from us. I think it was an RPG."<sup>50</sup>

One woman, Tsigereda (name changed), told Amnesty International that Eritrean soldiers killed her nephews Teklay Fitsum (age 29) and Kibrom Fitsum (age 14) near their home in the area of St Micheal Church on 28 November.<sup>51</sup> She recalled:

**The next day, they did not allow us to pick the dead. The Eritrean soldiers said you cannot bury the dead before our dead soldiers are buried. The father found their dead bodies next day. They were killed by the Eritrean soldiers who have mark on their cheek like number eleven. They also speak a different version of Tigrinya, which is called Tigre, spoken in the western lowland areas of Eritrea. I was in Axum by then. I went out looking for them. The roads in the area were full of dead bodies. Almost all of the dead were male.<sup>52</sup>**

A 27-year-old man found the courtyard of his sister's house turned into an improvised morgue. He recalls countless bodies covered in blankets: "I didn't count [them] at that time because I was really shocked and my sister was really crying because her son had been killed. I took her outside of the compound so she wouldn't see the dead bodies and to calm her down."<sup>53</sup>

That day, he and his sister sought to attend funeral rites but came under attack: "The people who had collected the bodies put them on carts and took them to the church. Me and my sister followed the cart. Immediately the soldiers started shooting on us from afar. We know that young men are targeted so I was scared and left my sister and started running away."

<sup>47</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>48</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>49</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>51</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2 February 2021.

<sup>52</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2 February 2021.

<sup>53</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

# MASS DETENTIONS AND THREATS

Eritrean soldiers also rounded up hundreds, if not thousands, of male residents in different parts of the city on 29 November. The men who were detained said the soldiers beat and abused them and robbed them of their belongings — jackets, belts, shoes and money. The soldiers also warned detainees that there would be renewed killings should they encounter any resistance.

A 26-year-old man described his detention: “Eritrean soldiers gathered us ... We were maybe 500 people, only men. They put us in a big hole in the ground” — the foundations of an unfinished building, located on the eastern entrance to the city.<sup>64</sup>

Two other men Amnesty International spoke to said they were detained in the open air near the airport. One of them said: “They started gathering people, 300-400 in a group, taking them to different locations out of the city ... They took us out of the city.” He described the ill-treatment he faced: “They beat us and inflicted military punishment: forcing you to walk with your knees, or to crawl on the floor with your abdomen ... They didn’t beat me. They would make me sit and stand constantly, like a physical exercise, and rolling while lying down, but I hated this.”<sup>65</sup> The Eritrean soldiers’ threats made it clear that the killings on 28 and 29 November, and in particular the targeting of men of fighting age, represented a coordinated effort to terrorize the population into submission and deter further attacks. One of the men who was detained said: “The Eritrean soldiers surrounded us. One of their officers came up to us and made a speech “You people — if you try fighting us and hold any weapon against us — look at this red soil — we will destroy Axum like this. So don’t do anything against us.”<sup>66</sup>

Another former detainee said: “They told us a lot of things: ‘Why are you trying to fight us? If you have a gun, give us, if not, we will continue this massacre.’ They also said, ‘We are destroying the TPLF ... If you keep following the TPLF and try to fight us again we will kill you and we will do the same as yesterday.’”<sup>67</sup>

## INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

International humanitarian law, which applies to all parties to an armed conflict, regulates the conduct of hostilities and sets out fundamental guarantees for the protection of those who do not or no longer directly participate in hostilities. The rules relevant to the violations documented in this briefing form part of customary international humanitarian law and are binding on all parties to the armed conflict, regardless of which treaties they have ratified.

One of the cardinal rules of international humanitarian law is that parties to the conflict must “distinguish between civilians and combatants” as well as “distinguish between civilian objects and military objectives.”<sup>68</sup> The corollary of the rule of distinction is that “indiscriminate attacks are prohibited.”<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>65</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>66</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>67</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>68</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross, Customary International Humanitarian Law, Vol. 1: Rules (ICRC Customary IHL Study) Rules 1 and 7.

<sup>69</sup> ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rule 11.

Indiscriminate attacks are those that are of a nature to strike military objectives and civilians or civilian objects without distinction, either because the attack is not directed at a specific military objective, or because it employs a method or means of combat that cannot be directed at a specific military objective or has effects that cannot be limited as required by international humanitarian law.<sup>70</sup> Launching an indiscriminate attack resulting in death or injury to civilians is a war crime.<sup>71</sup>

Pillage (looting of personal property by soldiers) is prohibited and is a war crime.<sup>72</sup>

International humanitarian law also provides fundamental guarantees for civilians as well as fighters who are captured, injured or otherwise rendered unable to fight (*hors de combat*). These rules include the requirement of humane treatment; and the prohibition of murder, of torture, cruel or inhuman treatment and outrages on personal dignity, collective punishment, and of rape and other forms of sexual violence.<sup>73</sup> Violations of these rules are war crimes.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rule 12.

<sup>71</sup> ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rule 156.

<sup>72</sup> ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rules 52 and 156.

<sup>73</sup> ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rules 87, 89, 90, and 93.

<sup>74</sup> ICRC Customary IHL Study, Rule 156.

# BURIALS

## FINDING THE DEAD

As people came out of hiding and left their homes on 29 and 30 November, the scale of the killing became obvious to all. Those who ventured out saw dozens of dead and injured people scattered around their neighbourhoods, often recognizing familiar faces. The people Amnesty International interviewed provided the names of well over 200 people they knew who were killed on 28 and 29 November.<sup>75</sup> They said that all the victims were unarmed and that the overwhelming majority of them were men.

Amnesty International was unable to calculate the massacre's precise death toll, but estimates that hundreds of people were killed.

A 22-year-old man said he found the bodies of two of his friends side by side and that they had been made to kneel, indicating an execution-style killing. Speaking of one of the victims, he said: "They killed him with a bullet in the mouth. We saw the wound at the back of his neck."<sup>76</sup>

In other instances, residents described injuries which suggested that some victims died because of a lack of medical care. A man said his friend had died from a bullet injury on the ankle. Another said he found the body of a friend about three metres outside of his friend's house. He said his friend had been shot in the abdomen with a single bullet, adding: "I believe that ... if he had gotten help, maybe he would be alive."<sup>77</sup>

Some of those who had been shot were still alive by the time residents felt safe enough to leave their houses, but interviewees said there was nowhere in town they could be treated. One man said: "Some of them had bullets in their bodies but could have survived, I think. Some people were injured and said, 'I'm losing blood, please help me.'"<sup>78</sup> Another man recalled:

**Around the Queen Sheba palace, I saw a lot of dead bodies and 10 farmers who had been injured by weapons. One of them, part of his bowel was coming out ... They were [men] aged 40 to 45-50 ... By that time there was no hospital. Kideste Maryam hospital had not been looted but there were no doctors or nurse. The Referral Hospital had been looted. We couldn't take these people to the hospital so we took them home."<sup>79</sup>**

One man similarly found a 24-year-old neighbour named Abdallah Hassan who had been shot with three bullets; he was near China Road. The man said: "He was alive but injured. They took him to the Referral Hospital, but he died there. There were no doctors or anything. It was empty."<sup>80</sup>

## COLLECTING THE DEAD

On the request of local elders, Ethiopian soldiers gave permission for people to bury the dead in the late afternoon on 29 November. Gathering the bodies and carrying out the funerals took days. Most of the dead appear to have been buried on 30 November, but witnesses said that people found many additional bodies in the days that followed.

The surviving men took up the task of carrying the dead to the town's churches. Amnesty International spoke to nine men who took part in the process, as well as to eight who witnessed it. The bodies were brought to the Arbeatu Ensessa church (next to the Axum Tsion St Mary Church), as well as St Micheal, Abune Aregawi, Enda-Gaber, Abba Pentalewon and Enda Eyesus (Jesus) churches. The men looked for bodies,

<sup>75</sup> Note that this figure does not include people whom interviewees said they saw killed or dead but whose names they did not know.

<sup>76</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

<sup>77</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>78</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>79</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>80</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 22 January 2021.

piled them onto carts — up to 10 bodies at a time — and pulled these makeshift hearses to a church, before returning to the streets for another run. In some cases, however, the dead were buried in makeshift graves in the immediate vicinity of where they had been killed.

Bereket (name changed), a 21-year-old Axum resident, told Amnesty International:

**I have seen many dead bodies since I was involved in collecting and burial of the dead on 30 November ... We collected the dead using horse/donkey carts. They didn't allow the priests to conduct funeral requiem for the dead or to clean and prepare the bodies as per the custom. We buried them at the Arba'etu Ensissa Church. While families of the deceased buried them in separate graves, unclaimed bodies were buried in mass graves."<sup>81</sup>**

Fanuel (name changed), a 23-year-old Axum resident, said:

**I was involved in picking up the dead from the Abnet hotel area on China street. We were loading 8-9 dead bodies on a cart and took them to the church for burial. I made three trips to pick up the dead from the street. And there were many other people doing the same, using other carts. We buried the dead at Arba'etu Ensisa; there was no proper burial."<sup>82</sup>**

Another one of the volunteer pallbearers explained: "I helped [bury] my friends' dead bodies. A lot of people helped because there were a lot of dead. Everyone helped. We carried them on carts. Some of them may carry five, depending on what was on the street, some of them 10, others seven, all gathered at the church from different parts of the city." A second man concurred: "We do three or four people in the same spot, cover them with a carpet, [or a] blanket, [then] take them to the church."<sup>83</sup>

Negasi (name changed), age 21, elaborated on his role in the transporting the bodies:

**We started after getting the permission. Personally, during that day, with my friends and other people, we brought in a total of 18 dead bodies at different times. I brought five cartloads. First: four people. Then: three people. Then: two people. Then: eight people. Then, the last cart: only one person. That was all on the 20<sup>th</sup> [Hedar, i.e., 29 November]. The next day, I gathered 27 dead bodies ... In total I brought 45 bodies."<sup>84</sup>**

Other men Amnesty International interviewed say they carried comparable numbers of bodies. One, for instance, said he brought a total of 30 bodies to the Arbeatu Ensessa and St Micheal churches; another said he carried three or four cartloads, each bearing seven to 10 bodies, suggesting he moved between 21 and 40 bodies. Yet another said he may have carried over 50 bodies to the churches of St Micheal and Abune Aregawi; he estimated that he saw 400 bodies on 30 November alone. Finally, another told Amnesty International he saw about 200 bodies during various funerals.

The endeavor was grueling and traumatizing. One man recalled: "I had only seen foods or seeds or money being collected, not bodies. That was a huge deep sadness. It was difficult."<sup>85</sup> In addition to the trauma of seeing and handling so many dead people, including loved ones, the men had to contend with the effects of decomposition and the fear of new killing. The bodies, which had remained in the open for a day or two before residents were allowed to take them away, had begun to decay. "It's smelly and very painful to see dead bodies," recalled one man. And the pallbearers wondered whether killings might resume at any moment. "We got scared the soldiers might kill us. It was a tough moment," he added.<sup>86</sup>

The pallbearers nevertheless toiled out of a sense of duty. One man said: "It feels painful when your friends and cousins are dead and you are able to take the dead bodies. It can be painful if you stay at home, so I went and took dead bodies."<sup>87</sup> Another man echoed this sentiment: "The feeling is complicated," he said. "I felt several things: deeply sad because a lot of people died, and I never saw dead bodies and that was a shock. I was afraid people would kill me. At the same time, I felt a strong emotion and felt strong, to be better."<sup>88</sup>

Samson (name changed), a 23-year-old mechanic who assisted with burials at St Micheal Church on 30 November, recalled:

<sup>81</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 6 February 2021.

<sup>82</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 6 February 2021.

<sup>83</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>84</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>85</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>86</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>87</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>88</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

**It was a horrible experience to collect the dead from the streets as the bodies were already decomposing and smelling. There was no transport service, so we moved the dead bodies with carts. We were putting many bodies on one cart.<sup>93</sup>**

Uncertainty over the prospect of renewed killings by Eritrean soldiers weighed over the population. A woman recalled these days: "It was tough and scary. Everyone was afraid soldiers would kill people who helped bury the dead. It was very difficult. When soldiers came up to us, everyone ran, and when they passed, everyone returned to the proceedings."<sup>90</sup> Afraid for their lives, some of the men Amnesty International spoke to stayed home on 30 November. Their fear was reasonable. One man said that on 1 December, he saw soldiers kill a man who was pulling a cart loaded with bodies near Axum's main bus station: "It was Eritrean soldiers in Eritrean uniforms. Maybe seven of them. Most of them were women soldiers."<sup>91</sup>

### BURIALS

30 November marked the anniversary of St Mary, a major celebration in Axum, which on another year would have drawn the faithful from across Ethiopia and tourists from around the world. In light of the exceptional circumstances, the celebrations were canceled. "It was deeply sad," said one woman. "There were funerals around the church — separate ceremonies. It wasn't the usual celebration."<sup>92</sup>

Amnesty spoke to 11 people who attended funeral services in various churches of the city. They described an atmosphere of shock and collective trauma as hundreds of people were packed into mass graves. A man who was there said: "In every corner you can find a family that lost a family member. Everyone talks about what happened. The atmosphere is a sad one."<sup>93</sup>

The dead were so numerous and their bodies in such a state that they were buried immediately, many without receiving religious rites, such as funeral requiems and body washing. Many were buried in mass graves, which in itself is a not uncommon practice locally. In some churches, such as Arba'etu Ensessa, St Micheal and Abune Aregawi, the graves were dug in soil. In other churches, such as the Ende Eyasus (Jesus) church, the dead were placed in existing vaults.

"A lot of people were dead," said a witness who went to the St Mary of Zion church, adding: "They didn't even have the time to recognize them. They just gathered and buried them."<sup>94</sup> Another witness who was at the same church described the same conditions: "The problem was that there were so many dead bodies and they smelled because they stayed out for a while so they buried them straight away."<sup>95</sup>

A woman who attended services at Arbeatu Ensessa recalled: "There were several small mass graves. It depended on the carts. When they took five or six dead bodies, we would take them directly inside the grave. When there are seven to 10 bodies, they bury seven to 10 at once."<sup>96</sup> In Arbeatu Ensessa, she added, "There were mass graves in many parts of the compound." Another witness, a 23-year-old man, said that in addition to one mass grave that was used on a regular basis in Arbeatu Ensessa, "There were small graves on the left and right of the church in the compound, on both sides."<sup>97</sup>

Satellite imagery reviewed by Amnesty International shows disturbed soil in the compounds of Arbeatu Ensessa and Abune Aregawi in a time frame that is consistent with these witness testimonies. When asked to locate the graves on older satellite images of the Arba'etu Ensessa compound (which showed no disturbed soil), two witnesses independently pointed to the areas that Amnesty International had identified as showing disturbed soil on more recent imagery.

<sup>93</sup> Amnesty International phone interview (name withheld), Axum, Ethiopia, 6 February 2021.

<sup>94</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>95</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>96</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>97</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>98</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.

<sup>99</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>100</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 18 January 2021.





The Abune Aregawi church, located in the Semeret neighbourhood on the southeastern edge of Addis, shows new disturbed earth in satellite imagery from 13 December 2020. While in some churches the victims of the massacre were buried in vaults, witnesses say that in Abune Aregawi, the graves were dug in soil.



Satellite imagery taken on 13 December 2020 shows new disturbed earth at the Arba'etu Ensessa church in downtown Addis. It was here that, in the aftermath of the massacre, the largest funerals took place.

Two witnesses who spoke to the church authorities at St Mary of Zion church (which encompasses Maryam Zion church proper as well as Arbeatu Ensessa) said 450 identified people were buried in that church alone. The figure excludes people who were buried there but not identified; the dead who were buried in other churches; and those who were buried on the roadside.

# LOOTING, HUNGER AND THIRST

In addition to the killings and the detentions, Eritrean soldiers looted Axum systematically and on a massive scale, leaving residents without food or drink. All of the refugees we interviewed spoke of the looting and its terrible impact on daily life. They said that the looting began as soon as Eritrean forces entered the town on 19 November, but that it escalated in the wake of the 28-29 November massacre.

## LARGE-SCALE LOOTING

"After they controlled the city on Hedar 11 [20 November]," one man said, "they started looting immediately ... Those were Eritrean soldiers. The Ethiopian soldiers did nothing – [they] just controlled the city, looking for hidden weapons and controlling government buildings."<sup>98</sup> "The looting," witnesses recalled, "was every day" and "huge."<sup>99</sup> One man said: "Everywhere you go, it was looted."<sup>100</sup>

According to residents, Eritrean soldiers looted the university, private houses, hotels, hospitals, grain storage facilities, petrol stations, banks, electrical and maintenance stores, supermarkets, bakeries, jewelries, vendors' shacks (known locally as "containers") and other shops, breaking through entrance doors with automatic weapons.

---

<sup>98</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 16 January 2021.

<sup>99</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>100</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.



Debris consistent with looting around buildings that appear to be warehouses or industrial facilities, on the southern edges of Asmara, shown on satellite imagery from 13 December 2020. Eritrean forces systematically looted the city. Residents said Eritrean soldiers stole sugar and flour from a store called Guna Trading; that they robbed May Akko, a large community store, of truckloads of sugar, cooking oil and lentils, and that they took flour and animal fodder from the Dejen Flour Factory.

Debris consistent with looting around an unidentified building in central Asmara, shown on satellite imagery from 13 December 2020. According to residents, Eritrean soldiers looted the university, private houses, hotels, hospitals, grain storage facilities, petrol stations, banks, electrical and maintenance stores, supermarkets, bakeries, jewelers, vendors' shacks (known locally as "containers"), and other shops, breaking through entrance doors with automatic weapons.

The soldiers stole luxury goods, machinery (such as generators and water pumps), vehicles (including bicycles, trucks, three-wheel vehicles, and cars, sometimes taken from their garage), as well as medication, furniture, household items, food, and drink. "They looted whatever they could get. If they got mango juice, they would drink it and then carry things on the truck," a man said.<sup>101</sup>

A woman recalled: "Eritrean soldiers looted everything in the streets, including all the cars. There were many in the city, including four-wheel drives, but there are none left."<sup>102</sup> A man remembered seeing four Eritrean soldiers stealing the vehicles of a local police station: "[They] dropped from one car and started to steal four cars ... They stole three white pickups and one camouflaged pickup. They broke the ignition box and short circuited them to start the engines."<sup>103</sup>

Residents said Eritrean soldiers stole sugar and flour from a store called Guna Trading; that they robbed May Akko, a large community store, of truckloads of sugar, cooking oil and lentils; that they took flour and animal fodder from the Dejen Flour Factory, and that they looted the budget student grocery store of the university.

The massacre of 28-29 November appears to have precipitated an escalation in the looting. One man said: "They even looted private houses ... The people were really tired of that. A lot of the people of the city moved to the villages. It was a good opportunity for the Eritrean soldiers to steal all of the property."<sup>104</sup>

One man said that on 29 November, Eritrean soldiers came to his brother's house and began to loot:

**We told Ethiopian soldiers and they tried to help us and asked them to stop. The Eritrean soldier said "Hey you donkey, it's none of your business" ... They took the TV, a jeep, the fridge, six mattresses, all the groceries and cooking oil, butter, teff, flour, the [furniture of the] kitchen cabinet [itself], clothes, the beers in the fridge, the water pump, and the laptop. They damaged the door ... They took all of this in a Mercedes truck."<sup>105</sup>**

<sup>101</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>102</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>103</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>104</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>105</sup> Amnesty International interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

A baker who had fled Axum returned following the massacre, only to find that his bakery and residence had been emptied of its oven, kneading machine, televisions, bed mattresses, table, flour, and oil. "I found only my shoes and my pants," he said.<sup>106</sup>

#### HUNGER AND THIRST

The scale of the looting made life difficult for Axum residents, for whom electricity, phone networks and public services had already been cut since the beginning of the conflict in early November. Many of Axum's residents eke out their living on a day-to-day basis, but now that their means of subsistence had been stolen there was little work that could be done. Food and water became scarce.

In the days after the massacre, a woman recalled, "we didn't have anything to eat or to make money."<sup>107</sup> On 1 December, another woman said: "The Ethiopian soldiers [using loudspeakers] kept telling us to open our stores but everything had been stolen."<sup>108</sup> Only a few cafés reopened, she said. A man described the state of the city at that time:

**The Eritreans had already looted everything, including teff and sorghum. We were very hungry. We couldn't work. All the property, shops had been stolen. We didn't do anything during that time. And also there was no bank or network. There was no internet access, and no one understood what's happening in Axum. There was no electricity.<sup>109</sup>**

Several people told Amnesty International that, without electricity, residents were unable to mill sorghum into flour. One woman said: "For food, we boiled sorghum seeds in water and ate them. We call that *tutoro*."<sup>110</sup> A 17-year-old boy who was separated from his aunt — his caretaker — during the shelling of Axum described his difficulties: "I didn't have any money and I didn't know anything about my aunt. And my parents are dead. I didn't have any money so I started stealing from the store of my aunt to get money. But still there is no food, no electricity. No one has a place to mill sorghum."<sup>111</sup>

Some people resorted to looting in order to eat. One man explained: "Eritreans, after looting the basic things — inside a store for example — ... they [would] leave the store open. So thieves came up and [would] also loot the open store."<sup>112</sup> Another man acknowledged he tried to steal from the Degen Flour Factory with some friends, only to be forced by Eritrean soldiers at gunpoint to load bags of flour into trucks.

The electricity blackout and the theft of water pumps also affected the city's water supply. Many residents were forced to drink from wells or rivers, which they said was unsafe. One man recalled: "About the water, we were drinking mineral water that we had bought before the war. After that we started drinking from the river and from a well which wasn't safe. That's how we survived. But there was no peace, it's dangerous. You don't feel comfortable even going to drink river water."<sup>113</sup> One woman told of the same problem: "It was kind of hard to survive because there was no water, so we drank water from the river or went around the villages far from the city so we could use river water."<sup>114</sup>

The lack of food and water drove many to leave the town. One man who, after fleeing, returned to Axum on 23 December, subsequently left for his parents' village to find something to eat. He explained that in Axum, "People can't mill sorghum. There is no macaroni, pasta or packed food — nothing."<sup>115</sup>

#### LOOTING OF MEDICINES

One man said his brother, who has heart disease, tried to obtain medicine at the pharmacies of the city's two hospitals, but that they had been looted. "28 December was the last time I saw him. He said he was really in suffering and pain from the disease because he didn't have his pill."<sup>116</sup> Another man from a village outside of Axum said that the small clinic in his village had been thoroughly looted, "especially the pharmacy."<sup>117</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>107</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>108</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>109</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>110</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>111</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>112</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 20 January 2021.

<sup>113</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>114</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 17 January 2021.

<sup>115</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>116</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 21 January 2021.

<sup>117</sup> Amnesty International Interview (name withheld), Hamdayet, Sudan, 23 January 2021.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The annual feast of St Mary of Zion, celebrated annually in Axum TSION on Hidar 21 (30 November), is now laden with painful memories. Many hundreds of dead, the large majority of them men, were buried in a climate of fear and anguish that day.

By all accounts, the Eritrean military's killing of hundreds of civilians in Axum on 28-29 November was coordinated and systematic. Its aim was to terrorize the population into submission, as evidenced by the military's mass detention of residents on 29 November and soldiers' threats to resume wanton killing in the event of resistance. These killings — as well as other extrajudicial executions that preceded them — the deadly indiscriminate shelling of Axum, and the widespread looting of property, may amount to war crimes. The systematic killing of hundreds of civilians by Eritrean forces on 28-29 November may also constitute crimes against humanity.<sup>118</sup>

The survivors of the Axum massacre were robbed of their relatives, their friends, and their neighbours. Without some measure of accountability for the grievous violations that they have endured, such crimes are likely to continue.

Amnesty International calls for a UN-led investigation into these events, and for the Ethiopian government to cooperate fully with it, including by facilitating unfettered access for UN investigators. Besides examining events in Axum, the investigation should look into the totality of the war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed in the context of the conflict in Tigray since 4 November 2020, with a view to ensuring accountability for suspected perpetrators and reparations for the victims and survivors.

In addition, we call upon the Ethiopian authorities to:

- stop the further commission of human rights and humanitarian law violations, including indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombardment, and deliberate attacks on civilians.
- ensure unfettered humanitarian access to Tigray.

Amnesty International also urges the African Union, the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations to encourage the Ethiopian authorities to implement the above recommendations.

---

<sup>118</sup> According to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Article 7), murders committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population constitute crimes against humanity.

## THE MASSACRE IN AXUM

Over an approximately 24-hour period, on 28-29 November 2020, Eritrean troops operating in the Ethiopian city of Axum killed many hundreds of civilians. Soldiers deliberately shot civilians on the street and carried out systematic house-to-house searches, extrajudicially executing men and boys. The massacre was carried out in retaliation for an earlier attack by a small number of militiamen, joined by local residents armed with sticks and stones.

The events in Axum were the culmination of a wave of violations carried out since 19 November, when Eritrean and Ethiopian forces entered Axum together, after indiscriminately shelling the city and firing at those who tried to flee. Witnesses say that Eritrean forces, in taking over the town, carried out extrajudicial executions and engaged in widespread looting. Following the 28-29 November massacre, Eritrean forces detained hundreds of residents and threatened renewed killing in the event of new resistance.

In this briefing, Amnesty International documents how the Eritrean military is responsible for serious human rights and humanitarian law violations against Tigrayan civilians in Axum. It concludes that the indiscriminate shelling of Axum by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops may amount to war crimes, and that the mass execution of Axum civilians by Eritrean troops may amount to crimes against humanity.

INDEX: AFR 25/3730/2021  
MONTH/YEAR: FEBRUARY 2021  
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

[amnesty.org](https://www.amnesty.org)

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL 

## **Massacre in the Mountains**

A CNN REPORT ON THE NOVEMBER 2020 MASSACRE IN  
THE TIGRAY REGION OF ETHIOPIA

[Editor's Note: The CNN report contains video material that cannot be adapted to the formats used by the Government Publishing Office to publish committee hearings. The report can be accessed with the following URL:]

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/26/africa/ethiopia-tigray-dengelat-massacre-intl/index.html>

---





## NOMINATION

---

TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, Portman, Paul, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order. Today we are considering the nomination of Ambassador Samantha Power to be administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, known to all of us as USAID.

Ambassador Power, congratulations on your nomination. Thank you for your willingness to return to public service. It is a pleasure to welcome you back before the committee.

When I chaired your 2013 hearing to be U.N. Ambassador, I said you were, quote, “impeccably qualified for the position.” Your experience, drive, and dedication to the advancement of humanitarian principles also, I believe, make you impeccably qualified to be the next USAID administrator.

Before I go any further, I understand that our distinguished colleague from Massachusetts, a member of the committee, wants to introduce you this morning. So we will turn to him first.

Senator Markey?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much, Ranking Member Risch. It is my absolute honor and pleasure to introduce our nominee today, Ambassador Samantha Power, nominated to be the administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, and more importantly, a cherished Massachusetts resident.

I would also like to welcome Ambassador Power’s husband, Cass, and their two young children, Declan and Rian, who are right behind us here today.

Samantha is a friend, a constituent, and, of course, a fellow Irishman—Irishwoman in her case. As noted in a *New Yorker* profile of her, Ambassador Power’s last name, Power, comes from the Irish “de paor,” meaning “of the poor.” Fittingly, she has dedicated her entire life in the service of others, using her razor-sharp intelligence and fierce advocacy as a journalist, activist, and diplomat to stand with the world’s voiceless masses, all while simultaneously advancing United States interests by building bonds in every corner of our world.

Ambassador Power has been known to be ferocious in the pursuit of justice, human rights, and democracy, always taking the time to hear other points of view with great humility.

While she disagrees with Henry Kissinger on everything from politics to the no-brainer debate of Red Sox versus Yankees, he has said that Samantha, quote, “has—

The CHAIRMAN. Do not ruin the nominee’s opportunity here, Mr. Markey.

[Laughter.]

Senator MARKEY. Ambassador Henry Kissinger has said that Samantha “has an excellent analytical mind, and even on matters where I might have come to different conclusions, I respected her analysis,” perhaps the highest praise ever given by a Yankees fan to a member of Red Sox Nation.

As an immigrant from Ireland, Ambassador Power’s personal background gives her a unique and deep respect for this country and all it stands for. Spending time between Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Dublin, and Boston, she received her bachelor’s degree at Yale University and went on to obtain her law degree at Harvard University.

She served in several key positions during the Obama administration, including as the Special Assistant to the President, the National Security Council, Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights and, notably, as the youngest ever United States ambassador to the United Nations.

Prior to entering government service, she began her career as a war correspondent, reporting from the seas of Sarajevo. She became a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and served as the founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University.

As she takes on the important work of the challenges Ambassador Power will face are daunting: recovering from the global pandemic, revamping the state of global democracy, tackling the climate crisis, and extending life-saving assistance to the nearly 1 billion people around the world who go to bed hungry every night.

I know of no person more qualified to take on this task. She embodies that bold red, white, and blue USAID logo which states “From the American People.”

In 2015, Ambassador Power invited me to be her guest to attend His Holiness Pope Francis’ address before the United Nations General Assembly. For two Irish Catholics from Massachusetts, it was the experience of a lifetime.

On that day, Pope Francis spoke of the need for compassion, inclusivity, and action in tackling the world’s shared challenges.

Ambassador Power's career personifies each of these qualities, and I know she will take her compassion, her inclusivity, and her unwavering desire for action to achieve great things for the people of the United States and the world at USAID.

So welcome, Ambassador Power. We are pleased to have you here. We cannot wait to see you get to work over at USAID and I thank you for your service to our nation.

It is my privilege, Mr. Chairman, to introduce Ambassador Power to the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Markey. We know that you both sit here and in other committees. So if you have other work to do, we certainly invite you to join us if you can. If not, we will see you back a little later.

That was a rousing introduction and with—but with one flaw. I thought it was extraordinary. So as a Yankee fan, I just—I just cannot be quiet.

So, anyhow, let me start off. Ambassador, in his inaugural address, President Biden said that, quote, “We will lead not merely by the example of our power, but by the power of our example.”

The work that dedicated professionals of USAID do exemplifies that example, supporting people around the world to advance democratic and citizen-responsive governance, to help ensure fair treatment and access to opportunity for vulnerable minorities, and provide life-saving relief on behalf of the American people.

We know that these core values are the strength of our own country and that promoting them abroad contributes to more stability and stability worldwide.

As I emphasized to Secretary Blinken at his nomination hearing, the U.S. must reassert itself as a global leader capable of confronting complex challenges.

As we work to address COVID-19 inequality, migration, climate change at home, if the U.S. is not contributing leadership and resources to address these issues globally, then our security at home is tenuous at best.

There are few people as familiar with many of today's complex long-running conflicts as you are. As you well know, if confirmed, you will be responsible for responding to new and renewed conflicts from Venezuela to Ethiopia to Burma, human- and resource-driven conflicts which have victimized hundreds of thousands of civilians, forcing millions to flee their homes.

Political crises in Latin America have caused unprecedented humanitarian disasters. I am encouraged by the Biden administration's plans to renew our commitment to achieving a diplomatic solution to the Venezuela crisis where USAID has provided significant humanitarian and development assistance.

In the Northern Triangle countries, addressing rampant crime, weak governance, corruption, and displacement must also be a top U.S. priority, as stability there directly impacts the security and prosperity of the United States.

Across Africa we have seen democratic backsliding in various countries, along with persistent terrorist threats and conflicts that have cost thousands of lives and displaced hundreds of thousands more.

In particular, the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray Province has contributed to destabilizing the whole Horn of Africa while increased terrorism has thrown the Sahel into chaos.

Meanwhile, climate change is increasing food insecurity and natural resource scarcity, and threatening the very existence of many small island nations, while COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world.

At the same time that you will be confronting these global challenges, you will also need to rebuild and restore USAID as an institution. Successful U.S. foreign policy rests on the appropriate utilization of the three D's: defense, diplomacy, and development.

Unfortunately, the previous administration had anywhere from skepticism to disdain for the last of those two. While I believe Ambassador Green who—for whom I have great respect, believed and invested in the mission of the agency, the years after his departure have taken a serious toll on the agency morale, strained USAID's relationships with its implementing partners, and weakened trust in America.

The agency needs internal attention, and I recommend that if confirmed you listen to USAID's civil servants, Foreign Service officers, and Foreign Service nationals to explain what USAID needs.

As you may know, USAID underwent a major reorganization spearheaded by Ambassador Green, and while I believe he approached this effort with the best of intentions, the ultimate execution was lacking.

I do believe the agency must be nimble enough to respond to changing and pressing challenges, and I trust that you will make the ongoing reorganization work better and consult with this committee on how that might be achieved.

So, in conclusion, if confirmed, you will have your work cut out for you. However, I have great confidence in your experience and abilities, not to mention your passion for making this world a better place.

But we would expect you to engage with this committee as a partner and asset in accomplishing USAID's mission. This committee has a long bipartisan history of support for USAID, and I expect you to engage in frequent and open dialogue to help sustain that support.

I look forward to hearing from you today. We welcome your family, who is always part of the sacrifices that those of us who are in public service make.

And with that, let me turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Risch.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Senator Menendez. I appreciate that, and Ambassador Power, thank you for agreeing to take this on and thank you to your family. As the chairman noted, there is always sacrifices that are shared, sometimes not equally by the family.

The role of the USAID administrator is an important one. We all know that. In order to accomplish the goals of our—as a nation, we need a development agency that reflects the challenges of the 21st

century and is staffed and resourced to be strategic, efficient, effective, and accountable.

USAID must be led by someone who understands that aid is most effective when it is targeted toward clearly-defined U.S. national interests and those who are committed to advancing good governance, economic growth, and self-reliance.

The challenges before us are immense. An estimated 80 million people globally have been displaced from their homes, 26 million of whom are now refugees. The conflict in Syria has entered its tenth year and has left more than 12 million people food insecure.

Ebola has reemerged in West Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the COVID-19 pandemic has shuttered schools, destroyed livelihoods, and pushed millions of people into poverty around the world.

USAID has a successful record of responding to emergencies, and we will count on the next administrator to put dollars provided for humanitarian assistance to good use.

The agency has also done tremendous work in combating food insecurity, expanding access to water, and empowering women to participate in their economies.

USAID needs to work on coordination with the CDC. This is why the largest U.S. global health program, PEPFAR, is coordinated by the Department of State.

As we continue to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, I look forward to working with the department, USAID, the CDC, and my colleagues here in Congress on a more comprehensive approach to global health, security, and diplomacy.

Senator Menendez and I have been discussing that issue in particular, and we have talked about a path forward to where we can get a bipartisan piece of legislation that will be one of the most important things we do as far as global health is concerned and as far as the people of the world are concerned.

We must put in the work now so we can get ahead of the next pandemic and keep Americans safe from infectious disease threats before they cross our borders again. We should also maximize the impact of U.S. contributions to COVAX and GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, and through the Global Fund's COVID-19 response mechanism.

Beyond pandemics, I am interested to learn more about how you, if confirmed, will position USAID to counter China's malign development model. That model is something that many of us consider to be one of the greatest threats to U.S. national security.

I would also like to better understand your view on promoting democracy, good governance, and the rule of law, the foundations of healthy and stable societies. The United States cannot, should not, and should not even consider singlehandedly trying to solve the world's problems. Difficult choices must be made.

But while the administrator is not empowered to make those choices independently, USAID does remain under the foreign policy direction of the Secretary of State.

I am pleased to see that the next administrator will have a seat at the principal's table on critical matters of development and humanitarian response.

If confirmed, I am eager to work with you to ensure that USAID remains strategic focused and accountable.

Thank you, Senator Menendez.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

With that, Madam Ambassador, the floor is yours. Your full statement will be included in the record. We ask you to summarize it, and then we will have a conversation with you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SAMANTHA POWER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Ambassador POWER. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee. It is a tremendous honor to appear before you today. I am humbled by President Biden's trust in me and by the opportunity to join such an indispensable agency at such a critical time.

I would like to begin by thanking my mother, Veera Delaney, a doctor whom I have watched care for her patients during the darkest hours of this pandemic, my father, Eddie Bourke, whose curiosity about the world helped spark my own, my husband and best friend, Cass Sunstein, an American original, and my 11-year-old son, Declan, and eight-year-old daughter, Rian, whose shared love of animals and nature remind me daily of our responsibility to our planet.

Public service does ask a lot of families and I am indescribably grateful for the support and generosity of mine. I would also like to thank the members of this committee.

While bitter political winds blew, continued bipartisan support for the U.S. Agency for International Development has saved and improved millions of lives while enhancing U.S. security and U.S. prosperity.

I was fortunate to work with many of you when I last served. If confirmed, I will be eager to build on these relationships and forge new ones.

I first saw USAID's impact in war-torn Bosnia, where I started my career in 1993 as a reporter. I saw USAID staff and partners deliver food to the vulnerable while supporting mothers as they tried to locate their missing sons and husbands.

Since then, wherever I traveled, whether in East Timor just after became the world's newest nation, Darfur in the middle of this century's first genocide, or West Africa at the height of the Ebola epidemic, USAID was there. America was there, identifying needs and moving heaven and earth to meet them.

In my work, I have seen how the investments the United States makes in other countries are investments in our own security. I have seen the inextricable linkages between political freedom and broad-based economic growth.

I have seen that the most effective development is driven by those on the ground with local knowledge and expertise, and I have seen the overwhelming power of individual dignity as a driver of world events.

Even as China increasingly uses its financial leverage to sway other nations, citizens everywhere are insisting that they be able

to exercise agency, provide for themselves, and exercise their fundamental rights.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the institution of USAID and invest in the capabilities of the agency's dedicated 10,000 Foreign Service officers, civil servants, locally employed staff, contractors, and other personnel.

This means seeking out and amplifying their insights, learning about specific local needs, and adapting our programs. It means addressing the issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and advancement within USAID's workforce, and it means emphasizing what President Biden himself and both of you, I think, already have stressed.

Development is critical to America's ability to tackle the toughest problems of our time, economic, humanitarian, and geopolitical. In consultation with you and others in Congress, I will aim to ensure that USAID enhances its long-standing leadership in food security, education, women's empowerment, and global health, while also addressing four interconnected and gargantuan challenges confronting the world at this moment.

First, the COVID pandemic and the development progress that has been imperiled in everything from food security to gender equality to access to education to economic growth.

Climate change, and the surge in droughts, storms, food shortages, and climate-associated humanitarian emergencies.

Third, with more conflicts occurring today than at any point since the end of the Cold War, conflict and state collapse.

And fourth, finally, with freedom declining around the world for the fifteenth straight year in a row, democratic backsliding.

In tackling these and other challenges, I want to assure the committee that I will work every day to expand burden sharing in the international system. At the U.N., working with my administration colleagues, I was able to help secure major commitments from other countries to care for refugees, respond to the Ebola epidemic, strengthen peacekeeping, and adopt the sustainable development goals.

U.S. investments are catalysts that can be used to mobilize governments, international organizations, foundations, and businesses to help countries achieve their own development goals.

If I am confirmed to lead this great agency, I will work tirelessly with members on both sides of the aisle to ensure that taxpayer dollars are well spent. Guided by evidence, I will work with you to adapt or replace programs that are not delivering. I will be transparent and accessible as together we chart a course that meets the needs of the current moment.

In 1979, as Senator Markey alluded to, my mother brought my younger brother and me to America from Ireland, blessing me with a life full of opportunity. As one who has been given so much by the United States, I would take it as an incomparable privilege to lead the world's premier development agency in order to expand the opportunities available to others.

I thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Power follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. SAMANTHA POWER

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is a tremendous honor to appear before you today. Thank you, Senator Markey, for your kind introduction.

I am humbled by President Biden's trust in me, and by the opportunity to join such an indispensable Agency at this critical time.

I would like to begin by thanking my mother Vera Delaney, a doctor whom I have watched care for her patients during the darkest hours of this pandemic; my father Eddie Bourke, whose curiosity about the world helped spark my own; my husband Cass Sunstein, an American original; and my 11-year-old son Declan and 8-year-old daughter Rían, whose shared love of animals and nature remind me daily of our responsibility to our planet. Public service asks a lot of families, and I'm indescribably grateful for the support and generosity of mine.

I would also like to thank the members of this committee. While bitter political winds blew, continued bipartisan support for the U.S. Agency for International Development has saved and improved millions of lives while enhancing U.S. security and prosperity. I was fortunate to work with many of you when I last served. If confirmed, I will be eager to build on these relationships and forge new ones.

I first saw USAID's impact in war-torn Bosnia, where I started my career in 1993 as a reporter. I saw USAID staff and partners deliver food to the vulnerable, while supporting mothers as they tried to locate their missing sons and husbands. Since then, wherever I travelled—whether to East Timor just after it became the world's newest nation; Darfur, in the midst of this century's first genocide; or west Africa, at the height of the Ebola epidemic—USAID was there—America was there—identifying needs and moving heaven and earth to meet them.

In my work—as a writer, professor, human rights advocate, national security staffer, and diplomat—I've seen how the investments the United States makes in other countries are investments in our own security. I've seen the inextricable linkages between political freedom and broad-based economic growth. I've seen that the most effective development is driven by those on the ground with local knowledge and expertise. And I've seen the power of individual dignity as a driver of world events. Even as China increasingly uses its financial leverage to sway other nations, citizens everywhere are insisting that they be able to exercise agency, provide for themselves, and exercise their fundamental rights.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the institution of USAID and invest in the capabilities of the Agency's dedicated 10,000 foreign service officers, civil servants, locally-employed staff, contractors, and other personnel. This means seeking out and amplifying their insights, learning about specific local needs, and adapting our programs. It means urgently addressing the issues relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, and advancement within USAID's workforce. And it means emphasizing what President Biden himself has stressed: Development is critical to

America's ability to tackle the toughest problems of our time—economic, humanitarian and geopolitical.

In consultation with you and others in Congress, I will aim to ensure that USAID enhances its longstanding leadership in food security, education, women's empowerment, and global health, while also addressing four interconnected and gargantuan challenges confronting the world at this moment:

- *The COVID-19 pandemic.* With decades of development gains shattered by COVID, imperiling progress on everything from food security to gender equality and access to education, USAID's support to partners will be vital for recovery, including by building more robust and durable health infrastructure for the future.
- *Climate Change.* With the surge in droughts, storms, food shortages, and climate-associated humanitarian emergencies, USAID can help countries become more resilient, while supporting their efforts to reduce carbon emissions.
- *Conflict and state collapse.* With more conflicts occurring today than at any point since the end of the Cold War, USAID assistance will continue to mitigate suffering, while working with U.S. diplomats and our international partners to address the root causes of such crises.
- *Democratic backsliding.* With freedom declining around the world for the fifteenth year in a row, USAID's democracy, rights, anti-corruption, and governance programming must nimbly support democratic and civil society actors as they push back against creeping authoritarianism and seek to build lasting democratic institutions.



In tackling these and other challenges, I want to assure the committee that I will work every day to expand burden-sharing in the international system. At the United Nations, working with my administration colleagues, I was able to help secure major commitments from other countries to care for refugees, respond to the Ebola epidemic, strengthen peacekeeping, and adopt the Sustainable Development Goals. U.S. investments are catalysts that can be used to mobilize governments, international organizations, foundations, and businesses to help countries achieve their own development goals.

If I am confirmed to lead this great Agency, I will work tirelessly with Members on both sides of the aisle to ensure that taxpayer dollars are well spent. Guided by evidence, I will work with you to adapt or replace programs that are not delivering. I will be transparent and accessible—as together we chart a course that meets the needs of the current moment.

In 1979 my mother brought my younger brother and me to America from Ireland, blessing me with a life full of opportunity. As one who has been given so much by the United States, I would take it as an incomparable privilege to lead the world's premier development Agency in order to expand the opportunities available to others.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador Power.

We will start five-minute rounds of—in order of those who have appeared either in person or virtually, and I will start with the chair.

USAID plays a central role in the U.S. government's humanitarian response to conflict and forced migration. Last year, I released a comprehensive report on forced displacement, which found that the vast majority of the 80 million displaced people worldwide are not displaced for months but for years or decades at a time.

How will you lead efforts at USAID to ensure coherence between the U.S. humanitarian and development programs and to ensure that a maximum impact is achieved in assisting protracted displacement?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Well, first, let me say that those displacement numbers, as you know, are the highest since World War II. Every year, we see that number go up. When I was U.N. Ambassador, it was the highest since World War II, and it gets worse and worse.

Climate-related events, of course, are a factor, and I think you are likely to see a surge and displacement stemming from the economic fallout from the COVID pandemic.

It is important to look behind the numbers at the causes of displacement, which vary. I alluded in my testimony to the fact that more conflicts are occurring now than at any point since the end of the Cold War. As you noted just now, conflicts are lasting longer.

So it used to be that one conflict would start but another might have been brought to an end and that, therefore, again, those numbers were not just continuing to grow.

But as a new conflict starts, other conflicts are just lasting longer and longer, and so the protracted refugee population is higher than it has been since World War II.

The investment that President Biden has committed to making in diplomacy is a critical part of this. We have seen, for example, in Libya, diplomacy produce, for the first time in many years, a U.N.-brokered transition government.

We need diplomacy to pay dividends in Yemen, which is facing the worst humanitarian crisis of any place on earth. And when it comes to a place like the Northern Triangle, where you have been

so active, it is critical to look at the different drivers of migration, which range from physical personal insecurity and gang violence and corruption to the lack of economic opportunity.

And USAID, again, I think has a really important role to play in mitigating humanitarian suffering, but also looking upstream at why people are leaving their homes in the first place.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me ask you this. Under the last restructuring of USAID, the Democracy Rights and Governance Center was moved under the new development, Democracy and Innovation Bureau.

My question is, I think this is a very significant part of the mission of USAID. I noticed you mentioned it among your four pillars.

How will you elevate and integrate democracy and human rights in USAID's response both to the COVID pandemic, which has provided cover for autocrats to attack civil society and diminish human rights, but even more broadly?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator. Well, there is a contest in this world occurring now between two models, the democratic model and an authoritarian model. The trends were not pretty before COVID struck and, as you note, they are getting worse in terms of human rights recessions, even in established democracies around the world.

I think that there would be no question to any of the wonderful USAID staff as to the level of priority that I give democracy and human rights. My whole career has been in that field.

I was moved to go into foreign policy by the massacre in Tiananmen Square that occurred in June of 1989 when I was still a college kid.

And so on the specifics of whether the Democracy Rights and Governance Center and that programming belongs within the DDI Bureau where it is now, I would love to revert.

But on the substance, I would just like to note that, again, this is incredibly important programming, partnering with the Department of State and their Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau, looking at anti-corruption work specifically, which is a real Achilles for authoritarian and illiberal countries, I think one we have not taken full advantage of.

This will be a huge priority for me, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. And finally, you mentioned in your comments, and I think it is one of the central issues that we need to face as we deal with the challenges of migration and the challenges that we have at the border, having AID address violence, corruption, and other drivers of migration in the Northern Triangle countries are incredibly important as part of—Vice President Biden was—when he was vice president he had a plan then.

Unfortunately, it was not continued. There is another provision in—that he has put forth. How do you see the key components of a joint USAID–State Department strategy as part of that the Northern Triangle effort?

Ambassador POWER. Well, just to note that I have been very heartened in the briefings that I have been able to have from out-

side by the reliance on data and evidence in tailoring those programs.

USAID actually gets data from the International Organization of Migration and CBP, the Customs Border Protection, to find out why individuals are leaving their homes, to dig into the specifics, to dig into the localities from which they are fleeing.

And USAID—prior to the funding suspension under the Trump administration, USAID actually has tailored programs around those places where people are most likely to flee and tailor programming around, again, the causes of migration.

So I think that is the right approach. It will take us some time to ramp back up, unfortunately, because some of those programs were suspended. But the infrastructure is in place and I look forward to working with you again to dig into specifics.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you.

Ambassador Power, first of all, thank you for taking the time yesterday and previously for you and I to talk about this position and your confirmation, and one of the things we talked about yesterday was National Security Memorandum No. 1 that President Biden has executed in which the Secretary of State will lead and, in coordination with the USAID administrator, the development of the U.S. Government wide plan to combat COVID-19 pandemic.

Can I get your thoughts on the record for that, please, briefly?

Ambassador POWER. Specifically on COVID-19 or on the structural—

Senator RISCH. Well, generally on the structure and then as it relates to COVID-19.

Ambassador POWER. Yeah. I mean, I think that as actually COVID-19 illustrates probably better than any contemporary threat, our fates, and the fates of the American people, are connected to health infrastructure, economic prosperity, the curbing of extremism and radicalization internationally.

And so programming that USAID does in that regard, in cooperation with the State Department and other agencies, is incredibly important for our security and what President Biden has done in elevating USAID and giving it a seat on the National Security Council and in the Principles Committee, I think, has just effectively enshrined that reality, which is that our development efforts and our diplomatic efforts have to be resourced and prioritized alongside, of course, our essential defense efforts.

So I think that is the logic. You know, from having spoken with him about this decision, that is the logic of elevating USAID. The expertise is there, the know-how is there, and I think what is really important about doing this is it means that that expertise and know-how will be reflected in the interagency, not only at high levels but at every level.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thanks for that answer.

Moving offshore, the memorandum also refers to a diplomatic outreach plan for enhancing the United States response to the COVID-19 pandemic by engaging partner nations.

Could you give me your thoughts on that, please?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

When I was U.N. Ambassador, I had the privilege of being part of President Obama's effort to mobilize a large anti-Ebola coalition to prevent, in that instance, an epidemic, a horrific epidemic from becoming a global pandemic of the kind that we are now living through.

I think the United States is at its most powerful, effective, and efficient when it leverages the support that it offers international institutions or the resources that it dedicates to combating global challenges, when it leverages that to get others to do more.

And that is what President Biden, I think, has already done in the context of announcing the \$2 billion that you allocated late last year for GAVI, for the vaccine effort, that that \$2 billion is going to be contributed.

But it is also going to be leveraged to get other countries to do more before the next \$2 billion is obligated, and I think that is just one example. There has not—there has not been, I should say, optimal coordination, I think, in the international global vaccine area and that is something that I am very eager to dig into, if I am confirmed.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. I appreciate those thoughts.

The Global Health Diplomacy and Security Act, which I introduced, creates a coordinator position at the State Department that is consistent with the type of framework I believe that President Biden intends in his memorandum.

Are you familiar with that, by any chance, and go ahead. Your thoughts?

Ambassador POWER. The prior version of the bill I was familiar with. I have not seen—I think the bill that you either are on the verge of introducing or have just introduced.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that. And as I indicated, Senator Menendez and I have been talking about the global health issue and an effort by this committee in that regard, and I intend to work with Senator Menendez on the creation of the framework because, obviously, the success is going to depend on that framework and I hope to engage you and your agency as we move forward on that.

And with that, my time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

Senator Cardin, who is with us virtually?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and, Ambassador Power, thank you very much for your willingness to continue to serve our nation.

I want to follow up on comments that you made earlier this year, which was something I was pleased to see where you indicated that anti-corruption would be a centerpiece of President Biden's foreign policy agenda.

And you have already answered some of that with Senator Menendez in regards to how you are using the DRG Center. You specifically mentioned in those comments the use of the tools that are at your disposal, including Magnitsky sanctions.

Can I take it that you will work with us as we look at permanently authorizing the Global Magnitsky statute today? It is by executive order and by statute that expires. We take pretty much

what was in the executive order, Senator Wicker and I, and codified that as permanent authorization.

Do we have your support on that legislation?

Ambassador POWER. Unequivocally, and let me just thank you for the Magnitsky Act where your leadership was so pivotal. As you know, it has now been replicated to a large extent in Europe and in Canada.

I think one of our tasks is to ensure that other countries adopt similar measures so that we can multilateralize these corruption and human rights sanctions.

Senator CARDIN. And Senator Young and I have introduced legislation to try to build on it to give capacity for our missions to evaluate how well the countries in which they operate are dealing with corruption.

So it is a way of using a standard similar to what we do in trafficking in persons to monitor progress made in fighting corruption. You mentioned in your article anti-bribery statutes and dealing with those—the laundering, anti-laundering statutes, et cetera.

Will you work with us as we look to enact this law to give you additional tools to help fight corruption?

Ambassador POWER. Yes, Senator. Always looking for additional tools. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

So let me talk a little bit about Central America. You already talked a little bit about that with Senator Menendez, and I know that President Biden is looking at providing help to the Central American countries in order to do what is right in our hemisphere from the humanitarian point of view as well as the practical aspects of migration.

But there is systemic corruption in these countries that if we do not deal with it we are going to be giving money that will not get to its intended purpose.

So how do you intend to make sure that our assistance to the Central American countries are used for the people to deal with the problems of Central America and not just fuel corruption?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

You put your finger on a real inhibitor of progress—above all progress for the people of that region. Let me say that, from what I understand of USAID programming up to this point, there is, of course, a recognition of the barrier that corruption has constituted to economic progress, to progress in combating threats to physical security, and thus, much of the programming is routed, for example, through local officials who have been identified as reformers or—and/or civil society partners.

And, indeed, many of those partners, as you know, are doing work to hold the central authorities accountable for transgressions and for different forms of corruption.

It has been disappointing to see some of the strides that were made, for example, in Guatemala and Honduras through CSIG. CSIG was actually the most popular and I know you were critical in pushing for its mandates to be renewed successively in Guatemala. It was the most popular institution in Guatemala before it was shut down, and so that is disappointing because it had a really

important role to play. Then Vice President Biden was also critical in ensuring that it was preserved there.

But I think, thinking through at the central level, how—what more we can do for civil society actors that are holding government accountable to try to change the equation so that those governments that are trending in worrying directions reverse that tide.

Senator CARDIN. I know that we can help you in this regard. I strongly support our involvement in Central America. But when we put conditionality on aid, it gives the administration, I think, the additional strength in dealing with the governments to indicate there has got to be progress made in dealing with the governance issues.

So I hope you take that as friendly help when we look at conditionality to make sure that we do achieve progress in dealing with systemic problems in these countries.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Portman, who is with us virtually, I understand?

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ambassador Power, and also thank you to your husband, Cass Sunstein, for his willingness to come back into public service. We appreciate your willingness to step up again.

I enjoyed our conversation, and let me follow up a little bit on what Senator Cardin just talked to you about.

As you know, I suppose, we have spent \$3.6 billion of taxpayer money in the Northern Triangle countries—El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala—in the past five years. The results are not impressive, understanding that recently some of the natural disasters in that area, particularly the hurricanes, added to this.

But I will tell you, I just got the numbers this morning from last week. Five hundred and fifty kids per day came into the United States, mostly from the Northern Triangle countries, which is five or six times more than in January when there was less than a hundred.

In terms of families—and by the way, there were 300 in February so we are going up and up and up—in terms of families, 1,500 per day last week, as compared to a thousand in February, on average, less than a hundred in January, again, a 15 times increase.

So the push factors are not being addressed effectively. People are coming. The pull factors are that the changes were made in policies to allow people to come and they are responding and the traffickers are responding.

So I guess what I would ask you is how you would do it differently. Senator Cardin rightly asked you about corruption, and I believe insisting on transparency and rule of law and tying our aid is important.

By the way, of that \$3.6 billion, as you know, much was sent through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, MCC, which has precisely those criteria and others to ensure the money is well spent.

But I guess I would ask you also about tying it to immigration and specifically requiring those countries to work with us to have people apply for asylum from their country of origin or if they feel

it is unsafe to do it in a safe third country, which is one of the programs that was discontinued by the current administration.

In other words, someone could apply in Guatemala for asylum if they are from Honduras, which would be the first country that they would come into, a safe third country.

Do you believe that that is an appropriate condition to us spending what President Biden has now suggested, which is another \$4 billion on top of the \$3.6 billion that has been set in the last five years?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

Well, first, just to embrace the premise of your question that we have a responsibility to be effective vigilant stewards of taxpayer resources, this is an immensely challenging set of problems, and as you called them push factors out of the region to deal with there are no silver bullets. Needless to say, if there were someone would have found one along the way.

But I guess I would just offer a few thoughts. I mean, first of all, there is actually compelling data, and I look forward to digging into the numbers further if I am—if I am confirmed, but that shows that, for example, in the districts where USAID had programming aimed at curbing violence—for example, in El Salvador between 2015 and 2017, there was a 61 percent drop in homicide rates.

There are comparable numbers in terms of the statistics in districts that USAID programming was set up in Honduras, with a slightly smaller drop but, nonetheless, a very substantial drop in homicide rates.

I think that is encouraging. I think, you know, suspending the programs, unfortunately, gave us less influence in using our programming to work with those reformist officials who were willing, again, to crackdown on violence within their neighborhoods.

Senator PORTMAN. Ambassador, let me interrupt you just for a second—

Ambassador POWER. Of course.

Senator PORTMAN [continuing]. Because I want to cover another topic as well. But just on this topic, having just been at the border the last few days, I did talk to a lot of unaccompanied kids and also to families and single men coming over from Central America and, as you know, the constant refrain is, “I can make 10 or sometimes 20 times as much in America. I want to take care of my family.”

So I agree that dealing with the violence is important and I applaud those changes. And, in fact, not only has violence been dealt with in those countries so that the numbers are a little better, generally, but also the economic situation is a little better, although the hurricanes and the COVID-19 numbers are probably not going to be as good.

But it is—it is an economic issue, primarily. In other words, people will still be looking to come to the United States. And my question to you was, should we condition billions of dollars in taxpayer money not just on the important things that Senator Cardin talked about but also on working with us on this issue of immigration and, specifically, on asylum claims? Do you agree with that?

Ambassador POWER. Well, I think that one of your premises, if I understood it, of putting individuals in a position where they

could apply for refugee status or asylum in the region rather than entrusting, for example, their children to coyotes—

Senator PORTMAN. Right. And taking a dangerous course, which is—

Ambassador POWER. I do not think any parents, you know, relishes the entrusting of one's child, again, to a smuggler. So one of the things that we looked at in the Obama administration, as you know, was setting up these UNHCR offices in the region. I think that is something that President Biden is looking at again, and that is very important.

But you put your finger, again, on one of the major causes of migration, which is the lack of economic opportunity, and that is something that USAID has a lot of experience investing in.

You are right, we have not produced the same kinds of results, as I have pointed to, when it comes to physical security and crime. But I think, you know, now with tailored programming, not being everywhere but being specifically in those communities where we know that there is the highest concentration of migrants, we can, working with you and being held accountable, hopefully, begin to make a dent.

Senator PORTMAN. Well, Ambassador, I hope you—I hope you work with—my time is getting toward the end here. But my question is specifically dealing with the economy—

The CHAIRMAN. The senator's time has past expired so—

Senator PORTMAN [continuing]. And the violence issues, but also if you could work with us on this issue of immigration and asylum so people can apply from their home country or a safe third country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons, who just returned from the Tigray region in Ethiopia on a mission and we appreciate his work, and you are recognized.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and Ambassador Power.

Welcome, and thank you for your willingness to serve our nation again, and to Cass and to Declan and to Rian, thank you for supporting your wife and mother in her tremendous service to our nation.

You are taking on this role, hopefully, once confirmed at a critically important time. We all saw how, in the last year of the previous administration, the absence of a Senate-confirmed administrator.

The absence of clear and forceful leadership led to real drift and some challenges operationally and organizationally.

There are humanitarian crises all over the world, as many of us will comment today, from Venezuela to Yemen to Burma to Ethiopia to many other nations, and clear and capable leadership at USAID is critical.

I have profound respect and appreciation for the work of the USAID, the folks who are deployed around the world. I just had the opportunity to meet with a number of the humanitarian partners and leaders that USAID is relying on in Ethiopia, as I have elsewhere.



I also think it is critical we continue to explain to the average American how the work of USAID overseas helps keep us safer, healthier, and more prosperous.

And, tragically, COVID-19 is an opportunity for us to remind folks exactly how vaccinating the rest of the world is critical to preventing new variants from breaking out and from harming all of us.

So I look forward to working with you in my role as the chairman of the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee and to having a meaningful dialogue.

Let me dive in first, if I could, to what I just saw. If confirmed, can we count on USAID to work with this committee and with all of us in Congress to ensure that we are addressing the humanitarian crisis throughout Ethiopia and, in particular, in the Tigray region?

Ambassador POWER. Absolutely. Thank you for taking the trip that you took. USAID, as you know, just made an announcement of an additional \$52 million dollars in humanitarian support. I think that makes the contribution so far \$150 million plus since the crisis began.

But the humanitarian—mitigating the humanitarian suffering, of course, is not all we need to be doing. We need to get at the root causes of that suffering and secure access so that that food can be delivered.

So thank you for what you have done to try to make that happen.

Senator COONS. And I am optimistic we will make progress now on humanitarian access.

I also met with the head of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, Daniel Bekele, and discussed with him and with other international leaders about carrying out a thorough and independent investigation of human rights abuses.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, has also talked recently about doing a joint investigation.

From your career working in human rights issues, what kind of investigation do you think would be most effective and have the greatest impact in getting to the root of human rights violations that have occurred?

Ambassador POWER. Well, the biggest challenge, traditionally, for international human rights investigations, especially independent ones, is securing access, and so the key is not only getting the approval from the Center and from the prime minister for something like that, but making sure that that agreement trickles down and that there is a willingness on the part of the authorities who have granted access to ensure that, you know, the checkpoints do not go up then as soon as the investigators deploy.

There are many, many countries where atrocity allegations have occurred, have developed. Unfortunately, creative traditions of erecting roadblocks, you know, where it matters—in other words, harassing, intimidating witnesses and so forth, denying visas to particular communities, blaming so-called uncontrolled militia, you know, without, at the Center, really taking steps to make sure that those militia allow investigators to do their work.

Senator COONS. Well, I look forward to partnering with you and relying on your advice in exactly how to make sure that this commitment that has recently been announced by the prime minister to investigate and this partnership that I think is quite possible is successful.

And there is a number of things I look forward to working with you on: the implementation of the Global Fragility Act, a bill that I helped lead that has been signed into law that is a new tool to ensure that development and diplomacy take the lead in support of defense work in securing countries from the Sahel to the Northern Triangle, the Nita Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act and ensuring that we are investing in both people-to-people programs and joint economic ventures to facilitate the conditions for a possible two-state solution, and then ways in which we can keep the Development Finance Corporation a development finance corporation and to best use the MCC.

My last question will be for you about the critical role that delivering safe and effective vaccines to the developing world can play in continuing our role as one of the world's leading supporters of effective public health programs.

There has been a significant increase in the appropriated funds available through COVAX. We have rejoined WHO.

What do you think we most need to do to ensure the prompt and equitable distribution of effective vaccines globally?

Ambassador POWER. Well, let me just cite, Senator, the International Chamber of Commerce report—I think we discussed it on the phone a month or two ago—but that shows that until and unless there is economic recovery by virtue of vaccinations and curbing of the pandemic in the developing world, it is going to cost the global economy \$9 trillion, including developed countries \$4.5 trillion. Between that and the issue of variants, where as long as the pandemic is raging somewhere there is a chance of some mutation and variants moving aggressively, it is so in our interest to make that happen.

COVAX, if fully funded, will vaccinate 20 percent of people, they hope, by the end of this year—20 percent of the people in developing countries.

That is not sufficient, and so looking to see how COVAX is being supplemented by bilateral donations, surplus donations, and other contributions, I think, is really important.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Madam Ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Paul?

Senator PAUL. Good morning. Welcome.

Ambassador POWER. Good morning.

Senator PAUL. Many on the left are horrified at being associated with the neocon foreign policy. But it is no small irony that the end results of responsibility to protect are, in reality, little different than the interventionist policies of John Bolton and Bill Kristol.

Like the neocons, the liberal advocates of responsibility to protect have advocated for military intervention in Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

Sure, the reasoning might be more humanitarian than geopolitical, but the advocacy for military intervention ends up looking pretty much the same.

I remember liking what candidate Obama said about military intervention, that without congressional approval it was only justified when there was an imminent threat.

After President Obama began bombing Libya, I asked him at lunch one day, what about your pledge to ask and seek congressional permission unless it was an imminent threat.

He responded that there was an imminent threat to Benghazi. I looked at him incredulously and responded, “Really? An imminent threat to a foreign city is your justification for an unauthorized war?”

The responsibility to protect ideology did not learn much from the Libyan debacle and immediately pushed the Obama administration to jump into Syria. Many on the left, like Secretary Blinken, do not admit that there was too much intervention. They actually believe in Syria that they failed because there was too little military intervention.

Several hundred thousand people have died in Syria and more than a million refugees have been displaced. If you are talking about humanitarianism, famine, the wars, really, other than natural causes war is the number-one cause of famine around the world.

An argument can be made, though, that Assad would probably massacred far fewer people had the West and the Gulf States stayed out of the civil war.

Are you willing to admit that the Libyan and Syrian military interventions that you advocated for were a mistake, and that going forward, you will be more conscious of the unintended humanitarian disasters that seem to occur again and again with our military interventions in Africa and throughout the Middle East?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

Well, first, if I may, just talk about USAID and its role, which I think can be very important in Libya today.

I think before you arrived I mentioned that there is—a power-sharing government has finally been set up in Libya. USAID right now, because of the security conditions, operates its programs, largely, from the—

Senator PAUL. You would acknowledge Libya is worse now than it was before we started bombing them?

Ambassador POWER [continuing]. I think it is really important with Libya having the opportunity to have elections at the end of this year for us to do what we can to support those elections. I think it is in the face of mass atrocities there are a whole set of nonmilitary tools that are—I would hope that you would support deploying.

We had some successes with them, for example, in helping bring about the South Sudanese Referendum, which was a risk of grave atrocities occurring back in the first term of the Obama administration, an attempt to steal an election in Cote d’Ivoire where diplomatic pressure averted mass atrocities, and even sending technical advisors, military advisors, to Central Africa to combat the Lord’s Resistance Army, which kidnapped children and—

Senator PAUL. Do you think we were successful in Libya, that Libya is a better place because of our military intervention, or Syria?

Ambassador POWER. The decision that President Obama made when confronted with the risk to the people of Benghazi and other civilian centers was an incredibly difficult one, and again, in sitting in the Situation Room, I think it is hard now to remember—you know, with the United Nations, NATO, the Arab League, this body, the Senate, unanimously calling for a no-fly zone, President Obama made the judgment that the risks of allowing Benghazi to fall and the slaughter that would ensue were not—

Senator PAUL [continuing]. I know it is a tough decision, but in retrospect, was Libya a good idea to militarily intervene in Libya? A good idea to militarily intervene in Syria, in retrospect?

Ambassador POWER. I think the challenge is that we do not have the counterfactual and, certainly, the fallout in the—in the wake of the intervention, the centrifugal forces have been incredibly difficult to manage and, above all, hard on the Libyan people.

Senator PAUL. But we have to learn lessons sometime. I mean, we went into Libya. We went into Iraq. We destabilized Iraq. We are still dealing with that. We went into Libya, destabilized Libya. We are still dealing with that. Syria, the same thing, and Yemen as well.

So, I mean, there should be an accumulation of knowledge and a learning curve here that our interventions make things worse, not better.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you. Thank you, Senator.

I, certainly, agree that nonmilitary tools in the toolbox are—carry with them far fewer risks. I opposed the war in Iraq. I agree with you on Yemen.

All I am trying to describe is that when these situations arise, it is a question almost of lesser evils, that the choices are very challenging.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations, Ambassador Power, for your nomination.

You have been a human rights activist. You have played a number of roles with the Obama administration, including U.N. ambassador, and now you are poised to take the helm of a critical engine of humanitarian assistance around the globe.

So I am going to ask you questions that kind of combine all the roles, both about what you might do at USAID but also how you see some of the challenges that affect the committee.

You began your prepared remarks with four gargantuan challenges, and one was democracy backsliding, and I want to talk to you about that. We are seeing it everywhere.

We are seeing it in every continent. We are seeing, as you indicate, declines in freedom and democracy indices, whether you are looking at, you know, Freedom House annual reports or the Economist Democracy Index annual reports.

President Biden has indicated that sometime either later this year or earlier next year he wants to convene a summit of democracies, which I think is a great idea.

How would you foresee USAID being part of what the U.S. might do in convening such a summit? Just share your thoughts on that. Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

If I might, just because the democracy and human rights numbers are so unfortunate and depressing, just to offer something on the other side of the ledger.

Prior to the pandemic, there were more political protests that occurred in more places than at any point in modern recorded history.

So on the one hand, you have states increasingly repressing their people and growing more sophisticated in shutting down the internet and in stifling space for civil society.

On the other hand, many, many people are not getting that memo and are insisting on taking their protests and their concerns to the streets and holding governments accountable.

So I think there is a lot to work with out there of concerns about violations of dignity and rights and a desire for the United States to play a leadership role in promoting human rights, of course, with humility.

With regard to the summit, I am not privy to the deliberations and sort of what the planning and thinking is either on timing or on the details of substance.

But I think there are a lot of opportunities to collaborate and for USAID to play an important role, for example, in combating misinformation and sharing best practices for doing so in protecting election infrastructure, not only from misinformation but from hacking and other forms of intrusion, the anti-corruption programs that have been effective in holding governments accountable and bringing civil society into conversations that are too often top down.

I think there are a lot of lessons that can be imparted in that regard. And often, Senator, I think it is—it is countries that themselves are at different stages of democratic progression that have the most valuable lessons to impart to those countries that are just becoming democratic.

For example, the country of Sudan, which is experiencing a political transition, is a long way from being a full and—a full Jeffersonian democracy, that—

Senator KAINE. Sudan is a good example of something. I agree with you.

You would agree with me that in something like a summit of democracies it would be very important not to just focus on, like, a NATO like U.S. and Europe or an OECD, just kind of the big developed nations, but we should include large and small democracies, mature and nascent from every continent on the planet.

I mean, should not that be the goal of such a summit?

Ambassador POWER. Again, I do not know how the current administration is thinking about the summit. I can tell you, Senator, from having helped design invitation lists as a U.N. ambassador that questions of who is in and who is out are actually quite challenging.

Senator KAINE. And but I am not asking about particular nations. I am just saying it would have less utility if it is just seen as kind of a U.S. and Europe thing or a big nation thing, right?

If we are going to have a summit of democracies, there are democracies on every continent. They are big and small and nascent and mature. And if we are going to try to uphold the model and share best practices, we should not have kind of a U.S. or U.S. and Europe-centric view. We should try to include democracies from everywhere.

Ambassador POWER. I think the more demographically and culturally and regionally representative we can be in general in talking about democracy and human rights the better.

The progress I was able to make as U.N. ambassador on LGBTQ rights would not have happened without the leadership of Latin American countries, who were at the forefront there.

So I agree with the premise of your question. I am just not familiar with what the plans are for the summit.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. I do not have any other questions, Mr. Chair. Thanks.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Welcome, Ambassador, and congratulations on your nomination.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. As you know, the People's Republic of China is using development dollars to advance its foreign policy goals through programs like the Belt and Road Initiative.

Some have proposed expanding DFC's work to enable it to more effectively combat China's investments by targeting middle-income countries or perhaps utilizing DSC to support the export of U.S.-made emerging technologies.

Whether through USAID or DFC, it is absolutely essential that our development dollars, I think, be used to advance our geostrategic priorities.

So, Ambassador, how would you like to see our development agencies improved so that we are able to more effectively compete with China?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

The way in which, and I alluded to this in my opening statement, but that China is using its economic leverage and heft not only to, in often a predatory way, but not only to change governing practices within countries but in my old place of work the United Nations to actually leverage those financial commitments to change the rules of the road altogether and to water down international human rights commitments and so forth, for fear that those laws and norms will be used against China. It warrants urgent, immediate, and well-resourced attention.

I think you asked about improvement and I am, again, incredibly impressed with what USAID staff have done and was very impressed with the leadership of Mark Green in this area.

I think you and Senator Coons and others have worked on making the DFC a much more powerful tool in the American toolbox. I think increasing coordination between the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the DFC, USAID, and the range of other development actors is one answer.

I think recognizing our comparative advantages—you know, we actually believe in local self-reliance. That is what we are working

toward. We want countries not to be dependent on international assistance.

So the investments we make are in their ability to have agency and to dictate their own affairs. This is very—

Senator YOUNG. Sure.

Ambassador POWER [continuing]. Different, I think, than the China model. Go ahead, sir.

Senator YOUNG. No. So you mentioned local self-reliance. I am going to get into that momentarily since you brought that up.

Might you support expanding DFC's mission to target areas in the developed world where China is attempting to make inroads?

Ambassador POWER. I would want to look into that and hear from you and others, just, again, having not worked yet within the administration or dug into DFC-related questions, if I could.

But I think, certainly, the question for American foreign policy, broadly, is not only, you know, how do we deal with China in sub-Saharan Africa and the inroads they are making there, but across the developed world as well.

Senator YOUNG. You mentioned self-reliance, that emphasis on making countries self-reliant, I think, is itself an advantage, right, because all people—so I think not just most people but all people want to be more self-reliant, less reliant upon foreign nations and others. It is sort of wired into our DNA.

How would you say America's national security interests are helped by making countries more self-reliant? Is that consistent with your thinking?

Ambassador POWER. Absolutely consistent with my thinking, and I think you put your finger on it. It is you cannot travel the world and talk to individuals, whether they are those who are receiving U.N. food assistance or those receiving technical assistance in a government ministry, without being struck by how eager they are to not be dependent on international assistance, and I think that is something USAID staff have taken to heart. So—

Senator YOUNG. Is there—is there a way that we might, or how should we measure self-reliance?

Ambassador POWER. Well, I think domestic resource mobilization is something that USAID has invested a lot in, so making sure that countries are able to collect their own tax, infrastructure, strengthening the rule of law, so that there is an ability, you know, not only for NGOs to hold governmental actors accountable for potential corruption or malfeasance but also the courts, and making sure there is an independent judiciary. So work in those domains, I think, is one—

Senator YOUNG. Then, lastly, in summary fashion, I will just ask you, how would you use your seat on the Development Finance Corporation's executive board to ensure that DFC and USAID's complementary missions are furthering achieving self-reliance in our targeted countries?

Ambassador POWER. I really look forward to that individual being named, nominated, confirmed, and sitting down with them. I think a critical answer to your question about China but also our larger question about just enhancing development for the sake of U.S. security and prosperity lies in that partnership.

And the resources that DFC bring to bear but also, specifically, they bring to bear what countries most want, which is private sector investment and, really, to move away from assistance to a more equal relationship of that nature.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Ambassador. I will be submitting some questions for the record about Burma.

Ambassador POWER. Okay. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand that Senator Schatz is with us virtually.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ambassador, for being willing to serve. Again, thank you to your family.

USAID is already leading in climate in our foreign assistance. We see that in the work of the bureaus, the various offices, and the regional missions.

But I do think there is more that we can do to make sure that there is leadership at the top to help to steer the agencies' climate work so there is an advocate for consistent and reliable funding, and someone to establish a clear set of priorities for USAID's mission.

Can you talk about where we might make some permanent structural changes at USAID so that our emphasis on climate is embedded into our budget, our priorities, and our objectives, going forward, and so that it does not swing back and forth depending on who is the president of the United States?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your leadership on climate.

I am struck by how much work is already being done, and you are alluding to this at USAID as it relates to disaster risk reduction, helping those countries that want to transition to clean energy or to lower their carbon emissions, above all, dealing with something that I know you have worked on in the Pacific Island context, which is mitigation and adaptation for—especially with Pacific Island countries, those countries that are only a few feet above sea level and really suffering devastating effects of climate events and just the rising sea levels.

But you asked a question more about the sort of bureaucratic instantiation of these efforts. I think, for starters, I will want to get smarter at a granular level about what USAID is already doing and was doing under the prior administration.

I think, as well, thinking through what it means to acknowledge that climate touches just about every aspect of USAID programming, from food security to displacement and humanitarian emergency to we had an exchange earlier about conflict and the causes of conflict and how we can address root causes.

So given that, what is the appropriate bureaucratic sort of structure for that disaster risk reduction, adaptation, mitigation, emissions reduction expertise? You know, what is the best way to channel all the expertise that exists within the building so that it is reflective of the fact that this expertise needs to permeate so many domains?

And so I do not have an answer for you today, Senator. If you have ideas, I would love to hear them. But I think it is incredibly



important to make sure that the structure is fit for purpose at this moment.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

I want to stay in Oceania and talk a little bit about not disaster response but disaster preparation. You know, the United States government is very effective in disaster response.

I think of the Fukushima Daiichi earthquake and tsunami. I think of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that impacted coastal Thailand, among other places, and, of course, we were there for the rescue.

But for such a small amount of money, we were able to prevent some of these disasters. Obviously, the natural disasters are unpreventable, but for the simple price of about \$500,000, we were able to deploy some sea level gauges so that people would get early warning about tsunamis and save life.

And I just wonder how you are looking at not just disaster response and mitigation in terms of hard infrastructure, but especially early warning systems and those relatively easy to deploy and inexpensive to purchase the kinds of assistance that really help island nations, and whether USAID would be amenable to really taking a look throughout Oceania about that.

Ambassador POWER. I cannot wait to dig into that set of questions, if I am confirmed. I do—I did read a little bit about it, just as I was been preparing these last weeks for this hearing.

And, as you said, just with such modest financial investments, I read about these beetles that were working with NOAA to provide countries that, in low connectivity areas, allow people to communicate warnings of extreme weather events to come.

I think that is just a great example of the kinds of uses of technology, the uses of satellites, the uses of surveillance that we can bring to bear to mitigate harms.

So eager, all ears, and look forward to hearing more about what USAID staff, which have been so creative in this domain, have already done.

Senator SCHATZ. Sea level gauges, DART buoys, drones for reconnaissance and disaster response—all of these are really inexpensive, even in the context of USAID but, certainly, in the context of our overall foreign aid and defense budget.

So I look forward to working with you on all these things. Thank you, Ambassador.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand Senator Hagerty is with us virtually.

Senator HAGERTY. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, I would like to commend your two children for attending today. I know that it takes a lot for a family to be as supportive as they have been of their parents, and I hope they obtain a great civics lesson today and I commend them for joining you and for being so supportive of your service.

To the extent that the United States spends development funds overseas, I know we all want to make certain that those funds are spent in a manner that is efficient and as effective as possible at serving our interest.

So I would like to turn our attention to women's empowerment. As you know, to the extent that women flourish in a nation their economies flourish, their democracies flourish, and we tend to see more stability.

The previous administration put together a tremendous program, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative, and Congress has allocated some \$200 million this fiscal year.

It enjoys great bipartisan support from this committee. And I think it has tremendous potential.

Ambassador, I would like to ask you, first, if you are aware of this program, and then further, how would you go about the implementation and making sure that we see this program through as it is intended?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator, just to wholeheartedly agree with your various premises about the link between women's empowerment and education and increased GDPs. Peace processes last longer if women are included in at the table.

As to the program that you are referencing, I have, certainly, read about it. I would like, if I could, to dig into it, again, if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, and look at also how it fits alongside other USAID investments, for example, in girls' education, in other efforts to catalyze entrepreneurship for women and girls.

But, again, I share your premises and happy to consult with you on that, going forward.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate that, and I would underscore that this is a terrific program and I think it has tremendous potential. So I hope that it will take a premier role as you evaluate what you may do, if confirmed, in the implementation of programs that will help advance our interest overseas.

Along those same lines, I would like to shift gears and talk a bit about nations that are vulnerable to Chinese influence and, specifically, the implementation of Chinese technology into their networks and their infrastructure.

Are there things that you might be able to accomplish, that USAID could accomplish, that would help make these nations less vulnerable to Chinese penetration, to help them stand up against the—this sort of incentivization that the Chinese often will give to get other types of benefits? Can you address that concern, please?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

Well, I think some of the answer is diplomatic. You know, the last administration, I think, exerted a lot of diplomatic pressure on countries and some of it was proved, I think, ultimately effective. For example, the United Kingdom reversing its prior decision on Huawei and 5G.

So I look forward to working with Secretary Blinken in that regard. But also, I had a couple exchanges earlier, sir, about the comparative advantages of USAID assistance and U.S. development assistance, more broadly, and I do think the fact that we stand for digital and secure—secure and open digital infrastructure is a comparative advantage.

It is something that aligns with the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people around the world, and so part of the investments that USAID makes in civil society and in nongovernmental actors,

part of our work with the DFC, knowing how much countries value private sector investment from the United States.

I think linking these conversations and recognizing that for American companies, for example, the investment climate is more hospitable in the event of an open and secure digital infrastructure. I think that can be part of our leverage alongside questions of how USAID spends—expends its resources.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate your time and effort looking at how we might better leverage our position to ensure that the networks around the globe remain free and clear.

Thank you very much for your time.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, for this hearing. And, Madam Ambassador, it is great to see you. Thank you for your past service to our country and for your willingness to serve again in this capacity, if confirmed, and it is great to see your family.

Senator Murphy and I have proposed a new foreign policy budget to really meet the needs of this century in the year 2021, recognizing that many of the threats that we face are transnational, global, from climate change to pandemics to cybersecurity, and we look forward to working with you to explore that budget.

It includes a significant increase in the budget for AID, among other things, and part of the idea is also to combat what Senator Hagerty was just discussing, which is China's very active and aggressive effort to export its model of authoritarianism to the developing world through a number of instruments, including debt trap diplomacy, the Belt and Road Initiative.

Their focus has been on sort of major infrastructure projects and, you know, decades ago, AID was also very focused on building larger infrastructure projects.

If you could just comment on how you see the role of AID in the developing world in the context of China's ongoing efforts, but with the toolbox that you have. I mean, should we consider changing the mix in our toolbox as we go forward and how do you see that challenge?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

Understandably, this has come up a good bit today, just as it comes up every day in the world, and I should say thank you to you and Senator Murphy for looking into this question of how development diplomacy, our foreign affairs budget, should be tailored for this moment.

So I look forward to seeing what comes of that exercise. I have seen the preliminary numbers, but look forward to more.

You know, I think that the phrase I keep coming back to is comparative advantage, and you alluded to debt trap diplomacy.

I think, you know, on the one hand, this has been a year of tremendous Chinese expansionism and aggressiveness when it comes to developing countries and when it comes to its near abroad as well. We have seen that in Hong Kong. We have seen it in the South China Sea. We have seen it on the Indian border.

But it has not gone that well for China. Their—you actually see, you know, very poor polling when it comes to China's standing in the world. Even with the donations of protective gear in light of the COVID pandemic, you do not see increases in soft power.

Quite the contrary, in light of COVID and the status of the global economy and how much different countries have suffered from that, and I think it is in part because people recognize that this coercive and predatory approach, which is so transactional and, seemingly, not really rooted in encouraging countries to achieve their own destinies, their own development objectives.

I think it is not going over that well, and that creates an opening for the United States. I think our comparative advantages are our support for accountable governance, which aligns with what citizens want worldwide, our ability to not only bring in the DFC but, in parallel, private sector investments, which countries hunger for, the fact that we are carrying out programming that is supportive of various countries' environmental objectives, so many of these countries cherish the natural resources that they have been given.

And so I think our approach, which is helping them sustain those resources rather than pillaging them, is something that also gives us a comparative advantage.

So I can go on and, again, I think it is country specific in terms of how the programming should be tailored. But, fundamentally, it is about supporting those countries achieve their objectives and their goals of becoming self-reliant and not being dependent on assistance.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. I also want to follow up briefly on the line of questioning from Senator Coons regarding our role in working with others in the world to defeat the coronavirus.

As you indicated, the COVAX facility, we hope, will vaccinate about 20 percent of the developing world. But it is in their interest and in our interest, obviously, to stop the spread of variants as quickly as possible, variants that could, potentially, you know, become more immune to vaccines. And then there is the economic fallout, both in those countries and the global economy.

What do you see as AID's role specifically in trying to expand the vaccination effort and the use of excess U.S. vaccine supplies?

Ambassador POWER. Well, because it will be some time before everyone is vaccinated in the world and in the developing world, it is really important not to lose sight of the diagnostic and the treatment support that we can offer, the support as well as we go in rebuilding health infrastructure that has been completely overwhelmed by the human costs of this pandemic.

I also think, you know, there is no question that the humanitarian toll when it comes to severe malnutrition is going to be substantial, and USAID, of course, brings great assets when it comes to meeting humanitarian emergencies and supporting organizations like the World Food Programme and others in meeting food needs and humanitarian needs.

So I think there is—to look at the pandemic both as the vaccination challenge, which we have talked about earlier, as a treatment challenge, but then not to lose sight of the fact that measles and TB and polio treatments and vaccines, all of those have lagged behind, and nor to lose sight of the need to ensure that this is the

last pandemic that does this kind of damage and to be building again in the infrastructure that these countries need to be able to fend for themselves in the future.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Madam Ambassador.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good to see you, Ambassador. Thank you for your willingness to serve again.

Let me just quickly associate myself with a few comments and lines of questioning from other members on the committee.

First, let me join with Senator Young in recommending that you play a forceful role at the DFC with respect to increasing their capability to be able to finance projects abroad. We have, obviously, targeted DFC's financing towards the developing world for good reason.

But China plays a different game. We carved out a billion dollars through legislation written by myself and Senator Johnson about a year ago to allow for energy projects to be financed in nondeveloping countries.

I think we are going to have to continue to expand the aperture when it comes to the type of countries and type of economies the DFC is able to do business in in order to compete with China.

Let me just associate myself with Senator van Hollen's comments. You and I have talked ad nauseam about the need to dramatically increase our nonmilitary toolkit, and now you will be in a perfect position to advocate for those resources.

My hope is that the administration, when it submits its budget, you know, will make a substantial down payment on those smart power tools. Just no way to compete with China or prevent the next pandemic or fight climate change if you are still funding, you know, more employees at military grocery stores than diplomats representing America abroad.

My lines of questioning are on the ability of USAID to be able to be nimble enough to meet the changing nature of very complex challenges.

The first is on the topic of how we get our USAID team outside the wire. We have significantly downsized—as an example, we have significantly downsized our embassy in Baghdad. I think right now we have four USAID officers overseeing a billion dollars of funding there.

But it is not unfamiliar what is happening there. All over the world we are having a harder time getting our diplomats and our economic development officers outside of embassies.

Second, we also have a lack of flexibility in the way that USAID can deploy funds. Congress tends to compartmentalize and earmark dollars so that when a challenge pops up it is difficult for the USAID administrator to put the dollars into the place that really needs it.

So I wondered if you would talk for a second about the need to be able to move USAID personnel around to places that need to see American presence but also the need for Congress to work with you

to try to give some more flexibility to the accounts that you are going to oversee.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator. Both such important questions.

So when it comes to the circumstance for USAID personnel and U.S. diplomatic personnel, as you know, it is very challenging, with more conflicts happening than any point since the end of the Cold War.

With extremists, you know, who do harbor depending on, again, where we are talking about can harbor ill intent towards U.S. personnel, you know, we need to take security precautions and keep our personnel safe.

At the same time, you will never meet people more eager to be out in the communities where the beneficiaries of U.S. programming are than USAID's personnel. I mean, that is what drew these extraordinary men and women to this agency in the first place.

You know, many of them are former Peace Corps volunteers or people who have taught English when they were, you know, practically in high school, you know, living in these communities.

So I think—I look forward to working with Secretary Blinken and our security professionals to being sure that we have the balance right there.

And then when it comes to flexibility in deploying funds, I do think this relates to the conversation that we have been having about China. You know, we—and actually, the Ranking Member Risch and I spoke about this a little bit in his office yesterday—we want our assistance to be fit for purpose.

We want our rules and regulations to be fit for purpose. We need to be accountable to the American people, given the generosity and the spirit behind the investments that are being made through USAID.

I, certainly, if confirmed, want to be responsive to the objectives that people have up here, and that is why you see a lot of those earmarks is that people have strong commitments and want to see particular programming.

And from what I can tell, you know, that is the kind of programming that I would wish to see as well. But we really do need to make sure that we are able to move quickly.

I know Administrator Green made some inroads on this issue. But I do think there is more to be done to make sure that we are—we are able to be a 21st century agency meeting the challenges of the moment.

Senator MURPHY. Agree. Circumstances change, and these days they change very quickly, and so I think there is probably a way for us to maintain accountability for funds, maintain programmatic earmarking but, perhaps, allow for a little bit more flexibility with regard to country and geography.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador, welcome.

Ambassador POWER. Thank you.

Senator CRUZ. So, Ambassador, you and I have had a good working relationship. We had a very good conversation in my office. We have worked together, in particular, concerning humanitarian crises and dissidents.

I appreciated your willingness when serving as U.N. ambassador to speak out for Meriam Ibrahim, who was wrongfully imprisoned in Sudan and sentenced to torture and death for the crime of being a Christian, and you showed courage speaking out for her.

As you know, I was very frustrated President Obama would not speak out for her, but I was grateful that you did. But I also had very significant disagreements with you during your time as U.N. ambassador and nowhere were those disagreements stronger than concerning Israel and concerning Iran.

Concerning Israel, I think, perhaps, the most shameful moment of the Obama administration was after the election in November of 2016 and was the Security Council's passage of Resolution 2334, which I do not think it is coincidental that the Security Council passed it after the presidential election and not before.

And that resolution was passed with, at best, the acquiescence of the United States and of you as U.N. Ambassador and, at worst, the active encouragement of the Obama administration and you, as U.N. Ambassador.

I believe Resolution 2334 is a pile of lies, that it is a resolution that is motivated by anti-Semitism, by hatred for Israel. Resolution 2334 declares much of modern-day Israel is illegitimate and illegally occupied territory.

It declares the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem as illegitimate and illegally-occupied territory. It declares the Wailing Wall as illegitimate and illegally-occupied territory.

The much-circulated picture of President Obama in a yarmulke paying respects at the Wailing Wall, to see the Obama administration put through a resolution designed to attack Israel, was quite dismaying.

So I guess my first question is, do you agree with Resolution 2334?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you, Senator.

I had—there were two sort of guiding principles that I relied upon as U.N. ambassador as it relates to Israel. The first was to combat bias and anti-Semitism and the unfair way that Israel has been treated at the U.N. and is treated at the U.N., and the second, following President Obama's direction, of course, was to preserve space for a two-state solution.

I want to make sure I have the chance to just describe a little bit what I did, and I am disappointed we did not get to talk about this in your office, what I did in the first category because I think your question does not reflect the reality of my four years at U.N.—

Senator CRUZ. With respect, Ambassador Power, the time is limited—

Ambassador POWER. Right.

Senator CRUZ [continuing]. And so if you could just answer the question I asked. Do you agree with Resolution 2334?

I recognize you may well have done other things that were positive concerning Israel. I am focused on this action at the United Nations.

Ambassador POWER. I just would like to get on the record that under my leadership we secured Yom Kippur as a U.N. holiday. We convened the first ever General Assembly condemning anti-Semitism in the same chamber as the Zionism is racism resolution was passed decades before.

And we integrated Israel in a way that had never been done before: chairing committees, being able to actually be part of groups from which they had been traditionally excluded.

I do not think there is a record that looks as substantial when it comes to integrating Israel.

On the resolution itself, it is a resolution in keeping with President Obama's desire to encourage the parties to avoid unilateral steps, including terrorism, incitement to violence, and the building of settlements.

Those dimensions of the resolution—I think, if you read my explanation of vote at the time, the problem with the resolution and the reason President Obama decided to abstain was, by and large, the venue because the U.N. has been so biased, because they are 18 General Assembly—

Senator CRUZ. So let us get to a little bit more granularity.

Ambassador POWER. Yeah.

Senator CRUZ. Do you believe the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem is illegitimate and illegally-occupied territory?

Ambassador POWER. I do not.

Senator CRUZ. So do you disagree with the substance of Resolution 2334? Because that is what it says?

Ambassador POWER. Senator, President Obama's desire was to encourage the parties to avoid unilateral steps. That is the essence of that resolution and I think the reason that he made the judgment to instruct me to abstain.

Senator CRUZ. So encouraging the party to—parties to avoid unilateral steps. Resolution 2334 was a unilateral step. Israel had no say in it. It was a step taken by the enemies of Israel to condemn Israel.

Ambassador POWER. Again, the desire that animated me in my time at the U.N. was to fight bias and to preserve space for a two-state solution.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. A final question. Can you please describe the role played by Iran and by the Houthis, in particular, in deepening the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and assess whether the Biden administration's moves to relieve terrorism sanctions on the Houthis has played a role in that humanitarian crisis?

Ambassador POWER. The Houthis, when I was at the United Nations, the Houthi overran a sovereign government, used military force for territorial acquisition, have used food as a weapon of war.

I mean, again, I am on record condemning Houthi actions and specifically, again, the use of humanitarian aid. I think the challenge is the vast majority of Yemenis live under Houthi control at the moment unless and until there is a political settlement.



And so it is really important, given that that is the world's largest humanitarian catastrophe right now, that we find a way to get food to those vulnerable people.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator CRUZ. But the Biden administration's lifting the terrorism sanction—

The CHAIRMAN. The senator's time has expired, and—

Senator CRUZ. I was just asking her to answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN. I know. I have let more time than other colleagues.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. I would still like her to ask the question.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure you can submit it for the record and you will get a response.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. So you do not—

The CHAIRMAN. No, I want to observe the time I have for everybody else.

Senator CRUZ. She could still—

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Booker?

Senator BOOKER. I am really grateful. We are all juggling hearings today and I appreciate the yielding of my friend from Texas and the considerations of our chairperson on a tight day.

I am very happy to see Ambassador Power. I have known her for years. She is a woman of extraordinary integrity, commitment, and has lived a life of service to our nation on many fronts that no matter what your political bias is it is laudatory the kind of dedication she has had to the best interest of America and issues of human rights and human decency.

I want to ask Ambassador Power, really quickly, about the—around the issue of preventing future pandemics. Last week, it was reported that wildlife farms that were encouraged by the communist Chinese government to breed exotic animals were most likely the source of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The senior senator from Texas and I—Senator Cornyn—introduced a bill called the Preventing Future Pandemics Act, which authorizes funding to USAID to work on reducing demand for consumption of wildlife from wildlife markets.

Will you work with us to reduce the global demand for wildlife that could lead to another zoonotic disease outbreak and will you work with us to invest in food systems and alternative sources of food protein to move food-insecure communities away from the consumption of wildlife?

Ambassador POWER. Yes, Senator, and I appreciate the integrated approach that that you bring to this issue, the idea that environmental, agricultural, health—that these sectors can be separated, I think, is—has been proven anachronistic and, if confirmed, part of my challenge at USAID is to bring about that integration and make sure that our experts are working together across what have been silos in the not so recent past.

Senator BOOKER. Thank you.

Ambassador, I know, from a friendship with you spanning from years, that you are—you have an incredible and courageous empathy for humanitarian crises around this planet and I know how seriously you take that.

We are in the midst right now in 2021 with a record 235 million people who are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. That is an increase of 40 percent since 2020.

I am really honored to be working with Senator Young. He and I co-chair a task force at CSIS to look at the humanitarian access, which has been increasingly constrained as violent conflict has escalated.

The NGO partners we worked with identified both international—in other words, the willful obstruction by governments, as we are seeing, frankly, in Ethiopia, and bureaucratic obstruction of humanitarian access.

And the humanitarian groups really argued to Senator Young and I that in the complicated environments like Yemen and Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, northeast Nigeria, and elsewhere, compliance with some USAID policies related to potential materiel support to terrorist groups has made it nearly impossible to operate.

And so in my final question to you and respectful of the time of other senators, I just want to know, can you outline the steps that you are going to take to work internally at USAID and with colleagues at the State Department to try to streamline and improve the regulatory process itself so that humanitarian NGOs are really on a sound legal footing when carrying out humanitarian assistance that is funded by the United States?

And will you work with us to find ways to ease some of the regulatory burdens on frontline humanitarian NGOs to make sure they are on legal—sound legal footing in carrying out humanitarian assistance funded by the U.S.?

Ambassador POWER. Thank you. Thank you so much. My gratitude to our partners working in those difficult environments and my gratitude to USAID staff who do the same at great risk.

I think part of the reason that you are seeing humanitarian access denied is a sense of impunity on the part of various actors, and it does create immense challenges for our partners on the ground.

With regard to vetting and the challenges of complying with regulations and certification, I think, Senator, that is something absolutely I would love to sit down with you and talk through.

I think we have to make sure that our—we are doing everything in our power to ensure that our assistance reaches our intended beneficiaries, given the kinds of actors that inhabit these conflict areas.

At the same time, if there are efficiencies to be achieved, of course, we would strive to achieve them. So absolutely happy to sit down with you and talk that through, consistent, again, with following the law and the requirements that this body has put forward.

Senator BOOKER. I look forward to that partnership. I yield. But I would like to just say I am so grateful to the state of New Jersey for giving me the privilege of being a United States senator.

I will count it as one of the great honors of my experience as a senator to vote for your confirmation on the Senate floor.

You are an extraordinary human being that will do not just the United States proud but the world proud with what I believe will

be extraordinary efforts to make this planet more just for humanity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Barrasso?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations. Good to see you. The kids have grown up since you were last here. Cass is behind you, and as you say, he is—

Ambassador POWER. He has not grown up.

Senator BARRASSO. No. No.

[Laughter.]

Senator BARRASSO. I would like to—if I could—before I start on some other questions, just if you could please answer Senator Cruz's question about if, when the Biden administration lifted the terrorism sanctions on the Houthis if that made the humanitarian crisis worse.

Ambassador POWER. In lifting the designation—that is an empirical question. I do not have an answer to the question and I had not heard the full question before. So I do not know the answer to that question.

Senator BARRASSO. I want to move to energy development in Africa. You know, worldwide 840 million people are living without electricity. Five hundred and seventy-three million live in—of these live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Power Africa was launched to increase the number of people with access to power. Energy development can lift people out of poverty, improve their education, health, well-being. On my multiple trips to Africa, what I see is humanitarian problems when they do not have electricity, when they do not have power, whether it is to charge a phone or to deliver a baby and use the suction apparatus at the time of the birth of the baby with—it can make the difference between life and death.

So developing countries desperately need access to a steady supply of affordable reliable electricity to support their economic growth as well. So, you know, people back home in Wyoming know firsthand the benefits of developing abundant energy resources.

The solution to ending energy poverty does not lie in limiting options but, I believe, using all available options. I mean, you read about the most threatening environmental hazard to people it is—it is cook smoke. It is indoor smoke because they are using dung and wood to cook indoors.

I think we have to be diligent in promoting all-of-the-above energy strategy that helps alleviate energy poverty.

So will you commit to helping developing countries use all energy resources, including coal and oil and natural gas, so they can get electricity?

Ambassador POWER. Senator, I know that many of our partners, you know, are seeking to transition, in part because of pollution. I think Power Africa, and grateful from afar for the last four years for your leadership on Power Africa.

I think it has been a tremendous boon to many communities, both in poverty alleviation and in providing energy.

I gather that more than 18 million new power connections for homes and businesses have been established through Power Africa

and that means first-time energy access for more than 88 million people in sub-Saharan Africa.

You know, on the specifics of what the energy sources are, if I could—if I could get back to you I would be grateful. Again, I know that there has been a shift over time, including in the last administration, toward renewable sources. But I also know that the all-of-the-above approach has been one that has been the standard since the inception.

Senator BARRASSO. Well, there have been issues about what loans would be made to which countries, and China is rushing in with—if the United States does not want to be active in providing opportunities for affordable energy, China is happy to become a partner with many countries that, I think, are ones that we would rather those be working with us, and sometimes the purity of the climate alarmists, as I call them, is harmful to the economic needs and the health needs of people in these areas, parts of the world.

Moving ahead, due to coronavirus, countries all around the globe are struggling to support the health and safety of their citizens. We see that—you have seen it firsthand.

There are limited resources to address incredible and growing needs that we just heard about from Senator Booker. Given the increasing needs for humanitarian assistance, global health, and food insecurity, I am concerned that precious resources are going to be redirected away from that in terms of focusing on international climate change. Will climate change be your top priority as the administrator of USAID?

Ambassador POWER. Well, as you know, climate-related events and the changing climate and the warmer climate is affecting USAID returns on investments. You know, more droughts have made an impact on our agricultural and food security programming.

So I think what we would be looking to do is within current programming, for example, on food security, to think about climate resilience.

You know, when it comes to humanitarian emergency funding, you know, since there are more natural disasters happening statistically, as a general rule, each year, thinking about how to do disaster risk reduction, so there is less damage.

And so we, thus, you know, need to provide less humanitarian emergency funding because buildings were built more securely in the first instance. So I think it is less a zero sum trade off and more about integration.

Senator BARRASSO. Mr. Chairman, my time is expired. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador, I am going to just draw your attention to a few things. I am going to submit those questions for the record. I would like a substantive response to them instead of going through it here. But I want to draw your attention to just a couple things.

We have challenges in the hemisphere, like Venezuela and Colombia, and I would like to hear your assessment on how AID can provide development assistance to countries like Colombia that are hosting refugees and doing a good neighbor and a hemispheric good neighbor.

But I think we need to help countries like that that are in the midst of doing that.

Second, I would like to draw your attention to the challenges that the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh continues to face in the light of last fall's attack by Azerbaijan.

In the short term, USAID can help address food, water, health care, and COVID assistance need, particularly for displaced Armenians. But I am concerned the U.S. has not done enough to date.

So I would like to look forward to hearing from you on that. I would like to hear from you how the administration seeks to address the interconnected security governance and climate-related crises that are feeding the humanitarian emergency in the Sahel.

And then lastly, I would like to draw your attention to the U.S.-India relationship. We introduced the prioritizing clean energy and climate cooperation with India to boost U.S.-India cooperation. I would like to hear the role you envision USAID playing in boosting U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy.

And last, last year's appropriation omnibus authorized the USAID administrator to establish the United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation, which would attract public and private capital to fund grants to address development priorities in India. I would like to hear your views on that foundation.

So we will submit those for the record. If you give us a substantive response, I would appreciate it.

I want to salute Declan and Rian, who have done such an extraordinary job of listening to all these in-depth questions and had patience through this whole period of time.

As the hearing comes to a close today, I want to thank Ambassador Power for her time and her thoughtful testimony. It is my intention, working with the ranking member, to hold the markup for Ambassador Power as soon as possible after the recess.

The record will remain open until Thursday, March 25th. I would urge you to answer any questions that are submitted for the record so that you can be in a position to be considered at a business markup.

With thanks to the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:53 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

## **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

### *Refugees from Venezuela*

*Question.* I support a strong U.S. response to the Venezuela humanitarian crisis given the regional implications, particularly for neighboring Colombia, which has received the vast majority of Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

- While the State Department leads on the refugee and migrant response (with the exception of food aid), what is your assessment of how USAID can provide development assistance in countries hosting large numbers of refugees?

*Answer.* Thank you for your support. USAID works closely with the State Department to coordinate response efforts across Latin America and the Caribbean, as these countries have received an unprecedented number of migrants and refugees from Venezuela. Since 2018, USAID has provided more than \$298 million in human-

itarian assistance supporting Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and host communities in Colombia with food assistance, direct cash assistance, and health support. USAID is also supporting the long-term development challenges in Colombia resulting from the Venezuelan migration crisis. In Colombia, I gather that USAID has dedicated more than \$77 million in development funding to provide long-term assistance for Venezuelan migrant receptor communities with the aim of expanding health, education, and justice services. Colombia recently granted ten years of legal status to all Venezuelan refugees who have fled to the country, making it possible for Venezuelans to live and work openly. This is an important step for Colombia to harness the economic potential of the many Venezuelans it hosts and, if confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on how USAID can support this effort.

*Central America Regional Security Initiative*

*Question.* The Trump administration sought to include funding for reintegration services for migrants returning to Central America as part of all of its programming for the region. As a result, existing programmatic initiatives such as the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) were significantly distorted to address reintegration initiatives for deportees from the United States—something never previously conceived to be a part of the CARSI framework.

- As USAID Administrator, will you work to ensure that well-established initiatives are used for their intended goals, and that security initiatives such as CARSI are never utilized for deportee reintegration services?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed as USAID Administrator, I will work to ensure that well-established initiatives, including CARSI, are used for their intended goals.

*Internal Displacement in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras*

*Question.* Humanitarian organizations report that internal displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean has increased over the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the region has seen an uptick in gang and criminal violence, especially in El Salvador and Honduras. Women, children, and LGBTQI+ individuals are at heightened risk of violence, intimidation, and forced displacement.

- Given recent commitments by governments in the region to address forced displacement, including the early 2020 passage of an IDP-focused law in El Salvador, what more can USAID do on the humanitarian and development fronts to respond to internal displacement in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras?

*Answer.* I agree this is a crucial issue. With growing needs from COVID-19, food insecurity, and the continued impact of recent hurricanes, USAID is looking to further expand humanitarian assistance in the region, for example increasing support for child protection. Following the hurricanes, USAID has been instrumental in providing emergency assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) ensuring they have safe shelter, food, clean water, health and protection services, in addition to helping them recover their livelihoods. The Agency utilizes several sets of data to understand internal displacement flows and dynamics and inform assistance, such as its InfoSegura regional project on security information management, implemented with the United Nations Development Program, and the International Organization for Migration's displacement and shelter mapping. This data collection and analysis informs evidence-based policies on human mobility in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. To increase protection for IDPs, USAID's Regional Human Rights Project supports strengthening early warning systems that track IDP dynamics, preventing and alerting their potential human rights violations, including referral programs for possible victims. Such efforts with the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman, are now being expanded at the regional level through joint work with the human rights ombudsman from Honduras and El Salvador. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID remains focused on internal displacement data to inform programming in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

*Gender-Based Violence*

*Question.* Will you ensure that USAID targets gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, women at risk of GBV, and LGBTQI+ individuals for humanitarian programming in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed as USAID Administrator, I will ensure that USAID continues to support gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, women at risk of GBV, and LGBTQI+ individuals for humanitarian programming in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. I understand that in the Northern Triangle, USAID supports civil society and independent watchdog institutions to deter human rights abuses, respond to human rights violations, and support vulnerable populations. This includes

forcibly displaced persons, women, children, and youth affected by violence and insecurity, indigenous and Afro-descendent communities, and LGBTQI+ individuals.

#### *Nagorno-Karabakh*

*Question.* The Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh continues to face serious challenges in light of last fall's attack by Azerbaijan. In the short term, USAID can help address food, water, healthcare, and COVID assistance needs, particularly for displaced Armenians.

- If confirmed, what will be your plan of action for providing needed assistance to ethnic Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh, including those displaced to Armenia, in both the short and long term?

*Answer.* This has been a horrific chapter in the lives of the civilians impacted by the recent conflict. President Biden has made clear his intention to look at enhancing humanitarian assistance in the region due to the displacement caused by the conflict. I believe USAID has an important role to play in supporting peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts, and supporting citizen-responsive governance and durable economic growth. If confirmed, I will continue to pursue all appropriate avenues for helping the people who are suffering in the aftermath of this war. Since September 2020, USAID has provided more than \$4.5 million in total assistance to effectively respond to the complex humanitarian crisis resulting from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and associated COVID-19 resurgence. USAID provided food, shelter, emergency health assistance, and social services to communities displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh in Armenia.

*Question.* What do you view as the biggest challenge to providing assistance at this time, and how will you address that challenge?

*Answer.* Both the Armenian government and humanitarian actors estimate that 35,000-45,000 spontaneous arrivals will permanently remain in Armenia, which is a major challenge moving forward. While the displacement situation is dynamic and continues to evolve, USAID continues to work closely with the Department of State to assess urgent post-conflict humanitarian needs and possible future U.S. Government engagement on an ongoing basis.

#### *The Sahel*

*Question.* The Sahel region of West Africa is facing a significant humanitarian crisis due to armed conflict, poor governance, and the impacts of climate change. Last year, the efforts of U.N. and humanitarian agencies in the region were severely underfunded.

- How will you, if confirmed, plan to address the interconnected security, governance, and climate-related crises that are feeding the humanitarian emergency in the Sahel?

*Answer.* I am concerned about rising violent extremism, growing humanitarian needs, and increasing governance challenges in the Sahel. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID continues to align with regional, national, and local efforts to expand economic growth, improve human capital, counter violent extremism, strengthen governance, and build resilience to climate risks. Gains in these areas will help communities be less vulnerable to shocks and violent extremism. Complementing these efforts, USAID carries out and coordinates resilience programs with a longer term aim to reduce chronic vulnerability that underlie the crisis and the need for recurrent humanitarian assistance. These investments aim to lift people out of poverty and improve on successful interventions to facilitate increased resilience to climate change and self-reliance in the Sahel. In addition, the administration will take advantage of the authorities provided in the Global Fragility Act to move this work forward. If confirmed, I hope to build on USAID programs already in place to counter violent extremism in the Sahel. I will also continue to work with my counterparts to find effective programming to address and combat violent extremism throughout the African continent.

#### *Support for Cuban Civil Society*

*Question.* For more than two decades, USAID has co-led U.S. government initiatives to promote democracy in civil society, and to provide support for courageous human rights defenders, as well as civil society leaders and journalists who work independently of the Cuban regime.

- As USAID Administrator, what steps will you take to continue this important work and ensure U.S. support for human rights defenders, independent civil society leaders, and independent journalists in Cuba?

Answer. Cuba is one of the most repressive countries in the world. The country is ruled by a dictatorship that flagrantly abuses human rights, controls information among its populace, inhibits meaningful civil society activity—including free press—and criminalizes political dissent. The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I gather USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners and persecuted activists. USAID-supported NGOs continue to defend the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs. If confirmed, I will ensure these critical programs continue. Also, as one of my first acts as U.S. Ambassador to the UN, I raised the case of Oswaldo Payú directly with the Cuban Foreign Minister, pressing him to allow an independent investigation of the circumstances in which Payú had been killed, and I continued to advocate publicly in support of Payú's family. During my time at the UN, I repeatedly called out Cuba for its abhorrent treatment of Cubans like José Daniel Ferrer, José Antonio Torres, Julio Ferrer, and Antonio Rodiles. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out against Cuba's persecution of its citizens and human rights violations.

#### *Haiti*

*Question.* Haiti's humanitarian situation is rapidly deteriorating, with the U.N. reporting extremely high levels of food insecurity, a 377 percent increase in gender-based violence over the past year, and lack of access to education.

- What more can USAID do to support protection-related needs, such as child protection and prevention, and respond to gender-based violence?

Answer. COVID-19 has had devastating direct and indirect impacts on women and children in Haiti. Supporting key initiatives that protect and empower vulnerable people is a priority for USAID. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to build on USAID investments in Haiti that support protection-related needs. For example, USAID has provided approximately \$2.3 million in fiscal year 2020 funding to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and four non-governmental organizations to provide protection services such as psychosocial support to Haitian children, families, and frontline health care workers affected by COVID-19. In addition to prioritizing protection activities, USAID also requires partners to adhere to COVID-specific gender and protection mainstreaming requirements to ensure all programming is safe and accessible to the most vulnerable. USAID has also provided \$500,000 to support activities in child-friendly spaces for vulnerable children and adolescents. USAID partners have also organized awareness campaigns that bring attention to gender-based violence services; trained journalists on how to ethically report on gender-based violence; and developed referral networks to connect survivors to safe spaces, legal aid, and other lifesaving services.

#### *U.S.-India Cooperation*

*Question.* I am a strong supporter of the U.S.-India relationship, and I was proud to introduce the Prioritizing Clean Energy and Climate Cooperation with India Act to boost U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy.

- What role do you envision USAID playing in boosting U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy?

Answer. The U.S.-India development relationship spans more than 70 years. India is a partner in advancing our shared objectives to support inclusive economic growth, reduced carbon emissions, open and inclusive digital ecosystems, and the global health security agenda across South and Central Asia and the Indo-Pacific. India is a priority country for our climate diplomacy strategy, both because of its current emissions trajectory, which is concerning, but also because we see India as an important partner on future clean energy research, development, and deployment. If confirmed, I envision that USAID will work with its clean energy transition as part of our shared objective of meeting the climate challenge.

#### *U.S.-India Cooperation and Congress*

*Question.* How can Congress and USAID work together to strengthen that cooperation?

Answer. While India is the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases globally, the Government of India has demonstrated in recent years a commitment to reducing emissions and combating climate change, including by setting ambitious targets for power sector-led emissions reductions. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress in support of India's climate priorities through programs and partnerships



that prioritize climate change mitigation, clean energy development, sustainable landscapes, and disaster risk reduction.

*United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation*

*Question.* Last year's appropriations omnibus authorized the USAID Administrator to establish the United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation, which would attract public and private capital to fund grants to address development priorities in India. What are your views on this Foundation? If confirmed, what will be your first actions regarding the Foundation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act, which calls for professional exchanges and the establishment of the U.S.-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation in coordination with the Government of India. The Foundation presents a unique partnership opportunity for the United States to work with the Government of India in leveraging India's domestic public and private resources to combat its most pressing development challenges. I look forward to advancing this partnership and honoring the legacies of both Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and Mahatma Gandhi. If confirmed, I will support the establishment of the Foundation which will include coordinating with the relevant Government of India ministries and stakeholders and creating a roadmap for next steps in establishing the Foundation.

*Labor Rights in Bangladesh*

*Question.* In March 2020, I released a SFRC report highlighting the growing threats to labor rights and trade unions in Bangladesh. The U.S. must respond to this threat by increasing our support for unions, not abandoning them. Under the previous Administration, USAID moved away from using its Bangladesh labor rights appropriation to support the development of unions, even though unions have been clear that they want, and can use, such support.

- If confirmed, will you commit to directly and robustly supporting the development of trade unions in Bangladesh, including with the funding from the annual appropriation for labor rights in Bangladesh?

*Answer.* Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. Labor rights are actively threatened and diminished in Bangladesh, as was made clear in your 2020 Report commemorating the seventh anniversary of the Tazreen Fashions and Rana Plaza tragedies. I understand that USAID has a robust labor program in Bangladesh, and if confirmed, I commit to continuing this important work. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to help ensure the findings of your report are central not just to USAID's labor programming in Bangladesh, but also the Agency's entire global labor program.

*Tigray*

*Question.* The ongoing conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region has triggered a large-scale displacement crisis, regional instability, and a humanitarian emergency with constrained outside access.

- Under what conditions should the U.S. restore full foreign assistance funding to Ethiopia? Should the U.S. increase assistance for critical development programs that address the drivers of the conflict and strengthen political reforms?

*Answer.* The loss of life and mass displacement resulting from the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region is profoundly disturbing. The violence against civilians must end, and unimpeded humanitarian access to the region must be granted without further delay. Ultimately, what is required is a constructive political dialogue between the parties and accountability for the atrocities committed by all sides. Ethiopia's successful transition to a more democratic, inclusive, and prosperous society is critical to U.S. interests. I understand that the Administration is reviewing our diplomatic, security, and other assistance to the region. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging in this conversation and commit to keeping you informed.

*Question.* Do you believe that, under current circumstances, Ethiopia can hold credible elections in June? What steps will you take, if confirmed, to address closing political and media space, and intercommunal violence in Ethiopia?

*Answer.* For the June elections to constitute a step forward in Ethiopia's political development, they will need to be seen as credible by a majority of Ethiopians, result in more inclusive political representation, and lay the foundation for broader political dialogue across Ethiopia. If confirmed, I look forward to working with inter-agency partners to determine how USAID can best strengthen democratic processes in Ethiopia, especially at a time of such grave crisis.

*COVID-19*

*Question.* Diseases do not recognize borders, so challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic necessitate a global response that the U.S. must help lead.

- How will USAID ensure its COVID-19 aid response is conflict sensitive and takes a peacebuilding and trauma-informed approach to reduce the risks of further violence and advance effective recovery?

*Answer.* Around two-thirds of the countries where USAID works are beset by or at risk of violent conflict, and COVID-19 is putting further stress on fragile systems in these nations. Dozens of countries have curtailed free expression, assembly, and media; more than 70 countries postponed elections; and a number have experienced civil unrest. Disinformation is rampant. Loss of jobs and lack of adequate education and basic services create contexts ripe for conflict. I understand that USAID applies principles of conflict-sensitivity throughout all programs, including its COVID-19 response. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to support conflict-sensitive approaches across all USAID programming.

*Question.* What steps will you take to address secondary impacts on health, education, poverty, and human rights in countries where USAID has programs and activities?

*Answer.* No matter where in the world we live, we all share the goal of ending this terrible pandemic, restoring normalcy in our daily lives, and beginning to rebuild from the devastation caused by COVID-19. We will not be safe here at home from COVID-19 and its variants unless the rest of the world makes significant progress on getting the pandemic under control. If confirmed, I will prioritize preventing COVID-19 transmission through public health and vaccine interventions; alleviating worsening humanitarian crises and food insecurity; and addressing the long term second order impacts on the global economy, democracy and human rights, education, and livelihoods. USAID will work with partner country governments, civil society organizations, and other partners to address the second order impacts through a conflict-sensitive, rights-based approach to health, education, poverty reduction, and governance.

*Question.* Will you revise the USAID-State COVID-19 strategy to ensure a peacebuilding and conflict prevention perspective is integrated?

*Answer.* As directed by President Biden's first National Security Memorandum, USAID is working with interagency counterparts to develop a whole-of-government response plan for combating the global pandemic. That document will provide a framework for State and USAID's forthcoming work on COVID-19 and will prioritize addressing second-order effects of the pandemic. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's programs incorporate and address the evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including issues related to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

*Question.* In what ways can USAID respond to governments using COVID-19 to justify closing civic space, curbing fundamental freedoms, committing human rights abuses and expanding authoritarianism?

*Answer.* COVID-19 is not just a public health crisis but also a crisis for democratic governance, fundamental freedoms, and civic space. According to Freedom House, the condition of democracy and human rights worsened in 80 countries during the pandemic, with a range of countries using the crisis to tighten their grip on power, crackdown on political targets, and restrict the rights of vulnerable populations. The Administration will restore democracy and human rights to the center of U.S. foreign policy, strengthening the protection of human rights worldwide and re-establishing government-wide attention to atrocity prevention and the protection of civilians in war. USAID will ensure that programming to address COVID-19 is implemented in a conflict-sensitive, rights-based approach. If confirmed, my seat at the NSC will allow me to ensure that these issues are engaged at the highest levels of decision-making within the USG.

*Environmental and Social Safeguards*

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure adequate environmental and social safeguards are in place for all of USAID's programming?

- How will you support USAID's development of this mechanism to ensure that it effectively addresses impacts that could undermine U.S. foreign policy objectives?

*Answer.* USAID has guiding regulations for examining the environmental impact of all projects, as well as a commitment to protect and advance vulnerable populations; to seek to do no harm; and to promote human rights. I understand USAID

is designing an Agency-wide accountability mechanism that will further enable beneficiaries and the project affected community to express environmental, social and economic concerns and grievances. If confirmed, I commit that the project design and implementation for all USAID programs, projects, and activities will include strong safeguarding for beneficiaries, especially the project affected community, including Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable populations.

#### *USAID Resources*

*Question.* Many USAID officials have argued they need greater flexibility in managing appropriated funds in order to adjust to rapidly changing global circumstances and achieve the greatest impact, while respecting Congressional priorities and maintaining high levels of accountability.

- How would you approach the question of increasing flexibility for USAID?
- Are there resource management tools you need immediately as you address the challenges presented by the pandemic, and adjustments needed in the near term as we move to post-Covid-19 requirements?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss ways to improve USAID's ability to align its resources with its strategic objectives and priorities, including increasing our ability to adapt and pivot to emergent needs and opportunities as they arise, while of course making sure to provide Congress with complete and useful information on the use of appropriated resources in a timely manner.

#### *Accountability*

*Question.* Accountability of resources and programs through transparency, monitoring, evaluation, and learning is an important aid reform pillar that strengthens the ultimate impact of programs, and ensures sustainability of investments.

- Is it your intention to prioritize accountability across the agency, especially the role of monitoring, evaluation, and learning to improve programs and strengthen their impact?

*Answer.* Yes, it is my intention to prioritize accountability across the Agency, and especially the role of monitoring, evaluation, and learning. It is important for USAID to act in the interest of the American people. Measuring and analyzing results and learning and adapting when programs fall short are essential aspects of day-to-day management of USAID's operations. USAID is recognized as a leader among federal agencies in using evidence from monitoring and evaluation for accountability and for learning. Of course, there is always room for improvement and innovation. If confirmed, I look forward to pushing USAID even further on finding innovative ways to quickly gather information to adapt programs and achieve results.

*Question.* What is your vision for ensuring important aid effectiveness tools will receive priority under your leadership?

*Answer.* The key principles of development cooperation effectiveness include transparency, accountability, a focus on results, and inclusive partnerships. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to ensure that USAID deepens its commitments to these principles in all aspects of its programs. I will also ensure that USAID remains a leader in the international aid community in championing these principles and promoting learning and exchange among donor and partner countries. For example, if confirmed, I will ensure that USAID will continue to support international accountability through USAID's leadership on remote monitoring and real-time evaluations, among other newer mechanisms. These innovative approaches have allowed USAID to maintain oversight of programs following the onset of the pandemic despite constraints placed on travel.

#### *American Recovery Plan Funding*

*Question.* The American Recovery Plan provides \$41 million for COVID-related operational expenses at USAID; \$905 million for global health response activities; and an estimated \$900 million for international economic stabilization efforts. The United States has both a national security and economic interest in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic's potentially crippling and destabilizing effects on regional and local foreign economies.

- With regards to the economic stabilization allocation: where do you see the economic risks created by the pandemic as being most acute?

*Answer.* The pandemic has had devastating impacts on households in the U.S. and around the world, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, especially in humanitarian settings. The reverberating socioeconomic impacts of this

global crisis are, and will continue to be, widespread and have already led to major backsliding in development and governance. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID remains committed to addressing urgent humanitarian needs, providing immediate economic relief by forging sustainable pathways out of poverty, and working with partner-country governments, civil society, and other actors to stabilize economies.

*Question.* Will you commit to fulsome engagement with this committee on the Agency's use of these funds?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to fulsome engagement with this committee on the Agency's use of the American Rescue Plan funds.

*Question.* The GAO recently published a report finding that the previous administration gave USAID plenty of marching orders, but consistently neglected to involve USAID in strategy development and decision-making around USAID's CARES Act allocation.

- Will you commit to asserting USAID's appropriate role in COVID decision-making processes, and in budgeting the Agency's American Recovery Plan funds?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to asserting USAID's appropriate role in COVID decision-making processes, and in budgeting the Agency's American Recovery Plan funds.

#### *USAID Vaccine Allotment*

*Question.* It was widely reported that the previous administration failed to acquire an allotment of the COVID vaccine for USAID employees from Health and Human Services.

- Will you commit to prioritizing the health and safety of USAID personnel, and use the Recovery Plan's operational resources to ensure a healthy and safe work environment at USAID?

*Answer.* The safety of USAID's workforce is my highest priority. I commit to prioritizing the health and safety of USAID personnel and to using the American Rescue Plan's (ARP) operational resources to secure a healthy and safe work environment at USAID. The Agency has recently partnered with the Department of State to vaccinate its overseas and domestic personnel with critical in-person continuity of mission functions. The Department of State is covering USAID personnel overseas while, domestically, USAID received a direct vaccine allocation from HHS. The Agency will continue to make every effort to keep USAID staff safe in its domestic facilities. The Agency will use ARP funds to augment its staff to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to improve the Agency's operational readiness.

#### *USAID's Global Labor Program*

*Question.* I need your commitment to restore and expand USAID's Global Labor Program. It is the agency's only multi-country program to empower marginalized workers to advocate for their rights and livelihood. Workers around the world are struggling amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, with women workers suffering disproportionately.

- Do you believe USAID currently has the staff capacity and expertise to develop the worker rights programs and approaches that marginalized workers so desperately need right now?

*Answer.* Empowering workers is relevant both globally and in the United States, and I appreciate your longstanding leadership on this critical issue. Work is central to people's daily lives, and labor issues and the ways in which workers express their rights affect many of USAID's development objectives. We already know, for example, that women are over-represented in a number of the industries (like retail and hospitality) most impacted by the pandemic around the world. USAID's Global Labor Program (GLP) was created to increase the capacity of worker organizations, and I look forward to working with our partners to ensure our strategy adequately promotes labor rights and access to justice in a fair and equitable manner. If confirmed, I will ensure that the high capacity and expertise of USAID staff to address these issues remains an Agency priority.

#### *Climate*

*Question.* President Biden is hosting a Climate Leaders' Summit on April 22, 2021. How will USAID participate in this summit? Do you anticipate building global support and financing for climate adaptation at the Summit?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID is actively participating in preparations for the Summit, and that the Agency welcomes the opportunity provided by the event to highlight their work with developing countries on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. A key theme of the Summit will be mobilizing public and pri-

vate sector finance to drive the net-zero transition and to help vulnerable countries cope with climate impacts. USAID has extensive experience improving policies, strengthening institutions, and mobilizing finance for climate adaptation and mitigation that also advances countries' development priorities. If confirmed, I will continue to elevate these issues within the interagency and with our developing country partners, and look forward to engaging in the Summit.

*Question.* Climate adaptation is currently vastly underfunded, and USAID's work in this area needs improvement in terms of execution, transparency and reporting.

- What are your initial ideas for how USAID can improve its support for the needs of those communities hardest hit by climate change to adapt in place?

*Answer.* I agree with your concern that adaptation programs are vastly underfunded. USAID works with vulnerable countries to implement their adaptation priorities and is committed to further mainstreaming climate considerations into its work to intensify efforts to increase climate security and resilience. USAID helps partners access and use climate and weather data and tools, and develop strategies to build resilience to climate risks, whether from sudden events such as floods and storms or from slower-moving events such as droughts and sea-level rise. If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring that our efforts on climate are informed by on-the-ground knowledge and in consultation with stakeholders.

*Question.* Many developing countries have made greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments to the Paris Agreement that are contingent upon support and assistance from multilateral finance institutions and/or bilateral assistance from developing countries.

- Is it important for U.S. support and assistance to developing countries to be consistent with host country climate change mitigation commitments?

*Answer.* Yes, and with the U.S. having rejoined the Paris Agreement, USAID will play an important role in working with developing countries to set and achieve more ambitious targets under their Nationally Determined Contributions to the Agreement. Developing countries produce about two-thirds of annual global greenhouse gas emissions and are integral partners in limiting climate change. USAID will provide assistance to partner countries to achieve their climate mitigation commitments and low-emissions economic development goals through concrete actions like transitioning to renewable energy and improving conservation and management of carbon-rich forests and landscapes.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Across Sub-Saharan Africa, democratic gains are under threat as long-serving rulers manipulate constitutional and electoral processes to remain in power while stifling dissent and limiting opposition parties and candidates' activities. In 2020 alone, several African ruling parties and incumbent leaders deployed authoritarian tactics that manipulated democratic processes and constitutional frameworks, including in Cameroon, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Meanwhile, across multiple administrations, including the Obama administration in which you previously served, U.S. democracy and governance programs are chronically underfunded and notoriously slow to respond to emerging opportunities.

- If confirmed, how will you prioritize reinforcing democratic institutions and norms in Africa through USAID programs while balancing competing priorities in the areas of economic growth, stabilization, global health, humanitarian assistance, and human rights?

*Answer.* In sub-Saharan Africa, Freedom House reports that 21 nations experienced democratic declines and only seven showed positive trends in 2020—the largest gap in 15 years. If confirmed, I will seek to increase, in scale and effectiveness, USAID's investments in democracy and governance throughout the region, including through support for anti-corruption efforts and justice reforms. In many backsliding countries, concerns about corruption and accountability are central to citizens' concerns about government performance. If confirmed, I will also work to make sure that USAID is doing much more to integrate efforts to address corruption and improve democratic accountability into economic growth, stabilization, global health, humanitarian assistance, and human rights programming. By embedding strong participation, inclusion, transparency, accountability, and oversight measures in health, education, and economic programming, USAID can better safeguard its in-

vestments in sustained and resilient recovery efforts from the pandemic, and lay a foundation for shoring up democratic institutions in the long term. This is an immensely challenging area, especially given China's growing support for various governments' undemocratic tactics and its provision of rights-infringing technologies in many of these countries. Given the critical importance of reversing democratic backsliding and supporting democratic reformers, I look forward to consulting closely on the path ahead.

*Question.* In the last two years, Sudan and Ethiopia have embarked upon unexpected democratic transitions. While the United States was, and continues to be, eager to support these transitions, rapidly mobilizing the necessary resources (enabling policies, funding, and staff) has been a challenge. If confirmed, how would you prepare USAID to respond to rapid democratic changes and seize unexpected opportunities?

*Answer.* USAID's democracy, human rights, and governance efforts are intended to promote democracy and civil society participation as well as prevent and respond to closing democratic spaces. These efforts include both rapid response mechanisms through our Office of Transition Initiatives programs as well as long-term investments designed to demonstrate solidarity with pro-democratic forces, protect nascent advances, and prevent backsliding. USAID can play an important role during unexpected opportunities by helping civil society adapt to changing circumstances and providing assistance to strengthen existing checks and balances. To further support transitions and rapidly mobilize in the context of unexpected opportunities or crises, USAID seeks to promote flexibility within activity design, award language, and implementation. This can ensure that programming, implementers, and local actors are able to best respond to windows of opportunity and/or democratic backsliding. As the current crisis in Ethiopia demonstrates, democratic progress and overall stability are fragile, and if confirmed I will be focused on ensuring that USAID programming is appropriate for, and reflective of, actual circumstances on the ground. As a long-time Sudan watcher, I am grateful to Congress for stepping up in support of Sudan's nascent democratic transition and eager to assess current programming and what more might be done to help deepen the reform process.

*Question.* There are long-standing concerns about the fungibility of U.S. foreign assistance for African countries ruled by authoritarian regimes (e.g., Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, etc.), particularly for health and food security programs, which account for the overwhelming majority of U.S. assistance on the continent. While this aid advances U.S. humanitarian interests, it can also offset essential budget lines, displace national investment, and enable authoritarian regimes to prioritize military spending, pilfer state resources, and support corrupt patronage networks.

- Do you think it is time for the United States to undertake a comprehensive re-evaluation of the policies, forms, and methods of delivering U.S. foreign assistance in Africa?

*Answer.* The tendencies that you describe are certainly ones I have observed in Africa and other regions. USAID works in very complex environments and I gather that the Agency's investments in Africa, particularly in health and food security, are structured to be sensitive to local contexts, in order to save lives and improve livelihoods for those most in need. When providing assistance in the region, USAID works with both U.N. organizations and international and local non-governmental organizations to ensure that support and services go to those most in need. USAID also utilizes a variety of tools to monitor the delivery of assistance to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. If confirmed, I look forward to delving into these issues more deeply and consulting with you further to ensure that USAID's assistance does not inadvertently benefit authoritarian governments.

*Question.* How will USAID effectively deliver aid such that it reaches the intended beneficiaries without enabling the preservation of repressive regimes?

*Answer.* This is a very important issue. USAID adheres to strict guidelines for monitoring assistance provided in restrictive environments and, depending on the extent of the restrictions, has developed remote methods for program monitoring, including contracting with third party monitors who are able to access regions where USAID staff are not able to travel. One of the cornerstones of U.S. soft power is our willingness to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance wherever it is most needed. In response to famine or natural disasters in authoritarian countries, USAID works with non-governmental partners to ensure that aid reaches those most in need without providing material support to unfriendly or authoritarian regimes. When it comes to longer-term development programs in those countries,

USAID works with civil society and other non-governmental organizations to support development and democracy and governance programs. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you further to ensure that USAID's assistance does not enable the preservation of repressive regimes.

*Question.* Africa is experiencing a massive demographic shift. Over the next two decades, demographers project that Africa will account for nearly half of global population growth and, by mid-century, will be home to a quarter of the world's population. Sixty percent of Africa's population is currently under 25, with an overall median age of 20, and expected to continue to get younger. USAID will remain at the forefront of United States efforts to work with young Africans.

- Programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and the initiative's Mandela Washington Fellowship are important, but what can USAID do to expand its reach, more effectively engage Africa's massive youth population, and build long-term partnerships with the next generation of decision-makers, business partners, and allies?

*Answer.* This emphasis on youth is key. Continent-wide initiatives such as the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), Prosper Africa, Power Africa, as well as mission-based programs, contribute to USAID's global reputation as a leader in youth programming. For example, through YALI, USAID has equipped more than 20,000 young leaders from 49 sub-Saharan African countries with the skills to catalyze economic, political and social change in their home countries based on American values of transparency, civic engagement, and accountability. I gather that USAID missions also integrate youth across all key sectors and support strategic partnerships with other donors and private sector partners, a practice I will ensure continues if confirmed. If confirmed, I look forward to further consultations with you on ways to expand USAID's engagement with young people on the continent, helping support the next generation of political leaders, engaged citizens, and business owners.

*Question.* Launched by the Trump administration, Prosper Africa is a U.S. Government initiative supported by 17 agencies and departments, including USAID, to increase two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa. In 2019, Africa accounted for just 1.4 percent of U.S. global trade and received 0.7 percent of U.S. foreign direct investment. Such shares have declined relative to their historical highs a decade or so ago. One area of Prosper Africa that requires greater emphasis, and where USAID can play a critical role, is in improving the enabling environment for economic growth. Strengthening the rule of law, combating corruption, and promoting inclusive economic growth and human rights under a rule-based system would create better conditions for U.S. investment while also counterbalancing efforts by the Chinese Communist Party to undermine free-market competition in African markets to their advantage.

- How can the U.S. Government, and USAID in particular, most effectively incentivize reforms that will improve the enabling environment for investment and trade in Africa? Does the existing Prosper Africa provide an effective framework, or does it need to be modified? If so, how?

*Answer.* Improving the enabling environment for private sector investment is essential, and I agree with you that USAID staff and programs can play an important role in engaging local actors to take steps to improve the regulatory and investment climate. USAID has developed innovative new programs in support of Prosper Africa, including a new continent-wide program to be launched this year to boost trade, increase investment, and support business-friendly policy reforms. If confirmed, I look forward to working with other Departments and Agencies to advance this important goal, including through any necessary adjustments to Prosper Africa. I will support efforts that build the capacity of African businesses and catalyze U.S. private sector investment in Africa's growth, and engaging young entrepreneurs, especially women, as partners. Programs that strengthen the rule of law, protect individual rights, and tackle corruption are vital for creating the conditions for economic growth and for attracting U.S. investment and trade in Africa.

*Question.* How should U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives factor into the U.S. global strategy to counter China, particularly in Africa?

*Answer.* Competition with China is one of the defining challenges of the 21st century for the United States, and engaging with our African partners to pursue shared strategic interests in advancing security, protecting global health, fighting climate change, strengthening democracy, and spurring equitable economic growth must be a cornerstone of our global strategy to counter China. In this regard, U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives have a critical role to play in meeting this chal-

allenge head-on. In Africa, the United States is providing a meaningful alternative to China's state-led approach by advancing a model of sustainable economic growth based on transparency, responsible lending practices, strong environmental standards, and investment in relationships with local communities. Through Prosper Africa, the United States aims to mobilize billions of dollars of U.S. private sector capital and to ensure that American companies can compete on an even playing field by sharing timely information on new opportunities, providing comprehensive packages of financing and other assistance, and supporting trade and investment policies that promote transparency and competition. We must also strengthen American soft power by effectively communicating this support, engaging with youth, and promoting entrepreneurship and American business practices. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting further with you and to working with other Departments and Agencies as well as the business community to help ensure that the U.S. is pursuing trade and investment initiatives strategically and from a position of strength.

#### *Belarus*

*Question.* Since the August 9, 2020, presidential election, Belarusians have peacefully protested in unprecedented numbers to contest the official results, which fraudulently awarded Alexander Lukashenka another term. The Government has responded to these peaceful protests with violence, initiating a campaign of disappearances, arrests, torture, and violence against the protestors and journalists.

- Since the protests began, the United States, though USAID and the State Department, has increased its support for civil society in Belarus. Do you believe that the U.S. response to events in Belarus has been adequate? What more could, or should, the United States and its European allies do to assist those Belarusians working for democracy, free media, and a free society?

*Answer.* I have used my platform as a private citizen to be an outspoken supporter of the courageous Belarusians who have been peacefully protesting for over seven months. If confirmed, I will build on the U.S. Government's support for their democratic aspirations. President Biden strongly condemned the Lukashenka regime for its violent repression of the protesters and called for a peaceful transfer of power, the release of all political prisoners, and new elections. As the administration consults with allies and partners to determine appropriate next steps to support the Belarusian people and their right to choose their own leaders via free and fair elections, if confirmed, I look forward to working with my interagency counterparts—guided by the Belarus Democracy Act of 2020—in developing a whole of U.S. Government approach to end this egregious assault on Belarusian citizens and initiate a constructive dialogue with those calling for change. As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I made it a priority to call attention to the work of activists, dissidents, and reformers around the world, and to mobilize multilateral pressure on their behalf. In addition to demonstrating solidarity and raising international awareness, support from government officials can sometimes provide those on the front-lines in places like Belarus with a greater degree of protection from potential retribution. As such, if confirmed, I will continue to find ways to lift up the voices of those Belarusians working for democracy while encouraging my counterparts around the world to do the same.

#### *Georgia*

*Question.* Since its independence, Georgia has made generally good progress in instilling democracy and implementing market-based economic reforms, and has been a strong U.S. partner with ambitions to join the EU and NATO. USAID has been a major funder of reform and development programs in Georgia. However, over the past few years, the country has suffered democratic backsliding and oligarchic capture of the judiciary, media, and the ruling political party.

- Do you believe that the political and governance situation in Georgia has reached the point at which we should reevaluate our relationship with the country, including by conditioning certain aid to Georgia? What levers can the United States, through USAID, use to push Georgians, including and especially the ruling party Georgian Dream, to reform Georgia's judiciary and complete its electoral reforms?

*Answer.* I agree that for Georgia to unlock further progress in its economic and democratic development, the people of Georgia must have confidence that their elected leaders are committed to a citizen-centered democracy based on the rule of law. USAID's work with Georgia's political parties, local nonpartisan monitoring groups, and the Central Electoral Commission support this goal. USAID's current programs are also actively working to strengthen Georgia's justice system and electoral process. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to assess the



shape and scope of these programs in light of the democratic downturn, so as to ensure that they are targeted appropriately, considering as well whether resources should be channeled in different ways.

#### *Ukraine*

*Question.* Ukraine continues to fight two wars: first with the Kremlin and its various attempts to undermine Ukraine's freedom and independence; and second with its own demons, particularly the entrenched corruption that has so often undermined Ukraine's democratic transition and Euro-Atlantic ambitions.

- Should the United States continue to condition certain types of assistance on continued economic and anti-corruption reforms? Should existing conditions for aid be expanded? What further incentives does the United States, along with our European partners, have to encourage Ukraine to complete its land reform, decentralization, privatization of State-owned-enterprises, and creation of an independent and responsive judiciary?

*Answer.* When I travelled to Ukraine in 2015 as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I spoke out against the very issue you identify: deep, systemic corruption that permeated virtually every facet of Ukrainian life. I continue to share your concerns about the daunting obstacle that corruption poses for the Ukrainian people. Troubling recent rulings by Ukraine's own Constitutional Court that weaken important anti-corruption institutions, such as the National Anti-Corruption Bureau and the High Anti Corruption Court, demonstrate clearly how much work remains to be done. At the same time, some inroads have been made. When the protests against President Yanukovich began in November 2013, Ukraine ranked 144th out of 175 countries on Transparency International's corruption index. Today, it ranks 117. While there is obviously significant additional work yet to be done, these small but important advances show how critical USAID and USG assistance is to anti-corruption efforts, from work aimed at strengthening oversight and accountability mechanisms to partnerships with civil society organizations. The Biden administration has been clear about its intent to support Ukraine's self-chosen European path, including by pushing for more progress on fighting corruption and implementing reforms that will strengthen Ukraine's institutions. USAID implements numerous anti-corruption programs in Ukraine that directly address land reform, judicial reform, decentralization, and privatization. Combating corruption is a central tenet and cross-cutting pillar of USAID's development strategy in Ukraine, and if confirmed, I will seek to ensure that measurable progress continues to be achieved on this pressing concern.

#### *Central Asia*

*Question.* The five post-Soviet Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, or C5, have often been an afterthought in U.S. foreign policy. However, the region sits between Russia and China and has often proven eager for U.S. involvement and activity in those countries. USAID has recently expanded its presence in the region in response.

- Over the past few years, the coordination between the United States and EU on development programs in Central Asia has markedly strengthened and both partners have published Central Asia engagement strategies. Will you commit to continuing to coordinate USAID's Central Asia engagement with the EU and to ensuring that Central Asia remains a priority for engagement by USAID?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that Central Asia remains a priority for USAID. The Biden administration fully supports the C5+1 initiative and seeks to help this region be more independent and resilient. We will continue our close coordination with the EU on development programs. A crucial strategic interest for the United States is the stability of the region, which borders China, Russia and Afghanistan and is increasingly marked by conflict and authoritarianism. USAID has cultivated relationships in Central Asia, establishing two new Missions in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in June 2020. If confirmed, I will build upon this momentum in collaboration with Congress and the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships, which has established technical expert working groups focused on coordinating trade, energy, water and environmental efforts in Central Asia.

*Question.* The Indo-Pacific is a critical region for U.S. security and economic growth. It represents nearly half of the global population and is home to some of the most dynamic economies in the world, but is also home to security challenges that threaten to undermine U.S. national security interests, regional peace, and global stability. The Trump administration articulated a strategy to advance a "free

and open Indo-Pacific,” and has expanded partnerships with regional countries and implemented multiple initiatives in the region to support this goal. USAID played a significant role in this strategy.

- Do you agree with the core tenants of a vision for the “free and open Indo-Pacific” strategy advanced over the last several years? If so, what should USAID’s role be in this strategy? If not, why not?

Answer. Yes, I agree. The Biden administration has made it clear that a Free and Open Indo-Pacific will be a foreign policy and national security priority, consistent with the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID continues to fulfill its important role supporting democracy, human rights, inclusive economic growth, open and inclusive digital ecosystems, and the global health security agenda in the Indo-Pacific. Additionally, I believe that USAID should continue its vital leadership in efforts to support countries’ COVID–19 responses and their natural resource management.

*Question.* If confirmed, what are the key principles, initiatives, and other elements of the Trump administration’s Indo-Pacific strategy do you believe should be retained and continued? How would you build on these initiatives? What other policies, initiatives, and priorities would you pursue to advance U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region? What specific policy and funding priorities would USAID require to advance a successful Indo-Pacific strategy?

Answer. The Biden administration will continue to advance the principles of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize strengthening democratic systems, fostering economic growth, and improving the management of natural resources as part of USAID’s approach to the Indo-Pacific region. I look forward to building upon USAID’s successful investments in democratic governance, transparency and anti-corruption measures, the digital economy, infrastructure, and energy across the Indo-Pacific. At the same time, USAID will need to review and adapt these initiatives to address the significant impacts of COVID–19 on the region, take advantage of new opportunities to increase climate security and resilience, and build upon renewed multilateral partnerships. I appreciate the continued support and advice of Congress on how to best advance U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to identify policy and funding priorities.

*Question.* Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands are both critically important regions to the United States.

- If confirmed, what will be your top priorities with respect to USAID’s work in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue deepening USAID’s collaboration with like-minded partners in this critical region. I also support USAID’s increased activities and staff presence in the Pacific Islands region to support our allies and counter Chinese influence.

We are committed to working with our Pacific Islands partners to help them address the effects of climate change, which poses an existential threat, and to mitigate the impacts of frequent natural disasters.

If confirmed, I am committed to advancing shared objectives toward strengthening democratic systems, fostering economic growth, and improving the management of natural resources throughout the region.

*Question.* In the area of human capital development, the Trump administration emphasized preserving and expanding assistance programs that provide concrete technical assistance and capacity-building for emerging and established leaders in partner governments, the private sector, and civil society. How would you work to bolster human capital development programs in the Indo-Pacific through USAID, if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to support USAID’s investments in technical assistance and capacity-building to bolster emerging leaders from partner governments, the private sector and civil society in the Indo-Pacific region. USAID will continue to prioritize investments to increase workforce participation opportunities (with a focus on women and girls), develop skills for a digital economy among youth, and improve education outcomes by modernizing curricula in partnership with host country governments, educational institutions, and the private sector. I will also direct USAID to work toward rebuilding human capacity in critical government institutions and health systems badly strained by their efforts to combat the COVID–19 pandemic.

*China*

*Question.* My view is that China’s “One Belt, One Road” initiative (OBOR) is a means by which to increase the economic influence of state-owned Chinese firms in global markets, engender undue PRC political leverage with governments around the world, create a China-centric technology regime, secure dependence on supply chains centered on Chinese companies, export corrupt business practices, and provide greater access to strategic nodes for the People’s Liberation Army.

- Do you agree that these are the goals of OBOR? If confirmed, what actions would you take and what partnerships would you seek to execute concrete USAID projects to compete with or reduce the influence of OBOR?

*Answer.* China’s approach to “development” through One Belt, One Road (OBOR) raises deep concerns for me and many people in USAID’s partner countries. Projects connected to OBOR have come under significant scrutiny on issues such as corruption; unsustainable debt; environmental degradation; construction contracts and jobs being awarded to Chinese firms over local enterprises; lack of transparency and local consultations; and even worries about the potential erosion of sovereignty due to the unfavorable terms attached to certain projects. I share your conviction that USAID needs a far-reaching strategy that addresses the challenges of OBOR, and I believe that frustrations around the world with China’s development practices provide an opportunity for the U.S.

The administration’s approach is to provide an alternative vision to Beijing’s—a vision that promotes democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership in our global development work. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America’s comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC’s, by engaging directly with our partner countries and ensuring that good governance, sustainability, and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. USAID can strengthen local capacity to ensure that development investments are both beneficial and sustainable. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners, including at the DFC and in the private sector, to better leverage our collective resources and influence, and I will be an advocate for the highest human rights, governance, environmental, social, and labor standards in order to promote investments that are sustainable for the long term.

*Question.* In a speech you gave on China last year at Harvard, you highlighted that the Chinese Government and Chinese companies are supplying other countries with digital technologies, such as facial recognition and artificial intelligence, and those countries are in many cases using those technologies for repressive purposes. China is also supplying next generation telecommunications equipment and other technologies through its Digital Silk Road.

- In your view, what is the role of USAID in helping developing countries harness emerging technologies to advance economic prosperity and freedom?

*Answer.* Emerging technologies can play a significant role in advancing economic prosperity and freedom, and USAID has an important role to play in this area. I understand that USAID launched its Digital Strategy in 2020 to ensure the Agency effectively integrates digital technologies across all its work and strengthens the openness, inclusiveness, and security of country-level digital ecosystems in partner countries. The Agency is supporting the digital security of civil society and media organizations, including cyber risk assessments and providing AI tools to track disinformation flows. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to further strengthen USAID’s work in this area.

*Question.* What tools does USAID possess in this regard, and how would you prioritize putting them to good use, if confirmed?

*Answer.* I understand that the Agency is supporting e-commerce and the opportunities that digital platforms offer traditional businesses in developing countries to access new markets and to better integrate into the global trading system. Additionally, it is working with CBP to apply emerging technologies such as non-invasive inspection systems to assure the safety, security and traceability of goods moving across borders. If confirmed, I will work with the interagency to promote the adoption of policies and technologies in our partner countries to advance U.S. national security objectives while creating innovation and investment opportunities for American businesses.

*Question.* Last year, I published a report on how the United States and Europe can cooperate on shared challenges related to China, which included chapters encouraging U.S.-Europe cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and Africa.

- What areas relevant to USAID’s mission are ripe for greater U.S.-Europe cooperation in these two regions? What are some factors that could enable such

cooperation, and what are the limiting factors? What is your perspective on the analysis and recommendations in the report I published?

Answer. I agree that U.S.-EU cooperation is critical to combatting China's influence in the Indo-Pacific and Africa and appreciated your report's analysis and recommendations to focus on areas such as democracy promotion, private sector growth, and the environment. USAID engages frequently with EU officials to seek to align policy and to increase burden sharing on key issues such as the COVID-19 global response, democracy and governance, economic growth, energy, food security and resilience, global health, and humanitarian assistance. The EU's new seven-year budget articulates commitments to climate change, human development, gender and digital development. These areas, along with immediate and second-order impacts of the pandemic, are opportunities for greater cooperation. In Brussels, Secretary Blinken and EU leaders recently discussed challenges that China presents to the rules-based order and agreed to resume U.S.-EU dialogue to coordinate approaches.

#### *Burma*

*Question.* Please describe your planned approach to USAID engagement in Burma, in light of the military coup and the Biden administration's executive order that will retain support for humanitarian assistance and civil society.

- What areas of engagement and assistance will you prioritize, if confirmed?

Answer. I condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the military coup in Burma and the junta's violent actions against peaceful demonstrators. I support USAID's immediate action following the coup to redirect \$42.4 million away from work that would have benefited the Government of Burma and toward strengthening civil society and other non-governmental actors.

If confirmed, I will work with the administration and Congress to continue to put pressure on the military regime, call out human rights abuses and ensure that USAID programs do not benefit the military regime and are focused on improving health outcomes and combating COVID-19, strengthening the ability of civil society to guard democratic space, fostering food security, supporting independent media, and promoting peace and reconciliation in Burma's conflict-affected regions. I would also prioritize continuing to provide critical humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya and other vulnerable populations including in Chin, Kachin, Rakhine, and Shan states.

#### *Supporting Middle East and North Africa Policy*

*Question.* When looking broadly across the Middle East and North Africa, one is struck with the enormity of the humanitarian need.

- However, given the relative size of budgets, how do you recommend the United States best align USAID programs with larger diplomatic objectives that further U.S. national interests?

Answer. I agree with your assessment regarding the importance of aligning USAID's humanitarian and development work with diplomatic objectives, and ensuring that all advance U.S. national interests. USAID and State align department, regional, and country-specific strategies and in MENA, in particular, there is close collaboration to ensure mutually-reinforcing efforts. USAID's primary role in particularly volatile countries in the region is to meet the basic needs of suffering populations and support stabilization efforts that are necessary preconditions for enduring diplomatic solutions. If confirmed, I commit to working further with the Congress and closely with Secretary Blinken to ensure that USAID programs are as closely aligned as possible with our national interests across the region.

*Question.* Looking across the region, what do you see as the most significant drivers of instability that run counter to U.S. interests and are most deserving of USAID's limited resources?

Answer. Destabilizing factors—including Iranian aggression, malign Russian influence, terrorist networks, and authoritarian resurgence and repressive governments that don't provide outlets for dissent and pervasive corruption—run counter to U.S. interests in the region. Nations in the Middle East and North Africa are also struggling to address the impacts of the COVID pandemic. Fragile economies, medical facilities, schools and essential services that were already struggling to meet the needs of their local populations as well as people displaced by active conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Iraq, have been further strained by the pandemic. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that USAID's resources are addressing life-saving and stabilization needs and addressing the root causes of conflicts, such as polarization,

state fragility, corruption, social and economic exclusion, gender inequality, and anemic economic growth.

#### *Iran*

*Question.* In 2008, you advocated for a new Iran policy based on “broadening cultural contacts with the Iranian people, bypassing the regime through Voice of America and the Internet.”

- What role should USAID play in efforts to foster greater U.S. engagement with the Iranian people? What form do you envision this would take?

*Answer.* The Iranian Government denies Iranians their human rights, including through severe restrictions on the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression. Iranian authorities have responded to a series of popular and widespread demonstrations with brutal repression, the arrests of thousands of protesters, and the use of lethal force. According to Amnesty International, over 300 people were killed during the most recent spate of major protests in late 2019.

If confirmed, I will work within the administration to draw attention to the Iranian regime’s human rights abuses and express support for the people of Iran. I look forward to engaging with Congress to further consider this issue.

*Question.* Can you commit to limiting any USAID program to Iran to the development and humanitarian assistance space?

*Answer.* Yes.

#### *Iraq*

*Question.* In the past, you’ve suggested the United States should seek to mitigate, rather than eliminate, Iranian influence in Iraq. In 2008, you wrote “no aspect of the Iraq quagmire can be resolved without Iranian involvement.”

- Do you still believe this to be the case? If so, how do you plan to balance concerns about Iranian’s malign influence, including its support for militia groups, with U.S. efforts to support a stable, sovereign Iraq? What is your vision for the role U.S. assistance can play in supporting an independent Iraqi governance model?

*Answer.* Iran’s support for terrorism and human rights abuses threatens U.S. forces and civilians as well as U.S. partners in Iraq and the region, and can hinder our ability to implement foreign assistance programming. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID’s programs in Iraq further the goal of a stable and sovereign Iraq, while also considering the safety and security of our staff balanced with proper oversight of USAID programs. I also will review USAID’s approach to ensure that development and humanitarian assistance needs of all Iraqis continue to be met in a principled and equitable manner as USAID continues to support the recovery and rehabilitation needs of victims of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), including Yezidis.

#### *Lebanon*

*Question.* Despite the August 4, 2020, explosions in Beirut and unrest that followed, Lebanon’s political elites have continued to cling to power. Past policy has been to withhold broader financial assistance absent reforms targeting corruption and transparency.

- How does USAID plan to advance crucial economic reforms in Lebanon, and what conditions would Lebanon need to meet in order to qualify for U.S. financial support?

*Answer.* I share your concerns—the Lebanese people deserve accountability and a government that prioritizes their safety and prosperity. However, the crisis in Lebanon goes beyond the explosion at the port and other immediate concerns like COVID–19. Lebanon’s crisis is the result of decades of bad governance, economic mismanagement, and corruption. Unfortunately, the Lebanese people have paid the highest price for their leaders’ negligence. USAID’s development programs are intended to provide support directly to the Lebanese people with essential services and humanitarian assistance and to counter potential Hezbollah influence in local communities. USAID can support the Lebanese people through programs that help businesses retain staff and assets to build a foundation for economic recovery; empower municipal governments and civil society to deliver vital services; and keep students in school. These programs lessen the likelihood that Lebanese citizens will suffer the worst effects of the economic crisis.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the committee to ensure USAID's assistance is appropriately targeted to support the people in Lebanon in the face of these challenges.

*Question.* Can you commit to working to ensure the \$11 billion in CEDRE, IMF, and World Bank funding earmarked for Lebanon remains contingent on key reforms, including reforms to the electricity/natural gas sector, increased transparency, and an audit of the central bank?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will expect my team to continue to engage with the Department of State, the World Bank, other IFIs, and our allies in support of meaningful economic and political reforms necessary to halt further deterioration and put the country back on a path toward prosperity. Lebanon's elected officials must respond to the demands of their people and move forward on reform.

#### *Yemen*

*Question.* The previous administration suspended U.S. humanitarian aid to Houthi controlled areas of Yemen in response to restrictions imposed on the delivery of aid.

- What is your position on the suspension? Can you commit to maintaining broad restrictions on aid flows into Houthi controlled areas until all 12 conditions are meaningfully and comprehensively addressed?

*Answer.* I understand that on March 11, 2021, USAID determined that international non-governmental organization (INGO) partners could resume humanitarian operations in northern Yemen, subject to special award conditions. I further understand that USAID is carefully monitoring this issue, which includes participation in the Yemen Technical Monitoring Group (TMG), consisting of USAID, U.N. agencies, NGOs, and like-minded donors, which meets monthly to review Houthi progress towards the Benchmarks for Monitoring and Decision-Making on Donor Criteria/Conditions for Funding. If confirmed, I will support these efforts and monitor conditions on the ground closely.

*Question.* How do you plan on working with U.S. funded NGOs to ensure the appropriate carve-outs are in place to ensure certain, life-saving operations can continue despite the broader suspension in U.S. assistance?

*Answer.* I understand that on March 11, 2021, USAID determined that international non-governmental organization (INGO) partners could resume humanitarian operations in northern Yemen, subject to special award conditions. During the suspension of humanitarian operations, USAID continued to support NGOs implementing some critical life-saving assistance, such as treatment for severe malnutrition. USAID partners remained operational in southern Yemen.

#### *Syria*

*Question.* More than 11 million people are in need of humanitarian aid in Syria. Traditionally, the U.S. and its partners have relied heavily on four humanitarian access points along the Syrian border to transport this life-saving assistance. Of these four cross-border access points, only the Bab al-Hawa crossing remains open, thanks to Russian and Chinese vetoes at the U.N. Security Council.

- How do you plan on continuing to maintain U.S. aid flows regardless of any future action taken at the U.N. Security Council related to Bab al-Hawa?

*Answer.* In 2014, I helped lead the U.N. Security Council in authorizing the delivery of vital assistance across the four humanitarian access points that you reference. I share your anger at Russia and China's vetoes at the U.N. Security Council to reduce the number of available access points, which even in 2014 were not even close to sufficient in terms of meeting the actual needs of Syrian civilians. Overall, since the beginning of the conflict, Russia and China have together vetoed 16 Security Council resolutions related to Syria. In the face of these unconscionable decisions, the U.S. must continue to aid vulnerable Syrians within Syria and across the region. The United States remains the largest humanitarian donor in Syria, providing over \$12.2 billion in humanitarian assistance since the conflict began. Despite enormous challenges, humanitarian organizations are reaching vulnerable Syrians in both government- and opposition-controlled areas, utilizing both cross-border and cross-line access. That said, there are no viable alternatives that would yield the same range and magnitude of capability, or efficiency, as the U.N.'s cross-border assistance to northern Syria. I understand that the Biden administration strongly supports renewal of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing and reinstatement of other crossings into northern Syria in the U.N. Security Council, and if confirmed, I will work tirelessly in support of these efforts.

*Question.* What are your thoughts on cross-border humanitarian assistance in the absence of a U.N. resolution?

*Answer.* There is no solution at the scale needed if U.N. cross-border access is not reauthorized. Humanitarian assistance must be able to be as flexible as possible, including both cross-line and cross-border. The humanitarian needs inside Syria will only increase in the face of closing borders and shrinking operating spaces. As referenced earlier, I understand that the Biden administration strongly supports renewal of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing and reinstatement of other crossings into northern Syria in the U.N. Security Council, and if confirmed, I commit to tirelessly supporting these efforts. I also believe that we must partner with a range of countries, NGOs, and influential figures to raise awareness about the catastrophic impact on Syrian civilians that will result from losing the final crossing, highlighting the reputational costs for Russia if it uses its veto to completely cut off civilians in northern Syria from this life-saving assistance. Additionally, if confirmed, I will support the Department of State's efforts to advance a negotiated political settlement so that Syria can move beyond its continual cycle of violence and suffering towards reconciliation and rebuilding.

#### *Central America*

*Question.* In September 2019, then-(Acting) Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Michael Kozak described to this committee how, despite years of programmatic successes, the U.S.-Central America Strategy had failed to muster the political will necessary for aid-recipient countries to effectively combat the endemic corruption, economic protectionism, and rampant criminality that have generated wave after wave of illegal migration from the region.

- If confirmed, what actions would you take to build and maintain political will among the political leadership in the countries of Northern Central America to tackle the push factors of illegal migration?

*Answer.* The President has articulated a comprehensive \$4 billion, four-year plan that will provide financial and other forms of assistance and incentives to confront corruption, enhance security, and foster prosperity across the region. As Vice President, he also exerted consistent diplomatic pressure in support of anti-corruption efforts in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on the most effective ways to implement President Biden's plan, and increasing the diplomatic pressure on elected officials not doing enough to confront corruption and lawlessness. I understand that USAID is working in partnership with other U. S. Government Agencies to address the root causes of irregular migration from the Northern Triangle and foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. USAID focuses on combating crime and violence by reaching at-risk youth, addressing corruption and impunity, disrupting the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. With the appropriate time, sustained commitment, and appropriate partners, I believe USAID programs can help address the push factors that lead Central Americans to reluctantly leave their homes. To give just one example: in neighborhoods where USAID worked in El Salvador to implement security programs, homicides declined by an average of 45 percent from 2015 to 2017. If we want to duplicate, improve upon, and eventually scale initiatives of this kind, strengthening our partnerships with civil society leaders—including advocates for transparent and accountable government and human rights—will be important. Similarly, USAID will work with those private sector leaders committed to transparency and the rule of law.

*Question.* The 2014 Strategy for Engagement in Central America aimed to deter illegal migration from the region by promoting economic prosperity, security, and good governance in recipient countries. Pursuant to that strategy, Congress has placed multiple conditions on aid to these countries.

- To what extent have legislative conditions contributed to policy changes in the recipient nations? How do you plan to incentivize needed reforms if the recipient countries fail to meet conditions set by Congress, and those failures prompt restrictions on assistance?

*Answer.* Congress is a key partner in setting America's foreign policy agenda and with regard to the implementation of foreign assistance. I cannot state definitively how the aforementioned conditions specifically impacted decision-making in recipient countries, but based on my own experiences as a diplomat, I agree that it is important that the administration work with Congress to utilize all available congressional tools with flexibility to implement our policies and respond to changing contexts.

*Question.* President Biden has proposed a four-year \$4 billion strategy for Central America.

- Can you describe the types of investments and specific reforms you would seek from individual governments under this strategy to reduce illegal migration from the region, including the concrete and verifiable benchmarks by which you will measure success? How will this strategy help the governments of Central America become more self-sufficient so that U.S. foreign assistance is no longer needed to achieve these objectives?

*Answer.* I believe that the ultimate solution for sustainably reducing irregular migration from Central America is to work not only with governments to encourage critical reforms, but also broadly with civil society, the private sector, and international partners to catalyze structural changes that address corruption, security, and prosperity in the region. Creating economic opportunity, rebuilding the social fabric in communities that have been torn apart by violence, establishing inclusive, fair, and just rule of law, and ensuring there is the capacity to deliver citizen-responsive governance and services will position Central America's Northern Triangle countries to address the drivers of irregular migration for the long term.

#### *Nicaragua*

*Question.* Nicaragua is scheduled to hold general elections in November. In October 2020, the Organization of American States adopted a resolution [AG/RES.2962 (L-O/20)] calling for the restoration of democratic institutions and respect for human rights in Nicaragua through free and fair elections. The Ortega regime responded by approving three statutes with the apparent aim of quashing dissent in Nicaragua ahead of the November 2021 elections.

- If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing actions and programs designed to improve the capacity of the democratic forces in Nicaragua to be a credible challenge to Ortega ahead of the November 2021 general elections?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to ensuring USAID supports viable, democratic processes and institutions in Nicaragua. USAID is focused on the November 2021 national elections in Nicaragua and on restoring democratic processes and respect for human rights through expanding opportunities for coalition building and supporting electoral integrity and an active civil society.

#### *Cuba*

*Question.* According to the State Department, in 2019, the Government of Cuba maintained an estimated 50,000 medical personnel in more than 60 countries under conditions that represent forced labor. The United States, the United Nations, independent media outlets, and non-governmental organizations have all documented and called out the Cuban regime's exploitative and coercive practices toward its doctors participating in its overseas medical programs.

- Do you consider the Cuban regime's overseas medical missions to be exploitative human trafficking efforts? How can USAID Missions in countries that accept Cuban medical missions help communicate the realities of the forced labor practices employed by the Cuban regime?

*Answer.* Support for democracy and human rights is at the core of this administration's Cuba policy. We must be vocal in our support for the journalists, human rights defenders, and democracy activists seeking to challenge the repressiveness of Cuban authorities, who maintain an extraordinarily tight grip on all aspects of life on the island and are ruthless in seeking to stifle dissent. I understand that USAID has programs in place currently to support the human rights of Cuban workers, including medical personnel. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues at the Department of State to review the Cuban Government's practices with regard to its overseas medical programs and look forward to consulting with you on this issue.

*Question.* The State Department's 2019 Human Rights Report for Cuba painted a dismal picture of human rights abuses by the Cuban regime, to include accounts of disappearances; torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment; harsh prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrests and detentions; denial of fair public trial; and political prisoners and detainees. The regime also has cracked down on freedom of expression, limited internet freedom, and restricted freedoms of peaceful assembly and association.

- Will you commit to calling out human rights violations by the Cuban Government?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that support for human rights remains at the core of USAID's efforts in Cuba. Cuba is one of the most repressive countries



in the world, and is ruled by a dictatorship that flagrantly abuses human rights, seeks to prevent its populace from accessing even basic independent information, inhibits meaningful civil society activity—including free press—and criminalizes political dissent. As one of my first acts as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I raised the case of Oswaldo Payá directly with the Cuban Foreign Minister, pressing him to allow an independent investigation of the circumstances in which Payá had been killed, and I continued to advocate publicly in support of Payá's family. During my time at the U.N., I repeatedly called out Cuba for its abhorrent treatment of Cubans like José Daniel Ferrer, José Antonio Torres, Julio Ferrer, and Antonio Rodiles. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out against Cuba's persecution of its citizens and human rights violations.

*Question.* How will you work to support democratic activists and human rights defenders in Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue USAID's work to support democratic activists and human rights defenders in Cuba. The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I gather that USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners and persecuted activists. NGOs are poised to continue defending the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs.

*Question.* Do you commit to maintain a robust USAID democracy program focused on advancing respect for basic human rights in Cuba?

*Answer.* Yes, I am committed to supporting robust USAID democracy programming in Cuba.

#### *Haiti*

*Question.* Haiti is facing a complex and worsening constitutional crisis.

- What role can USAID play in promoting effective dialogue among the different political forces? If confirmed, what efforts would you make to support strengthening Haiti's technical capacity to hold elections?

*Answer.* The Haitian people deserve democracy and prosperity. Haiti has been without a functioning government for too long, and in the meantime, conditions continue to deteriorate. The political parties need to come together to end the misery, corruption and insecurity wreaking havoc for the Haitian people. While Haiti is facing a complex emergency that USAID assistance alone cannot resolve, USAID does have an important role to play in helping to promote democracy, human rights, and governance. With respect to the upcoming legislative elections, I understand that USAID's current activities aim to promote credible elections, increase political party competition, and expand civic participation in electoral processes to help end the ongoing political crisis of rule by decree. If confirmed, I will advocate for a strong whole-of-government and multi-donor approach for targeted democracy, human rights, and governance work to promote democratic political reform, peace and stability.

#### *South America*

*Question.* Over the last three decades, Colombia has emerged as a source of economic prosperity and stability in the region and a key strategic ally and partner of the United States. Yet, policy decisions made during the negotiations of the 2016 deal with the FARC terrorist organization created new challenges for Colombia and in our relations. Coca production in Colombia has steadily increased since 2013, reaching 212,000 hectares in 2019. In March 2020, the United States and Colombia announced a joint action plan to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by the end of 2023. The plan would make full use of all available tools, including rural development, interdiction, as well as manual and aerial eradication.

- Would you agree that achieving this goal by 2023 would deliver significant health and security benefits for Americans here at home? If confirmed, what tools and policies would you implement to ensure that our two nations meet this goal?

*Answer.* I share your concern about the flow of drugs from Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States. USAID plays an important role on this issue through its alternative development programs in Colombia, which are intended to offer licit alternatives—such as coffee, cacao, dairy, and others—to replace coca production. Alternative development is a necessary but insufficient tool to significantly reduce coca cultivation, which also requires robust involvement by the private sec-

tor, civil society, and international organizations, along with a commitment by Colombian leaders to equitable economic development in communities that have long been underserved by government programs. Colombia's historic 2016 peace accord with the FARC was an important first step in ending one of the longest-running armed conflicts in the world, which had led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions of Colombians. Implementing the various components of the accords is a complex undertaking, and a challenge that continues to this day. I gather that USAID's assistance focuses squarely on these efforts at implementation, which must move forward in order to enhance security, governance and development in former FARC-controlled and ungoverned territories where some 95 percent of coca is cultivated and cocaine is produced.

#### *Venezuela*

*Question.* Approximately 7.2 million people will require humanitarian assistance due to the Venezuela regional crisis in 2021, a 10 percent increase from the year before.

- How will you organize the resources of USAID to respond to the increased need of millions of Venezuelans?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize humanitarian funding for the Venezuela regional crisis. The situation within Venezuela is grave and deteriorating: a recent U.N. fact-finding mission has uncovered "widespread and systematic" abuses by the Maduro Government against the Venezuelan people, including extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and torture. Concurrently, more than five million Venezuelans are now refugees, putting immense pressure on neighboring countries. USAID has provided more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance since 2017 for Venezuelan migrants and refugees, and host communities in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, as well as more than \$104 million since 2018 to reach people inside Venezuela with life-saving humanitarian assistance, making the U.S. the largest donor to the crisis regionally. USAID also supports long-term development and integration activities in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru for Venezuelan migrants and refugees. Still, there is more that can be done, particularly in terms of stronger coordination and cooperation with like-minded countries.

If confirmed, I will ensure USAID's critical humanitarian and development assistance continues. Furthermore, despite the Maduro regime's efforts to stifle any activities that threaten its hold on power or accountability for its numerous crimes, if I am confirmed, USAID will continue to provide support for civil society organizations and democratically-minded actors working under incredibly dangerous conditions to bring about a democratic transition.

#### *Self-Reliance*

*Question.* Former USAID Administrator Mark Green spearheaded the agency's "Journey to Self-Reliance" initiative in an effort to provide strategic focus to U.S. foreign assistance, including by taking a data-based approach toward building partner country capacity to achieve and sustain development results. In contrast with China's development model, which creates dependence, Administrator Green argued that America should seek to foster self-reliance and responsibility among its friends.

- While distinct from diplomatic and humanitarian assistance, do you agree that the purpose of development assistance is to end the need for its existence? If so, how will you ensure that USAID and the implementing partners it supports effectively work themselves out of a job?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree with the principle of self-reliance and that USAID's programs should encourage self-reliance and sustainability. I also believe it is what the vast majority of beneficiaries of USAID programs want most for themselves and their communities. My vision for USAID's role includes traditional development priorities. It also applies a broader lens that recognizes U.S. foreign assistance within core U.S. national security priorities, including advancing democracy, human rights, increasing climate security and resilience, and global health in a collaborative manner with civil society partners and governments. If confirmed, I commit to advancing sound, evidence-based development and humanitarian programming that continues to improve aid effectiveness, self-reliance and sustainability.

*Question.* Do you intend to work with USAID to continue the "Journey to Self-Reliance" initiative, whether in name or in spirit? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I deeply respect and appreciate former Administrator Mark Green's leadership on this issue and intend to build on this initiative. I understand that the Journey to Self-Reliance emphasizes developing critical local capacities and sup-

porting meaningful country commitments, fit to the diverse contexts in which USAID works. I agree the concept is sound and builds on the work of the Agency to support sustainable development that has spanned multiple administrations.

*Global Health Security*

*Question.* The COVID-19 pandemic originated and accelerated in higher-income countries, where USAID does not maintain a regular presence and where intense, high-level diplomatic engagement proved critical to securing global health data, navigating supply chain disruptions, and facilitating the safe evacuation of American citizens.

- Do you agree with the framework outlined by President Biden in NSM-1, in which the Secretary of State, in coordination with the USAID Administrator, leads (1) the development of the U.S. Government-wide plan to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and (2) a diplomatic outreach plan for enhancing the United States' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on engaging partner nations?
- Do you agree that this framework outlined by President Biden could be used in other contexts to support global health efforts of the U.S. Government, to include efforts to advance the Global Health Security Agenda and enhance pandemic preparedness and response overseas?

*Answer.* Yes, I support the framework outlined by the President in NSM-1. I gather that there has been effective collaboration in the interagency on the Global Health Security Agenda and if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and seeking ways to enhance our impact.

*Question.* My bill, the *Global Health Diplomacy and Security Act*, creates a coordinator position at the State Department that is consistent with this type of framework outlined by President Biden. If confirmed, do you commit to work with me on this effort?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with you and the committee on all efforts to advance global health security so as to ensure that, after such devastation, the world is far better prepared to confront global health threats.

*COVID-19*

*Question.* The *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021* (P.L. 117-2), included \$10 billion in international affairs funding for the COVID-19 pandemic response, to include: (1) \$3.75 billion to prevent backsliding in HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis programs, of which \$3.5 billion was directed toward the multilateral Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's COVID-19 Response Mechanism; and (2) nearly \$5 billion in bilateral funds, of which an unspecified portion would be directed toward the United Nations and other multilateral entities. This is on top of the \$4 billion that already had been appropriated to support U.S. contributions to COVAX/Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

- What are the comparative advantages of bilateral funding versus multilateral funding in the U.S. response to COVID-19 overseas? Are there benefits to bilateral funding that you, if confirmed, will advocate for and prioritize?

*Answer.* I believe that the U.S. Government (USG) is most effective when both bilateral and multilateral funding is available and flows to responsible and accountable partners. Multilateral funding allows the USG to leverage the financial commitments, technical expertise, and diplomatic engagement of many partners, often achieving economies of scale and burden-sharing with other donors. Bilateral funding enables USAID to align that work and those commitments to action on the ground through the expertise and coordination of USAID field teams and ongoing local assistance efforts, and address priorities that may not be effectively or efficiently covered through multilateral channels.

If confirmed, will you continue the policy of providing funding for multilateral entities, to include COVAX/Gavi and the Global Fund, in tranches, such that U.S. contributions are made available based upon need, performance, and other donor support?

I understand that USAID funding to Gavi/COVAX will be provided in tranches. This will allow USAID to ensure Gavi/COVAX has the funding it needs to scale global vaccine access, while closely monitoring COVAX's performance and also incentivizing other donors to provide additional resources. I understand that to date, USAID has obligated \$2 billion out of a total \$4 billion to Gavi/COVAX. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID, in consultation with Gavi, is carefully considering the timing of contributions to ensure COVAX is sufficiently resourced to meet critical public health needs, given evolving supply dynamics and resource constraints.

*PEPFAR*

*Question.* Lack of strategic direction, embittered competition, and poor communication between the two principal implementers of U.S. global health assistance—USAID and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—have long plagued U.S. global health programs. This is why, when authorizing the greatest commitment by any country to combat a single disease in history, Congress placed the responsibility for coordinating the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) within the Department of State. The PEPFAR program is now recognized as the most successful U.S. foreign assistance program since the Marshall Plan and has saved millions of lives, strengthened health systems and supply chains, and advanced key U.S. diplomatic, economic, and security goals.

Recognizing the success of the PEPFAR model—but also understanding that PEPFAR would eventually need to be transitioned—the Obama administration in 2009 sought to launch a 6-year, \$63 billion Global Health Initiative (GHI). Managed by the Coordinator of U.S. Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS and Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy at the Department of State, the GHI proposed to take an evidence-based approach toward strengthening health systems and enhancing global health security. Though the GHI never found its footing, the compelling need to close gaps in global health security while also mitigating the need for disease-specific initiatives justifies taking another look.

- Do you agree that the PEPFAR model, to include the coordinating role played by the Department of State and the implementing roles played by USAID and CDC, has been successful? As more and more countries approach epidemic control, do you believe this model could be adapted to advance broader global health security and diplomacy objectives, as the Obama administration envisioned under the GHI?

*Answer.* I agree that PEPFAR has been enormously successful, and should be considered one of the most significant and impactful public health initiatives ever undertaken. As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., many of my African colleagues spoke to me in strikingly personal terms about what PEPFAR meant to their countries, offering sincere and profound thanks to the American people for continuing to support this initiative. I am also aware that there are other highly successful U.S. Government public health initiatives, including the President’s Malaria Initiative, the West Africa and Eastern Congo Ebola responses, and USAID’s Neglected Tropical Disease program that should be reviewed for lessons learned. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the administration and Congress to review all of these successful programs, draw lessons learned and determine how to best posture the U.S. Government and USAID to advance global health security, global health diplomacy, and pandemic response objectives.

*Question.* The Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator was recently directed to suspend its Country Operating Plan (COP) process, which had already reached an advanced stage, in order to alleviate burdens on implementing partners during the COVID-19 outbreak. While sympathetic to the needs of implementing partners, the COP process, and the data-driven approach it has institutionalized, is vital to the effective planning and execution of PEPFAR programs. If confirmed, will you ensure USAID fully and faithfully engages in the COP process and adheres to such plans without unwarranted delays or deviations?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure that USAID fully and faithfully engages in the COP process and adheres to such plans without unwarranted delays or deviations.

*Question.* The World Health Organization (WHO): You had a front row seat to the ineptitude of the WHO during the 2014–2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. It was so bad, in fact, that you helped lead the effort on the U.N. Security Council to declare the outbreak “a threat to international peace and security” and to establish the U.N.’s first-ever “health-keeping” mission.

Much like the Ebola outbreak that preceded it, the WHO was either unwilling or unable to mount an effective emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China. Not only did it fail to press the Chinese Government for access and information in the critical first days of the outbreak, but the WHO provided political cover for China’s reckless response, publicly validated disinformation, and condemned travel controls designed to mitigate the global spread.

- Do you agree that the WHO is badly in need of reform? If so, what specific reforms are necessary to restore its credibility among the American people and the world?

Answer. Yes, the WHO needs reform and strengthening. While the WHO continues to play an important role in the global response to COVID-19, the pandemic exposed weaknesses in the readiness posture of both the WHO and member states to respond to a crisis on this scale. President Biden is firmly committed to reforming and strengthening the WHO, and some of his first executive actions have focused on strengthening global preparedness against future pandemic threats. The administration believes that the best way to do this is by remaining an actively engaged member of the organization and working with all member states to support, strengthen, and build accountability at the WHO. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Departments of State and Health and Human Services to ensure USAID informs and supports efforts that strengthen the World Health Organization.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you ensure that by joining COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the WHO-supported Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, the United States will not subsidize the distribution of non-transparently developed, reportedly substandard Chinese and Russian COVID-19 vaccines?

Answer. USAID funding to COVAX will only support procurement and delivery of vaccines that meet rigorous quality standards, are safe and efficacious, and have been approved or authorized by a stringent regulatory authority, such as the U.S. FDA or the World Health Organization. To date, vaccines developed by China and Russia have not met these standards.

#### *Food Aid and Food Security*

*Question.* The United States is the single most generous provider of humanitarian assistance in the world, both financial and in-kind, thus saving hundreds of millions of lives and promoting the growth of healthier, more stable societies. Yet today, an estimated 690 million people are food insecure, of which 270 million are facing starvation. As needs outpace the ability of donors to respond, it is imperative that the Department and USAID be enabled to stretch U.S. humanitarian resources farther, including by modernizing U.S. international food aid.

Historically, the flagship U.S. food aid program—Food for Peace—required that 100 percent of the food provided under the Act be purchased in the United States, of which 50 percent must be shipped on U.S. flagged vessels. According to the GAO, the shipping requirement, in particular, has added significant time and cost to emergency food aid, even while failing to fulfil its statutory purpose. Three consecutive administrations have thus proposed changes—ranging from setting aside 20 percent of the budget for local and regional procurement to eliminating Food for Peace entirely. The Global Food Security Act (as re-authorized through FY2023) and the 2018 Farm Bill did include modest reforms, but more needs to be done.

- Do you agree that the Department of Defense is capable of managing its own sealift capacity and that U.S. agricultural cargo preference requirements have outlived their statutory purpose, add unnecessary time and expense to life-saving U.S. food aid, and should no longer be applied to international food aid?
- If confirmed, will you carry forward the food aid reform efforts of your predecessors, including under the Obama administration?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to make USAID's programming to combat rising food insecurity and build the resilience of vulnerable communities as effectively and efficiently as possible. Each of the food assistance modalities—U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming—complements the others in addressing food insecurity efficiently and effectively. At this time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, USAID's ability to reach hungry people and improve the efficiency of our programs is of utmost importance.

#### *Humanitarian Assistance*

*Question.* How will USAID, in coordination with the new Office of Sanctions Coordination, work with the Treasury Department to ensure our sanctions programs are designed to shape behavior without exacerbating humanitarian crises around the world?

Answer. I understand that USAID coordinates regularly with the interagency to review sanctions programs, including how sanctions are impacting the COVID-19 response and humanitarian programs. If confirmed, I will support USAID's work with the Department of Treasury, the Department of State and the rest of the interagency to develop effective sanctions regimes with requisite flexibilities to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance can reach those in need.

*Question.* Should U.S. humanitarian assistance be branded? If not, why not? If confirmed, will you uphold President Trump's Executive Order on branding U.S. for-

oreign assistance and the USAID Branding Modernization Act (P.L. 116–334), including by branding all U.S. foreign assistance administered by USAID?

Answer. I am committed to branding and agree that branding sends a strong public diplomacy message, conveying that our assistance is due to the generosity of the American people. It is also a critical element of a counter China strategy.

Current branding regulations and policy continue to apply to USAID awards and partners must continue to follow the branding requirements outlined in their assistance agreements.

#### *Women, Peace, and Security*

*Question.* Under President Trump’s Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) initiative signed into law in 2019, the United States is working to advance three objectives by 2023, such that: 1) women are more prepared and increasingly able to participate in efforts that promote stable and lasting peace; 2) women and girls are safer, better protected, and have equal access to government and private-assistance programs, including from the United States, international partners, and host nations; and 3) the United States and partner governments have improved institutionalization and capacity to ensure WPS efforts are sustainable and long-lasting.

- What actions will you, if confirmed, take to ensure these goals are met? Will you enhance lines of effort and agency actions?

Answer. I agree that women’s meaningful engagement leads to better, more durable outcomes for peace and security. Studies show that when women participate in peace processes the resulting agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years. More broadly speaking, one of the best predictors of a state’s peacefulness is the way women are treated within that state. USAID assistance supports the objectives in the WPS Act to bolster women’s ability to participate in peace and political processes, protect against gender-based violence, and hold accountable those that commit acts of gender-based violence. USAID’s activities also help break down barriers to women’s participation in conflict mitigation and peacebuilding. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to further implement our commitments under the WPS Act and ensure that these efforts continue to be a priority for the Agency.

#### *Human Trafficking*

*Question.* The COVID–19 pandemic has exacerbated cases of human trafficking and online sexual exploitation and abuse worldwide.

- What will you prioritize, if confirmed, to counter this growing problem during COVID–19 and to prevent a resurgence of these behaviors after the pandemic is over?

Answer. I share your concerns and believe that human trafficking is a grave human rights abuse. Sadly, the COVID–19 crisis has amplified a number of factors that increase the risk of human trafficking and online sexual exploitation and abuse. In particular, as out-of-school or quarantined children spend more time online, the potential for online harm of children also increases. If confirmed, I am committed to USAID’s work to counter human trafficking, which includes activities to raise awareness about the risk of online sexual exploitation and abuse, and provide children, families, and communities with the knowledge and tools they need to reduce exposure to harmful online content.

*Question.* How will you, if confirmed, enhance USAID’s role in the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking (PITF) and the Senior Policy Operating Group to Combat Trafficking in Persons (SPOG)?

Answer. If confirmed, I will bring USAID’s expertise to bear in the PITF and SPOG, specifically by strengthening the interagency approach to promote evidence-based prevention practices; identify, protect, and respond to victims’ needs; increase prosecutions and convictions; and build partnerships, including with the corporate sector. I will advocate for survivors and those who experienced trauma from human trafficking. A survivor-centered approach is essential to preserve the dignity, safety, and well-being of at-risk and vulnerable populations. I am committed to working within the interagency to increase collaboration with international organizations, civil society groups, and the corporate sector.

#### *United Nations Funding*

*Question.* USAID provides significant amounts of funding to the United Nations system, including through voluntary contributions to the World Food Program, UNICEF, the U.N. Development Program, and others.

- If confirmed, how do you plan to ensure that funding that goes through the U.N. system has proper oversight and is not lost to waste, fraud, abuse, or diversion to repressive governments, armed groups, terrorist organizations, or criminal enterprise?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration will continue to hold United Nations (UN) organizations accountable to their mission and U.N. member states. This means doing everything possible to ensure that U.N. organizations are using resources efficiently and effectively—eliminating waste, demanding zero tolerance for corruption and sexual exploitation, and strengthening whistleblower protections and transparency and accountability. Since most USAID funding to U.N. partners is project-based, the Agency also ensures that USAID's U.N. partners understand and comply with USAID requirements on monitoring and reporting. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Department of State and Mission to the U.N., to continue to advance these priorities.

#### *DDI*

*Question.* With the re-organization of USAID, there is a new Bureau of Development, Democracy and Innovation.

- Can you speak in detail about USAID's democracy promotion efforts?

Answer. China and Russia are using their resources, influence, and technology to support autocrats and undermine and interfere with democratic institutions. To meet this moment, the Biden-Harris administration will restore democracy and human rights to the center of U.S. foreign policy. USAID will pursue an affirmative strategy that counters new and emerging threats to democracy and advances human rights. This has been a top priority of mine throughout my career, and if confirmed, I will elevate democracy programming and seek to deepen current investments in anti-corruption programming, democracy, human rights, and governance, including by supporting civil society and promoting independent media and protection for journalists.

*Question.* How do these efforts complement the work being done by the Department of State's Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Bureau?

Answer. USAID works closely with the Department of State and the National Endowment for Democracy in democracy promotion efforts. Each entity has distinct comparative advantages—in the case of USAID, that includes USAID's ability to leverage relationships and know-how through its missions to tailor its work to local conditions—which gives the United States a multi-faceted and more effective approach in increasingly complex environments. I understand the USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation and the State Department's Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) engage in regular information-sharing and coordination efforts to avoid duplication and make the most strategic use of assistance funds. This coordination takes place both in Washington and at our missions overseas. If confirmed, I will work closely with my counterparts to ensure that coordination continues to take place and every effort is made to maximize the impact of our assistance.

#### *Atrocity Prevention*

*Question.* What role does USAID play in U.S. atrocity prevention efforts?

Answer. Since the 2011 Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities, USAID has played a leadership role in helping improve U.S. Government capabilities related to atrocity prevention. USAID addresses mass atrocities in four main ways: identifying and communicating risk factors and warning signs that could lead to mass atrocities; mitigating risks and bolstering resilience to shocks that could lead to mass atrocities; responding to escalating atrocity situations with humanitarian assistance and prevention programs; and supporting recovery from mass violence and gross violations of human rights through programs focused on promoting justice and accountability, rebuilding social cohesion, supporting political transition, and supporting the protection of human rights.

This work is incredibly important because preventing mass atrocities is a core national security interest of the United States. While serving on the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, I worked with President Obama to create the aforementioned Directive and the Atrocities Prevention Board, the first White House-led structure tasked with reacting to early warnings of atrocities.

*Climate*

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you and USAID interact with the office of Special Presidential Envoy Kerry, including with respect to implementation of U.S. foreign assistance connected to any climate arrangements or agreements negotiated by the office of Special Presidential Envoy Kerry?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would commit to working closely with Special Presidential Climate Envoy Kerry, as USAID plays an essential role in working with our partner countries to translate bold climate ambition into action. Indeed, Secretary Kerry and I have a strong working relationship, forged during my time as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. while he was serving as Secretary of State. I understand that the administration's top priorities are to: immediately raise and implement partner countries' climate commitments, meet the U.S. climate finance pledge, accelerate efforts to increase the resilience of climate vulnerable countries. USAID will work with countries and regions with globally important forests and carbon-rich landscapes to reduce deforestation and improve conservation, as unsustainable land use accounts for one-quarter of global greenhouse emissions, as well as reduce emissions from land use change in critical tropical ecosystems that serve as global carbon sinks. USAID will also work with countries and regions with globally important forests and carbon-rich landscapes to reduce deforestation and improve conservation.

*Infrastructure*

*Question.* USAID plays an important role in the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network and the Transaction Advisory Fund, set up under the Trump administration.

- Please describe your specific views on these two programs. Will USAID under the Biden administration retain this initiative?

*Answer.* China's significant infrastructure investments around the world are often fiscally unsustainable, include corrupt practices and processes, do not comply with international environmental and labor standards, lack public oversight and transparency, and have limited community involvement. I believe that USAID, through initiatives like ITAN, should continue advising countries on how to ensure a fair and level playing field. Once a country commits to undertaking a competitive procurement process, USAID should continue using mechanisms such as the Transaction Advisory Fund to advise it on how to ensure projects are legally, financially, and technically viable and incorporate appropriate environmental and social safeguards.

*Reproductive Health*

*Question.* President Biden has rescinded the Mexico City policy (which conditioned U.S. assistance to foreign NGOs upon a commitment that they will not perform or promote abortion with funding from any source) and has said the United States will rejoin the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), notwithstanding concerns about its support for China's population control program. Abortion pro-choice advocates are also seeking to overturn the Helms amendment (prohibiting the use of U.S. foreign aid for the performance or promotion of abortion as a method of family planning) and the Siljander amendment (prohibiting use of U.S. foreign aid to lobby for or against the legalization of abortion).

- In your opinion, does the term "reproductive health" include abortion?

*Answer.* Abortion is not included in USAID's definition of reproductive health.

*Question.* Do you commit to uphold U.S. laws that prohibit funding for abortion overseas?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to uphold U.S. laws, including the Helms and Siljander amendments.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Human Rights*

*Question.* What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Promoting human rights and democracy has been central to my work as a writer, advocate, and diplomat. In 2002, after years of extensive reporting and research, I published "A Problem From Hell": America and the Age of Genocide, which



documented inaction in the face of genocides over the course of the 20th century. The book was integrated into high school and university curriculums, and some of its lessons were embraced by student activists, faith groups, and others seeking to promote human rights. In addition, many readers have informed me that the book's central message encouraged them to take action in the face of genocide in Darfur.

While serving on the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, I worked with President Obama to develop new processes aimed at ensuring that atrocity warnings rapidly reached senior policy makers, and to make creative use of the policy toolbox when signs of potential atrocities arose—efforts that helped ensure that, in the face of mass atrocities, the American response did not come down to a choice between doing nothing or using U.S. military force. This work produced significant outcomes, such as the highly-effective deployment of U.S. military advisers to support African Governments combating the Lord's Resistance Army, proactive peacekeeping in the Ivory Coast to prevent spiraling mass atrocities following a stolen election, and relentless high-level diplomacy in support of Sudan's independence referendum, which paved the way for the birth of an independent South Sudan. Also, during my time as Senior Director, I worked with my NSC colleague Gayle Smith to spearhead the creation of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a multilateral initiative that secures governmental commitments to promote transparency, fight corruption, empower citizens, and strengthen governance. Since its founding in 2011, the OGP has grown to include 78 country members and a growing number of local members—representing more than two billion people—that work alongside thousands of civil society organizations.

As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., my top priorities included working to prevent and end conflicts, addressing the humanitarian needs of vulnerable communities, and advancing the human rights and dignity of all individuals. I spearheaded the effort to convene two successive summits that mobilized unprecedented commitments to U.N. Peacekeeping of over 50,000 new troops and police from more than 60 countries. In response to the global refugee crisis, I led efforts to convene a summit in which participating nations agreed to increase their total annual contributions to U.N. appeals and international humanitarian groups by approximately \$4.5 billion and to double the number of formal refugee resettlement slots made available to the U.N.'s refugee agency, while a range of private sector companies made \$650 million worth of pledges in support of refugees. Finally, I used intensive public and private diplomacy to secure the release of political prisoners and enhance the rights of LGBTQ individuals. Among various efforts to advocate on behalf of those unjustly imprisoned, in the #FreeThe20 campaign, I publicized the cases of 20 female political prisoners around the world—16 of whom were ultimately freed. As part of my work to advance LGBTQ rights, I helped create for the first time a mandate for an Independent Expert to monitor and report on the violence and discrimination faced by LGBTQ persons around the world, convened the first-ever U.N. Security Council meeting on threats to LGBTQ persons, and was able to push the Security Council to condemn (for the first time in its 70-year history) violence against individuals due to their sexual orientation.

#### *Diversity and Inclusion*

*Question.* In response to a request that I led, GAO reported in June 2020 that USAID still has much work to do in order to create and sustain a truly diverse workforce. What plans do you have for improving diversity and inclusion at USAID?

*Answer.* Diversity, equity, and inclusion must be a guiding principle—in our people, funding and programs, and policies. If confirmed, as I noted in my testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I will make diversity, equity, and inclusion foundational priorities for both our mission around the world and how we support our workforce. The report you requested, for example, presented data demonstrating that “promotion outcomes at USAID were generally lower for racial and ethnic minorities than for whites in early to mid career.” I will engage the staff to understand the challenges facing them, solicit advice on how we can create a workforce that is more diverse and inclusive, and treat these issues with the urgency they demand. Ensuring that USAID remains the world's leading development agency requires that diversity, equity, and inclusion be guiding principles when it comes to our people, our funding and programs, and our policies.

*Question.* Do you commit to regularly and transparently monitoring the Agency's progress towards its diversity goals?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Basic Education*

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you work to ensure that USAID's efforts to support remote learning and re-enrollment efforts in the context of COVID-19 will support marginalized learners, including girls, refugees, and children with disabilities?

*Answer.* COVID-19 interrupted the education of more than 1.6 billion learners. The risk of not returning to the classroom is especially high for those who experience multiple vulnerabilities based on economic status, gender, disability, refugee and displacement status. Since the beginning of the pandemic, USAID has adapted its education programming to respond to the shifting needs of students and educators in more than 50 countries. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to support partner countries to sustain investments in inclusive distance learning so that education systems are more resilient and equitable. I will also ensure that USAID continues to leverage its partnerships and global leadership to ensure continued learning opportunities, especially for the most marginalized. I will also ensure that USAID continues to leverage its partnerships and global leadership with groups like the Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, the LEGO Foundation, the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, the Partnership to End Violence, and UNICEF, among others, to ensure continued learning opportunities, especially for the most marginalized, including girls, refugees, and children with disabilities.

*Question.* What more can USAID be doing to help build back school systems around the world so that they are capable of serving all students, both during and after the pandemic, and are more resilient in the face of future challenges?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support efforts to continue to build more resilient and equitable education systems and societies, especially for the most marginalized and those in vulnerable situations, by building emergency preparedness and response capacity, institutionalizing remedial and accelerated education, and engaging youth and higher education institutions as leaders. USAID has opportunities to leverage its experience and expertise in accessible and safe distance learning, non-formal and accelerated education, inclusive education, youth workforce development, and private sector engagement to scale. Institutionalizing these approaches within education systems to meet the diverse needs of all children and youth while also building resilience within education systems will help minimize disruptions to learning in the event of future emergencies.

*Conflicts of Interest*

*Question.* Do you commit to bring to the attention of the committee (and the USAID Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

- Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

*Answer.* I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any foreign country?

*Answer.* My spouse's and my investment portfolio includes mutual funds that may hold interests in companies with an international presence, or directly in U.S. companies that have an international presence, but none of these holdings represent conflicts of interest with the position for which I have been nominated. I am committed to following all applicable ethics laws and regulations and remaining vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations. I have already committed to divest investments the USAID Designated Agency Ethics Official (DAEO) has identified as possible conflicts of interest. Additionally, the separate U.S. literary agents that represent my spouse and me, have international offices that negotiate publication or republication of our writings in various foreign countries. The DAEO has reviewed these business arrangements and has determined that they do not represent conflicts of interest, but has advised me that we will need to monitor and report any overseas re-publications that occur during my tenure in Government.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to supporting the Interim President of Venezuela Juan Guaidó and prioritize working with implementing partners in support of President Guaidó's humanitarian efforts in Venezuela?

*Answer.* The United States recognizes Juan Guaido as the interim president and the democratically-elected National Assembly as the only legitimate democratic institutions in Venezuela. If confirmed, I commit to working with the interim government and to support the people of Venezuela.

*Question.* Will you commit to working with non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to restore democracy and a pathway to free, fair, and transparent elections in Venezuela and to keep my office informed of that progress?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to restore democracy and a pathway to democratic elections in Venezuela. I look forward to consulting with you about how we might strengthen those efforts, given the devastating costs of Maduro's repression.

*Question.* Do you commit to supporting the Interim President of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó, and the National Assembly?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support to support Interim President Juan Guaido, the democratically elected National Assembly, and the people of Venezuela to determine their own future through free and fair elections.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would your priorities be for Central America?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my priorities in Central America will include expeditiously strengthening programs that seek to improve conditions in the region and tackle the major drivers of migration. While the specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across countries or even communities, they are generally tied to insecurity, lack of economic opportunity, and the effects of poor governance and corruption, and I will work with other U.S. Government agencies to build the political will of partner nations to address these drivers. COVID-19 has exacerbated these conditions, as have major natural disasters (including hurricanes) recently hitting the region.

As you know, in recent years, USAID programs have been designed to combat crime and violence by reaching at-risk youth; addressed corruption and impunity; disrupted the activities of transnational criminal organizations; civil society; and provided vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. As USAID restarts and ramps up those programs and as USAID missions in the region seek new or expanded partnerships, the agency will draw on evidence of what works in order to help foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. If confirmed, I will continue USAID's current approach of tailoring and adapting programs to the unique needs of each country and community. I will also continue the Agency's practice of using migration data to focus resources geographically in response to specific, local drivers of migration. USAID will work with a wide range of stakeholders from civil society and the private sector to increase the impact of our efforts. And I look forward to further consultations with Congress on how to further improve the effectiveness of these programs.

*Question.* Regional coordination is essential to the effectiveness of the U.S. Strategy for Central America. Will you commit to working closely with our partners in this region?

*Answer.* Yes, I will commit to working closely with our partners in the region. I understand that USAID works closely with multiple stakeholders in the region both in the public and private sectors as well as with civil society organizations and international non-governmental organizations.

*Question.* How will USAID, under your leadership, work to address the drivers of violence, corruption, and migration in the Northern Triangle?

*Answer.* The specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across communities or even countries. Accordingly, USAID tailors and adapts programs that address the root causes of irregular migration to the unique needs of each country and community; the extensive use of data is critical and is an integral part of these efforts. By tracking migration trends, the Agency is able to concentrate resources geographically in response to local drivers of migration.

I understand that USAID is addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of irregular migration to the United States from Central America in partner-

ship with other U.S. Government agencies, including the development of a forthcoming strategy on addressing the root causes of irregular migration as mandated in Executive Order 14010. Critical to the success of our efforts is generating political will on the part of governments in the region to address the reasons people choose to migrate. USAID combats crime and violence through its programming by reaching at-risk youth, addressing corruption and impunity, disrupting the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. Through this work, USAID seeks to foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. If confirmed, I will work to build and expand on this foundation. I look forward to deepening consultations with Congress on how to further improve the effectiveness of these programs.

*Question.* Last year, in the FY 21 SFOPS conference report, \$25 million was allocated for programs in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to implement the national sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention strategies in fiscal year 2021. The bill required, within 120 days, and in consultation with the USAID Administrator, a report on the implementation of the national SGBV prevention strategies in such countries. Also included in the FY21 appropriations bill, were recommendations for the State Department to create programs in the Northern Triangle for programming and enhancing the capacity of police, judicial systems, and child protection systems to identify, investigate and prosecute cases of sexual violence. If confirmed, will you commit to briefing my staff on how USAID intends to implement this funding?

*Answer.* I share your desire to prevent sexual and gender-based violence in Central America, which has some of the highest rates of GBV in the world. If confirmed, I commit to briefing you on how USAID intends to implement the funding appropriated in FY21 and how the Agency currently works across the region supporting initiatives to reduce impunity for gender-based violence (GBV) cases. GBV was prioritized by President Biden in Executive Order 14010 which mandated a new strategy on the root causes of irregular migration from the Northern Triangle.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to supporting Cuba democracy programs as well as civil society and human rights defenders in Cuba?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, support for human rights will remain at the core of USAID's efforts in Cuba. Cuba is one of the most repressive countries in the world, and is ruled by a dictatorship that flagrantly abuses human rights, seeks to prevent its people from accessing even basic independent information, inhibits meaningful civil society activity—including free press—and criminalizes political dissent. As one of my first acts as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I raised the case of Oswaldo Payu directly with the Cuban Foreign Minister pressing him to allow an independent investigation of the circumstances in which Payu had been killed, and I continued to advocate publicly in support of Payu's family. During my time at the U.N., I repeatedly called out Cuba for its abhorrent treatment of civil society and human rights defenders like José Daniel Ferrer, José Antonio Torres, Julio Ferrer, and Antonio Rodiles. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out against Cuba's persecution of its citizens and human rights violations.

The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I understand USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners and persecuted activists. NGOs are poised to continue defending the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs.

*Question.* Colombia has been directly impacted by the man-made crisis created by Nicolás Maduro and his brutal regime in Venezuela. Currently, Colombia hosts about 1.7 million Venezuelans, according to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees. How should we support Colombia in responding to the impacts it faces due to the Venezuelan crisis?

*Answer.* USAID is addressing immediate humanitarian needs and supporting the long-term development challenges in Colombia resulting from the Venezuelan crisis. I understand that the USAID Mission in Colombia is providing more than \$77 million for Venezuelans in health, education, governance, citizen security, human rights, and economic integration. Since 2018, USAID has also provided more than \$298 million in humanitarian assistance supporting Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and host communities with food assistance, direct cash assistance, and health support. Colombia recently granted ten years of legal status to all Venezuelan refugees who have fled to the country, making it possible for Venezuelans to live and work

openly. This is an important step for Colombia to harness the economic potential of the many Venezuelans it hosts and, if confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on how USAID can support this effort.

*Question.* In 2017, Colombia signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NATO and became the first NATO partner country in Latin America. Today, Colombia and the U.S. are a success story that have forged a bond through shared commitments in support of stability, the defense of human rights, respect for democracy and the rule of law, and the protection of citizens' safety and security throughout the Western Hemisphere. Do you view our partnership with Colombia as one of the strongest in the Western Hemisphere?

*Answer.* The United States and Colombia enjoy a decades' long strategic partnership that is among the strongest in the region. If confirmed, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and democratic freedoms will be at the center of our relationship with Colombia.

*Question.* Do you believe that Colombia's shared goals with the United States should be an example for younger democracies in the Western Hemisphere? How do we take that model and focus our efforts on other nations in the region?

*Answer.* I agree that the U.S.-Colombia partnership has proven successful, and USAID's work with Colombia over the past decades on peace and stability has achieved a number of successes. The peace accords signed with the FARC in 2016 present a tremendous opportunity for Colombia to end a conflict that had raged for more than 50 years, and to end a continuous cycle of violence by transforming the long-neglected parts of the country prioritized in the accords.

If confirmed, I will work with Colombia, and with Congress, to collectively find ways to make USAID's assistance even more supportive of Colombia's own efforts toward an enduring and inclusive peace. While taking into account the context of each country's unique set of circumstances, I agree that Colombia's advances provide important lessons that may be applicable elsewhere within the region. At the same time, as with other countries in the region, I will also speak up in support of human rights: since 2016, more than 400 Colombian human rights defenders have been killed, underscoring the importance of USAID's continued assistance in helping the country achieve the commitments and overall transformation envisioned by the peace accords.

*Question.* USAID foreign assistance programs must continue to strengthen democratic institutions and bolster transparency and accountability to underpin democratic resilience, but they also need to provide targeted support to local stakeholders to understand CCP influence and counter those malign efforts. Such funding should be integrated into existing democracy programs at the country level, with support from international actors who understand these issues, to incorporate them into existing programs at the country level. If confirmed, how will you ensure USAID supports these efforts?

*Answer.* U.S. competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC) is a defining challenge of the 21st century. The administration's approach is to provide an alternative vision to Beijing's—a vision that promotes democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership in our global development work. USAID will draw on America's comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC's, by ensuring that good governance, sustainability and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. USAID will strengthen local capacity to ensure that development investments are both beneficial and sustainable. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to better leverage our collective resources and influence, and I will be an advocate for human rights, governance, environmental, social, and labor standards in order to promote investments that are sustainable for the long term.

*Question.* How can USAID support administering some of the Countering Chinese Influence Fund?

*Answer.* I would like to thank you and your colleagues for the Countering Chinese Influence Fund (CCIF) resources that were made available in the FY21 appropriations act. I understand that USAID is working with the Department of State on programming these funds, as well as others, to counter China's foreign policy strategy and influence in critical countries and regions. The approach is to offer alternatives to China's predatory development model and instead improve inclusive, democratic governance; advance rules-based economic competition and fair trade practices; strengthen our security partnerships to counter transnational crime and terrorism; combat digital authoritarianism and malicious cyber activities; and promote energy

security and independence. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on this and to further assessing how USAID can best support these efforts.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to pushing for greater humanitarian assistance and access for the Syrian people, while making sure that such aid does not fall into the hands of a corrupt and bloodthirsty Assad regime?

*Answer.* Yes. USAID remains committed to ensuring that all assistance reaches those in need and does not benefit the Assad regime. Across Syria, USAID takes all possible steps to minimize the risk of diversion, whether to the Assad regime or to terrorist groups, by working through experienced and trusted U.N. partners, other international organizations, and non-governmental partners in Syria, including through the use of third-party monitoring. USAID has zero tolerance for fraud, waste, or abuse of American taxpayer resources and requires partners to have robust safeguards and risk mitigation systems in place to ensure that humanitarian assistance is reaching only those for whom it is intended.

*Question.* Do you agree that long-term stabilization in Syria will not be achieved as long as Bashar al-Assad remains in power?

*Answer.* Bashar al-Assad has perpetrated the most chilling, barbaric crimes imaginable against the Syrian people for the past decade. Despite political isolation, economic pressure, and weak control over much of Syrian territory, Assad clings to power with no indication that he is willing to bring an end to the war and the suffering of the Syrian people, and indeed with Assad's increasingly ruinous economic mismanagement exacerbating the horrific costs of conflict, repression, and mass atrocities for the Syrian people. Members of Congress spoke out clearly on this issue when they voted for the Caesar Civilian Protection Act in the last Congress imposing military, political, and accountability benchmarks for the Assad regime before it can receive sanctions relief. Countless brave Syrians have risked their lives to preserve evidence of Assad's war crimes, and Assad and his collaborators must be held accountable for their atrocities.

*Question.* As an expert on genocide, do you agree that the Chinese Communist Party is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs and other its Muslim minorities in Xinjiang?

*Answer.* Yes. I agree with President Biden and experts who have studied the facts that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang.

I welcome Congress's bipartisan action on this issue, including the passage of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act that holds perpetrators accountable for human rights violations and abuses against Uyghurs and other minorities in China. If confirmed, I will use my platform to draw attention to the horrors in Xinjiang and ensure that USAID actively engages with you, the committee and the interagency to determine any further steps that can be taken.

*Question.* You have written extensively about the failure of past administrations to prevent and respond to genocide. You are now in a unique position to put your aspirations into action. We have seen what has happened to Iraq's Yazidi and Christian community at the hands of ISIS. We know about the atrocities and likely genocide committed against the Rohingya by Burmese military forces. Now, we are reading weekly reports about the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities by the Chinese Communist Party.

- Can you assure this committee that you will not only support, but also strengthen, USAID's commitment to victims of religious persecution?

*Answer.* Yes. As you note, I have a longstanding commitment to human rights, and a profound awareness of the risks of atrocities, especially for religious minorities. As Ambassador to the U.N., I used my platform to elevate the voices of religious minorities. I called for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for refusing to denounce her Christian faith, and for Sudan to repeal the laws that put her in jail in the first place. I was the first person to bring a young Yazidi woman named Nadia Murad to the U.N. Security Council, after her family had been almost completely wiped out by ISIS and she had been forced into sexual slavery. USAID has a history of helping the world's most vulnerable people, and it will continue to play a critical role in supporting communities persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring with you, the Agency's regional bureaus and Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships office, and diverse faith communities, to mobilize resources and, as appropriate, to tailor our programs to support individuals being subjected to religious persecution.

*Question.* If so, how do you plan to use your position to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to stand up for victims of religious persecution, and I will review USAID's approach to ensure that our programs are most effectively supporting them, making adjustments as appropriate.

*Question.* The past several months have been historic for Israel's relationships with regional Arab neighbors. The UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan joined Egypt and Jordan in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel—paving the path to peace through recognition and engagement rather than isolation and boycotts of Israel. What role do you see for USAID in supporting these new relationships? Do you see opportunities for increased trilateral cooperation in the region?

Answer. USAID has the opportunity to support these relationships through identifying opportunities for increased trilateral and multilateral cooperation, such as by leveraging the inherently collaborative power of science, technology and innovation in order to address common challenges. USAID supports cooperation between Israel and countries in the Middle East region through the Middle East Regional Cooperation (MERC) program, which has long supported programs between partners throughout the region. If confirmed, I look forward to building upon such efforts to further peace and normalization across the Middle East.

*Question.* During your tenure as U.N. Ambassador, the United States abstained at the United Nations Security Council on a one-sided resolution that sought to impose solutions to final status issues on the parties. Seventy-nine senators subsequently backed a resolution objecting to the abstention. In hindsight, do you believe that vote advanced American interests or moved the peace process forward?

Answer. During my time as Ambassador to the U.N., I worked tirelessly to combat bias against Israel and end Israel's unfair isolation at the United Nations. The U.S. Mission to the United Nations helped secure several notable firsts for Israel under my leadership, including bringing about recognition of Yom Kippur as a U.N. holiday; convening an unprecedented session on antisemitism in the U.N. General Assembly; spearheading Israel's full and equal participation across numerous U.N. bodies; and lobbying to ensure Israel's historic selection as chair of a powerful U.N. committee (the Sixth Committee, the main U.N. forum for addressing questions of international law).

This context is important in addressing the Obama administration's vote on UNSCR 2334. President Obama instructed me to abstain on UNSCR 2334 in order to try to preserve prospects for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He saw the vote as consistent with bipartisan policy, dating back almost 50 years at the time, of supporting two states and opposing unilateral measures by either side that could impede prospects for two states. The resolution included a condemnation of all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terrorism and incitement, and it expressed concern about Israeli settlement activities, reaffirming the long-standing U.S. position on settlements.

During my explanation of the U.S. vote, I denounced persistent anti-Israel bias at the U.N. and described our numerous efforts (including those mentioned above) "to fight for Israel's right simply to be treated just like any other country." I also explained President Obama's posture on the resolution: "It is because this forum too often continues to be biased against Israel; because there are important issues that are not sufficiently addressed in this resolution; and because the United States does not agree with every word in this text, that the United States did not vote in favor of the resolution. But it is because this resolution reflects the facts on the ground—and is consistent with U.S. policy across Republican and Democratic administration throughout the history of the State of Israel—that the United States did not veto it."

(The full explanation of vote, from December 23, 2016, is available here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20161231232014/https://usun.state.gov/remarks/7621>)

If confirmed, I will work to advance President Biden's strong support for the U.S.-Israel relationship, as well as to enhance prospects for two states by working to responsibly restart humanitarian and development assistance in the West Bank and Gaza in accordance with all legal requirements, including the Taylor Force Act.

*Question.* The Helms amendment states, "No foreign assistance funds may be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions." If confirmed, can you guarantee there will be a strict adherence to the Helms amendment in the administration of U.S. foreign assistance?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID fully abides by all U.S. laws, including the Helms Amendment.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* After enduring a decade of conflict, humanitarian needs in Syria are projected to only increase. President Biden pledged to recommit the U.S. to lead on humanitarian issues including to pursue political solutions, protect vulnerable Syrians and facilitate the work of NGOs.

- What specific actions will USAID take under your direction to reassert U.S. humanitarian leadership and efforts in Syria? What tools are available to the U.S. to ensure continued humanitarian access into and within Syria?

*Answer.* As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., I worked tirelessly to hold the Assad regime and its backers accountable for their war crimes, and to provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people. Among these efforts, in 2014 I helped lead the U.N. Security Council to authorize U.N. agencies to deliver relief into Syria without explicit approval from the Syrian Government, allowing millions of people to receive assistance that the Assad regime had been blocking. Today, USAID's humanitarian assistance is reaching an estimated 4.8 million people per month inside Syria and 1.1 million Syrian refugees in the region. The United States is the largest donor of humanitarian assistance inside Syria and across the region, contributing close to \$13 billion since the start of the conflict. If confirmed, I will continue to be a forceful advocate for delivering critically-needed humanitarian aid to the Syrian people, and ensure that the United States continues to play a leading role in protecting vulnerable civilians by advocating for unhindered humanitarian access, coordinating with other donors, and encouraging other donors to increase their support to the response. I will also work with Secretary of State Blinken and Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield to ensure that the U.S. Government continues to advocate in the U.N. Security Council and on the international stage to improve the lives of the Syrian people, including through the reauthorization of the aforementioned U.N. cross-border assistance and to advance a long-overdue negotiated political settlement to end the Syrian conflict.

*Question.* How can USAID play a role in bringing about a political solution in Syria? What tools are available to the U.S. through USAID to better support our allies in Northeastern Syria?

*Answer.* While assistance will not solve the conflict in Syria, it is a vital component of the effort to create conditions for peace by saving lives, providing some measure of stability to vulnerable populations, and uniting partners and allies in support of the Syrian people. If confirmed, in addition to ensuring that as many Syrians as possible are able to receive critically-needed assistance, I will support administration-wide efforts to advance a negotiated political settlement, which is the only way to end this conflict. I will also explore USAID support for civil society actors who are documenting war crimes and pursuing accountability, a critical complement to pursuit of a stable peace. The Biden administration redoubled the U.S. commitment to our allies in northeast Syria by lifting the previous administration's freeze on stabilization funds. If confirmed, I will ensure not only that these critical programs continue, but that they complement the larger administration-wide efforts to advance a negotiated political settlement.

*Question.* It is imperative for U.S. foreign assistance to aim to break down gender-related barriers to educational attainment in countries where there is persistent gender disparity. This is particularly important in secondary school when girls are the most likely to drop out. In many contexts, poverty and entrenched social and cultural norms can limit girls' access to quality learning opportunities.

- How can USAID better provide holistic support to ensure adolescents stay enrolled in and complete secondary school?

*Answer.* USAID promotes a "whole-of-girl" approach, reducing gender-based violence and increasing the capability of all learners, of all gender identities, to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and make independent decisions. If confirmed, I commit that USAID will continue to break down gender-related barriers to education so that all learners, especially girls and the most marginalized, have access to safe, quality education from early childhood through adulthood, especially during adolescence, a crucial time in girls' lives. Part of this approach is recognizing that menstrual health and hygiene is an integral part of dignity and empowerment for adolescent girls, including their ability to attend and stay in school. USAID will also continue to prioritize the needs of the most marginalized and those in vulnerable situations, and address inequalities that have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Ensuring that we continue to make progress in this area is critically important not just for empowering young women, but for achieving lasting advances on behalf of



society as a whole and creating conditions for a more equitable response to the fall-out from the pandemic. For example, addressing gender inequality in education contributes to closing gender gaps in employment and wages, which have in turn been shown to reduce income inequality and lead to overall increases in GDP.

*Question.* USAID's global health programs are critical to providing sexual and reproductive health care for women and girls. However, research has shown that a 10 percent decline in the use of contraceptives—such as due to the COVID-19 pandemic—could result in more than 48 million women with an unmet need for modern contraception and more than 15 million additional unintended pregnancies. If confirmed, I hope you will not only support international family planning as a priority for USAID, but also the partners on the ground who implement these programs.

- How will you work to expand and improve USAID's family planning and reproductive health programs?

*Answer.* I believe that reproductive health care is essential to women's health and well-being and also positively impacts infant and child health. Now more than ever, as countries battle COVID-19 and the secondary effects from the pandemic, we must strengthen our efforts to reach those most vulnerable, including women who benefit from voluntary family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) programs. The administration is committed to ensuring that foreign assistance programs prioritize women's health needs globally, including robust support for voluntary family planning and maternal health programs, and for preventing gender-based violence.

*Question.* What needs to be done to increase access to sexual and reproductive health care amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected all global health efforts, including routine vaccination programs for children, voluntary family planning and reproductive health programs, women and children's access to basic health care, and the distribution of treatments to control neglected tropical diseases, as well as tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. If confirmed, I will work with USAID global health experts to ensure funding is prioritized to activities, including voluntary family planning and reproductive health activities, that will support regaining the progress lost during the pandemic.

*Question.* Is there a way for the U.S. to better engage with partners and allies on the provision of family planning services? What would that look like?

*Answer.* USAID is the largest bilateral donor for voluntary family planning and reproductive health assistance globally. Other donors, partner governments, and civil society actors have historically looked to USAID for leadership because of its strong reputation for technical excellence. The administration is committed to restoring U.S. global health leadership, including as it relates to voluntary family planning and reproductive health, which will require effective partnerships to improve coordination and investments and strengthen linkages across diverse global health programs. If confirmed, I will look for ways that USAID can advance voluntary family planning and reproductive health programming with our partners and allies around the globe.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*Extremism and the Global Fragility Act*

*Question.* Despite the best efforts of both parties and their respective administrations, the threat from Salafi-Jihadi extremism persists to this day. The Global Fragility Act passed by Congress last year changed our approach to conflict-prone states that can be vectors of violent extremism, uncontrolled migration, and extreme poverty by dedicating \$1.5 billion toward this space and establishing a new Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation at USAID.

- How will you effectively use this legislation to direct our approaches toward countering fragile states?

*Answer.* this is a key priority. We need a comprehensive approach and more tools to prevent conflict and increase stability. If confirmed, I will consult with Congress on the implementation of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (the "GFA strategy"). It is my understanding that the list of priority countries is currently being considered by the interagency, with USAID participation. After country selection, we will need to bring a range of U.S. policy tools to bear in imple-

menting the GFA strategy and associated country and regional plans. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with you and Congress frequently to support the implementation of the Act with State and DOD.

*Latin America*

*Question.* I would like to talk about the importance of Latin America and the role of the United States in the economic and democratic development of this region.

Last week I led a bipartisan CODEL to El Paso to see firsthand the crisis on the border. We are seeing people fleeing extreme poverty from the Northern Triangle countries— Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. I am very supportive of building a robust border protection system to physically protect our border, but I also understand the necessity to help these fragile countries address the root causes of illegal immigration such as extreme poverty and breakdown in security.

The latest numbers are deeply concerning. 550 kids per day are coming into the United States, mostly from the Northern Triangle countries, which is five or six times more than in January, when there were less than 100 in terms of families. In terms of families, 1,500 per day last week, as compared to 1,000 in February— on average, less than 100 in January. This is a 15 times increase when compared to previous data.

- Do you believe that that is an appropriate condition to us spending what President Biden has now suggested, which is another \$4 billion on top of the \$3.6 billion that has been sent in the last five years?

*Answer.* As you note, President Biden proposed a multi-year, \$4 billion comprehensive regional strategy to address the root causes of irregular migration. I agree that any funding needs to be accountable and channeled to evidence-based programming. Since the specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across communities or even countries, USAID tailors and adapts programs that address the root causes of irregular migration to the unique needs of each country and community; the extensive use of data is critical and is an integral part of these efforts. By tracking migration trends, the Agency is able to focus resources geographically in response to local drivers of migration.

I gather that USAID is addressing the distinct and overlapping security, governance, and economic drivers of irregular migration to the United States from Central America in partnership with other U.S. Government agencies, including, as mandated in Executive Order 14010, by working with the State Department to develop a forthcoming strategy on addressing the root causes of irregular migration from the region. USAID seeks to combat crime and violence by reaching at-risk youth, addressing corruption and impunity, disrupting the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing vulnerable citizens with greater economic opportunity, social services, and protection. Through this work, USAID helps to foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries and communities. If confirmed, I will work to build and expand on this foundation and look forward to consulting with you about how best to ensure these programs are tailored to optimize results.

*Question.* Do you commit to work with Congress on asylum seekers to have them apply from their home country or a safe third country?

*Answer.* Under President Obama, in my capacity as White House Coordinator for Iraqi Refugees while serving at the NSC, I saw the importance of the in-country processing efforts in Iraq that had initially been established in 2008, and as U.N. Ambassador, I supported President Obama's establishment of the Central American Minors (CAM) Refugee program, which President Biden has announced will continue under his administration. As you know, USAID is not involved in asylum policy or enforcement of border security, so if confirmed, I would defer to the Departments of Homeland Security and the State Department.

*Question.* Do you commit to placing an emphasis on combating corruption, especially through the Millennium Challenge Corporation through programming in the northern triangle countries?

*Answer.* Yes. Corruption can itself be a driver of migration and of course makes it more difficult to address a wide range of development challenges—from global health and food security, to economic development and fair trade, to maintaining strong alliances. If confirmed, I plan to renew USAID's focus on governance and anti-corruption programs in the Northern Triangle and, in my role on the Board of Directors at the MCC, I commit to placing an emphasis on combating corruption.

*Question.* Do you commit to emphasizing an adherence to transparency and rule of law in Latin America and beyond?

Answer. Yes, I commit to the importance of transparency and the rule of law in Latin America and beyond.

*Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA)*

*Question.* The Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA), which is a program I created during my time serving in the House, remains a top priority for me. This is a “debt-for-nature” swap program that offers eligible developing countries options to relieve or restructure concessional debt owed to the U.S. in exchange for supporting conservation activities for tropical forests and coral reefs. Through the TFCA program, approximately \$233 million in appropriated funds from the U.S. Government have generated nearly \$340 million through interest and leveraging from NGOs and private entities.

To date, 20 agreements have been carried out with 14 different countries to save more than 67 million acres of tropical forest. Tropical forests are valuable tools for carbon storage. These TFCA agreements have led to the sequestration of more than 56 million metric tons of carbon dioxide—that’s the equivalent of taking 11.8 million cars off the road—and without losing a single American job. In fact, this program has helped developing countries by improving their balance sheet through debt-for-nature swaps.

TFCA was provided \$15 million in appropriations for both fiscal years 2020 and 2021. USAID, in coordination with the Treasury Department and the State Department, is one of the key agencies responsible for carrying out TFCA agreements.

- If you are confirmed to be Administrator of USAID, will you commit to prioritizing additional TFCA deals using the funding that Congress has provided?

Answer. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue, which I was grateful to have the chance to discuss with you. I certainly agree that this is win-win programming. I gather that USAID works closely with the State Department and Treasury in an effort to program TFCA agreements, including those addressing coral reef conservation. I understand that TFCA programs have generated substantial additional resources through capital gains from fund investments, cost-sharing by grant recipients, and co-financing with other donors. If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing additional deals with TFCA funding.

*Africa and Great Power Competition*

*Question.* China has focused heavily on Africa as a part of their Belt and Road Initiative. While China has provided much needed infrastructure spending and benefits to some countries on the continent, I am concerned about shifts in Chinese investment away from development initiatives toward projects that are more aligned with military purposes. At the same time, many countries have traded infrastructure and development for natural resource rights and burdensome debt obligations.

- How will you effectively lead USAID to counter China’s influence in Africa? How can we do a better job of highlighting the benefits of working with America rather than the CCP?

Answer. Competition with China is one of the defining challenges of the 21st century for the United States, and engaging with our African partners to pursue shared strategic interests in advancing security, protecting global health, fighting climate change, strengthening democracy, and spurring equitable economic growth must be a cornerstone of our global strategy to counter China. In this regard, U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives have a critical role to play in meeting this challenge head-on. In Africa, the United States offers a meaningful alternative to China’s predatory economic approach, and we must continue to work to ensure that American companies can compete on an even playing field at the same time we promote local entrepreneurship and fair practices. Despite the massive amounts of money that Beijing has invested in Africa, people in many African nations are voicing growing concerns over China’s lack of transparency, lending practices, poor environmental record, and failure to invest in relationships with local communities. In these and other areas, the United States has multiple comparative advantages that we must work across agencies to demonstrate. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting further with you and to working with other Departments and Agencies as well as the business community to help ensure that the U.S. is pursuing trade and investment initiatives from a position of strength. I also look forward to digging into the communications dimension of this challenge, because we need to be strategic about how we amplify the tenets of the U.S. approach and how we highlight for our local partners the ways in which U.S. investments are responsive to local needs and priorities.

*Question.* China has also exported a number facial recognition and security software programs for law enforcement, the same systems that are being used to enable the genocide in Xingjian against the Uyghurs, to effectively “coup-proof” authoritarian regimes on the African continent.

- Do you see this as a threat for democracy promotion in Africa, and how can we help you to be successful in pushing back against this threat?

*Answer.* Yes. China’s use of facial recognition and security software programs for law enforcement are a threat to democracy and freedom of expression in Africa. Freedom has been declining globally for 15 consecutive years, and China and Russia are using their resources, influence, and technology to buttress autocrats and undermine and interfere with democratic institutions. In Africa, USAID supports efforts to uphold civil society efforts to advocate for fundamental rights, such as freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, and to hold credible, free, and fair elections. I appreciate your offer of support. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize this critical work and look forward to working with you and your colleagues to devise new strategies for countering this growing threat.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*Virginia Tech Innovation Lab*

*Question.* The Feed the Future Integrated Pest Management Innovation Lab (IPMIL), funded by USAID and managed by Virginia Tech, has been in operation since 1993. In that time, the program has generated nearly \$2 billion in economic benefits for developing countries, funded 500+ graduate students, and collaborated with more than 100 institutions. Unfortunately, in a deviation from its historic review process for innovation labs, USAID has not renewed IPMIL for a full five-year contract since 2014; rather, it is now operating on its second one-year no-cost extension that is set to expire in November 2021. USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security has also established a new Future Innovation Lab for Current and Emerging Threats to Crops (CETC), for which the agency is now soliciting proposals.

Given the potential overlap between IPMIL and the CETC, I recently led a letter with Senate and House colleagues to Acting Administrator Steele in support of IPMIL, including seeking clarity on the status of the program at Virginia Tech moving forward. Should you be confirmed, I look forward to USAID’s attention to the matter

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to looking into this matter and getting back to you.

*USAID Collaboration with Research Universities*

*Question.* USAID has a strong tradition of working with universities to utilize their expertise to help address some of the most challenging global development challenges. Feed the Future Innovation Labs are one part of that partnership and are critical in advancing the solutions needed to help reduce global hunger, poverty, and undernutrition. If confirmed, are there new programs and collaborations you envision with strong research universities like those in Virginia? Will you consider expanding innovation labs to help reach more countries?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I would explore opportunities to deepen USAID’s collaboration with research universities. USAID greatly values its partnership with the U.S. university community and the unparalleled research capacity that these institutions bring to the U.S. Government’s global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future. The U.S. university-led Feed the Future Innovation Labs are central to leveraging American science and innovation to solve problems facing food-insecure regions, and they are doing so in ways that build local and national capacity in partner countries. I gather that the cutting-edge portfolio of Innovation Labs evolves as new challenges emerge and new research pathways open up for making progress in food security, strengthening climate resilience and accelerating improved nutrition, and if confirmed, I look forward to engaging in that process and discussing any new opportunities with you.

*New Partnership Initiative (NPI)*

*Question.* The New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) was established to diversify USAID’s partner base by creating avenues for new and underutilized partners to

work with USAID. Through NPI, the Agency promotes local leadership, seeks bold and innovative approaches to fostering self-reliance, and identifies new sources of funding to sustain partnership and scale impact. It is one of the only tools the agency has to effectively work with new partners.

- How will you work to ensure that mechanisms like the New Partnerships Initiative are maintained as effective tools in partnering with new, innovative, and locally established organizations?

Answer. I recognize the longstanding challenge of enlisting new and non-traditional partners. It is my understanding that approximately 80 percent of USAID funding went to just 75 organizations in 2017, and by 2019 only 69 organizations were receiving the same share. The number of new partners has declined every year since 2011. Reducing the barriers to engaging with and accessing resources from USAID is important, and I strongly believe in diversifying the Agency's partnership base. Doing so will help to broaden the USAID's perspectives and approaches in order to address development and humanitarian challenges. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to build on and expand efforts to be more inclusive in partnering with a broader set of organizations to achieve our objectives, while ensuring that the Agency meets relevant requirements.

#### *Community Health Workers*

*Question.* Community health workers, the vast majority of whom are women, have been a critical part of the response to COVID-19 and other endemic diseases around the world. According to a recent report commissioned by Malaria No More and the United Nations Foundation, investments in community-based health programs help prevent 75 million malaria cases annually, reducing the burden on the health systems of low-income countries. Unfortunately, in many countries community health workers are not well supported or compensated.

- How can USAID support community health workers so that they have the resources they need?

Answer. Community health workers (CHWs) have long been central to responding to basic health needs, confronting global health threats (including Ebola, Zika, malaria, and now of course COVID-19), and providing life-saving assistance in humanitarian emergencies. CHWs are an essential part of the global health workforce and often the only source of care for their communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the need for CHWs, placing additional demands on these critical frontline workers and requiring communities to redirect resources to support COVID-19 response, when other health threats remain. USAID recommends that host country governments include CHWs in health systems as a professional cadre that are a critical part of a sustainable health workforce. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to advance programs that support and equip CHWs with the resources they need.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

*Question.* The coronavirus worsened the existing global food crisis. An estimated 130 million more people were on the brink of starvation last year due to factors caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Many of these individuals are in countries already experiencing instability from locust infestations, military conflict, and extreme poverty.

- In what ways would you alter the previous planning and strategies for U.S. food security efforts in light of the coronavirus impacts?

Answer. The pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition worldwide, with the most vulnerable bearing the brunt of its impact. The World Bank estimates that in 2020 as many as 124 million people fell into poverty and hunger as a result, and expects this number to increase significantly this year to as much as 163 million people. The nutrition impacts are equally devastating, putting millions more children at risk. In the face of COVID-19, the U.S. Government's Feed the Future initiative to end global hunger, is adapting its vital programming to mitigate and deal with the impacts on food systems and nutrition. Specifically, I understand that Feed the Future is leveraging its existing global portfolio to respond to the crisis in the following ways: (1) engaging governments on trade and inclusive economic growth policies; (2) bolstering small and medium sized enterprises throughout the food system and unlocking private sector funds to accelerate eco-

conomic recovery, growth and employment; (3) transitioning households and communities off of assistance through economic inclusion models; and (4) supporting governments to create and strengthen their existing social protection systems, including shock-responsive safety nets and risk financing. It will be critical to further leverage Feed the Future as countries rebuild economically in the long wake of the pandemic, and I understand that USAID is currently looking at ways to do this.

*Question.* For more than 50 years, USAID's global health programs have focused on saving lives and protecting vulnerable populations from disease. The United States works extensively with countries across the globe to strengthen public health systems. There are a finite amount of resources available to address the current global pandemic. Yet, the needs continue to expand.

- What is your strategy to ensure USAID is assisting those countries most in need due to the coronavirus pandemic?

*Question.* What indicators or criteria will you rely upon to make decisions on how to best utilize U.S. resources to combat the coronavirus?

*Answer.* I am committed to ensuring that USAID's COVID-19 work is needs-based and evidence-driven. If confirmed, I will work with the team at USAID to ensure that we prioritize resources based on rigorous needs-analysis and clear performance metrics. It is my understanding that USAID is developing a COVID-19 response plan, in coordination with interagency partners, to meet critical and immediate health and humanitarian needs such as vaccine readiness and acute food insecurity, but also to address the wide range of second-order impacts of the pandemic. If confirmed, I will support the development of this response plan and ensure USAID invests new COVID-19 resources in a way that best responds to the pandemic. I will also work with experts within USAID and across the inter-agency to apply epidemiologic indicators and other criteria to guide resource allocations, recognizing the complex and dynamic nature of the first- and second-order impacts of the pandemic. And across the board, I will prioritize transparency and accountability in decision-making, and use data and analysis to guide the use of funds.

*Question.* In 1985, USAID created the Famine Early Warning Systems Network to provide objective, evidence based analysis to plan for and respond to acute food insecurity.

- Is this something that USAID can use as a model to work on an early warning system for global health pandemics?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that the Famine Early Warning Systems Network is a useful model to inform our efforts to improve early warning systems for infectious disease epidemics and pandemics, in terms of establishing a data-driven approach to predict outbreaks. The challenge will be to establish objective, evidence-based epidemiologic criteria for tiered risk classification systems, and to link relevant data to recognize threats early and take actions to prevent new outbreaks from becoming epidemics or pandemics. If confirmed, I pledge to work with other U.S. government departments and agencies, and the international community, to improve early warning systems for infectious disease epidemics and pandemics.

*Question.* What role should USAID play in the U.S.'s global health security strategy to make us better prepared to combat any future global health pandemic?

*Answer.* Ensuring global health security for the United States will require that all countries be capable of preventing, detecting, and responding effectively to health security risks and public health emergencies. USAID will work in partnership with other international organizations and public and private stakeholders to help implement the U.S.'s global health security strategy. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to work in close collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of State, and other interagency partners, to strengthen global health security across the globe to ensure we are positioned to prevent or respond to future pandemics.

*Question.* In July 2019, USAID's Inspector General testified before Congress on the management challenges impacting USAID. One major management challenge identified was assessing and responding to the risk in providing humanitarian and stabilization assistance.

Inspector General Ann Barr's testimony stated, "Insufficient risk assessments not only leave USAID programs and services vulnerable to exploitation, but they also put USAID in the position of attempting to mitigate threats it does not understand. The adverse effects of poor planning, monitoring and evaluation were demonstrated in the fraud schemes that our agents uncovered in Iraq and Syria and across Africa, some of which involved diversions of USAID-funded commodities to terrorists."

- How will you address the issues of insufficient risk assessments, monitoring and evaluations at USAID?

Answer. It is important for USAID to act in the interest of the American people, and to provide foreign assistance and build partnerships where there is the greatest need, which is often in difficult situations. Risks that are inherent to operating in conflict settings and challenging environments can be mitigated, but never eliminated. Monitoring risk, and measuring and analyzing results-and adapting when programs fall short-is part of the day-to-day management of USAID's operations. Of course, there is always room for improvement and innovation. If confirmed, I look forward to pushing USAID even further on finding innovative ways to quickly gather information to adapt programs and better achieve results, while also ensuring proper vetting and accountability to U.S. taxpayers.

*Question.* What steps will you take to strengthen current procedures aimed at preventing diversions of U.S. taxpayer resources going to terrorists?

Answer. USAID conducts extensive screening to mitigate risk and safeguard U.S. foreign assistance from diversion to organizations or individuals posing a threat to national security. USAID has a robust system for partner vetting to mitigate the risk of funds supporting terrorist groups. I understand that since it began tracking these figures in 2015, USAID estimates that it has prevented more than \$800 million from supporting or benefitting people and entities that do not meet USAID vetting requirements. Further, USAID applicants are required to sign certifications and assurances stating that they have not knowingly provided material support or resources to terrorist groups or individuals/entities affiliated with terrorist groups. This risk mitigation has allowed USAID to continue to work in the highest-risk environments, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee on this important priority.

*Question.* Will you commit to doing a full audit of USAID funds and programs to ensure U.S. resources are not going to support terrorist groups and entities on the Specially Designated Nationals and Block Persons list?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that USAID funding does not fall into the wrong hands, whether it be terrorism, fraud, or waste. I understand that USAID has numerous safeguards, financial accountability mechanisms and an independent Office of Inspector General, whose work I am committed to supporting if I am confirmed.

*Question.* During a Senate investigation into the World Vision's interactions with the Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA), redacted emails were uncovered implying that when you were the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations you were involved in efforts to delist the ISRA from the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (SDN) list. Specifically, your office appears to have requested OFAC review the designation without a formal request from ISRA. The U.S. Treasury sanctioned ISRA for its support of terrorism including direct financial support to Usama bin Laden, Al Qaida, the Taliban, and Hamas.

- Why were you and your office involved with seeking a review of the ISRA's placement on the SDN list?
- What efforts did you and your office take to discourage the delisting of ISRA from the SDN list?
- Please describe all the efforts you and your office took while serving as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations to advocate for or provide assistance in the delisting process for entities on the Specially Designated Nationals and Block Persons list.
- As Administrator of USAID, when would you consider it appropriate to assist entities in requesting a review of their placement on the SDN list outside the general Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) parameters?
- Will you commit to providing this committee and the rest of Congress timely and substantive responses to oversight inquiries?

Answer. As U.N. Ambassador, I was not involved in any effort to delist ISRA; nor did I do anything to "assist" this or any other entity on the SDN list. Indeed, the opposite is true. Under my leadership, as is documented in public records, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (U.S.-U.N.) worked tirelessly to rebut ISRA's false claims that it had been wrongly designated on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list by the U.S. Government. During my tenure, U.S.-U.N. repeatedly raised questions about ISRA's status and funding in order to force the United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to postpone the consideration of ISRA for accreditation.

In support of these efforts to prevent the accreditation of ISRA by the United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, U.S.–U.N. maintained the standard practice of regularly coordinating with the U.S. State and Treasury Departments to ensure U.S. diplomats at the U.N. had the most up-to-date information available.

Please find records of some of U.S.–U.N.’s actions at the January 2014, January 2015, and May 2015 sessions of the United Nations Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations:

- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/ecosoc6593.doc.htm>;
- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6662.doc.htm>;
- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ecosoc6694.doc.htm>;

As Ambassador, in addition to repudiating ISRA’s efforts to rehabilitate itself, I often used my platform to draw attention to the crimes and dangerous activities of organizations on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list. If confirmed, I can assure you that I share the goal of ensuring that the U.S. Agency for International Development takes all appropriate measures to prevent misuse of its funding—whether for terrorism, corruption, or any other types of abuse. I further confirm my commitment to cooperate and provide Congress with timely and substantive responses to inquiries, if confirmed.

*Question.* With a national debt over \$28 trillion, it is more important than ever for the government to be good steward of taxpayer funds. USAID must design and implement programs in the most effective and efficient manner. Every agency needs to be carefully evaluated and streamlined to eliminate duplicative and wasteful spending.

- What reforms will you take to improve the effectiveness of U.S. international development assistance?

Answer. I agree with the principle of aid effectiveness and that USAID’s programs should encourage self-reliance and sustainability. My vision for USAID’s role includes traditional development priorities. It also applies a broader lens that recognizes U.S. foreign assistance within core U.S. national security priorities, including advancing democracy and human rights, mitigating the effects of conflict, and promoting global health in a collaborative manner with civil society partners and governments. If confirmed, I commit to advancing sound, evidence-based development and humanitarian programming that continues to improve aid effectiveness, self-reliance, and sustainability.

*Question.* What actions will you take, if any, to prevent fraud, waste and abuse at USAID?

Answer. All USAID employees have a statutory duty and responsibility to promote accountability in the Agency’s programs and activities. Every USAID employee is responsible for assisting the Office of Inspector General, by promptly reporting instances of waste, fraud, or abuse. Furthermore, I understand that USAID has a number of policies and requirements in place to prevent fraud throughout the solicitation, award, and management of our grants and contracts. I understand that when instances of fraud, waste, and abuse do occur, the Agency considers a variety of award remedies, such as disallowed costs, special award conditions, and/or award suspension or termination. In addition, implementing partners and individuals who have committed fraud, waste, abuse, or other serious misconduct are subject to a number of accountability actions, including exclusion from receiving future U.S. Government funds through USAID’s suspension and debarment program.

*Question.* What opportunities exist for streamlining, efficiencies and savings at USAID?

Answer. I agree that streamlining, efficiencies, and savings of taxpayer dollars is a priority. If confirmed, I look forward to looking for opportunities and continuing this conversation with you.

*Question.* A January Wall Street Journal article reported that you requested the “unmasking” of nearly 300 people in the last year of working for the Obama Administration as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. When U.S. intelligence agencies intercept the communications of private U.S. citizens, those individuals are “masked” to ensure their privacy is protected.

- How many U.S. citizens did you unmask during the time you worked as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations?
- What criteria did you use in determining whether it was appropriate to request the unmasking of a U.S. citizen?



- Given the large number of reported requests for unmasking made in your name, do you plan to refine your criteria going forward to ensure Americans privacy is appropriately protected?
- How will you protect the privacy of U.S. citizens as USAID Administrator?

Answer. Safeguarding classified information and protecting the privacy of US persons are serious responsibilities for anyone serving in a national security role within the US government. I have protected classified information and guarded the privacy of US persons throughout my career as a public servant, and I will continue to do so if I am confirmed as USAID Administrator.

While serving as U.N. Ambassador and as a cabinet member advising the President on the full range of national security threats, I was a recipient of information prepared by intelligence professionals, which I used to do my job of protecting and defending the United States and advancing US national security interests. I did not discuss the contents of classified material with unauthorized personnel. On occasion, in order to understand the intelligence briefed to me, I asked questions about the individuals or entities referenced in intelligence. Any requests I made for identifying information were made solely for the purpose of understanding the intelligence in order to do my job. While I do not recall the specific number of such requests I made as U.N. Ambassador, the number attributed to me in press reports, including in the Wall Street Journal Editorial board opinion piece referenced here, is false. It is my understanding that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence is responsible for matters related to how intelligence professionals manage and record matters related to intelligence.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. SAMANTHA POWELL BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* In the waning days of the Trump administration, USAID unveiled its 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. Unfortunately, the policy was drafted behind closed doors and erased key LGTBQI+ rights, and denied comprehensive sexual and reproductive rights to all people. Will you commit to reviewing the 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, and updating it to make sure it is rights-affirming and inclusive of all marginalized identities, including LGTBQI+ individuals?

Answer. I understand that a review of the USAID Gender policy commenced March 2021. If confirmed, I will consult with you and other Members of the committee on the review. President Biden has been clear that he supports protections for LGTBQI+ people, as do I. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID programs and policies contribute to these efforts, by advocating for LGTBQI+ rights and programs around the world.

*Question.* What is your vision for elevating USAID's leadership within the executive branch to tackle the existential threat of climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I would commit to working closely with Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry and the National Security Council's climate and energy directorate. The Biden administration's top priorities are developing an ambitious U.S. target and working with countries around the world to raise their ambition alongside the United States. President Biden is inviting leaders from major economies to a Leaders' Summit on Climate to discuss climate impacts and more importantly-what more can be done on a number of fronts moving forward climate action to keep a 1.5 degree Celsius warming trajectory in sight. Given that unsustainable land use accounts for one-quarter of global greenhouse emissions, USAID will work with countries and regions with globally important forests and carbon-rich landscapes to reduce deforestation and improve conservation, as well as reduce emissions from land use change in critical tropical ecosystems that serve as global carbon sinks.

*Question.* We must support the developing world in the transition towards renewable energy, while also better forecasting climate-driven disasters to minimize human impacts before they occur. Will you commit to increasing climate change mitigation and adaptation programming as a part of a proactive and robust USAID climate strategy?

Answer. Yes, I commit to increasing USAID's efforts to support reduced carbon emissions combating climate change, including climate change mitigation and adaptation programming. Addressing climate change will be a top priority for me, as it is for President Biden. If confirmed, I will expand the scale and urgency of USAID's

programming, building on USAID's strong foundation of local partnerships to address climate change. I will ensure that USAID continues to be a leader in supporting countries to reduce carbon emissions and that USAID provides further support for early warning systems which help communities prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climatic events.

*Question.* The coup in Burma has temporarily severed the democratic hopes for the Burmese people. The situation continues to devolve as the threat of civil war rises. As USAID Administrator, will you work to quickly increase and pivot U.S. assistance to strengthen civil society, protect the fundamental civil and political rights of the Burmese people, and lead the humanitarian community in contingency planning for increased humanitarian assistance levels?

*Answer.* I condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the military coup in Burma and the junta's ongoing violent crackdown against peaceful demonstrators. If confirmed, I look forward to working with and empowering the brave local and civil society actors who are advocating for civil and political rights under extraordinarily difficult and dangerous circumstances. I support the action taken by USAID immediately after the coup to redirect \$42.4 million from work that would have benefitted the Government to civil society and programs that directly benefit the people of Burma. Those programs focus on a range of objectives, such as improving health outcomes, strengthening the ability of civil society to guard democratic space, fostering food security, supporting independent media, and promoting peace and reconciliation in Burma's conflict-affected regions. If confirmed, USAID will also continue to provide critical life-saving humanitarian assistance to Rohingya and other vulnerable populations including in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, and Shan states.

*Question.* Recent reports and statements from Secretary Blinken indicate an ethnic cleansing likely occurred in western Tigray. Humanitarian and media access continues to be constrained in rural areas. Concerns are mounting regarding the instability in the run up to the June elections. How will you work with the interagency to increase access and transparency, pursue accountability for victims, and provide oversight and capacity building assistance in a surge to promote a free and fair election?

*Answer.* The loss of life and mass displacement resulting from the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region is profoundly disturbing. The violence against civilians must end, and unimpeded humanitarian access to the region must be granted without further delay. Ultimately, what is required is a constructive political dialogue between the parties and accountability for the atrocities committed by all sides. Ethiopia's successful transition to a more democratic, inclusive, and prosperous society is critical to U.S. interests. The administration, with support from members of Congress and U.N. representatives, has undertaken numerous diplomatic efforts to end the violence and provide humanitarian access. As a result of these efforts, Prime Minister Abiy recommitted to unhindered humanitarian access to Tigray. I understand that USAID staff in Addis and in Washington continue to push for real progress on these important issues. To your question on accountability for victims, while Prime Minister Abiy has recently acknowledged human rights abuses and violations and committed to ensuring that those responsible are held accountable, it will be essential to hold him to these commitments. If confirmed, I will both ensure that USAID continues to work with the interagency on these critical issues and work with the Secretary to ensure we can find a way to provide humanitarian assistance to the Ethiopian people and support, as appropriate, the pursuit of accountability.

*Question.* During the campaign, then-candidate Biden indicated that his top foreign policy priority would be "rallying the free world to push back against rising authoritarianism" and that "human rights will be at the core of U.S. foreign policy." Will you commit to re-vamping the role of human rights programming as a central pillar of USAID's development mandate?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will seek to deepen Agency investments in democracy, human rights and governance. With freedom in its fifteenth straight year of decline, there is more that the United States and USAID need to do on all fronts to counter authoritarian trends, support civil society, promote independent media, and protect human rights defenders.

*Question.* The U.N. has called gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls a "shadow pandemic" during the COVID-19 crisis. Will you commit to utilizing newly appropriated COVID-19 funds in working to curb GBV and other secondary impacts of the pandemic?

Answer. Yes. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is a critical component in the global response to COVID-19 and it is a priority for USAID. If confirmed, I will prioritize USAID's support for the prevention of and response to GBV that has emerged as a result of COVID-19. Various types of GBV become particularly pervasive during emergencies. As such, addressing GBV in emergencies is central to USAID's efforts, including our COVID-19 response. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID programming continues to address GBV and that our programming prioritizes women and girls' health, psychological well-being, and safety. I understand that USAID is currently developing a COVID-19 Response Plan, a strategy that will seek to address second-order impacts of the pandemic, including increased rates of GBV, and improve protection and target the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized families and individuals.

*Question.* For the past 15 years USAID has promoted a "One Health" approach, bringing together disciplines such as medicine, veterinary medicine, public health, and ecosystem health to more effectively address emerging pandemic challenges. Tufts University is leading a new effort consistent with the "One Health" approach to analyze, communicate, and mitigate risks of zoonotic viral spillover in priority countries. Will you commit to strengthening this type of USAID programming that ensures lasting reduction of the risk of viral zoonotic spillover and disease so we can avoid repeating the experience of COVID-19?

Answer. COVID-19 is a grave reminder that biological threats- whether naturally emerging, accidental, or deliberate- pose a significant and potentially existential threat to humanity. USAID's partnership with countries throughout the world makes the Agency well-placed to prevent avoidable outbreaks, detect threats early, and respond rapidly when outbreaks occur. Preventing the next pandemic requires an approach that recognizes that the future well-being of humans, animals, and the environment are inextricably linked. History has shown us that we need to significantly increase resources for both risk reduction and the discovery of unknown viruses. To do this, we should focus on the discovery of new viruses and address current zoonotic diseases (e.g., Ebola viruses, coronaviruses) that pose the greatest risk of spilling from wildlife to humans. If confirmed, I commit to continuing this critical programming.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*U.S. Foreign Assistance*

*Question.* On December 10, 2020, President Trump issued Executive Order (EO) 13964, "Rebranding United States Foreign Assistance To Advance American Influence" which required U.S. Government Departments and Agencies to use a single logo for all U.S. foreign assistance.

- Please assess the degree to which such moves to ensure consistency and clarity in our aid contribute to the development of American soft power in general?

Answer. I am committed to branding and believe that branding sends a strong public diplomacy message, contributing to American soft power by conveying that our assistance is due to the generosity of the American people. Branding is also a critical element of a counter China strategy. Current branding regulations and policy continue to apply to USAID awards, and partners must continue to follow the branding requirements outlined in their assistance agreements.

*China*

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which such moves to ensure consistency and clarity in our aid contribute to the development of American soft power opposite Chinese development efforts?

Answer. China's approach to "development" through One Belt, One Road (OBOR) raises deep concerns for me and many people in USAID's partner countries. Projects connected to OBOR have come under significant scrutiny on issues such as corruption; unsustainable debt; environmental degradation; construction contracts and jobs being awarded to Chinese firms over local enterprises; lack of transparency and local consultations; and even worries about the potential erosion of sovereignty due to the unfavorable terms attached to certain projects. USAID needs a far-reaching strategy that addresses the challenges of OBOR, and I believe that frustrations around the world with China's development practices provide an opportunity for the U.S.

In addition to branding, the U.S. has a range of tools we can bring to bear including development aid, finance, and our innovative corporate sector. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America's comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC's, by engaging directly with our partner countries and ensuring that good governance, sustainability, and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with my colleagues across many agencies to help ensure the U.S. is responding to Chinese development efforts from a position of strength.

*Question.* The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is committing genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that is ongoing. The Biden administration had sent differing signals about the degree to which administration officials assessed that genocide is indeed ongoing, but on March 22, 2021, Secretary Blinken correctly emphasized "the P.R.C. continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity." USAID had and has a significant role to play in countering the CCP's genocide, and the agency had initiated a number of programs and outreach in that space. Those programs included efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of the Uyghurs, which is being directly targeted by the CCP.

- Do you agree with the assessment that the Chinese Government is engaged in a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the XUAR that is ongoing?

*Answer.* Yes. I agree with President Biden and experts who have studied the evidence that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang.

*Question.* What role do you see for USAID in countering that ongoing genocide, and more broadly the human rights atrocities being committed by the Chinese Communist Party?

*Answer.* I welcome Congress's bipartisan action on this issue, including the passage of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act that holds perpetrators accountable for human rights violations and abuses against Uyghurs and other minorities in China. If confirmed, I will use my platform to draw attention to the horrors in Xinjiang and ensure that USAID actively engages with you, the committee, and the interagency to determine any further steps that can be taken.

*Question.* What is the status of programs aimed at preserving the cultural heritage of the Uyghurs within USAID?

*Answer.* I gather that USAID is developing programs to preserve the cultural heritage and promote the human rights of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the Asia region. If confirmed, I will be eager to discuss these programs with you.

#### *International Religious Freedom*

*Question.* The Obama administration repeatedly failed to speak out on critical issues of religious liberty, including the plight of imprisoned Christians in Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, and Mexico. The result was a vacuum of American leadership. USAID has a critical role to play in highlighting and countering such persecution, as well as the plight of dissidents more broadly. Advancing international religious freedom (IRF) is a major foreign policy priority of the United States with bipartisan support, and I strongly believe that the agency must maintain and deepen decisions and commitments made by the Trump administration in that context.

- The Trump administration allocated resources to IRF-related projects in Iraq, Nigeria, and elsewhere. If confirmed, do you intend to maintain these projects?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support international religious freedom programs at USAID. I have a longstanding commitment to human rights, and a profound awareness of the risks of persecution faced by religious minorities. While serving at the NSC in the Obama administration, I advocated on behalf of Coptic Christians in Egypt who were experiencing violent attacks, and I met with Iraqi Christians while visiting Iraq to show support for their community. As Ambassador to the U.N., I used my platform to elevate the voices of religious minorities. I called for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for refusing to denounce her Christian faith, and called on Sudan to repeal the laws that put her in jail in the first place. I gave a young Yazidi woman named Nadia Murad her first major public platform, inviting her to speak before the U.N. Security Council, after her family had been almost completely wiped out by ISIS and she had been forced into sexual slavery. In addition, I worked with the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and others in the administration to seek

recognition of ISIS's violence against the Yazidi people, Iraqi Christians, and Shiite Muslims as a genocide, which Secretary of State Kerry recognized in March of 2016. USAID has a history of helping the world's most vulnerable people, and it will continue to play a critical role in supporting communities persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith. If confirmed, I will review USAID's approach to ensure that our programs are most effectively supporting victims of religious persecution. Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to exploring with you, the Agency's regional bureaus and Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships office, and diverse faith communities, how to mobilize resources and, as appropriate, tailor our programs to support individuals being subjected to religious persecution.

*Question.* Until recently the agency held monthly sessions for USAID's cross-Agency Sector Council on Strategic Religious Engagement and International Religious Freedom. Have such sessions of the Strategic Religious Engagement and International Religious Freedom been frozen, and if so why?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to looking into USAID's cross-Agency Sector Council on Strategic and Religious Engagement and International Religious Freedom and whether it is still holding sessions. I look forward to discussing with you.

*Question.* The Trump administration invested significantly in programs promoting IRF through USAID's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) Center. What is the status of those programs?

*Answer.* USAID continues to implement programming, including through the DRG Center, that supports religious minorities. USAID is deeply committed to supporting the world's most vulnerable people, including members of religious minorities. USAID will continue to play a critical role in supporting communities around the world that are persecuted and/or discriminated against because of their faith.

*Question.* The Trump administration was considering support for a Yazidi Genocide Museum in Kocho. What is the status of that program? If it has been suspended or canceled, why?

*Answer.* I am not familiar with these deliberations or this program. If confirmed, I commit to learning more about it and consulting with you on this issue.

*Question.* The persecution of Christians in Nigeria has over the last decade emerged as a systematic problem that the U.S. and the global community have struggled to counter. Policy responses have been broadly inadequate, and have been hampered by disputes over the factors explaining the violence, including the degree to which the crisis is a function of farmer-herder clashes or religious extremism. In December 2020, the Department of State designated Nigeria as a country of particular concern (CPC) in response to pervasive and egregious violations of religious freedom, and USAID in particular engaged Nigerian bishops as part of countering the persecution of Christians by Boko Haram.

- What is your assessment of the degree to which the persecution of Christians in Nigeria is a function of farmer-herder clashes vs. explanations that the persecution is driven by religious violence?

*Answer.* Nigeria's deep structural problems have manifested in various violent conflicts which have escalated across the country. As I witnessed in my trip in 2016 to the Boko Haram-affected regions of Cameroon, Nigeria, and Chad, while these conflicts may have been originally rooted in resource competition, which includes farmer-herder clashes, they have evolved over time to include targeted attacks based on religion or ethnic identity. The violence is exacerbated by the proliferation of illicit weapons and a weak state security architecture.

*Question.* Have USAID officials, including and especially those tasked with advancing IRF, engaged Nigeria's community of bishops since February 1, 2021?

*Answer.* I gather that USAID works closely with the State Department at U.S. Embassy Abuja to advance religious freedom. For example, in March 2021, USAID supported the U.S. Ambassador's participation in a major gathering of Nigerian Christian leaders hosted by Cardinal John Onaiyekan. This meeting followed a July 2020 roundtable hosted by USAID with senior Christian clerics, including bishops. USAID regularly engages with religious leaders and faith-based organizations across multiple sectors of programming to respond to the impacts of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria. In mid-March 2021, USAID met with leaders from the Christian Association of Nigeria, the Heads of Church Denominations, and the Dialogue, Reconciliation, and Peace Center.

*Question.* The Trump administration made a particular point of engaging churches and other faith organizations globally, and of increasing the amount of direct aid

that is disbursed through local churches rather than international aid agencies. The move was driven by several considerations, including concerns about corruption that is endemic to many such agencies, e.g. on March 19, 2021, the Department of Justice announced that the International Rescue Committee had agreed to pay \$6.9 million to settle allegations that it performed procurement fraud by engaging in collusive behavior and misconduct on programs funded by USAID. Critics of the policy have suggested that it entangles USAID in faith-based organizations in violation of USAID principles related to unbiased partnering and humanitarian principles.

- If confirmed, will you continue the Trump administration's policy of increasing the amount of direct aid disbursed through local churches? If not, why not?

Answer. Faith-based organizations are often the most trusted and deeply embedded groups in local communities. These organizations often serve remote, difficult to access communities and provide important social services, strengthen civic space, and ensure inclusive development. As I understand it, USAID has a robust history of engaging faith organizations to advance Agency goals and priorities. The Code of Federal Regulations (22 CFR 205.1) clarifies that faith organizations may compete for federal assistance funding on the same basis as other organizations, and that all funding decisions are made on the basis of merit, not religious or secular affiliation. If confirmed, I will support USAID's strong engagement with faith-based organizations, whenever and wherever appropriate, by ensuring field staff are equipped with the requisite skills and resources to advance development and humanitarian assistance goals.

*Question.* Do you believe that channeling aid through faith based organizations is in tension with USAID principles related to unbiased partnering or humanitarian principles? If so, please explain why.

Answer. Faith-based organizations are often the most trusted and deeply embedded groups in local communities. These organizations often serve remote, difficult to access communities and provide important social services, strengthen civic space, and ensure inclusive development and principled humanitarian assistance.

*Question.* Do you believe that channeling aid specifically through Nigerian Christian groups is in tension with USAID principles related to unbiased partnering and humanitarian principles? If so, please explain why.

Answer. Faith-based and community organizations are eligible to participate in USAID programs on the same basis as any other organization without regard to their religious character or affiliation. USAID humanitarian assistance is delivered solely on the basis of need regardless of political, religious, or other affiliation, in accordance with U.S. law and policy, and does not discriminate against nor favor one group over another. Delivering humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people, including ethnic and religious minorities, is central to our work in Nigeria and a core value of USAID's humanitarian efforts worldwide. USAID takes significant steps to ensure our assistance reaches those who need it most and does not jeopardize their safety.

#### *Israel*

*Question.* In recent years Congress has passed a range of legislation limiting assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and for activities that benefit the PA, e.g. the Taylor Force Act (TFA) (Title X of P.L. 115-141), which limits funding for activities that "directly benefit" the PA. TFA included certification language regarding a range of concerns related to PA policies and governance, including "payments for acts of terrorism against Israeli citizens and United States citizens." Part of the policy rationale for TFA's restrictions is that money is fungible: any aid that directly benefits the PA indirectly supports the PA's payments for acts of terrorism. Officials in the Biden administration have recently suggested that regardless of restrictions imposed by Congress the administration intends to pursue projects and increase assistance that "benefit[] ordinary Palestinians," implicitly in contrast to programs that would directly benefit the PA and therefore be noncompliant with TFA. Please describe your understanding of restrictions imposed by Congress on aid to the PA, especially your understanding of the distinction between aid that "directly benefits" the PA and other forms of aid.

- Can you commit that, if confirmed, you will ensure that USAID will not engage in projects or provide assistance for projects that directly benefit the PA?
- Can you commit that, if confirmed, you will ensure that USAID will not engage in projects or provide assistance for projects that are the same as, materially similar to, or successor projects to USAID projects and assistance that were suspended pursuant to TFA?

Answer. President Biden publicly supported passage of the Taylor Force Act, and he has never hesitated to condemn terrorism or incitement by Palestinian actors. He has made clear that this will continue during his administration. I appreciate Congressional concerns regarding U.S. aid that may benefit the PA and I can assure you that, if confirmed, USAID will continue to ensure that any provision of aid strictly adheres to relevant U.S. laws governing the provision of assistance in the West Bank and Gaza, including the Taylor Force Act. To comply with various legislative restrictions, including the Prisoner Payment Restriction (Section 7041(k)(3) of the FY 2020 SFOAA) and Taylor Force Act ( P.L. 115-141), USAID conducts case specific analysis to ensure that USAID assistance is neither “for” nor “directly benefiting” the PA, consistent with the requirements and exceptions set forth in relevant statutes.”

*Question.* The Obama-Biden administration’s approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict was justified on the basis of a theory of regional relations in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prevented broader Israeli-Arab rapprochement. Among other decisions, that administration implemented discriminatory policies that distinguished between Jewish communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967. That approach culminated in December 2016, when the Obama administration maneuvered the United Nations Security Council into passing UNSCR 2334, which among other things denied Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights and part of its capital Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter.

The Trump administration systematically worked to hollow out and render UNSCR 2334 null and void. They did so, including by recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, by moving our embassy to Jerusalem, by seeking to end discriminatory approaches that distinguished legally and for the purposes of aid and trade between different Israeli communities, and by taking several other steps.

- Can you commit to ensuring that USAID’s approach to Israel, including cooperative projects, will not distinguish or discriminate between Israeli communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967? If not, why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to advance the administration’s strong support for the U.S.-Israel relationship, as well as to enhance prospects for two states by working to responsibly restart humanitarian and development assistance in the West Bank and Gaza in compliance with all legal requirements, including the Taylor Force Act.

*Question.* Do you believe that a) Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?; b) Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem? c) Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem?; d) Israel is in illegal occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem?

Answer. The administration’s position is that our embassy will remain in Jerusalem, which we recognize as Israel’s capital. The administration has made clear that the ultimate status of Jerusalem is a final status issue which will need to be resolved by the parties in the context of direct negotiations. I agree that the current Syrian regime and its Iranian allies poses a significant security risk to Israel and that the Golan Heights is critically important to Israel’s security.

#### *Yemen*

*Question.* On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On February 5 the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. The issue of aid was central to the public explanation of the decision: officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the “broad” designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen’s population live under areas controlled by the group. Since then the Houthis have escalated their violence across the region, bombarding civilians in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Yemen was already one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the world, in large part because the Houthis and their Iranian backers block aid, steal aid, and attack civilians.

- Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

Answer. Iran’s support for the Houthis-and the Houthis use of food as a weapon of war-during the long-running conflict in Yemen has contributed to the gravest humanitarian crisis in the world. Moreover, I agree that Iran’s malign influence in the region, including in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, has clear destabilizing effects.

Iran's support for terrorism and human rights abuses threatens U.S. forces and partners in the region in places like Iraq and Lebanon and hinders our ability to provide humanitarian assistance in places like Yemen and Syria. The U.S. Government continues to call on all parties to implement a comprehensive, nationwide ceasefire in Yemen. The crisis in Yemen will only be resolved when all parties to the conflict agree to a durable and peaceful resolution to the conflict.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to deliver aid to Yemeni civilians in general.

*Answer.* The Houthis are far from benign actors, and their actions contribute to prolonging the suffering of the Yemeni people. However, the administration takes seriously the warnings from the U.N. and international humanitarian organizations that these designations could lead to a wide-scale famine. At the same time, the administration has been clear that it will not hesitate to apply pressure to push the Houthis to curb their abuses against the Yemeni people and to negotiate an end to the war. With the lifting of the terrorist sanctions, the U.S. can continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Yemen, and critical commercial trade, such as food and fuel, can flow freely. USAID has announced \$336 million in FY 2021 humanitarian funding that implementing partners can now use to provide lifesaving assistance to more than 13 million Yemenis. As this assistance moves forward, USAID will continuously monitor the Houthis' interference and our partners' access to populations in need to determine if our assistance is able to reach those for whom it is intended.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to deliver aid to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

*Answer.* As referenced in the prior question, Houthi operations in Yemen exacerbate the already-catastrophic humanitarian situation in Yemen, and the Houthi leadership should be held accountable for their actions. However, while seeking to counter Houthi conduct, we must also consider the highly credible voices urging the United States not to make the country's humanitarian crisis worse or make it even harder to end Yemen's civil war. The Biden administration's action has enabled the U.S. to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Yemenis, including to those affected by the recent escalation of conflict in Marib, and critical commercial trade, such as food and fuel, can resume.

#### *Classified Information*

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF.

- Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress by USAID is in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, USAID's classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

#### *U.S. Foreign Policy*

*Question.* U.S. foreign policy is a responsibility which cannot be delegated to foreign powers or international institutions. On the contrary, the weight of U.S. foreign policy comes in three parts from Congress: treaty ratification or rejection, domestic law that forms the basis for enforcing foreign policy positions, and the power over the purse.

- Do you agree that U.S. foreign policy is non-delegable to foreign powers, including international institutions, and that any enforcement of commitments made by the United States bilaterally or multilaterally must be authorized by Congress in the form of treaty ratification or domestic law?

*Answer.* I agree that the U.S. Government is solely responsible for conducting foreign policy on behalf of the American people, and that this responsibility cannot be



delegated outside the Government. Collaboration with other nations and private actors, including using platforms like international institutions, can be used to effectively implement U.S. foreign policy.

*Question.* In a 2003 piece for the New Republic you wrote, “And the American approach must cease its reliance on gratuitous unilateralism. We make rules and create international institutions precisely in order to bind states when their short-term interests would otherwise lead them toward defection. The United States is willing to bind itself to the World Trade Organization, because it knows it benefits more than any other country from free trade, but not to the ICC, because there is no good selfish reason to expose American citizens to external scrutiny. But the truth is that only U.S. resources and leadership can turn such institutions into forces for the international stability that is indispensable to U.S. security. Besides, giving up a pinch of sovereignty will not deprive the United States of the tremendous military and economic leverage it has at its disposal as a last resort.”

- Is it your view that the United States federal Government, through the resources of its taxpayers spent at international institutions, is responsible morally and legally for “international stability?”

*Answer.* The United States is not the world’s policeman. It is a critically important global leader and catalyst, and it has often used its resources and foreign policy tools to promote stability, development, democracy, and human rights, as well as to alleviate suffering in humanitarian contexts. As the COVID–19 pandemic demonstrates, the welfare of Americans is often connected to the fate of people living elsewhere. As a result, to take but one example, investments in global health security are investments in the security, prosperity, and overall well-being of the American people. In addition, when the United States works with partners and allies and succeeds in exerting its influence at the United Nations and other global forums, we can be more effective in countering malign actors such as China, Russia and Iran—who would like nothing more than to undermine the democratic values, human rights norms, and rules of the international system that benefit the American people and contribute to global stability.

*Question.* Additionally, is it your view that in joining multilateral institutions and international agreements outside the treaty ratification process and changes in domestic law by Congress, the United States only “gives up a pinch of sovereignty?” If yes, do you believe it is appropriate for the president to unilaterally cede sovereignty to a foreign power or international governing body?

*Answer.* The President should always act to advance what is best for the American people. I believe that foreign policy should be conducted in accordance with U.S. law. I also believe that Congress has an important voice and should be consulted in foreign policy deliberations including with respect to international agreements and engagement with multilateral institutions.

*Question.* You note in the same piece that the United States constitutes, “the very runaway state international law needs to contain.” Please elaborate on this view, and please specifically address how this view reconciles with the oath you will take if confirmed to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.”

*Answer.* This quote from eighteen years ago does not represent my view of the United States. I should not have used that language, especially because the article itself is an extended and passionate call for America’s moral leadership in the world.

In 2009, before I became NSC Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, I took the oath to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” It was one of the greatest honors of my life. I did so again in 2013 when I became U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. As a public servant, I have been a tireless advocate for American values around the world and a relentless defender of the United States at the U.N. and elsewhere, standing up to malign actors such as China, Russia, Venezuela, Iran, Syria, North Korea, and others who seek to undermine U.S. interests. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to determine how to be maximally effective in promoting and protecting the interests of the American people, drawing on the important tools that USAID can bring to bear to promote freedom and prosperity.

*Question.* Religious liberty is a foundational American value enshrined in our First Amendment. USAID policy should respect and affirm life and religious liberty at all stages of the program cycle. This includes adherence to, at minimum, the Siljander and Helms amendments.

- If confirmed, do you commit to following these provisions of law in crafting and implementing USAID policies, procedures, and programs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will follow the law and ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Helms and Siljander amendments.

*Food for Peace*

*Question.* Food aid delivered to people in need abroad under the Food for Peace program currently falls subject to a requirement that 50 percent of the commodities are transported on U.S. built, flagged, and crewed vessels. Unfortunately, this requirement results in higher shipping costs, limited availability of vessels or vessels not appropriately outfitted for carrying food aid, and less food arriving to people in need due to food spoilage. A 2018 GAO report estimates that “for each \$40-million increase in shipping costs, food aid reaches one-million fewer recipients each year.”

- Is it your view that cargo preference requirements prevent vital aid from reaching intended recipients in a timely manner?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to make USAID’s programming to combat rising food insecurity as effective and efficient as possible, and to build the resilience of vulnerable communities. Each of the food assistance modalities—U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming—complements the others in addressing food insecurity efficiently and effectively. At this time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, USAID’s ability to reach hungry people and improve the efficiency of our programs is of the utmost importance.

*Question.* Is it your view that USAID should be spending more of their resources allotted for Food for Peace on the aid products and commodities as opposed to transportation costs?

Answer. As USAID responds to an increasing number of complex and protracted humanitarian crises, the costs of providing emergency food assistance have unfortunately grown to reflect increased security and logistical needs. In FY 2020, USAID shipped more than 1.4 million metric tons of U.S.-grown agricultural commodities using Food for Peace Title II resources. Volatility in shipping costs is just one complex element USAID faces in the management of the Food for Peace Title II account as it responds to increasing food insecurity worldwide.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. SAMANTHA POWER BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* If you are confirmed, how will USAID contribute to efforts by the United States and our partner nations to counter the People’s Republic of China’s predatory and malign Belt and Road Initiative, including by bringing together governments, the private sector, and civil society to promote global infrastructure development. China’s Belt and Road Initiative uses predatory financing, debt-trap diplomacy, bribery, corruption, and other means to promote infrastructure projects in developing nations, with the goals of creating new markets for China’s “national champion” companies, capturing the loyalty of foreign government and business elites, and drawing developing nations—especially those in strategic locations or with strategically important resources—into Beijing’s geopolitical orbit.

Answer. Competition with China is one of the defining challenges of the 21st century for the United States. By advancing security, protecting global health, fighting climate change, strengthening democracy, and spurring equitable economic growth, USAID can play an integral role in helping the U.S. meet the challenges you have identified that are posed by the Belt and Road Initiative. The administration’s approach is to provide an alternative vision to Beijing’s—a vision that promotes democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership in our global development work. If confirmed, I will work aggressively to draw on America’s comparative advantages in distinguishing the U.S. approach from the PRC’s, by engaging directly with our partner countries and ensuring that good governance, sustainability, and social and economic safeguards are built into projects we support. USAID can strengthen local capacity to ensure that development investments are both beneficial and sustainable. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners, including at the DFC and in the private sector, to better leverage our collective resources and influence, and I will be an advocate for the highest human rights, governance, environmental, social, and labor standards in order to promote investments that are sustainable for the long term.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, how will USAID not only promote effective U.S. development assistance and humanitarian assistance, but also advance America’s

long-term competition with the Chinese Communist Party's broader malign influence and predatory efforts around the world?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China's (PRC) approach to development through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) raises deep concerns for me and many of USAID's partners. Projects connected to BRI have come under significant scrutiny on issues such as corruption; unsustainable debt; environmental degradation; preferencing of Chinese firms over local enterprises for construction contracts and jobs; lack of transparency and local consultations; and even worries about the potential erosion of sovereignty due to the unfavorable terms attached to certain projects. I share your conviction that USAID needs a far-reaching strategy that addresses the challenges posed by the BRI. There is no question that the frustrations many around the world have voiced with China's development practices provide an opportunity for the U.S. U.S. support for transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance gives us another advantage, especially in communities that have experienced repression and corruption. If confirmed, I will continue to promote human rights, democracy and transparency and I will ensure that USAID works with partners to better leverage our collective resources and influence for sustainable and beneficial development pursued in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, how will you support and strengthen USAID's commitment to combat religious persecution, which is all the more important after the State Department's recent determination of the Chinese Communist Party's genocide and crimes against humanity with respect to Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang? You have written extensively about the failure of past U.S. presidential administration to prevent and respond to genocide.

*Answer.* As you note, I have a longstanding commitment to human rights, and have seen firsthand how religious minorities are at risk of being targeted with atrocities. I also agree with you, President Biden, and experts who have studied the facts that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang.

While serving in the Obama administration, I advocated on behalf of Coptic Christians in Egypt who were experiencing violent attacks and met with Iraqi Christians while visiting Iraq to show support for their community. As Ambassador to the U.N., I used my platform to elevate the voices of religious minorities, such as by pushing for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a Sudanese woman sentenced to death for refusing to denounce her Christian faith. I also called for Sudan to repeal the laws that put her in jail in the first place. In addition, I worked with the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and others in the administration to seek recognition for ISIS's violence against the Yazidi people, Iraqi Christians, and Shiite Muslims as a genocide, which Secretary of State Kerry recognized in March of 2016. I gave a young Yazidi woman named Nadia Murad her first major public forum, inviting her to speak before the U.N. Security Council, after her family had been almost completely wiped out by ISIS and she had been forced into sexual slavery. USAID has a history of helping the world's most vulnerable people, and, if confirmed, I will invest in efforts to support communities persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith, and I will make it a priority to prevent and address ongoing violence and atrocities perpetrated against religious and ethnic minorities including Rohingya; Yazidis and Christians in Iraq, Syria and other parts of the Middle East; and Tigrayans.

*Question.* Do you believe that the People's Republic of China should be classified as a "developing country" at the World Trade Organization? China-as the world's second largest economy-is still classified as a "developing country" at the World Trade Organization.

*Answer.* No, I do not believe China should be classified as a "developing country." Indeed, by any number of measures, China today is a global economic powerhouse. China is already the world's largest trading nation, having surpassed the United States in 2013, and its investments in research and development are second only to those of the United States-having increased by more than 15 percent a year on average over the past two decades. And in 2020, half of the top ten largest public companies in the world were Chinese companies. If confirmed, I will work with Congress and the administration to counter China's tactics whether in global forums or at the country and regional level, including in Africa, Asia and the Western Hemisphere.

*Question.* What is your assessment of USAID's "Clear Choice" strategy under the last presidential administration? If you are confirmed, do you commit to continuing and improving USAID's "Clear Choice" strategy? As DevEx-a media platform that tracks the international development efforts-reported in December 2020, your predecessor, USAID Administrator Mark Green "spearheaded a broad agency strategy

called ‘Clear Choice,’ intended to denote that countries have a ‘clear choice’ between the U.S. and China when they consider investment partnerships for infrastructure and other development initiatives.” The “Clear Choice” strategy sought to better organize USAID’s regional and functional efforts on development and humanitarian assistance while also meeting the China Challenge and countering China’s malign influence, and better informing and coordinating with interagency partners in the U.S. Government.

*Answer.* I applaud former Administrator Mark Green’s efforts to proactively counter malign Chinese influence in international development. If confirmed, I will review and build on these efforts, and I will work with allies and partners to better leverage our collective resources and influence.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit to modernize the concept of foreign assistance to include also the development and adoption of next-generation telecommunications and mobile technology in partner nations that receive U.S. foreign assistance?

*Answer.* Digital tools hold immense potential to help people live freer and more prosperous lives. They also present significant risks to citizen privacy and data, freedom of the press, and individual expression. I gather that USAID’s work in this area builds upon the Agency’s twenty-five year legacy of bringing internet access points, strengthening national broadband strategies and universal service funds, and advancing multi-stakeholder models of internet governance to USAID partner countries around the world. Today, such efforts are more important than ever as the foundations of next-generation telecommunications technologies like 5G are developed and adopted by our partner countries to enable their citizens to participate in the digital economy and ultimately become more self-reliant. If confirmed, I will continue USAID’s commitment to open, inclusive, secure and competitive communications infrastructure and mobile technology, as outlined in USAID’s Digital Strategy.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, how will USAID use foreign assistance to help ensure that partner nations-especially those that receive U.S. foreign assistance-reject or move away from next-generation telecommunications and mobile technology from Huawei or other untrusted China-based vendors?

*Answer.* USAID is already addressing the challenges presented by untrusted vendors of mobile and next-generation telecommunications equipment. I understand that USAID provides developing countries with technical assistance to encourage reforms to related regulations and policies, including those that support secure networks, vendor diversity, and cybersecurity best practices. USAID programs also include work with civil society to bolster messaging for autonomy, security, and privacy in their telecoms sectors, and with the private sector to increase investment in and deployment of secure communications technologies. If confirmed, I will continue this commitment to next-generation telecommunications and mobile technology built upon trustworthy vendors.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit to supporting the Abraham Funds or similar development initiatives with other countries in the Middle East in order to advance U.S. national security interests, support the Abraham Accords, and promote further peace and regional economic cooperation between Israel and Arab nations?

*Answer.* President Biden rightly welcomed the Abraham Accords as an important contribution to peace in a divided region. If confirmed, I will join others in the Biden-Harris administration in efforts to build on these agreements to further strengthen cooperation between Israel and its neighbors and to encourage other Arab and Muslim countries to normalize relations with Israel. If confirmed, I will seek to take steps that advance the cause of peace, as well as Israel’s integration in the region and the world-something that I was able to make great headway on at the United Nations, securing Israel’s integration into important U.N. bodies from which it had been excluded, recognition of Yom Kippur as an official U.N. holiday, and the convening of the first-ever U.N. General Assembly session on antisemitism.

## NOMINATIONS

---

THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:12 a.m., in Room SD-106, Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Merkley, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, Paul, Cruz, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. Let me turn to—again to the second part of our business meeting or hearing. Before I do, I want to say that I understand the administration will be coming up next week to brief senators on the decision to withdraw from Afghanistan. This committee will also receive a classified briefing next Monday.

The administration, in my view, was dealt a terrible hand by the last administration on Afghanistan, manifested in a withdrawal agreement, then negotiated away all of our leverage with the Taliban. President Biden was left only with bad options. Most Senators would agree that the war in Afghanistan has gone on too long and that we want to see our troops home. But as I have said before, how we draw down matters, as does the political arrangement left in our wake. I have many questions. How can the U.S. maintain the capability to conduct counterterrorism operations in the region without a military presence in Afghanistan? What will this decision portend for the women of Afghanistan? Without a U.S. military presence, how long does our intelligence community think the Afghan Government can survive in the face of punishing Taliban attacks? So I look forward to these conversations next week.

Let me turn to our——

Senator RISCH. May I respond?

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely. The ranking member.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH, U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I concur in the questions that you have. I do not concur in the initial statement about the prior administration. There is no good answer to this. There are just questions. I think that at this point we should look forward rather than backwards, and I think we

should get answers to those questions and decide what—how we can assist in the path forward because that is the most important role we will play here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me turn to our two nominees, Ambassador Nuland and Ms. Zeya. Congratulations on your nominations, and our thanks to both of you for your willingness to return to the State Department and distinguished careers in the Foreign Service. At this pivotal moment for our foreign policy for democracy and for the State Department, I am heartened that President Biden nominated both of you. You are experienced and accomplished diplomats, and you have both demonstrated the strength and commitment necessary to defend our values.

The positions you have been nominated for—Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Undersecretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights—are among the most important in the Department. Ms. Zeya, I understand that the distinguished Senator from Virginia is going to introduce you this morning, so I will turn to him at this time. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and to members of the committee, it is a real honor for me to introduce a wonderful public servant, Uzra Zeya, the nominee for the post described by the chair. Virginia is one of the most connected States in the country to our military mission, but I am also proud that it is one of the most connected States to our diplomatic and development missions, with many diplomats and State Department staffers calling Virginia home.

Ms. Zeya is a 20-year Virginia resident. She is a distinguished diplomat and nonprofit leader who has dedicated virtually her entire adult life to public service, the advancement of human rights, and U.S. national security. The duty to serve runs in her family. She is here with her husband, Tom, a United States Marine. Together, they have more than 60 years of public service to the American public, which is just wonderful, and I love that we have got a diplomat and a military union in the household. That is a wonderful balance.

Ms. Zeya served five presidents, three Republicans and two Democrats, with distinction for 28 years as a Foreign Service officer on four continents. She is fluent in Arabic, French, and Spanish. She was Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, Democracy, and Labor. In that post, she led U.S. human rights dialogue with China, Egypt, and Bahrain, among others. She vigorously defended religious freedom around the globe and expanded public/private partnerships to advance LGBT equality and counter gender-based violence.

She was *chargé d'affaires* in Paris, and she led the U.S. response to, sadly, three major terror attacks in that city, took U.S.-French cooperation on counterterrorism and Russia to unprecedented levels, and elevated U.S. engagement against antisemitism and online hate. In India, she crafted a strategic partnership framework over a decade ago that still enjoys broad bipartisan support and today serves as the cornerstone of the U.S. Indo-Pacific engagement. She helped overcome India's longstanding aversion to external democracy promotion, and launched new bilateral initiatives to support gender equality in Afghanistan, and to support free and fair elec-

tions abroad. As a young human rights officer in Syria, she documented the brutality of the Assad regime and led U.S. outreach to Syria's minority, religious, and ethnic communities under siege. Since leaving the State Department, Ms. Zeya served for 2 years as CEO and president of the leading nonpartisan Peacebuilders Network where she worked to strengthen the evidence base for successful political transitions and support greater accountability for taxpayer-funded foreign assistance. She also drafted the Council on Foreign Relations report on revitalizing the State Department.

Ms. Zeya is a trailblazer. She is the proud daughter of Indian-American immigrants. She would be the first Asian-American woman to serve as an undersecretary of state, and I believe she is very, very well prepared to take on this post, and we are proud to support this exemplary Virginian. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kaine, for the robust endorsement of Ms. Zeya. Let me conclude. The State Department faces unprecedented challenges from restoring America's place in the world to managing the health and economic crisis created by COVID-19, and China and Russia is at the top of the list of foreign policy crises confronting America today. As you know well, Ambassador Nuland, the United States needs to act now to stop a resurgent Russia with Putin once again threatening Ukraine, continuing his attacks on our democracy, and threatening his grip on the Russian people and those who dare to oppose him. I want to applaud the administration for the actions that were announced today. They are robust. It is a type of action I would have wanted to see, and I look forward to their continuing engagement.

On China, we must both confront Chinese attempts to undermine democracy and human rights and compete with them economically. That is why I am pleased that Senator Risch and I have authored a bipartisan bill which will make the United States competitive with China, and provide us with a clear and coherent national security strategy on China. And while I look forward to a more in-depth discussion on Russia and China during our time for questions, I want to quickly highlight three additional policy areas: Iran, Turkey, and the Western Hemisphere.

Although I did not support the JCPOA, I felt strongly that the Trump administration's decision to withdraw without a coordinated diplomatic strategy would embolden Iran and leave us less safe, and Iran's behaviors only validated my predictions. I recently led a bipartisan letter supporting a diplomatic path forward, but let me be clear. That path must go beyond the scope of the JCPOA. I expect that this administration will pursue what the President and Secretary themselves have endorsed, a stronger and longer agreement, and I will expect you to provide the committee with details of any agreement and on exactly what "longer and stronger" means. Iran, not surprisingly, is seeking to control the timetable for these discussions by taking provocative actions against vessels in the Arabian Gulf and U.S. military facilities in Iraq.

In Turkey, President Erdogan got a free pass from the previous administration, and we are seeing the effects: the purchase of a Russian missile, systematic military aggression in Nagorno-Karabakh and Syria, bellicose actions against Greece and Cyprus. Long considered a NATO ally, Turkey seems to want to break with

us instead of being our partner now. Now, I do not agree with Erdogan's choice, but we have to begin to reorient ourselves in the Eastern Mediterranean towards democracies that share our values and our security interests. The administration has an important opportunity here, and I hope they seize it.

Finally, in our own hemisphere, we must strengthen our alliances and address forced migration. I am particularly concerned about the challenges Columbia, our top strategic partner in Latin America, currently faces, including the monumental task of implementing the 2016 Peace Accord, the violence related to drug trafficking, and the destabilizing influence of the Madura regime's crimes against humanity in Venezuela.

And, Ms. Zeya, I cannot close the day without raising a crisis that goes to the core of American values and American leadership: the state of democracy around the world. We are in the midst of a 15-year democratic recession. From Nicaragua to Hungary, democracy is marching backwards. Even worse, authoritarians are using the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to steamroll free and fair elections, independent media, and other hallmarks of democracy, and they have assumed that their violations will be met with little resistance. It is time for the United States to step up and speak out on democracy, and I expect that both of you will help lead the charge to restore democracy throughout the world.

At a time of unprecedented challenges around the world, America needs outstanding leadership at the State Department. I have no doubt that you are both up to that task, but I expect to hear from both of you today about how you plan to restore America's place in the world, repair democracy, and confront the immense challenges facing us.

With that, I turn to the ranking member for his opening comments.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. We all know that undersecretaries of state serve an important role at the Department. They are responsible for day-to-day management of and policy coordination for their respective bureaus, and we want to thank both of you for your willingness to serve in those capacities.

In the case of Ambassador Nuland's nomination to be undersecretary for political affairs, this role oversees all regional, bilateral, and multilateral policy issues for the Department. This is no small task obviously. While this position has a broad scope, there are a few specific areas of concern I would like to address today, the first of which, of course, is China. Next week, this committee will mark up the Strategic Competition Act. This legislation, introduced by Senator Menendez and myself, counters the Chinese Communist Party's malign influence globally, including by expanding the scope of the Committee on Foreign Investment and the United States' review of foreign money flowing into U.S. higher education institutions; advances concrete cooperation with allies and partners in technology, infrastructure, development, and defense; shines a light on China's predatory economic practices; pushes back on the Chinese Communist Party's influence at the U.N.; highlights China's growing nuclear missile capacities; and calls on President Biden to



assure our extended deterrence to allies and engage China in arms control talks.

These are just a few of the issues we face when it comes to strategic competition with China. The Biden administration's highest priority and ours here in Congress must be to prioritize resources and respond to the challenges posed by the Chinese Communist Party, as well as opportunities presented by expanded and concrete cooperation with allies and partners, especially in the Indo-Pacific region and in Europe.

I want to take this opportunity once again to thank the chairman and the majority party for the negotiations we have had on the China bill. I think this has been a very positive step forward, and it is certainly bipartisan. And obviously, as with all these kinds of things, there are parts of it that I am not in love with, but, on the other hand, it is always a give and take proposition to get where we want to go. I specifically want to thank the staffs of both of the majority and the minority for the give and take that they have entered into and the many hours they have spent negotiating the details of the many pages. I hope we can move this forward. I am a little bit concerned about the overall idea of taking this and wrapping it with six other committees who have ideas along this line. I think these are always difficult enough, but the more of those you wrap together, the more difficult it will be. So whatever happens, I hope we are able to move this bill forward in a bipartisan fashion.

Next, I would like to address the administration's ongoing desire to re-enter the failed JCPOA. Many of us on both sides in the Senate are closely following negotiations with the P5+1 in Vienna. I concur with the chairman that this is difficult. This is not an easy proposition. And at the outset, many of us are deeply concerned with the administration's promises to lengthen and strengthen. Unfortunately, it sounds like a bumper sticker, and, like the chairman, I am interested in hearing what the details are. Unfortunately, to me, it is starting to look a lot more like a straight re-entry into the 2015 deal, which is not acceptable to me and I think not acceptable to most members of this committee on both sides of the aisle. Discussions with the parties have led me to conclude that, and I hope I am wrong on this.

Negotiators have established working groups to address nuclear compliance and sanctions relief, but they have not established a working group on Iran's regional terrorism, something that a lot of us have repeatedly said must be addressed in any deal with Iran. Our national security interests on Iran must last longer than a single administration. If the administration chooses to continue on a path of straight re-entry into the nuclear deal, it will be short-lived. Either the next Republican administration will tear down the deal, or the nation most directly affected, who is remarkably always excluded from the deal, will take unilateral action, which will not end well. To avoid this outcome, the administration must seek bipartisan congressional support for any agreement with Iran. I am feeling that the administration is walking down a well-worn, partisan path that will repeat the mistakes of the original administration that entered into the deal. I hope I am wrong on all of this and all of us here who have a lot of experience in this will be listened to as we move forward.

In Europe, Russia remains a pressing concern. Although Russia is amassing tens of thousands of troops on Ukraine's border as we speak, they have still been allowed to continue construction of the malign Nord Stream 2 pipeline. And, Ambassador Nuland, I appreciate your candid discussion with me in that regard. Actually, in front of this committee, Secretary Blinken testified that he sees the pipeline as a bad deal and has told us that he would like to see it stopped. Yet despite having the power to stop it, we have not seen real action, and I am very disappointed in this. He was personally handed, by myself and other members of this committee, a vetted list of people who need to be sanctioned.

I am not happy with what has happened. They keep telling us that, well, they need to vet this and prepare a case so that when they put the sanctions on, they can be prepared to do it at Court. I have told them, no, you do not. You have probable cause on every one of those people that we have put in front of you, and you need to sanction them. Now, when you go to Court, you need lawyers that have a case well prepared, but there is probable cause on every one of these to be sanctioned that will shut down the pipeline.

The committee drafted and pushed through legislation on a bipartisan basis to prevent the completion. We continue to be concerned by the administration's refusal to fully implement the law and sanction all parties—all parties—involved in the construction of the pipeline. It is past time that the administration take meaningful action on this issue.

I would remind everyone, on day one of this administration, they stopped the XL pipeline, on day one. They have in hand direction from this Congress on a bipartisan basis to do the same thing on a Russian pipeline. If we are going to put American workers out of work, we ought to put the Russian workers out of work on the Nord Stream pipeline. Many on this committee bemoan the previous administration's posture on Russia. What is clear is that the Trump administration was tougher on them than the present Biden administration has been so far.

Next, we have Ms. Zeya's nomination to be undersecretary of state for civilian security, democracy, and human rights. This position is tasked with a broad functional portfolio, which encompasses human rights, counterterrorism, refugees, migration, and trafficking in persons. We must continue to lead on the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights around the world, not just because those democratic values form the core of our values as a Nation, but also because they lead to stronger partnerships with other nations. I know virtually every member of this committee agrees with me on that proposition.

With regard to the rule of law, I share the administration's concern about the International Criminal Court's decision to investigate U.S. personnel in Afghanistan and Israeli actions in the Palestinian territories. It is completely unacceptable that the ICC has decided to pursue cases clearly outside of their jurisdiction. The Department must continue its efforts to protect our personnel from these politically-motivated efforts.

Again, I thank you both for being here today and your willingness to serve, and your family's willingness to undertake the sacrifices necessary to do so. With that, thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch. We will now turn to our two nominees. We ask you to summarize your statements in about 5 minutes or so, so we can have a conversation with you. Your full statements will be included in the record. We welcome your family members who may be with you either virtually or presently. We understand that it is a family affair. There are sacrifices that are made by all in this process, and we appreciate the willingness of your family members as well as yourselves to make the sacrifice. With that, let me turn to Ambassador Nuland.

**STATEMENT OF HON. VICTORIA NULAND, OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (POLITICAL AFFAIRS)**

Ambassador NULAND. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and the members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I also want to thank my husband, Bob Kagan, and my kids, Lanie and David, for their love and their wise counsel. Bob and David are with me today. Lanie is studying for her law exams.

It is a huge honor to be nominated by President Biden and Secretary Blinken to serve as undersecretary of state for political affairs. If confirmed, I will rejoin the profession and the Department that I love, determined every day to strengthen America's capacity to protect our freedom, our security, and our prosperity. And I will support Secretary Blinken in his vision to re-energize American diplomacy, to strengthen our alliances and partnerships, and to build the closest possible collaboration with this committee and with both houses of Congress.

Over 32 years in the Foreign Service, I have served five presidents and nine secretaries of state from both Republican and Democratic administrations. That experience taught me that America is at its strongest when our foreign policy enjoys broad bipartisan support both in Washington and at kitchen tables across America, and the move that you have made together on a bipartisan China bill is really important in that regard.

The CHAIRMAN. Could I just ask you to turn—move your microphone closer to you? It is a little difficult.

Ambassador NULAND. Is that better?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, thank you.

Ambassador NULAND. Okay. My foreign service career was full of adventures, and challenges, and historic moments, from my first tour in Guangzhou, China in 1985, to watching the Soviet flag come down and the Russian flag go up over Red Square in 1991, to being at NATO when it invoked Article 5, an attack on one is an attack on all, 20 years ago in solidarity after the Twin Towers fell. And, of course, I had the opportunity to work closely with many of you in this room, both when I was ambassador in NATO in the Bush administration, and as assistant secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs in the Obama administration. I take pride that, together, we built strong bipartisan approaches to pol-

icy, and many members of this committee and the Senate contributed with their own travel and diplomacy.

Today, our Nation faces a confluence of challenges as daunting as at any time in my professional life. China, under Xi Jinping, does not simply want to compete with us, it wants to dominate the international system and change its rules to benefit autocrats and undercut freedom around the world. Putin's Russia has deployed its fighters and weapons on almost every continent and accelerated its disinformation, election interference, and snuff campaigns against its opponents. Iran is again enriching uranium at 20 percent, while continuing to destabilize its neighborhood from Syria, to Yemen, to Lebanon, to Iraq. ISIS and Al-Qaeda are weakened, but they are not defeated, and too many of the world's citizens are suffering under corrupt and/or illegitimate leaders with blood on their hands. Add to this the urgent global challenges we share: restoring global health and security, tackling climate change, and building our democracies and economies back better with more equity and more justice.

If confirmed as undersecretary of state for political affairs, my job will be threefold; first, to take on any negotiations or diplomatic assignments and management issues that the Secretary deems necessary; second, to oversee the work of the regional bureaus and the Bureau of International Organizations, ensuring that this orchestra of talent plays in harmony; and third, to maintain the closest coordination with fellow political directors around the world, especially in allied and partner capitals, to build communities of common action.

If confirmed, I will also be the senior lifer in the State Department. The President and Secretary Blinken have pledged to respect and empower our great workforce and to have their backs. That was also a powerful motivator for me to return to service to help revitalize and modernize American diplomacy. We must give our foreign, and civil service, and local employees more professional opportunities, support, training, career flexibility, and better technology, while strengthening diversity at all levels of the Department.

I am also animated every day by a firm belief that America is safer and stronger when we lead. As Secretary Blinken has said, the alternatives are far worse, a chaotic vacuum or a global takeover by the enemies of freedom. I also share President Biden's conviction that we are at a global inflection point. Democracy will and must prevail, but democracy does not happen by accident. We have to defend it, we have to fight for it, strengthen it, and renew it. If confirmed, it will be the honor of a lifetime to play my part in that effort.

I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Nuland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. VICTORIA NULAND

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I also want to thank my husband, Bob Kagan and my kids, Leni and David, for their love, their wise counsel and the sacrifices they made as a foreign service family.

It is a huge honor to be nominated by President Biden and Secretary Blinken to serve as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. If confirmed, I will rejoin the profession and the Department that I love, determined every day to strengthen America's capacity to protect our freedom, our security and our prosperity. And I will support Secretary Blinken in his vision to reenergize American diplomacy; strengthen our alliances and partnerships; and build the closest possible collaboration with this committee and both houses of Congress.

Over thirty-two years in the Foreign Service, I served five Presidents and nine Secretaries of State from both Republican and Democratic administrations. That experience taught me that America is at its strongest when our foreign policy enjoys broad bipartisan support both in Washington and at kitchen tables across America. President Biden and his team have pledged to lead a foreign policy that represents and benefits the American people. This will require more listening, more consultation with each of you, and with American business, workers, and committed citizens across our country. If confirmed, I look forward to doing as much hard work at home as abroad.

My foreign service career was full of adventures, challenges and historic moments:

- From my first tour in Guangzhou, China in 1985 when our relationship seemed to have so much promise;
- To watching the Soviet flag come down and the Russian flag go up over Red Square in 1991;
- To working on tough arms control problems and conflicts from Rwanda to Haiti to Bosnia and Kosovo;
- Too serving as Deputy Chief of Mission at NATO when our great Alliance invoked Article 5—an attack on one is an attack on all—in solidarity with the United States the day after the twin towers fell.

And, of course, I had the opportunity to work closely with many of you when I was Ambassador to NATO in the Bush administration and Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs in the Obama administration. Together, we built strong bipartisan approaches to policy, and many members of the Senate contributed with their own travel and diplomacy.

Today, our nation faces a confluence of challenges as daunting as at any time in my professional life. China, under Xi Jinping, does not simply want to compete with us; it wants to dominate the international system and change its rules to benefit autocrats and undercut democracy and freedom around the world. Putin's Russia has deployed its fighters and weapons on almost every continent and accelerated its disinformation, election interference, and snuff campaigns against opponents. Iran is enriching uranium at 20 percent again, while continuing to destabilize its neighborhood from Syria to Yemen to Lebanon and Iraq. ISIS and AQ are weakened but not defeated. And too many of the world's citizens are suffering under corrupt and/or illegitimate leaders with blood on their hands. Add to this the urgent global challenges we share: restoring global health security, tackling climate change, and building our democracies and economies back better, with more equity and justice.

If confirmed as Under Secretary of State, my job will be three-fold:

- First, to take on any negotiations, diplomatic assignments or management issues that the Secretary deems necessary;
- Second, to oversee the work of the regional bureaus and Bureau of International Organization Affairs, ensuring this orchestra of talent plays in harmony, not at cross purposes;
- And third, to maintain close coordination with fellow Political Directors around the world, especially in allied and partner capitals, to build communities of common action to meet today's challenges.

If confirmed, I will also be the senior "lifer" in the State Department. The President and Secretary Blinken have pledged to respect and empower our great workforce, and to have their backs. That is a powerful motivator for me to return to service—to help revitalize and modernize American diplomacy. We must give our Foreign and Civil Service personnel and local employees more professional opportunities, support, training, career flexibility, and better technology while strengthening diversity at all levels of the Department. For years, the State Department scored the highest among government agencies for workforce satisfaction. I believe it can and will again.

I am also animated every day by a firm belief that America is safer and stronger when we lead. As Secretary Blinken has said, the alternatives are far worse: a chaotic vacuum or a global take-over by the enemies of freedom. I share President Biden's conviction that we are at a global "inflection point"—"democracy will and

must prevail . but democracy doesn't happen by accident. We have to defend it, fight for it, strengthen it, renew it.”

If confirmed, it will be the honor of a lifetime to play my part in that effort. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Zeya?

**STATEMENT OF UZRA ZEYA, OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE  
AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (CIVILIAN SECURITY, DEMOCRACY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS)**

Ms. ZEYA. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, Senator Kaine for your kind words, and distinguished committee members. It is also the honor of my lifetime to be President Biden's nominee as undersecretary of state for civilian security, democracy, and human rights. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I also want to thank those who made my journey here possible: my husband, Tom, for always having my back and his decades of service to our Nation as a U.S. Marine and civilian. I also want to thank our two children, Kiera and Lexi, who could not be here today, but whose idealism never ceases to inspire me. Ours is a family rooted in public service and the advancement of freedom. For my father-in-law, a World War II veteran who fought tyranny on the shores of Okinawa; to my grandfather, a freedom fighter in India's quest for independence; to my mother, whose own education was cut short by marriage at the age of 16, and invested all her brilliance in raising four independent-minded, opinionated daughters to seize opportunities never afforded to her. I thank my parents, brother, and sisters for their solidarity in joining virtually today.

In today's disrupted world, the work of the State Department's "J" family of bureaus and offices has never been more important. Authoritarianism, violent antisemitism, islamophobia, and xenophobia are on the rise as the world enters the 15th year of a democratic recession. The Chinese Government is perpetrating genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, strangling autonomy in Hong Kong, and repressing Tibetans, Christians, and other religious and ethnic minorities. Global human displacement is at record levels while the scourge of human trafficking is ever present and while terrorists expand their lethal reach from Africa to South Asia.

Recognizing the enormity and complexity of the task ahead, I would like to emphasize three core areas where, if confirmed, I would gladly partner with all of you to address. First, the United States needs to take on the China challenge from a position of strength, rooted in human rights and our democratic values. Having led U.S.-China human rights dialogues, I know the severe repression that has only grown more acute under the CCP. I have met with courageous Chinese human rights activists and their families, gave voice to their concerns at the United Nations, and demanded the release of Chinese prisoners of conscience who put their quest for liberty above their personal welfare. I am proud to have been banned on Weibo for denouncing systematic Chinese human rights abuses in Beijing in 2013. We also must continue to

press China on synthetic opioids, which have killed far too many Americans.

Second, we must defend and renew democracy at home in tandem with allies and partners. We are stronger when we work together to address not only China's human rights abuses and Russia's efforts to undermine Western democracies, but also rising corruption, disinformation, hate crimes, cyberthreats, and violent extremist movements. If confirmed, I will leverage decades of experience from Europe to South Asia, shoring up alliances in service of shared democratic values, and champion administration initiatives, such as the Quad Summit and the planned Democracy Summit. I am strongly committed to using tools developed by Congress, such as the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act and the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act to target human rights violators, human traffickers, and kleptocrats, and to encourage parallel action by allies and partners.

Third, we need more integrated, inclusive, and effective foreign policies and programs that deliver for the American people. If confirmed, I would build on my experiences inside and outside government to ensure that our assistance and policies have measurable impact and help support reliable rights respecting burden-sharing partners for the United States. To this end, I will support meaningful implementation of key bipartisan legislation, such as the Global Fragility Act, the Child Soldiers Protection Act, and the Women, Peace, and Security Act. And with the devastating impact of COVID-19, we need to ensure that humanitarian assistance and diplomacy work in tandem towards promoting prevention, self-reliance, and durable solutions.

And finally, with research showing that diverse organizations produce greater impact and innovation, I will gladly champion Secretary Blinken's effort to build a more diverse and inclusive State Department, especially with respect to the "J" family workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here and potentially return to public service. If confirmed, I will work intensively with all of the members of this committee on policies that seek to deliver greater peace, security, and prosperity for the American people. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Zeya follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF UZRA ZEYA

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished Committee Members. It is the honor of my lifetime to be President Biden's nominee for Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I also want to thank those who made my journey here possible: my husband, Tom, for being here today and his decades of service to our Nation as a U.S. Marine and civilian. I also want to thank our two children, Kira and Lexi, who could not be here today but whose idealism never ceases to inspire me.

Ours is a family rooted in public service and the advancement of freedom—from my father-in-law, a World War II veteran who battled tyranny at Okinawa; to my grandfather, a freedom fighter in India's quest for independence; to my mother, whose education was cut short by marriage at the age of 16, so she invested her brilliance in raising four independent-minded and opinionated daughters to seize opportunities never afforded her. I thank my parents, brother, and sisters for their solidarity in joining virtually today.

In today's disrupted world, the work of the State Department's "J family" of bureaus and offices to advance civilian security, democracy, and human rights has never been more important. Authoritarianism, violent anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and xenophobia are on the rise worldwide, with a global democratic recession entering its fifteenth year. The Chinese Government is perpetrating genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang while strangling autonomy in Hong Kong and continuing to suppress Tibetans, Christians, and other religious and ethnic minorities. Global human displacement is at the highest levels ever recorded and the scourge of human slavery is ever present, while terrorists expand their lethal reach from Africa to South Asia.

Recognizing the enormity and complexity of the task ahead, I'd like to emphasize three core areas where—if confirmed—I would partner with members of this committee to address:

*First*, the United States needs to take on the China challenge—what Secretary Blinken has called our greatest geostrategic test—from a position of strength, anchored in America's support for human rights and democratic values. Having led U.S.-China human rights dialogues, I know the severe repression of human rights in China that has grown even more acute. I met with courageous Chinese human rights activists and their family members, gave voice to their concerns at the United Nations, and demanded the release of Chinese prisoners of conscience who put their quest for liberty above their personal welfare. I am proud to have been banned on Weibo—a state-controlled social media platform—for denouncing systematic Chinese human rights abuses in 2013. We also must continue to press China on synthetic opioids, which have killed too many Americans.

*Second*, we must defend and renew democracy at home and abroad, in tandem with allies, the "force multipliers" for our national security. We are stronger when we work together with democratic allies and partners to address not only China's human rights abuses and Russia's malign efforts to undermine Western democracies, but also rising corruption, disinformation, hate crimes, cyber threats, and violent extremist movements. If confirmed, I will leverage decades of experience, from Europe to South Asia, shoring up alliances and partnerships in service of shared, democratic values, and champion Biden-Harris administration efforts to empower democratic partnerships, such as the Quad Summit and the planned Democracy Summit. I am strongly committed to using tools developed by Congress, such as the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act and the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, to target human rights violators, human traffickers, and kleptocrats—and to encourage parallel actions by allies and partners.

*Third*, we need more integrated, inclusive, and effective foreign policies and programs that deliver for the American people. If confirmed, I would build upon my experiences inside and outside government, most recently as CEO of a non-partisan global peacebuilders' network. We must be careful stewards of taxpayer dollars while ensuring our policies and assistance have a measurable impact and help support reliable, rights-respecting, burden-sharing partners for the United States. In consultation with Congress, we must also exercise greater leadership to implement bipartisan legislation such as the Global Fragility Act, the Child Soldiers Prevention Act, and the Women, Peace, and Security Act. And with the impact of COVID-19, we need to ensure that humanitarian assistance and diplomacy work in tandem towards promoting prevention, self-reliance, and durable solutions.

*Finally*, research shows diverse organizations produce more impactful and innovative results. If confirmed, I will champion a more diverse and inclusive State Department, especially with respect to the talented, 1,000-plus J family workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. If confirmed, I will work with members of this committee on policies that seek to deliver greater peace, security, and prosperity for the American people. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much to both of you, and we will start a round of 5 minutes questioning.

Ambassador Nuland, I appreciate your leadership over the years in countering Kremlin malign influence. I do not think they were very happy to hear of your nomination, which is a good thing, but a lot has changed since you were in government. Thanks to Congress, we have the CAATSA law, which forced the last administration to take some sanctions measures. However, the last administration also ignored key mandatory provisions in CAATSA and did



little to galvanize our friends in Europe to counter Russian aggression in all of its forms. So what specific new measures would you recommend the Biden administration take to build cohesion among our European allies to show a united front against Kremlin aggression?

Ambassador NULAND. Thank you, Chairman, and thank you for your leadership on this issue. I am going to guess you are right about Kremlin's attitude to today's proceedings. I think we made a very important step today with the strong package of sanctions and measures that the President announced, including, very importantly, constraining Russia's access to our financial markets, to hold them to account for the SolarWinds attack, and other things. I think you have also seen that the administration has already been working hard to align with allies and partners when it moves on Russia. For example, the sanctions that were imposed after Navalny's arrest in February were matched in Europe and in other parts of the world.

I agree with you completely that the U.S. can confront Russia alone, but that is not the smart policy, and we are far stronger when we do it together. I was very pleased to see Chancellor Merkel, for example, issue a parallel, very strong warning to President Putin with regard to his aggression in and around Ukraine and the buildup of forces. That is the kind of thing we need to do, and we need to continue to build sanctions packages together so that the costs are borne born equally, and we highlight what Russia is doing collectively.

The CHAIRMAN. Can we count on you to robustly implement the CAATSA law?

Ambassador NULAND. Absolutely, as well as Global Magnitsky, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me turn to China, which we collectively agree is probably biggest strategic challenge whether it is the broader Indo-Pacific region, getting that right, which I think is the way in which we ultimately face the China challenge correctly, or the previous administration, which I welcomed the Trump administration's clarification of our legal position on China's unlawful claims in the South China Sea. How do you intend to be part of implementing a new approach that we know that such claims are not self-enforcing? It is critical that we make a legal position of reality, not just rhetoric in the South China Sea, among other things. How do you see your role in that regard?

Ambassador NULAND. Well, Mr. Chairman, I agree with you, and, as I said in the opening, China is not just competing with us. It wants to change the rules of the global system. This is the challenge of our time, and having strong bipartisan consensus, not just in this committee, but across the Congress and across the country, makes us stronger. So does investing in our strength at home. But as you have said, and as we talked about with regard to Russia, doing this in tandem and addressing all of China's issues in tandem with our allies and partners is absolutely essential.

So we have to build a coalition of allies and partners to combat unfair trade practices, to the aggressive security policies of China in the South China Sea and in the Taiwan Straits, the cybersecurity, disinformation, all of these things, and protect against a PRC

takeover of international organizations. I am particularly gratified to see more countries joining us, as you said, in the South China Sea with freedom of navigation patrols, et cetera, and we need to take this new quad and build on it, and get Europe and other parts of the world more involved.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador NULAND. If confirmed, obviously every bureau that I will oversee will have to play a very strong role in our China policy, and I would be responsible for weaving that into everything that we do.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Ms. Zeya, let me ask you one last question. The previous administration, in my view, deprioritized human rights and weakened U.S. credibility on this important value. From abdicating our role in the Human Rights Council to failing to call out dictators' human rights abuses, the previous administration disregarded one of the most critical pillars, in my view, of U.S. foreign policy. Can you speak to the importance of U.S. leadership on human rights in terms of our values and interests, and will you make it a priority to ensure that we are working to hold both our allies and our adversaries to the same standards on human rights?

Ms. ZEYA. Thank you, Senator, for your leadership on bipartisan human rights issues as seen in the Strategic Competition Act, and I think it is a very pertinent question. I would commend the administration's approach to reasserting U.S. leadership on human rights by reclaiming an American seat at the table. I think the U.S. decision to rejoin the recent Human Rights Council session and to seek reelection to the Human Rights Council reflects its commitment to make the aspiration of centering human rights and democratic values in our foreign policy a reality.

I would say that they are doing this eyes wide open, recognizing many of the endemic flaws within the Human Rights Council itself, starting with the fact that you have almost a who is who of the world's worst human rights violators as members of that grouping. But I think even within the session that just took place where the U.S. was an observer, we are seeing the positive impact of American engagement and leadership.

And, you know, one of the very important issues that I would continue to focus on is working to eliminate pervasive anti-Israel bias in the U.N. At the just concluded Human Rights Council session, they were able to reduce the number of agenda items for Article 7. You know, the only country in the world is Israel in having a specific agenda inclusion in that fashion. And also work with like-minded partners on issues like Sri Lanka, Belarus, Iran, on so many of the core concerns of this committee, and I would work to expand and sustain that leadership.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, Ms. Nuland, I want to talk about the JCPOA for a moment. Look, all of us have been through this exasperating exercise now for many, many, many years. Can you give me your thoughts on how we can get together on this, the administration and Congress? I mean, words alone cannot explain to you how frustrated we were in dealing with the negotiators the last time as they dealt with

Iran. Totally ignored everything we asked them to do, and then came back and wanted us to agree to what they had agreed to. How are we going to work through this? Help me out here.

Ambassador NULAND. Senator Risch, I agree with you 100 percent that whatever agreements we reach with Iran need to be supported in a bipartisan fashion, not only on this committee, but across the Congress and across America, and, you know, that will ensure that they are binding across administrations and for the long term. So we have to do our job and consult at every phase, and hear your ideas and incorporate them, and use your expertise and the expertise that we have on this committee and throughout the Congress.

We also have to get on with the job because as we sit here, Iran is now enriching again at 20 percent. It is deploying IR2 centrifuges again. Its breakout time has shortened. So, you know, first job, get them back in the box, and then together define what “longer and stronger” means, and work together as we go through these negotiations.

You know, I think you know from our time together working on Ukraine, we built that policy together, and it was enduring because of that. And if confirmed, I would pledge to be here as often as we need to be to ensure that we all support what is going—what is happening.

Senator RISCH. Well, I appreciate that. One of the things that strikes me, and I have just become so disgusted with this over the years. I have listened very carefully to the nation that is most directly affected by what happens with Iran’s nuclear ambitions, and they are very clear that it does not matter what kind of an agreement you make, they are going to take care of themselves. And so, look, however we go forward in this, they have got to be brought into the fold here to come along because they do not believe they are bound by this. They believe that their existence depends on Iran not having a nuclear weapon, and they are going to see that they do not, regardless of what the agreement says. So this is an issue that really has to be addressed.

And the question I keep asking the administration is, what happens when you get the call, because that is going to be the question. What do we do when we get the call? And so I think that is something that is obviously appropriate for a closed session, but somebody has got to answer that question.

In any event, let’s talk for just a minute. Well, my time is running out. Let me, again, express my frustration on the U.N. Human Rights Council. I understand all the criticism that was given to the last administration for getting up and walking out of the Council. Frankly, I was not as shocked as a lot of people were. I do not know how you sit at a table with—Ms. Zeya, as you indicated, you are sitting around a table with the who is who of human rights violators on the planet, and how do you talk to these people? How do you say to them, you guys got to behave yourself even a little bit more, and they are telling us mind your own business, you know, we will handle our things internally. How do you handle that?

Ms. ZEYA. Senator, I share your concern and even frustration over that issue, but I think it is a question of tactics where U.S.

disengagement from the multilateral system leaves a vacuum that others are very gladly there to fill, starting with China, but also Russia and other countries allied to basically entirely distort the framework of universal human rights, arguments of sovereignty, to reject any notion of international scrutiny or accountability for human rights violations.

So I think the United States needs to be there, but I think the critical element as well, as I cited, is really leveraging our alliances and partnerships, something that China and Russia do not have and does not compare, as a force multiplier to basically integrate universal human rights and our democratic values to make bodies like the Human Rights Council much more effective, and upholding the mission that they were set out to pursue.

Senator RISCH. Well, thank you. That is really good description of what they do and their malign activities, but I think the general statement that we want to make things better, as you talked about it, getting them to move forward on this, I wish you well. I really, really do. But, boy, I will tell you, watching what they have done and how they defend it, I am sure not optimistic in that regard. But I wish you well, and we will support you every way we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me thank both Ambassador Nuland and Ms. Zeya for your public service, your incredible record to our country, and your willingness to continue. And I also want to express my thanks to your family for putting up with public service. It is not always easy, so thank you both.

You both have mentioned that our foreign policy mission must be defined by our values, and I agree completely with that. I have listened to President Biden express that on several occasions as well as Secretary of State Blinken. Both of you mentioned Global Magnitsky, and I am pleased that you underscored the importance of that particular statute that was passed by Congress and incorporated in an executive order by the President. You might be aware that there is a limitation on that, a sunset clause, and there is legislation to remove that sunset clause. And I take it we will have your support for making clear that that statute needs to be made permanent by Congress.

Ms. ZEYA. Yes, Senator. Absolutely.

Ambassador NULAND. Absolutely.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I got both of your answers. Thanks. Appreciate that. And, Ambassador Nuland, I want to just underscore your point about President Biden's action taken against Russia. It was not only a decisive action, as it was. It was very clear on its findings, which was refreshing to see the President of United States be very clear about Russia's accountability under Mr. Putin in regards to incursions on borders of other countries, in regards to the treatment of Mr. Navalny, in regards to interference in our cybersecurity, all those. It was a very clear finding, so that was refreshing to see. So knowing your record, it looks like the President is following in your footsteps about being very direct about issues, and we appreciate that very much.

I also want to underscore the point that both of you made, that we have to engage our allies. If we are going to be effective in our foreign policy objectives, it is not only having bipartisan support here in Congress. It is having the support of like-minded countries, and that requires effort, and we have done that in regards to the sanctions under Global Magnitsky. We have gotten more and more countries to go along with us, but I think we need to do more of those, that type of outreach.

Ms. ZEYA, I want to just mention one area that is under your portfolio, and that is trafficking in persons. We have a pretty clear statute on trafficking in persons. It is pretty objective findings as to what tier a country would find itself. But we have had problems under previous administrations where political considerations interfered with the objective findings of countries because of other bilateral considerations. Do we have your commitment that you will maintain the integrity of the TIP reports so that it is based solely on the facts and not interfered with by other politics?

Ms. ZEYA. Yes, Senator. Absolutely.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. And I use that as an example because there is legislation that I hope will move in this Congress that will use that model for dealing with anti-corruption activities in countries. All countries have problems with trafficking. All countries have problems with corruption. Many of the issues that you have talked to, the root problem is corruption. Mr. Putin does what he does because he gets a lot of money. Oligarchs support his operations, his corruption, and we need to increase the capacity in our country missions to evaluate the corruption situations as we did with trafficking, and then evaluate and use that for foreign policy considerations, and that legislation does exactly that. So can I have both of your commitments to work with us on passing legislation that would use the trafficking model to deal with corruption so that we have capacity in each of our mission countries to deal with corruption in those countries?

Ms. ZEYA. Yes, Senator. I confirm to consult with you and would certainly support the elevation of U.S. anti-corruption efforts, and view corruption as both a violation of human rights, a means to sustain autocracy, as well as an inherent danger to democracies.

Ambassador NULAND. Senator, same from me. Corruption is a country killer. It is also a tool of malign outside actors. I think we have got to do a better job of pulling together the tools of government to help countries attack corruption, so combining the efforts of the State Department, intelligence services, Treasury, Justice into a fusion, and we can do that off the embassy platforms, but we also have to train and educate and support our officers out in the field better. And if confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. My last point—it is not a question—is that, dealing with diversity in the State Department is a very high priority, and I know both of you have mentioned that. Recognize that you have support in the Senate to advance diversity within the Department of State. We have—it is a challenge because we are looking for senior positions as well as entry positions, and I hope that you will work with us on a strategy as to how we can improve the record of diversity within the State Department.

Ms. ZEYA. Yes, I will.

Ambassador NULAND. Absolutely.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin, and I think you have spoken to the ranking member as well. We look forward in the near future to have your legislation on corruption, which I understand is bipartisan, for a markup soon.

I am going to see if we have some of our colleagues virtually. Senator Paul?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Senator Cruz?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hagerty?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Then as we wait for them to get connected, let me turn to Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to both of you on your nominations. And thank you both for your willingness to come back into the State Department and continue your public service, which has been admirable on both counts.

Ambassador Nuland, I have expressed disappointment in the President's decision to set the September deadline in Afghanistan to remove all of our troops. Given that we have a very limited time there, is there anything that we should be looking for in terms of benchmarks that we should try and reach before that September deadline?

Ambassador NULAND. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your long commitment to Afghanistan, and particularly to the women of Afghanistan. As you mentioned, when we prepare for the U.S. redeployment of forces, that puts an emphasis even more strongly on the diplomatic aspects of our work and on the embassy as the platform for that. So we have really got to bear down on this peace process and on bolstering civilian, and economic, and humanitarian assistance programs, and particularly those that protect the gains that have been made, and the gains of women and human rights, Afghan people. We have got to, as the President has pledged to do, expand and expedite special immigrant visas for those Afghans who helped us. We have got to ensure that, as we find a new place to stage our counterterrorism efforts, that we are successful in the diplomacy to establish that, but also in their ability to deploy as needed. I think we also have to look at our embassy platform, particularly when we do not have military security around it.

So I would expect we are going to be coming back to this committee and to the Congress as a whole for more support, and particularly also to get you involved in the diplomacy. I know that has been something you have been willing to do in the past, so watch this space. Thanks.

Senator SHAHEEN. And can you expand a little bit on post-withdrawal strategy with respect to how we can continue to support the gains that women and girls have made in Afghanistan?

Ambassador NULAND. Well, Senator, I want to be careful here because I obviously——

Senator SHAHEEN. Assuming you have been confirmed.

Ambassador NULAND. Yes. Yeah. I was not part of the deliberations, but, as you know, we have very robust support programs, assistance programs, and civilian training programs for women and girls both in Afghanistan and outside. I think we need to ensure that our allies and partners are also contributing to that effort. And we have to hold the Afghan Government and the Taliban to account for their commitments in this regard, and it needs to be a fundamental measure of whether Afghanistan is making progress or retaining the gains or sliding backwards.

Senator SHAHEEN. Ms. Zeya, I appreciate your mentioning the Women Peace and Security Act in your opening remarks. I think it is a very important tool that we have, and I was disappointed that it was not used by the previous administration in Afghanistan as they were negotiating with the Taliban. But can you talk about how you will work with the Office of Global Women's Issues, if you are confirmed, to ensure that the "J" family is aligned with the gender concerns of GWI and the GPC?

Ms. ZEYA. Absolutely, Senator, and I want to thank you for your leadership on building bipartisan consensus for, you know, greater women's empowerment and ultimately achieving women, peace, and security goals. And I think the Afghanistan example is critical, as you discussed with Ambassador Nuland. I would say, from my own perspective, I think it is very important with this decision for the U.S. to continue to strongly support increased women's participation in the peace process. As you are well aware, women's participation in peace processes, most of which fail, you know, by record of history, makes them 35 percent more likely to last 15 years or more. This is critical, I think, at the inflection point we find ourselves.

It is also critical to take an integrated approach in the State Department. I think since the GWI Office was created, and, you know, it has been a bipartisan effort with important progress made, it is really critical to recognize this is not the work of one office. So if confirmed, I would certainly seek to further integrate gender equality across the full spectrum of "J" family activity, obviously on democracy and human rights, but also on issues like counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, and, quite obviously, trafficking in persons. So this work is too important, it is too enormous for anyone office to accomplish alone, and I certainly would seek to leverage the talent and expertise in the "J" family to make WPS goals a reality. And I think we have a critical task ahead of us in Afghanistan to make that possible.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you both very much. If you are confirmed, and I assume you will be, I look forward to working with you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen. Thank you for your leadership on global women's issues. With that, I understand now that Senator Hagerty is with us virtually?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much. I have a question for Ms. Zeya, please. Ms. Zeya, this is a matter of deep concern to me. It is a serious problem in my home State of Tennessee. December 1st, 2018, President Xi promised then-President Trump to halt the

export of fentanyl and all of the ingredients used to make fentanyl. Since that promise was made, we have had over 100,000 American lives lost to synthetic opioids, directly traceable to CCP-produced fentanyl. If I think about it, America has done a great job, in the current administration and the administration that preceded it, in dealing with the COVID-19 situation, but there is no vaccine for the addiction to fentanyl that we are experiencing at the hands of communist China. Can you tell me what your plan is to address this and to hold President Xi to his promise made in December of 2018?

Ms. ZEYA. Thank you, Senator, for raising a critically-important issue, and I just want to express my own concern for the welfare of your constituents, and this was one of the reasons I raised this point in my opening remarks. And as you recounted, I think there was progress made under the previous administration where China agreed to implement controls and schedule fentanyl analogs, but sadly, what happened is we saw transnational criminal organizations adapt and basically shift to using precursor chemicals from China, negating the gains from the previous effort, which was the result of considerable U.S. diplomacy and negotiation. So I absolutely believe that the Chinese Government can and must do more to hold its citizens and companies accountable that are supplying these precursors to transnational criminal organizations in Mexico and elsewhere.

I think the United States needs to take a whole-of-government approach where the State Department, our embassy in Beijing, plays a very important role, but we also need to work with the Department of Homeland Security, DEA, and DOJ, to take on the Chinese Government's willful ignorance on this issue and to really prioritize saving the lives. As you mentioned, the record numbers of American losses due to opioid-related overdoses is unacceptable, and this is something I would intend to prioritize if confirmed.

Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate your prioritization of that, and I would also underscore the fact that our border has become far more porous at Mexico, and that is where this fentanyl is coming in and being produced in mass quantities. I was just back in my home State of Tennessee talking with sheriffs, with mayors, and what they have told me is something I think is probably being experienced across America. There has been a huge uptick in the number of overdoses since the borders collapsed after the 20th of January. So this situation has become even more critical at this point, and very much appreciate your attention to it.

Ms. ZEYA. Thank you, Senator, for sharing that information, and I will certainly work to prioritize that in the work of the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau, and I know this remains a significant priority in terms of our counter-narcotics engagement with Mexico.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Ms. Zeya. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Next is Senator Kaine, and there is a vote that is ongoing. It is the intention of the chair to work through the vote, so I would urge members to possibly vote and return. The order I have in order of appearance is—and, course, we will flip back and forth to the extent that there are members on



the other side who are available. It is Senator Kaine, Senator Merkley. I do not know if they will be here, but Senator Schatz, Senator Van Hollen, Senator Coons, Senator Booker, and Senator Murphy. That is the order I have. With that, Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Great to see both of you, and congratulations on your nominations. Ambassador Nuland, briefly, I am about to reintroduce a bill that this committee acted on last year but that never saw action on the floor that would clarify that no President can withdraw unilaterally from NATO without congressional action. NATO is a Senate-affirmed treaty. I view this as a statement of congressional prerogative, but also just simply an effort to demonstrate to our NATO allies that congressional support for the alliance's near 75 years is still very, very strong. You have a lot of experience with our NATO allies. Would they see that statement of strong intent from Congress in a positive light?

Ambassador NULAND. Thanks, Senator Kaine. When you introduced it last year, you could hear the huzzahs on the other side of the Atlantic. I think there was quite a lot of concern. And, you know, I also think that it is really interesting that over the last 3 years, public opinion polling on the United States with regard to NATO has gone up to record levels over the last 20 years. You know, Americans want to work with allies and partners, so I think you are reflecting the bipartisan commitment to our great alliance as well across the country. So I commend you.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. And when that bill was acted on by the committee last year, just to specify, it was a very bipartisan vote. It was bipartisan in introduction. The version that we will introduce, again, is very bipartisan. Ms. Zeya, thank you for the conversation that we had the other day. One of the issues I would like to ask you about is the issue of the refugee cap. The past administration dramatically scaled back U.S. acceptance of refugees, and the Biden administration sort of in its campaign and earlier today said we wanted to kind of return more to the norm where the U.S. was accepting refugees who go through a careful vetting process because our Nation has been such a haven for those seeking refuge from circumstances that are just nearly unspeakable. Tell me, is it your understanding that it is still the administration's intent to revert back to a norm on refugee admission? Some of us are a little bit discouraged at the timing and pacing of that, but please let us know what the administration's plans are, to your knowledge.

Ms. ZEYA. Thank you, Senator. I can assure you that I strongly support President Biden's public commitment to raise the ceiling for refugee admissions to 125,000 for fiscal year 2022. Now, as a nominee I am not privy to policy discussions that are under way, but I know that the President is committed to regrowing this program and doing it in the most effective, orderly, and humane way possible. So if confirmed, I will do everything in my power to make this a reality.

Senator KAINE. My surmise is that when the past administration cut the program down so dramatically in terms of the admissions, they may have also reassigned staff who were working on vetting and other issues. And so I do not think we want to just go back to the number without having the staff to make sure the program is run well, so I think we would all understand if it takes a while

to get back to the norm. But should you be confirmed, we would really love your reporting to us about the progress toward that, recognizing it is not just a State Department issue, but multiple agencies work on this, and we would love to be in dialogue with you about that going forward.

Human rights questions, I cannot think of anybody whose background is better suited than yours to dealing with these tough human rights issues. And one of the things that, you know, I have often found on this committee in dealing with human rights issues is, it is one thing to raise them against adversaries, you know, what is happening with the Uyghurs in China, what is happening with Hong Kong pro-democracy activists, and we need to be muscular in raising this with adversaries, but it is one of the most difficult sets of human rights issues when you are dealing with allies. And, you know, whether it is a—we have had an alliance with Saudi Arabia, we have an alliance with Egypt, but we run into significant human rights challenges with them.

And when you raise human rights issues with an ally, one of the stock responses we used to hear from the past administration, but not just them, from others, is, well, if you push us too hard on human rights, of course, we will just buy our arms or do our, you know, diplomatic activities with Russia or others. Just talk about how we balance aggressive promotion of our human rights values with this sort of oft-repeated threat that, well, if you push us, we will deal with countries that are not interested in human rights.

Ms. ZEYA. Thank you, Senator, for raising, you know, what is a challenging and a critically-important issue, this issue of consistency with respect to centering human rights and democratic values in our foreign policy. And in this case, the way I see it, the administration is absolutely committed to democratic renewal at home and abroad. And what this means is it is important, as we seek to shore up our alliances and partnerships, for us to hold one another accountable. And ultimately, I think we have seen how a selective U.S. approach to human rights, one that only targets U.S. competitors or adversaries, ultimately undermines U.S. credibility and leadership. So I can pledge to you, if confirmed, I would work very closely with Ambassador Nuland, with counterparts in regional bureaus, our 270 missions in the field, to strike the right balance and to make sure that we are truly centering human rights and democratic values in our foreign policy.

I think that the initiative of the Democracy Summit, which the President is committed to, is a very important one where we can help carry a concrete agenda forward on issues like corruption, countering rising authoritarianism, and really defending human rights at home and abroad.

Senator KAINE. Thank you much. I am over my time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I just want to echo Senator Kaine's concern about the presidential declaration on refugees. There is a difference between refugee resettlement and the question of those who seek asylum at our border. They are fundamentally different, and they should not be conflated, and I do hope and I believe the President is committed to that, but the sooner he signs the declara-

tion, the greater the crystallization of that commitment will be realized. So thank you.

I am not sure if there are any members presently waiting virtually. If you are, please speak up at this time.

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. I am not hearing any. I do understand that Senator Coons is coming back and there is another member on his way. So let me take advantage of the time to ask one or two questions that I had intended to wait to the end.

Ambassador, Azerbaijan's attack on the Armenian people last fall with Turkey's full support was, in my view, an unspeakable tragedy. The absence of top-level United States diplomacy throughout the war was inexcusable, and we have to prevent it from repeating in the future. I also believe the U.S. must press Azerbaijan to release the prisoner of war numbers that it has, which it is refusing to release them, in violation of international law, and to ensure that the Armenians displaced from their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh get the assistance they need. So if you are confirmed, will you commit to advocating for robust humanitarian assistance, including de-mining funds, to help the Armenians in the South Caucasus who have been displaced from their homes or otherwise affected by Azerbaijan's attack? And secondly, what can we do to revitalize the OSCE Minsk Group and create a more sustainable peace process?

Ambassador NULAND. Absolutely. Mr. Chairman, I think you know that I have worked on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh issues for some 25 years, and the way things went down last year was absolutely tragic for so many in the region. So as you say, we have to get prisoners released. We have to get humanitarian support back in. We have to ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Armenia and that it can make its own decisions, and we have to talk to our ally, Turkey.

You know, the Secretary has spoken about needing to be clear eyed regarding trends in Turkey. I think we have got a lot of work to do there in our bilateral relationship to make clear our concerns about not only what Turkey is doing outside its country, but also what it is doing inside its country. So I think we have got to get back into the business of strong support for the Caucasus countries, being active diplomatically, getting high-level leadership there, showing support, et cetera, and using all of our economic and humanitarian tools.

The CHAIRMAN. And I hope we will be a strong advocate for getting POWs back. I mean, it is just in violation of international law.

Ambassador NULAND. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, let me turn to Senator Cruz.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to both the nominees. Congratulations on your nominations. I have enjoyed conversations with both of you in my office.

Ms. Nuland, I want to turn to a topic that is not going to surprise you, and it is a topic we have discussed at great length, and that is Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline. I have deep concerns that the Biden administration is on the verge of squandering what was an enormous bipartisan victory won by this committee, by Congress, and the previous administration last year. Nord Stream 2

was 90 percent complete when Congress passed bipartisan sanctions that I authored, along with Senator Shaheen, that stopped the pipeline in its tracks, immediately stopped the pipeline for a year.

Russia has begun again building the pipeline. It did so in the weeks following Joe Biden's election, and it did so because Russia believes the Biden administration is not going to follow the law, that they are not going to enforce the bipartisan sanctions that have passed now both houses of Congress with the chairman's support, with the support of virtually every member of this committee, passed twice now, sanctions targeting Nord Stream 2. And yet there are voices within the Biden administration that I think are arguing not to enforce the law and enforce the sanctions.

Ms. Nuland, in your judgment, can you assess the damage to American national security and to the energy security of our European allies if the Nord Stream 2 pipeline is completed?

Ambassador NULAND. Senator Cruz, thank you for your leadership on this issue. We did have a robust conversation about this, and we also worked on the energy security together when I was in the European assistant secretary job. Look, this is not just a bad deal for Germany and Europe. It violates their own climate policy, their energy policy to go greener. It deepens their dependence on Russia just at a time when Moscow is rearming around and inside Ukraine and when they are letting Navalny wither in prison. So I want to thank you for the tools you, and this committee, and this Congress have given us. I think we need to use all the tools at our disposal to stop this pipeline before it is finished. We need to press the German Government to do the same.

As I said earlier, I was very pleased to see a strong statement from Chancellor Merkel warning President Putin about his arming in Ukraine. Nothing would send a stronger signal to him than the cancellation of this pipeline, and I think we have got to make that point. And if confirmed, it will be a top early priority of mine.

Senator CRUZ. So if you are confirmed, what steps would you anticipate taking to stop the completion of Nord Stream 2?

Ambassador NULAND. I understand there are sanctions packages in development, some of them based on information that has been provided and circulated from the Congress. I think we have to accelerate the sanctions packages. I also think we have to be much clearer and stronger with our German allies that this is a matter of bipartisan concern across the United States, and it is taking Germany in the wrong direction in terms of its relationship with Russia. And all of us together now need to stand up to an increasingly aggressive Putin. So lots to do.

Senator CRUZ. So I very much agree with you. I also think time is of the essence. The Russians are trying to jam through and finish this pipeline before the administration takes action. As you know, I have tried to work with the administration, using both carrot and stick, to prompt the administration to comply with the law and use the tools that are available. I appreciated Secretary of State Blinken putting out a strong statement on Nord Stream 2. And, as you know, because you were in the room when we negotiated that agreement in my office, that in exchange for that statement, I lifted two holds that I had placed on nominees from this

administration. I very much hope to lift other holds as well, but the agreement that we worked out was designed to be incremental and staged, and in order for the next set of holds to be lifted, we need to see sanctions on the entities responsible for Nord Stream 2.

And the Biden State Department has indicated that those would be forthcoming, but they have not been, and I will say there are reports of ongoing resistance within the administration to doing so. If that resistance manifests in delays that will turn into an unequivocal win for Putin, a loss for Europe, and a loss for America. And so let me urge the administration to honor the commitments that it has made, follow the law, and issue the sanctions that are mandatory under law. We can stop this pipeline. We have stopped this pipeline, and it is only the signals of weakness and a willingness to disregard the law that have enticed Russia into returning once again to building the pipeline. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand Senator Van Hollen is online with us virtually.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, and let me thank both of our witnesses here today. Ambassador Nuland, let me start with you. I was pleased to see President Biden impose sanctions yesterday and today on Russia given Putin's continuing aggression, given their cyberattacks on the United States, including on our democracy and in working to interfere in our elections. And, of course, we see increased aggressive activity in eastern Ukraine from Putin.

Meanwhile, the chairman mentioned in his opening statement a number of actions being taken by one of our allies, Turkey. Under President Erdogan, Turkey has purchased the advanced air defense system, the S400, from Russia. Turkey has violated the airspace of another NATO ally, Greece, and invaded the territorial waters of Cyprus. Under Erdogan, they have attacked our Syrian Kurdish allies who were critical to our fight against ISIS, additional measures taken in Armenia, so this does not sound like a faithful NATO ally to me. Can you talk about how you and the administration propose to deal with the challenges we are facing now under President Erdogan's Turkey?

Ambassador NULAND. Thank you, Senator Van Hollen. I agree with you that this is a very challenging allied relationship that is going to require a whole lot more work. As I said to the chairman, I agree with the Secretary. We have got to be clear eyed and firm about it. It makes zero sense to me that a NATO ally is buying new Russian weapons systems. It is also a matter of bipartisan concern across the United States. We need to continue to press Turkey on this issue, as well as all of the other issues that we have together, and we have got to—you know, including democracy and human rights inside the country, freedom of the press. We have got to get on the same page together with regard to Syria and Libya, and, as we talked about earlier, Nagorno-Karabakh.

And, more broadly, I think we have got to start a conversation in NATO about backsliding on our values among allies. The United State is far from perfect itself as we all know, but it is very important that we all recommit at that table to the things that make us strongest, and, particularly, in the context of a rise of autocracy and illiberalism across the world. NATO allies have to stand for

freedom, democracy, and governments that serve their people. So if confirmed, I look forward to rolling up sleeves, getting back to Ankara, and having these conversations.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you. I was also pleased to see the Biden administration, first of all, reaffirm our ironclad commitment to the security of Israel and, you know, deepen those ties even further. And also I was pleased to see them reaffirm what had been longtime bipartisan support for a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians. There are a lot of people who think it is too late for a two-state solution given the changes on the ground in the territories and other factors. Do you believe it is too late, and, if not, what needs to be done to ensure that we preserve the option of a viable two-state solution?

Ambassador NULAND. Thanks, Senator. It remains profoundly in U.S. national interests to support a two-state solution. As you know, Senator, it is going to require willing and ready partners on both sides in the Israeli context where, again, in a government formation period in the Palestinian Authority, there needs to be will as well. And in the meantime, we need to ensure that both Israel and the PA refrain from any unilateral steps that could exacerbate tensions and make it harder to get to a two-state solution.

I think the United States has got to remain a steady partner and continue to say to both Israel and the Palestinian Authority that this is the best path for peace, so. I think that is where we have got to go. And I think it is important that the National Security Council is running almost weekly sessions with Israeli counterparts, particularly in this period of transition in Israel, to keep us connected not only on these issues, but on Iran and other vital issues in the region.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. Mr. Chairman, I know I have run out of time. I will submit my questions for our other witness, and congratulations to both of you on your nominations.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Van Hollen. Chairman Menendez has gone to the floor to vote. As you both, as seasoned public servants, know, the schedule of the Senate is not entirely predictable, so for those watching and may be surprised that I just popped in—Senator Coons—I am sitting in for a few moments for the chairman as he goes to vote.

Thank you so much, Ambassador Nuland, Ms. Zeya, for your willingness to serve our Nation again and for the support and love that your family and your circle of supporters have offered throughout your decades of service. I look forward to working with both of you to address the many foreign policy challenges facing our country, how to build a bipartisan China strategy, something I am really encouraged about progress being made here by Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch and their staff. There is bipartisan legislation being introduced that will be marked up next week. I am very excited about that and look forward to joining as a sponsor and supporting their work on that; the work to address Iran's nuclear program and other threats regionally from the Islamic Republic, efforts to support stability in the Middle East while avoiding additional long-term entanglements, efforts to push back on and contain the malign influence of the Russian Government. There are so many challenges, I could take all of 5 minutes in sum-

marizing them, and I hope we will get to work closely together on prioritizing human rights, defending democracy, revitalizing the State Department, confronting shortcomings in workforce diversity, and others.

Let me just ask both of you, if I could, about the Global Fragility Act. Ms. Zeya you were kind enough to reference it in your opening remarks. This is a tool provided by Congress on a bipartisan basis, I helped co-author, to address the root causes of extremism and violence in fragile countries. Will you commit to reviewing it, and to promptly selecting the priority countries for the Global Fragility Act, and submitting a revised strategy that takes into account the post-COVID context?

Ms. ZEYA. Yes, absolutely, Senator.

Ambassador NULAND. I think one of the fun things here, if we are both confirmed, is that we would work on these issues together because it will obviously cross the remits of both of our jobs, so looking forward to it.

Senator COONS. It is my hope and expectation we will use this tool to balance assistance around security, democracy, human rights, and to make sure that between diplomacy development and defense, we have got the order right.

The Moscow Bureau of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty is under intense pressure, really under siege by the Kremlin, just one of many recent examples of an authoritarian crackdown on press freedoms around the world. How would you support, if confirmed our RFE/RL's efforts to ensure that Russian citizens have access to unbiased news about their own country, and what actions would you take to support free press around the world? If I might, Ms. Zeya.

Ms. ZEYA. Senator, I think it is critical for, you know, for the United States to take a whole-of-government approach on these issues. So certainly, if confirmed, I would work closely with the undersecretary for public diplomacy as well as USAGM on this critical closing space for civil society and free expression in Russia that is critical to holding the Putin Government accountable for their widespread violations of human rights. So I would look to work with partners in government as well as the mission in the field to elevate this issue and act accordingly.

Senator COONS. Thank you. Ambassador Nuland on press freedom broadly?

Ambassador NULAND. Yeah, just to pile on, Senator, and thank you for raising RFE/RL. I agree with you that they are at a critical moment here. Really interestingly, I think one of the reasons the Kremlin is cracking down is because listenership and viewership at RFE/RL has gone up exponentially over the last recent years, and not just in Russia, but also in Belarus and other parts of the world where press is constrained. So one of the things that Moscow understands is reciprocity. If confirmed, I would be interested in looking at whether we are being reciprocally constraining with regard to RT Sputnik and other Russian Government organs. Press freedom is an absolutely essential human right and part of good governance around the world.

I would just lay down a marker here that I am also concerned about press freedom in the NATO space. We have a number of allies backsliding here, and it is very important that we keep that

front of agenda. And we also have a number of American companies that, you know, broadcast freely in these countries, and their ability to do that is being constrained by government. So a lot of work to do.

Senator COONS. I introduced a bipartisan Libya Stabilization Act in the last Congress and recently reintroduced it. This would support a diplomatic resolution to the ongoing grinding conflict in Libya, a country where there are 280,000 IDPs and 570,000 refugees. What additional action should we be taking to ensure that elections actually take place in December of this year and to enable the Government to be successful, and would movement by this committee on a bill like the Libya Stabilization Act be constructive? Ambassador Nuland, if you might.

Ambassador NULAND. Absolutely. We have a sliver of light now in Libya with these elections, agreed, and we have got to ensure that they are free, fair, that they are internationally observed. This is a place where, again, working with allies and partners, Europeans obviously, but countries in the—in the region to support Libya as it goes forward with all of this, we may need more resources to do that. I, you know, if confirmed, look forward to opening up the hood and seeing what we are already doing and working with allies and partners to ensure that the Libyan people feel that support and get this chance that they have suffered so much for.

Senator COONS. Any additional comments before I turn to my colleague, Senator Murphy?

Ms. ZEYA. Senator, I would just add on Libya, endorsing Ambassador Nuland's comments, I think we should also leverage all tools available, including U.N. and U.S. Government sanctions, to bring an end to foreign military intervention, hold violators of human rights accountable, and ultimately support the goal of a sovereign, stable unified Libya.

Senator COONS. Wonderful. Thank you both. Let me now turn to my colleague, Senator Murphy of Connecticut.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Senator Coons. Welcome to you both. Thank you for your willingness to serve once again. Ms. Zeya, I look forward to building a working relationship with you. To Ambassador Nuland, I am glad to have you back as a partner. I will tell you, your candor and your reputation for candor, we appreciate it here on the Foreign Relations Committee. We often get a lot of spin from administration officials on both sides of the aisle, but I think you are well respected here on both sides of the aisle because of your ability and willingness to talk to us about facts on the ground as they are, not as we wish. So great to see you again.

Speaking of facts on the ground, I wanted to bring us back to the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, and just note a statement from the Saudi foreign ministry dated yesterday or today in which an official there said we can begin with a nuclear deal and move on to another format that we will discuss all these other issues in a positive manner. Some folks took note of that statement, but it, frankly, likely acknowledges two realities: one, that our partners in the Gulf would like to be at the table when we discuss broader regional security concerns, in particular, Iran's support for terrorist organizations or their ballistic missile program, but also, that it is



much more likely to have that conversation constructively if we get back into the JCPOA and get back on the same page with the P5+1.

And so I wanted to ask you whether you think that the likelihood of getting a comprehensive agreement, where we litigate all of our disputes with Iran, is more likely today than it was in 2013, 2014, and 2015, when we were negotiating the JCPOA.

Ambassador NULAND. Senator Murphy, it is great to see you. Although I am a citizen in Senator Kaine's region at the moment, I grew up in Connecticut, so Connecticut strong. Look, on Iran, I think we have got to pursue all of these problems in tandem. Whether that is a question of a comprehensive agreement, I think there are many players in many different pieces of this. What is most urgent today is that Iran is breaking out again of its nuclear box. It is enriching at 20 percent. It is using these advanced centrifuges. We have got to get them back in the box on the nuclear front. But at the same time, we can and should be countering their malign regional influence by being stronger diplomatically in Syria.

I have concerns that the diplomatic table, the future of Syria's political structure, et cetera, is being run by Russia and Iran, and the United States needs to be more active there. We need to support Lebanon more strongly against malign Iranian influence, and I was glad to see the undersecretary for political affairs, David Hale, make a trip to Lebanon. You have worked a lot on the Yemen issue.

So I believe we can be working on Iran's malign influence at the same time that we are having these conversations about the nuclear problem, and, frankly, the players are different in some of those things. And we have also got to build the basis for people to understand better than they do now what Iran is doing on the missile front. So walk and chew gum would be my answer to your question.

Senator MURPHY. Yeah, so I agree that our goal should be to walk and chew gum at the same time. Do you think we have to be driven by realities on the ground? And I, for instance, do not believe that we are going to be able to make progress in Yemen while we are still outside of the JCPOA. I think while we are still engaged in maximum pressure, the Iranians are likely to use every opportunity they can find to provoke. And so I do think that there is some argument to sequence here, and I will continue to make that argument on this committee.

In the remaining time I have left, I just wanted to turn to the subject that you and I have spent a lot of time working on together, and that is Ukraine. Obviously, you know, we have taken strong steps today to send a strong message to the Russians about the message we need to send regarding the array of Russian forces on the border. But it has always been, I think, our belief that while Russia wants to use that front in order to put pressure on the Ukrainian Government, their longer-term plan is not likely a full military takeover of Ukraine, but to try to politically and economically weaken that country to the point where they ultimately just make the decision to install pro-Russian or a Russia-friendly government again.

And so I would just ask this question. It is still incredibly important for us to view this as a multi-systemic effort that, while we have to have a military answer and support Ukraine in a military way, we also have to be equally focused on supporting their economy, supporting their political reform agenda, because that is maybe the most likely mechanism for Russia to eventually get a state of affairs that aligns with their interests.

Ambassador NULAND. I absolutely agree completely, and, you know, your leadership on Ukraine was essential the last time I was in government, and the fact that you continue to support Ukraine is important. The number one thing Ukraine needs to be a strong, stable, sovereign state is to tackle endemic corruption. The United States has put a huge amount of effort into that, but corruption is also a tool that the Kremlin uses to corrode Ukraine from the inside and by governments, et cetera. So it is in all of our interests to continue to work on those issues.

And the Zelensky Government has taken some important steps in recent weeks, but there is a lot more to be done. And we also need to get—support them and getting back into alignment with the IMF and all of those things that you have worked on. And the strong support from the Congress for Ukraine has been important, but they need to take the steps to walk the walk.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you. Thank you to you both. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. My understanding is there are no members seeking recognition on either side of the aisle, and with that, thanks to both nominees for their time today.

The record will remain open until the close of business on Friday, April the 16th. I would urge the nominees to answer questions expeditiously in order for their nominations to be able to move forward to a business meeting.

The CHAIRMAN. And with that, the committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:47 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

## Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR ROBERT  
MENEDEZ

*Question.* Too often, regional bureaus have sidelined DRL and other essential functional bureaus. If confirmed, how will you ensure better consultation and coordination between DRL, other functional bureaus, and the regional bureaus you will lead as P?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will emphasize to the regional bureaus under my supervision, as well as to the functional bureaus, that the President's vision of placing human rights and democracy at the heart of the foreign policy of the United States necessitates full inclusion of DRL in the Department's policy-making processes. I intend, if confirmed, to work with the Under Secretary for Civilian Security and Human Rights, and with DRL's leadership, to ensure

full policy coordination among regional bureaus and across the Department.

*Question.* What actions will you take, including with our partners, to address the global forced migration crisis? How specifically will you work to address the root causes of displacement such as new and unresolved conflicts; support populations on the move and those enduring lengthy displacement; and seek innovative solutions to assist low-income countries who host the majority of refugees and displaced people around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will pursue comprehensive strategies for addressing the root causes of migration, including climate change, help rebuild the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, and stand up for democratic values and human rights. I will also encourage stronger partnerships between humanitarian and development actors, including multilateral development banks, in situations of protracted displacement and fragility, conflict, and violence.

*Question.* Do you think we are doing enough to counter threats to democracy right now? What more should the United States be doing, and how will you elevate the importance of democracy promotion efforts and a democracy-centered foreign policy within the State Department and abroad given the President and Secretary of State's public commitment to these goals?

*Answer.* As President Biden said, "The United States will stand up for democracy wherever it is under attack." We know well from our own experience that sustaining democracy requires hard work, careful stewardship, and constant vigilance. If confirmed, I intend to support the Biden Harris administration's commitment to putting the promotion and protection of democracy at the center of U.S. foreign policy. This means working to bolster democratic resilience at home and abroad, and holding ourselves, our allies, and our partners accountable to promote, respect, and defend human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* What shifts must be made in our foreign policy to ensure we are working to hold our allies and adversaries to the same standard on human rights? How will you prioritize this parity in expectations on upholding human rights?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the tradition of seeking to report the facts on human rights fully and objectively on every country in the Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, using the standards found in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. I also intend to raise human rights issues with allies and adversaries alike, regardless of the other interests we may have in our relationships with other countries.

*Question.* How will you engage with international counterparts to pursue effective accountability measures to address violations and abuses of human rights around the world? What role do you believe multilateral bodies like the United Nations have in this endeavor?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to ensuring that the United Nations promotes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and holds those countries with the worst human rights records to account. The United States supports U.N. investigatory mechanisms designed to enhance accountability for human

rights violations and to end impunity. If confirmed, I will consider all possible tools and actions to promote accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and abuses.

*Question.* We must be clear-eyed about the nature of President Erdogan's Turkey. Turkey is among the top jailers of journalists and lawyers in the world, which is unbelievable for a member of an alliance founded on democratic values. In addition to its many domestic abuses, Turkey's aggression throughout the region and its refusal to give up the S-400 underscore the fact that Turkey is not a reliable NATO ally. How the U.S. decides to define its relationship with Turkey is critically important to security in the region and our ability to support democratic values abroad. Is there any circumstance under which the U.S. should reconstitute the F35 program with Turkey if it does not get rid of its S-400 system?

*Answer.* President Biden has promised to call out Turkish behavior that is inconsistent with its commitments as a NATO Ally. Turkey's acquisition of the Russian-made S-400 was incompatible with NATO principles, Turkey's commitments to NATO, and its participation in the F-35 program, and thus resulted in Turkey's suspension and pending removal from the global F-35 Joint Strike Fighter partnership. If confirmed, I will continue to press Turkey to abandon the S-400 system, and I would not support reconstitution of the F-35 program so long as Turkey retains the Russian system.

*Question.* What is your position on the Cyprus question, in advance of 5+1 talks next month?

*Answer.* I continue to support a Cypriot-led comprehensive settlement to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicomunal federation, something which would benefit all Cypriots as well as the wider region. The United States has welcomed and should stand ready to assist the U.N. Secretary-General's initiative to convene an informal 5+UN meeting in Geneva. Consistent with the October 2020 U.N. Security Council Presidential Statement, I am deeply concerned by the Turkish Cypriots' unilateral decision, with the support of Turkey, to reopen Varosha. If confirmed, I will urge a reversal of this decision.

*Question.* Do you commit to the full implementation the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and colleagues in the interagency to support robust ties between the United States and Greece, Israel, and Cyprus, as envisioned in the legislation. The U.S.-Greece security relationship remains vital to our interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and has grown significantly as bilateral ties have improved, beginning in the Obama-Biden administration. If confirmed, I will work to continue to deepen ties between the United States and Greece and the United States and Cyprus.

*Question.* Do you commit to consult with, not simply notify, this committee as it relates to U.S. policy on Turkey?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing close consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations committee regarding U.S. policy toward Turkey.

*Question.* Last year's NDAA included provisions which would require the Department to be more forthcoming with Congress on the peace process. The Department was required to provide a certification in January to confirm that the Senate has been provided with all relevant documents associated with the February 29th agreement. We have yet to receive this certification. Will you commit to providing this information to Congress upon your confirmation?

*Answer.* Yes, I understand that the Department is preparing to provide a response regarding section 1217(b) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (P.L. 116-283) to Congress. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department provides this response and other required notifications, reports, and certifications promptly.

*Question.* The law also requires regular consultation with Congress on the peace process. Do you commit to consult with, not simply notify, this committee as it relates to U.S. policy on Afghanistan?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to consult fully with theon U.S. policy toward Afghanistan.

*Question.* The continued spread of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean is deeply concerning. Despite initial vaccination campaigns in the region, cases are on the rise and many health systems are overwhelmed. The current situation in Brazil is alarming and unrestrained spread only raises risks for new variants. What steps will you take to ensure vaccine access for nations in the Western Hemisphere, as well as other developing nations? What other vaccine-related initiatives will you prioritize?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the U.S. commitment to leading the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including through supporting global vaccine distribution via COVAX. Latin America and the Caribbean are suffering a disproportionate share of global COVID-19 cases and deaths, posing a threat to the United States given our strong economic ties. However, the President's first priority must be to take care of the American people, and given the unpredictability of this virus, we must be prepared for a variety of scenarios. As the United States moves toward having enough vaccine here at home, I will support efforts to pursue options for sharing doses abroad, if confirmed. I will also support efforts to work with partners to expand the global manufacturing of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, and their needed supplies, to increase worldwide capacity and availability.

*Question.* As Colombia works to implement its 2016 peace accord, it is facing an uptick in violence against civil society leaders by irregular armed actors and drug traffickers, including criminal groups that receive safe haven inside Venezuela. Additionally, there are concerns about the role of Russia in the region, including its presence in Venezuela and its disinformation efforts targeting Colombia. What steps will you take to strengthen U.S.-Colombia relations and ensure that the United States helps our Colombian partners consolidate the gains of peace?

Answer. Colombia is a vital strategic partner that shares our democratic values. If confirmed, I will support the efforts the Colombian Government and people as they continue to work towards a just and lasting peace and a prosperous future. Through diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance, the United States must work with Colombia to promote sustainable peace and reconciliation by expanding security, state presence, access to justice, and licit economic opportunities throughout the country. If confirmed, I will support efforts to work together with the Colombia Government to combat narcotics trafficking and transnational crime, coordinate a regional response to the political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, and promote and protect human rights.

*Question.* President Biden has outlined his strategy for a COVID-19 response, and has committed to making vaccines more widely available here in the United States. Part of what we need to do to safeguard American lives is ensure that other countries—especially poor countries—can do the same. As I've said before, COVID-19 didn't start here, but it came here. Americans are not safe until the world is safe. What do you see as the most important actions the United States can take to lead international efforts to end the COVID-19 pandemic for once and for all?

Answer. To keep U.S. citizens safe, build back the economy, and curb the emergence of variants, the United States is committed to leading the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and strengthening global health security and pandemic preparedness to prevent future biological threats. I will support those efforts if confirmed. Under President Biden's direction, the United State has already taken significant steps, including: re-engaging with the WHO; committing to provide the most funding—\$4 billion to COVAX—of any country to accelerate the pace and ambition of global vaccination efforts; and collaborating with our Quad partners (Japan, India, and Australia) to expand the manufacture and supply of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will be your role in achieving that goal?

Answer. President Biden and Secretary Blinken have committed to a whole-of-government response to COVID-19 and building longer term global health security. If confirmed, I will work with all the regional bureaus under my supervision, our functional bureaus, the U.S. interagency and the international community—including the private sector, civil society, and other partners—to help bring the COVID 19 pandemic to an end and build back better preparedness to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats both at home and abroad, including through initiatives such as the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSa).

*Question.* The situation in Ethiopia is alarming. Not only is there conflict in Tigray, ongoing tensions in other parts of the country have the potential to cause sustained violent conflict and political space continues to close. The administration has taken a robust multilateral approach to resolving the Tigray crisis, working through the U.N. and with our African partners to achieve results, which I applaud. It also sent a strong, positive signal of its engage-

ment by dispatching Senator Chris Coons to Addis Ababa. However there is much more to be done to put Ethiopia's democratic transition back on track. 3. Can Ethiopia hold credible elections in June under the current circumstances?

Answer. I share Secretary Blinken's concern that a number of factors could undermine inclusive, free, fair, and credible national and regional elections, including: continued violence, harassment and detention of opposition figures, human rights abuses and violations, growing insecurity, more than 2 million internally displaced, interference with media freedom, and regional and local government interference in political processes. If confirmed, I will pursue sustained engagement to press the Government of Ethiopia to move towards inclusive political dialogue, to ensure a free political environment, and to address ongoing inter-ethnic tensions across the country to help mitigate these risks.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to encourage the Abiy administration to take meaningful action to open political space, and engage with all political stakeholders?

Answer. The United States strongly supports democratization in Ethiopia. Political space for all Ethiopians is critical for advancing this process and building strong, inclusive institutions. If confirmed, I will work with the newly appointed Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa and the Bureau of African Affairs to press the Ethiopian Government to ensure freedoms of assembly and expression, political participation, access to information, including through the internet, and political resolution of inter-ethnic conflict across the country. If confirmed, I will continue to underscore to the Government of Ethiopia the need for broad and inclusive dialogue and for opposition parties and civil society to be able to participate freely in the political process and organize and work without the fear of harassment or intimidation.

*Question.* What will you do to help resolve the Tigray crisis should Russia and China continue to block U.N. Security Council efforts to address this urgent matter, or the African Union fail to take a more prominent leadership role?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Linda Thomas Greenfield and the newly appointed Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa to use every opportunity to address the crisis across U.N. agencies. The U.N. plays a vital role in delivering humanitarian assistance and in protecting refugees in Ethiopia. As conflict in Ethiopia poses a threat to the broader region, if confirmed, I will work with the African members of the Security Council in New York and the African Union to push for an end to fighting and press for a political settlement, protection of civilians, withdrawal of Eritrean forces, immediate unhindered humanitarian access, restoration of all communications to the region, independent investigations into reported human rights violations, abuses, and atrocities, and accountability for those responsible. I will also work closely with the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa to build a broad coalition of likeminded countries willing to work together to achieve these objectives and to take the necessary steps to hold all parties accountable to their commitments and their international obligations.

*Question.* The administration's recent suspension of drone strikes outside select war zones has significant implications for the situation in Somalia, where AMISOM and Somali operations against Al Shabaab have long depended on the support of US drones. The current election crisis in the country, which has been made significantly worse by parliament's ill-conceived attempt to extend the term of President Farmajo, and an earlier withdrawal of US troops under the Trump administration, are additional complicating factors. What is your view on how best to achieve a breakthrough both in the struggle against Al Shabaab, and on the broader democratization and stabilization of Somalia?

*Answer.* A holistic approach is needed to ensure sustainable gains in countering terrorist violence, achieving stability, and building adequate governance. Such an approach will require not only continued international support to counter al-Shabaab but also robust support to build the capacity of Somali security institutions, promote sustainable development, and improve governance. Engagement with all Somali stakeholders and international partners, including the U.N. and AU, on a pathway forward for Somalia is required. With respect to the current political crisis, it is vital for the peace, stability, prosperity, and governance of Somalia that the Federal Government and Federal Member States reach a consensus on a way forward for the electoral process without delay.

*Question.* Recent flawed elections in Uganda require a robust USG response that advances of democracy, governance, and human rights in this important African country. I was pleased to see the administration's recent announcement of visa restrictions on Ugandan persons engaged in undermining democracy. But Uganda's status as a security partner in East Africa has complicated the willingness of past administration's to apply meaningful pressure on Kampala for its shortcomings in this area. How can the USG better prioritize democracy and governance in its relationship with Uganda, and ensure that our regional security interests do not crowd out or trump these essential priorities?

*Answer.* Uganda's positive contributions to regional stability, particularly as the largest troop contributing country to AMISOM and as Africa's largest host of refugees do not give the Government of Uganda a free pass regarding the importance of respecting human rights, democracy, and good governance. If confirmed, I intend to support the Department's efforts to ensure that U.S. policy appropriately reflects the centrality of strong democratic institutions and respect for human rights in our partnership with Uganda.

*Question.* The Central African Republic (CAR) faces ongoing violence and a humanitarian crisis in the wake of elections that suffered from low participation, and were fraught with irregularities. The U.S. supported an increase to the United Nations peacekeeping force but stability remains elusive, complicated by CAR government-aligned Russian and Rwandan military involvement and an anti-government coalition of militia groups representing roughly two-thirds of the country that are committed to the overthrow of President Touadéra. What steps should the U.S. take to reduce tensions, encourage inclusive political dialogue, build a



participatory democracy, and help put the country on a path toward sustainable peace?

Answer. The United States has been a steadfast supporter of the democratic will of all Central Africans and their efforts to build resilient, responsive, and representative democracy. This is the best way to move the country towards peace and away from its repeated crises. If confirmed, I will support efforts to continue working with our partners to encourage an inclusive dialogue between all legitimate actors in the country with the support of neighbors, regional organizations, and the United Nations. If confirmed, I will work with partners and allies to ensure countries providing assistance, military or otherwise, do so in a transparent and coordinated way, and consistent with the U.N. arms embargo.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* There are several vacant ambassadorial posts in Sub-Saharan Africa without a named nominee to be considered by the Foreign Relations Committee, including such high-priority posts as Sudan, Kenya, and South Africa. Many other posts will become vacant in the coming year with little evidence that candidates are in the pipeline for consideration. As Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, if confirmed, are you committed to working with the White House to ensure that Ambassadorial positions in Sub-Saharan Africa are filled by qualified, experienced nominees in a timely manner?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the White House to ensure that ambassadorial positions in Sub-Saharan Africa are filled by qualified, experienced nominees in a timely manner.

*Question.* Under your leadership as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, if confirmed, what actions will you pursue to ensure that hard to fill posts in Sub-Saharan Africa are sufficiently and consistently staffed?

Answer. I recognize that State's Bureau of African Affairs (AF) is chronically understaffed, both in terms of positions and vacancies. If confirmed, I will review our staffing levels around the world to ensure that staffing is aligned with our most pressing interests. I will explore enhancing incentives to serve at hardship posts, including those in Africa, and will look for other ways to ensure that our vacancies are filled. I am committed to an inclusive workplace and will support AF's efforts as they work to implement management reforms for recruitment, hiring, and retention.

*Question.* With 49 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, there are myriad opportunities and challenges to the security, economic, health and humanitarian interests of the United States. The U.S. Government is presently engaged on a variety of fronts. The White House and Secretary Blinken have repeatedly stated that "Africa is a priority for the Biden administration". In the early days of your tenure as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, if confirmed, how will you make clear inside the Department, across the administration and externally, that Africa is a priority for the Biden administration?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to support the Secretary's efforts to engage African countries early and often as partners in pursuing our shared interests and values—from security, global health, climate change, freedom and democracy, and mutual prosperity. If confirmed, I intend to participate in the interagency policy process as the Biden-Harris administration develops a whole-of-government Africa strategy and consider additional banner initiatives to signal the critical importance of this region. I believe active, consistent engagement of senior officials in Africa will be critical to advance U.S. interests on the continent and a signal of our commitment.

*Question.* How will you ensure the United States respects and values our African partners, while also representing our values and interests, particularly as it relates to respect for the rule of law, protecting human rights, and advancing democracy?

Answer. I believe we must continue to build partnerships in Africa, investing in civil society and strengthening democratic institutions. If confirmed, I look forward

to implementing the Secretary's plan to engage African countries early and often as partners in pursuing our shared interests and values—from security, global health, climate change, freedom and democracy, and mutual prosperity. Senior-level engagement on a consistent basis will be a signal of our commitment.

*Question.* Sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing a massive “youth bulge.” While programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative and its Mandela Washington Fellowship are vital, what can the United States do to expand its reach and effectively engage with Africa's enormous youth population?

*Answer.* Empowering youth is at the heart of the longstanding U.S.-Africa partnership. If confirmed, I will direct Department of State resources to expand youth engagement initiatives. In addition to the Mandela Washington Fellowship, I intend to leverage YALI's USAID-run Regional Leadership Centers, the online YALI Network, and other public diplomacy and Department programs, including U.S. youth exchange programs like the Pan-Africa Youth Leadership Program, to help identify and dedicate resources for youth and alumni engagement to empower youth leaders in their communities, particularly around issues of entrepreneurship, civic engagement, democracy, governance, and respect for human rights.

*Question.* What are your views on the role trade and investment could and should play in building stronger ties between the United States and the African continent? How should U.S.-African trade and investment initiatives factor into the U.S. global strategy to counter China, particularly in Africa?

*Answer.* Strengthening and expanding U.S.-Africa trade and investment is critical to our primary objective of building stronger ties between the United States and the African continent. Stronger trade and investment ties with the United States also offers Africa an alternative to the PRC. If confirmed, I will engage in our commercial and economic diplomacy and use the tools of the DFC, USAID, MCC and Treasury. I will also work with the U.S. private sector, African governments, and international financial institutions to increase trade and investment in Africa and promote U.S. business.

*Question.* One vital area of Prosper Africa that requires greater emphasis is improving the enabling environment within African partner countries to better attract U.S. business investment. Improvements in anti-corruption initiatives, human rights, the rule of law, and overall good governance would create better conditions for U.S. investment conditions. Such enhancements would also counterbalance efforts by Chinese firms and the Chinese Communist Party to undermine free-market competition in African markets to their advantage. How can the U.S. Government most effectively support efforts to improve the enabling environment for competitive foreign investment by U.S. firms in Africa? What types of partnerships work best, and how can the United States best incentivize reforms and other actions necessary to foster economic opportunity and expand two-way trade and investment with the African continent?

*Answer.* A conducive business climate is essential to building sustainable economies. If confirmed, I will deploy the full set of diplomatic and development tools to promote enabling environments in our African partners that foster robust economic growth and respect for human rights and democracy. For example, the Prosper Africa Initiative will help clear impediments to economic growth in Africa, create new export and investment opportunities for U.S. companies, and increase prosperity at home. If confirmed, I will work to provide a meaningful alternative to the People's Republic of China's (PRC) economic approach, and I will help build countries' resilience in order to respond to PRC economic coercion.

*Question.* What should be guiding principles for increasing two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa in light of the presence of China, Russia and other malign actors that often operate within several of these countries by their own rules?

*Answer.* The President is particularly focused on rebuilding the middle class at home by creating new and better jobs, raising wages, and strengthening communities. Increasing two-way trade and investment is critical to building stronger ties between the United States and Africa, and it will benefit the American middle class. The competition with China, Russia, and other malign actors is one of the central challenges that will define the 21st century. If confirmed, I will advance the Department's efforts to ensure that American companies can compete on an even playing field in Africa, which will allow them to provide an attractive alternative based on entrepreneurship and free-market principles, and which will be of benefit to African economies.

*Question.* How can the Department better leverage the Bureau of African Affairs and encourage better coordination with the Bureau of Near East Affairs on Red Sea Corridor issues?

*Answer.* A comprehensive and coordinated interagency approach to the Greater Horn of Africa and the Red Sea corridor better serves U.S. national security interests. To this end, Secretary Blinken has appointed a special envoy for the Horn of Africa. If confirmed, I will ensure close coordination between the Bureau of African Affairs and the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the new special envoy for the Horn of Africa, and the special envoy for South Sudan and Sudan on Red Sea Corridor issues, and ask senior leadership to identify and implement mechanisms for further coordination.

*Question.* President Biden has proposed a \$4 billion plan for Central America. Please describe specifically how this plan will build off of the successes and failures of the U.S. Strategy for Engagement for Central America, and the importance of garnering sustained political will from the individual governments.

*Answer.* As I understand it, the Root Causes Strategy seeks to build on the lessons learned from the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central Americas. Place-based strategies, including targeted security and economic programs, helped Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador reduce violence and increase job growth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Root Causes Strategy seeks to use similar tools and reforms to increase transparency, combat corruption, and create conditions conducive to economic growth a top priority, and to use data to support decisions and technology to increase efficacy. If confirmed, I would work to support a strategy to engage the governments, civil society, and private sectors of countries throughout the region as partners in this endeavor to address the factors that cause people to leave their homes. If confirmed, I will work with these countries, including by bolstering civil society, to build the necessary political will to undertake tough reforms. I am under no illusions that will be easy. It will require a consistent, committed effort from the United States and our partners.

*Question.* There have been more than a dozen failed attempts at negotiating with Maduro in Venezuela. They have occurred in an environment of engagement favored by the Obama administration, and under the pressure of punitive measures implemented by the Trump administration. Describe the conditions that would need to be met for the administration to engage in negotiations with the Maduro regime in Venezuela.

*Answer.* Only good faith negotiations among Venezuelans can establish the conditions required for free and fair elections. That is the best framework for a political resolution to the political, economic, migratory, and health crises afflicting Venezuela. This was the clearly stated sense of Congress when it passed the bipartisan VERDAD Act in 2019, co-sponsored by nearly twenty Democrats and Republicans, and it remains true today. As the Act states, “direct, credible negotiations led by the Interim President of Venezuela and members of Venezuela’s democratically elected National Assembly represent the best opportunity to reach a solution to the Venezuelan crisis.” The Venezuelan democratic opposition to Nicolás Maduro has assembled a broad alliance for free and fair elections and has made clear its willingness to establish the conditions for such elections through negotiations, while also relying on coordinated domestic and international pressure to bring Maduro to the negotiating table. If confirmed, I will work with Venezuelan and international partners to press Maduro to commit to participate in credible negotiations with the Venezuelan opposition. If confirmed, I will also work with international partners to press for respect for human rights, restoration of democratic norms, and the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Venezuela.

*Question.* What is your assessment of what it would take to achieve those conditions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support diplomatic engagement in order to advance a negotiated, peaceful solution to Venezuela’s political, economic, and humanitarian crises, an approach consistent with the VERDAD Act of 2019. Venezuelans themselves must meet this challenge. Past negotiations have fallen short because Nicolás Maduro and his supporter used negotiations as a tactic to distract the international community and to centralize power. Negotiations can promote a peaceful transition toward free and fair elections if the international community is united in pressuring Maduro to engage in good faith and Venezuela’s democratic forces remain united. Credible negotiations must incorporate the views and reflect the interests of Venezuelan civil society. They need to produce elections that comply with international standards of freedom, fairness, and transparency and allow Venezuelans to restore

their democracy and the rule of law. To create the conditions for such a process, Maduro must free political prisoners and allow for the delivery of humanitarian aid. At the same time, the President has made clear that the United States will continue to pursue regime supporters involved in criminal activity and violations of human rights.

If confirmed, I would work with partners inside Venezuela and internationally to pressure Maduro and those who support him to commit to a serious process.

*Question.* Nicaragua is scheduled to hold general elections in November. In October 2020, the Organization of American States adopted a resolution [AG/RES.2962 (L-O/20)] calling for the restoration of democratic institutions and respect for human rights in Nicaragua through free and fair elections. The Ortega regime responded by approving three statutes with the apparent aim of quashing dissent in Nicaragua ahead of the November 2021 elections. If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing and maintaining policies and programs to create acceptable conditions for free and fair elections in Nicaragua?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing and maintaining policies and programs to create acceptable conditions for free and fair elections in Nicaragua. I will support the continued use of the economic and diplomatic tools at our disposal, including targeted sanctions, bilateral and multilateral engagement, and support for democratic processes, to advance free and fair elections. It is not too late for the Ortega regime to make the meaningful reforms by the May OAS deadline, and the United States continues to urge them to do so.

*Question.* Please describe the long-term implications for Nicaragua and the region if Ortega fraudulently extends his time in office.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will press for meaningful electoral reforms by the May OAS deadline toward free and fair elections in November. I understand that the Department is working multilaterally, in coordination with the European Union, Canada, and the UK, as well as our partners in the OAS, to use the tools at our disposal to create the conditions for free and fair elections in November. If Ortega chooses a non-democratic path, and if confirmed, I will join the Department's efforts to work with those partners to hold accountable those responsible and encourage a return to democracy.

*Question.* Despite reassurances from Secretary Blinken acknowledging the importance of the Abraham Accords, there are concerns that encouraging additional normalization agreements between Muslim majority countries and Israel isn't a priority for the Biden administration. Specifically, Senator Risch is concerned with the staffing, resourcing, and messaging the Biden administration has dedicated to this issue thus far. On the staffing front, the previous administration had an empowered agent in the White House to pursue normalization agreements. This has been pushed back down to the State Department, where it currently falls under the purview of the Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for Israel Palestinian Affairs (IPA). On messaging, we've seen more out of the Department on restarting assistance to the Palestinians than on additional normalization agreements. The Biden admin's interim strategic guidance makes no mention of normalization in its section on the Middle East. Can you share your thoughts on the Abraham Accords and where it, as well as other prospective normalization agreements, rank among your policy priorities?

*Answer.* President Biden and Secretary Blinken have welcomed the recent normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world. The Department is leading the U.S. Government's efforts, working with the National Security Council and the U.S. Government interagency to deepen existing agreements and urge other countries to normalize relations with Israel. If confirmed, fostering peace in the Middle East will remain a top priority and I will look for opportunities to build on the Abraham Accords and expand cooperation among countries in the region.

*Question.* Apart from the Abraham Accords, Senator Risch's top priority in the Middle East is Iran policy. He led a letter to President Biden, along with other national security Ranking Members that outlined his position. We've engaged in extensive Iran discussions with Sec Blinken, Wendy Sherman, and have just started consultations with Rob Malley. How would you define this administration's strategic aims with Iran? Where does regional activity fall in our strategic aims? How does engagement with allies and partners fit in to this wider strategy with respect to Iran?

*Answer.* The President is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon and believes diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal. The administration has fundamental

problems with Iran's actions across a series of issues, including its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, its destabilizing actions throughout the region, and its abhorrent practice of using wrongfully detained U.S. citizens and foreign nationals as political tools. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's continuing commitment to addressing these challenges using the various tools at its disposal, including sanctions, and working in close coordination with our allies and partners.

*Question.* The administration has said that regional terrorism and ballistic missiles will be addressed in follow-on agreements. Do you think this is possible? Assuming we grant financial relief as a part of a nuclear negotiation, what leverage would the US have in terms of securing follow-on agreements?

*Answer.* President Biden has committed to try to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and then use that as a platform to lengthen and strengthen the constraints on Iran's nuclear program, regional support for terrorism, and other issues of concern. If confirmed, I will work to achieve this vision. If confirmed, I would ensure the framework of U.S. sanctions on Iran remains robust. Many layers of that sanctions architecture would remain in place, even in the event of a U.S. return to the JCPOA. This includes the primary U.S. embargo on Iran and many other U.S. sanctions on Iran. If confirmed, I would work with allies and partners, and use other avenues to place pressure on Iran to address these critical issues.

*Question.* President Obama argued in favor of granting sanctions relief, stressing "our best analysts expect the bulk of this revenue to go into spending that improves the economy and benefits the lives of the Iranian people" and that "Even a repressive regime like Iran's cannot completely ignore those expectations." Yet, we now know that a majority of the sanctions relief went to Iran's defense industry and proxies. We actually saw an increase in Iran's malign regional activities since the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed in 2015. Do you still believe Iran prioritized the needs of its people over its defense industry and proxies?

*Answer.* I do not believe that Iran has prioritized the needs of its people, as evidenced by its abysmal human rights record. The U.S. Government maintains a range of tools to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region and support for proxy organizations. If confirmed, I will support continuing U.S. efforts to maintain and, where available, impose sanctions on Iranian entities and individuals providing support to designated terrorist groups in the region. I will also support action by the Biden-Harris administration, in coordination with our allies and partners, to both deter and counter Iran's destabilizing activities and to vigorously pursue talks on these critical issues. If confirmed, I am committed to consulting closely with Congress on the path forward.

*Question.* Russia and China are increasingly encroaching in the Middle East in ways that are contrary to US interests—we see joint R&D, basing, and a growing cooperation with US partners and allies in the region. Russia's continues to use its support for Bashar al Assad in Syria as a platform to further its influence in the region, while China is trying to make deeper inroads into the Gulf and Israel and thereby advance its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Biden administration has advertised its commitment to de-prioritizing the Middle East North Africa region, in favor of a greater presence in the Indo-Pacific and Europe. Yet Great power competition has historically taken place outside the Indo-Pacific and Europe regions, favoring combat in weak and failed states. The moves made by the Biden administration is occurring against backdrop of recalibrating relationship with Saudi Arabia, de-emphasis on Abraham Accords, and renewed focus on Palestinian issues. How do we compete with Russia and China in the Middle East? How do we remain the partner of choice and strike right balance between human rights and the national interest?

*Answer.* There is no question that the People's Republic of China's (PRC) and Russia's coercive behavior threatens our collective security, and that these countries are actively working to undercut the rules of the international system and the values we and our allies share. If confirmed, I will press our Middle East partners to be clear-eyed about the risk of doing business with Russia and the PRC, highlighting that partnerships with the United States bring tangible benefits to the people of the region, while protecting human rights. The U.S. also should support investment and economic growth in the region in a transparent manner that respects workers, strengthens labor rights, and serves as a counter to authoritarian business models.

*Question.* Lebanon is moving quickly towards financial collapse. Despite the August 4 port explosion, political elites lack the will to execute necessary reforms and unlock IMF, World Bank funds that will save the country from collapse. According to many, Lebanese political players are interpreting US outreach to Iran as a precursor to sanctions relief and an excuse not to implement reforms. Can you outline your thoughts on appropriate Lebanon policy? What role do sanctions play in that policy?

*Answer.* Lebanon needs to execute significant reforms in cooperation with the IMF to address its economic challenges. Lebanon can never be truly stable and will never prosper if corruption remains rampant, and Hezbollah continues to operate with impunity. If confirmed, I would seek to use all available tools to push Lebanese officials to implement the reforms necessary to root out corruption and terrorism and unlock critical support from international financial institutions.

*Question.* Secretary Blinken has been vocal on the importance of renewing and maintaining cross-border humanitarian assistance, which we agree with, but when discussing Syria policy or strategy, we return to the same mantra of UNSCR 2254, progress on which remains stalled. What changes would you propose for Syria policy? How can the administration accelerate progress under UNSCR 2254?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will join the Biden-Harris administration in continuing to engage diplomatically to press for an end to the Syrian people's suffering and to encourage all possible efforts to advance the legitimate political track in keeping with UNSCR 2254, and will advocate for accountability for the most serious crimes committed against the Syrian people, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. The United States seeks a nationwide ceasefire, unhindered aid access through all possible routes, the release of those arbitrarily detained, and free and fair elections under U.N. auspices. If confirmed, I will support the use of a variety of tools to ensure the Assad regime and its supporters do not profit from the conflict or any post-conflict reconstruction, and will consult closely with our partners and allies on the best way forward in Syria.

*Question.* What role does the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act play in US policy? Do you feel it can be used as an effective tool to containing Russian influence in Syria, and preventing US partners and allies from normalizing relations with Bashar al Assad?

*Answer.* The Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act is an important tool to limit the ability of Assad and his enablers to profit from the ongoing conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. If confirmed, I will use it and all available tools to stop those responsible for grave human rights abuses against the Syrian people, and will coordinate with our allies and partners on policies toward Syria, including in preventing normalizing relations with Assad, in order to push for meaningful progress on our shared political objectives.

*Question.* In light of the rocket attack on Erbil by an Iranian proxy group in February, and the continuing presence of ISIS forces in remote areas of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, what steps is the Biden administration prepared to take to reaffirm America's commitment to the territorial integrity and safety of the Kurdistan Regional Government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the United States' top priorities of ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS and increasing the capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), including Peshmerga forces. I understand that the administration is in constant contact with Kurdistan Regional Government leaders to address security concerns, and the United States provides assistance to support the continued development and professionalization of the ISF, increasing their ability to respond to threats and conduct counter-terrorism operations, as well as defend Iraq—its people and borders—while upholding the rule of law. If confirmed, I will support U.S. continued efforts with Iraq on our shared vision of a secure, stable, democratic, and prosperous Iraq that can stand on its own and defend its autonomy against malign regional influence.

*Question.* In light of the threats posed to the Kurdish people of Syria by ISIS, the Assad Government, Assad's backers in Moscow and Tehran, and the Government of Turkey, what are the Biden administration's policies on the U.S.-Syrian Kurd security and diplomatic relationship, and the appropriate Kurdish role in Syria's political roadmap under UNSCR 2254?

*Answer.* Stability in Syria and the greater region can only be achieved through a political process that represents the will of all Syrians. The Syrian Democratic Forces remain a capable and committed military partner in the fight against ISIS. The United States also supports the ongoing Intra Kurdish Dialogue and looks for-

ward to its continued progress. The dialogue complements renewed U.S. efforts to stabilize areas of northeast Syria liberated from ISIS and to promote greater transparency and inclusivity in local governance, and if confirmed I will work to support it.

*Question.* In your opinion, does the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons threaten the integrity of U.S. alliances, especially regarding extended deterrence commitments?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration does not believe that progress toward nuclear disarmament can be decoupled from the prevailing security threats in today's world. If confirmed, I will support the administration's view that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is incompatible with U.S. extended deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security, and may reinforce divisions that hinder the international community's ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. U.S. allies covered by extended nuclear deterrence—which includes all NATO Allies, plus Australia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea—share the administration's view that the TPNW is incompatible with our extended nuclear deterrence arrangements.

*Question.* In December 2020, NATO re-affirmed the Allie's longstanding position that, "as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance." In your view, do you believe that this principle requires the United States to deploy nuclear weapons in NATO countries?

*Answer.* The United States is fully committed to its Article 5 obligations. If confirmed, I will strongly support U.S. continued coordination with Allies in support of NATO's deterrence and defense posture, including U.S. nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe.

*Question.* How can we get NATO allies to invest more in their own defense?

*Answer.* This is an issue I have spared no effort on since my days as NATO Ambassador, and if confirmed, one I will continue to pursue vigorously. At the 2014 Wales Summit, Allies agreed to increase their defense spending for the mutual benefit of the Alliance. If confirmed, I will work to ensure Allies continue to share the responsibility of our collective security against new and existing threats and appeal to them to do more. If confirmed, I will also ensure that the burden-sharing conversation at NATO also focuses on capabilities, readiness, and force generation. I look forward to consulting with NATO Allies, as well as with Congress, on the best strategy to ensure NATO has the capabilities, readiness, and forces it requires to maintain a credible defense and deterrence posture, as well as fulfill NATO missions and operations.

*Question.* Why does Japan spend only about 1 percent of its GDP on defense? Given increasing threats from China, is this acceptable and sustainable? If confirmed, how would you approach discussions regarding defense spending with the Japanese Government?

*Answer.* Japan has become one of our strongest allies in maintaining peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. The Government of Japan has increased its defense budget every year since 2012. The U.S. Japan Alliance advances our shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific and beyond. If confirmed, I will work with Japan to bolster its national defense capabilities to further strengthen the alliance and regional security.

*Question.* Taiwan is set to increase its defense spending to about 2.4 percent of GDP for this year. However, some senior U.S. defense officials have indicated that is still an insufficient amount for Taiwan to be able to ensure resilient defense in the face of an increasing Chinese threat. Do you agree with those concerns? If confirmed, how would you approach discussions regarding defense spending with the Taiwanese Government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to maintaining the U.S. rock-solid commitment to Taiwan. The United States will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy. At the same time, Taiwan needs to maintain robust defense budgets. The United States sold nearly \$30 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but arms sales alone cannot ensure Taiwan's ability to defend itself. Our expanding security cooperation seeks to encourage Taiwan to prioritize cost-effective, mobile, resilient, and asymmetric capabilities, including an effective civil defense force for defense in depth.

*Question.* How can we resolve the current impasse with Turkey over the S-400?

*Answer.* One of President Biden's top priorities with respect to Turkey is urging it not to retain the S-400 and to refrain from additional Russian arms purchases. If confirmed, I will support efforts to persuade Turkey to forego the S-400. The CAATSA sanctions announced in December 2020 impose real costs on Turkey for acquiring the S-400 and advance our global efforts to deter and disrupt purchases of Russian weaponry, which bring Russia revenue, access, and influence. Turkey's suspension and pending removal from the F-35 partnership represents an additional significant cost. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to review the impact of the sanctions imposed in response to the S-400 acquisition and to determine whether additional measures are required or warranted.

*Question.* What is your understanding of how China has expanded and modernized its nuclear forces?

*Answer.* I understand that during this decade, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is likely to more than double the size of its nuclear stockpile. This rapid expansion includes new delivery systems as Beijing works to establish a nuclear triad, which will include a long-range stealth bomber, new road-mobile ICBMs, multiple-warhead silo-based ICBMs, and a growing fleet of ballistic missile submarines. The PRC also appears to be working on hypersonic-glide vehicles, air-launched ballistic missiles, and low-yield nuclear weapons that will fit into this nuclear triad. The PRC is also making additional advances towards developing a launch-on-warning posture.

*Question.* In your view, do these capabilities pose an increasing threat to the United States and its allies?

*Answer.* Yes. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) ongoing rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal presages a more dangerous future, with a considerably larger number of sophisticated nuclear delivery systems able to reach the United States and our allies and partners than in the past. This larger nuclear arsenal will buttress a broader PRC military build-up and its increasingly assertive and threatening behavior to U.S. allies and partners.

*Question.* How can we bring China to the negotiating table for arms control?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support U.S. efforts to pursue arms control to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal. To date, the PRC has failed to meaningfully engage on these issues. If confirmed, I will support efforts to work with U.S. allies and partners to press Beijing to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control to reduce global nuclear risks.

*Question.* Do you believe that China's professed no first use policy is credible?

*Answer.* There is ambiguity over the conditions under which Beijing would act outside of its professed no first use policy. Some People's Liberation Army (PLA) officers have written publicly of the need to spell out conditions under which China might need to use nuclear weapons first. There has been no indication that national leaders are willing to attach such nuances and caveats publicly. However, ongoing PRC advances in their nuclear arsenal, from an exploration of low-yield warheads to the development of a launch on warning posture, raise questions regarding PRC intent and undermine their claims to seek a minimum nuclear deterrent backed by a no-first use policy.

*Question.* Until now, analysts have estimated that the growth of the Chinese arsenal would be constrained by the lack of fissile material. However, recent reports indicate that Chinese plans to reprocess plutonium will greatly increase its stocks of weapons-grade material. Do you see this as threatening to the U.S. and its allies? Why do you believe China is pursuing these activities?

*Answer.* Yes, this would be threatening to the United States and its allies. China's ongoing rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal presages a more dangerous future, with a considerably larger number of sophisticated nuclear delivery systems able to reach the United States and our allies and partners than in the past. Precisely because Beijing is the least transparent member of the P5 nuclear weapon states, accurate assessments of its nuclear trajectory and intentions are difficult. I would defer to the intelligence community for specific assessments. In general, the United States has a longstanding position that seeks to limit the further development of sensitive fuel cycle technologies, including enrichment and reprocessing, beyond those facilities already in existence.

*Question.* What is your understanding of how Russia has expanded and modernized its nuclear forces?



Answer. Russia's strategic forces are undergoing a comprehensive modernization in their force structure, operations, and planning. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's intention to engage Russia in comprehensive negotiations that address the full range of systems that threaten international security, including Russian novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons.

*Question.* In your view, do these capabilities pose an increasing threat to the United States and its allies?

Answer. The United States monitors Russian nuclear policy, strategy, doctrine, and current and projected nuclear forces. If confirmed, I would work to sustain a safe, secure, and effective strategic deterrent and ensure that our extended deterrence commitment to our allies remains strong and credible. If confirmed I would also support efforts to use the time provided by the five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control measures that address all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and nonstrategic nuclear weapons.

*Question.* After the United States ratified the New START Treaty, Russia refused to engage in follow-on negotiations regarding its non-strategic nuclear weapons, and other arms control issues. The United States recently agreed to a five-year extension to the New START Treaty. Given Russia's refusal to negotiate in the latter years of the Obama administration, do you expect Russia to behave differently this time, and to be willing to engage in arms control negotiations in the next few years? Why or why not?

Answer. President Biden and President Putin have agreed to explore strategic stability discussions on a range of arms control and emerging security issues. The administration is in the process of establishing the terms of these discussions and, if confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress and allies on the path forward. While Russian intentions regarding possible negotiations remain unclear, the United States must enter any talks on future arms control from a position of strength.

*Question.* How should we account for Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons and exotic delivery systems in future arms control agreements?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support an approach in which the United States uses the time provided by a five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and nonstrategic nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Would Russia view a U.S. no first use or sole purpose policy as credible? Would such a policy affect the confidence of U.S. allies in extended deterrence?

Answer. President Biden is committed to maintaining a strong, credible deterrent to defend the United States and our allies, while also taking steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons. The Biden-Harris administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy and, if confirmed, I will ensure we consult with Congress and our allies on any policies or actions in this area.

*Question.* The Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) and other U.S. legislation and policy tools have failed to deter Russia from attacking our democratic systems, especially through means of cyberattacks. How can we deter Russia from conducting cyberattacks?

Answer. Russia is a full-scope cyber actor that will remain a major threat to U.S. Government, military, diplomatic, commercial, and critical infrastructure networks. If confirmed, I will support efforts to combat Russian cyber threats through a whole-of-government approach that leverages the full range of U.S. Government capabilities—diplomatic, economic, law enforcement, intelligence, and military. If confirmed, I will work with the Department to communicate to the Russian Government when its behavior is unacceptable, coordinate with interagency partners to impose costs in response to destabilizing activity, and build international coalitions to actively deter malign Russian activities—including those carried out through cyberspace.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you balance the International Organizations bureau within the Political Affairs family regarding decision-making?

Answer. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO) is the State Department's gateway to advancing U.S. foreign policy priorities across the multilateral system. The IO Bureau was an invaluable partner when I served as Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, and if confirmed, I will rely heavily

on the IO Bureau's U.N. system and international organizations expertise to advance U.S. interests and address global challenges. IO is also central to our efforts to protect international organizations from Chinese domination and efforts to flood the staff with their nationals.

*Question.* There is growing concern about the aggressive efforts of the Chinese Communist Party to stack U.N. agencies with Chinese nationals and secure leadership positions in order to exert undue influence in International Organizations. Do you share this concern?

*Answer.* I do. The PRC engages in conduct to reshape the international system to accommodate and more closely align with its ideology. Its actions undermine the foundations of the international system that has provided peace and stability since the end of World War II. At the U.N., the PRC drives an authoritarian agenda that stands in opposition to the values of the United States and the U.N. itself, including on human rights, labor rights, transparency, and poor economic practices. If confirmed, I will work to stop the PRC's efforts to harm international organizations and their transparency, efficiency, and influence.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should craft a comprehensive strategy to ensure the open and transparent processes for the selection and promotion of Directors, Secretary Generals, and Director Generals of all international organizations, including the U.N. and its specialized bodies?

*Answer.* I believe in the independence and integrity of the U.N. and other international organizations, including specialized agencies, and agree with the importance of having qualified, independent candidates in key positions. If confirmed, I will prioritize robust strategies that include working with our allies and partners to select or elect qualified, independent candidates that support democratic values through a transparent and fair process.

*Question.* What do you believe is the most appropriate level of funding to the United Nations? Should the U.S. leverage our contributions to promote necessary reform within U.N. specialized bodies and committees?

*Answer.* The most appropriate funding level for the U.N. is the one that enables the U.N. to fulfill its mission effectively and efficiently, as determined by the U.N. General Assembly in accordance with its established procedures. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and the other IO missions to U.N. organizations to promote reforms that ensure that the U.N. and U.N. specialized agencies are transparent, accountable, and well-managed.

*Question.* The United States has accrued peacekeeping arrears due to incongruence between U.S. law and U.N. assessment levels. How will you advocate for the lowering of U.S. peacekeeping assessments to 25 percent during the scales of assessment negotiations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs on a strategy to advance U.S. interests in reaching agreement in the U.N. General Assembly to lower the U.S. peacekeeping assessment rate, thereby reducing or eliminating future peacekeeping arrears.

*Question.* Do you support paying the backlog of U.S. arrears, including the pre-Helms-Biden agreement arrears, or will you honor the bipartisan agreement negotiated in the current President's name?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult closely with Congress on the issue of whether to pay the "contested" arrears that are subject to the Helms-Biden agreement. As indicated in the President's FY 2022 budget request, the Department is seeking funds and authority from Congress to enable payment of peacekeeping arrears that accrued over the past four years. These arrears are not subject to the Helms-Biden agreement.

*Question.* Given the potential conflict with U.S. policy that U.N. membership would cause, what actions would the Biden administration take if the Palestinian Authority submitted a new application for membership to the U.N. or attempt to accede to any new U.N. body?

*Answer.* I believe that efforts by the Palestinians to join international entities are premature and counterproductive. There are no shortcuts to Palestinian statehood outside direct negotiations between the parties, a process I would support, if confirmed.

*Question.* Do you support establishing an office of U.N. Integrity within the Political Affairs family to counter malign influence within the U.N. system and to promote free and fair elections within the U.N. system?

*Answer.* The IO bureau has taken steps in recent years to strengthen its capacities to counter malign influence and I would support building on those efforts, if confirmed. I look forward to working with Congress to ensure the State Department is organized and resourced effectively to strengthen the U.N. system and ensure the transparency, effectiveness, and integrity of multilateral institutions. If confirmed, I will work with partners and allies to elect qualified and independent candidates to lead the U.N. and other international organizations bodies, including highly specialized agencies.

*Question.* In 2014, your phone call with then-Ambassador to Ukraine Geoff Pyatt was leaked, and, among other things, it revealed less than flattering opinions about the European Union. At the time, how did you address this comment with your European Union colleagues?

*Answer.* I made immediate contact with senior partners in the EU and key Allied capitals to make clear that this phone call was leaked by the Russians to try to drive wedges between us, and that my comments in no way reflected my larger view of the EU, but reflected only a short term, tactical frustration that the EU had chosen not to send an envoy to help negotiate a transitional Ukrainian Government. In fact, I was seeking more EU collaboration on Ukraine. I also apologized for the crude language I used. I went on from that incident to have very productive and collaborative relations with EU diplomats and Allied partners for the next three years on Ukraine, energy security, Russia relations, the Balkans, Cyprus settlement talks and a host of other issues.

*Question.* Do you believe this statement will present issues in your job as Under Secretary and impede your ability to work well with the political directors of European Foreign Ministries? How will you fulfill President Biden's intent to strengthen our relationship with our allies, including the European Union as a bloc?

*Answer.* As noted, I went on from that incident to have very productive and collaborative relations with the EU and Allied partners on a wide variety of issues. If confirmed, I look forward to building on that experience to support the President and Secretary's efforts to repair, revitalize, and raise the level of ambition in the U.S. relationship with the European Union. U.S.-EU cooperation will be critical to our ability to control the pandemic, fight climate change, address the challenge posed by China, secure a digital future that favors free societies, and manage other global issues. If confirmed, I will work closely with my EU and other European counterparts to deepen cooperation on these issues on the basis of our shared values.

*Question.* Which nations do you believe the U.S. should work most closely with to counter China's growing malign influence and actions around the world? Which countries do you see as most aligned with U.S. goals and values vis-a-vis China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will put alliances and partnerships at the center of our foreign policy to advance shared norms and values that underpin peace and security and compete with the People's Republic of China (PRC) from a position of strength. This includes working closely with our Indo-Pacific and NATO and EU Allies, within groupings like the Quad and the G7, and with other likeminded partners to preserve our democracies, protect the integrity of the U.N. system, strengthen our vital security partnerships, and secure the technologies of the future.

*Question.* What are your views on the recently agreed EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment? Should the U.S. be engaging with the European Parliament to stop its ratification?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to early consultations with our EU and European partners on shared concerns about China, including those related to trade and investment. Ultimately, the onus will be on China to show that its pledges on forced labor, state-owned enterprises, and subsidies in its new agreement with the EU are not just cheap talk, and the Chinese Government will need to follow through. If confirmed, I will seek to engage with European counterparts, including members of the European Parliament, on how to advance our shared economic interests and counter China's aggressive and coercive actions, as well as on China's failures to uphold its past international commitments.

*Question.* Many European countries have pledged to keep unsafe telecoms companies out of their networks. What do you view as the next priority areas for cooperation between the U.S. and EU?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will support continued collaboration with European Allies and partners to build a vibrant and diverse supply chain of trustworthy telecommunications equipment and services. This includes support for open, interoperable approaches like Open RAN (radio access network) technologies that promise to increase vendor diversity and market competition and have the potential to lower costs and improve security. The United States encourages others to join us in our support of trustworthy vendor diversity, open networks, and transparent standards. National measures must be crafted to fully exclude untrustworthy and high-risk suppliers, regardless of national origin, from providing equipment and software in 5G networks.

*Question.* To what extent do you believe that there is an emerging Russia-China axis? Some suggest that the U.S. should try to drive wedges between the two nations to destroy any emerging axis. Do you agree with that analysis?

**Answer.** I believe the alignment between Russia and China on many issues amplifies the challenges that both countries pose to the United States. China and Russia cooperate in certain areas, touting their relationship as a “comprehensive strategic partnership,” but remain competitors in others. Beijing and Moscow share the same goal of undermining U.S. leadership and reshaping the international rules-based order, particularly in the defense, democracy, and human rights realms. They complement these efforts with their military capabilities, technological innovation, and disinformation campaigns. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States is vigilant in imposing costs on coercive and reckless behavior that undermines the rules-based order.

*Question.* In an article last year in *Foreign Affairs*, you said the U.S. should “resist Putin’s attempts to cut off his population from the outside world and speak directly to the Russian people.” As Putin’s tightens the screws on his people, not least through the “foreign agents” law, independent media is being suppressed, and RFE/RL is on the brink of withdrawing from the country altogether. How do you propose we resist Putin’s attempts to cut off his population from the outside world? What actions do you believe the U.S. should take?

**Answer.** The United States is committed to maintaining ties with the Russian people despite the Russian Government’s efforts to increase government control over its population using new and existing legislation and regulations adopted under the guise of regulating “foreign influence.” If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues to promote the courageous work of Russia’s independent media, civil society organizations, and democratic elements of the society and call out the Russian Government for abusing the fundamental freedoms of the Russian people and will join with partners and allies to amplify that message. If confirmed, I will work to enhance people-to-people ties, seek ways to ensure continued communication with the Russian people, and draw attention to Russia’s increasing repression.

*Question.* In the same article, you wrote “U.S. and allied sanctions, although initially painful, have grown leaky or impotent with overuse and no longer impress the Kremlin” and the “U.S. and European leaders should be clearer about their conditions for rolling back or removing sanctions.” What do you believe the role of sanctions should be in the creation and execution of U.S. foreign policy?

**Answer.** Sanctions remain an important tool in our broader arsenal of instruments for countering Russian malign behavior and signaling to Russian leaders that their actions will have costs, as most recently demonstrated by the President’s April 15 executive order. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to enhance coordination and amplify the effect of U.S. sanctions actions, as well as the imposition of new sanctions if warranted.

*Question.* With respect to Russia, how do you believe the sanctions imposed on that country since 2014 have affected the Russia’s economy and foreign policy decision making?

**Answer.** U.S. and allied sanctions impose costs on Russia for its destabilizing activities. Russia might well have sought to take even more territory in Ukraine and elsewhere had tough sectoral sanctions not been imposed. Economically, sanctions have sharply curtailed new foreign investment in Russia. Moscow now has few opportunities to achieve sustained growth absent significant structural reforms to improve competitiveness and the business environment, which the Kremlin shows little willingness to undertake. The economic role of the state has steadily expanded, growing from roughly 35 percent of GDP in 2000 to 60-70 percent today. This is detrimental to Russia’s long-term interests and growth.

*Question.* Given the wide range of Russian malign behavior, how can the U.S. (including Congress) and Europe do a better job of being clearer about the policy aims of sanctions and any conditions needed for rolling back or removing sanctions with respect to Russia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Allies and Partners, as well as with Congress, to examine all options for how to calibrate sanctions actions to best meet U.S. and allied policy aims.

*Question.* Do you believe that the imposition of more sanctions on Russia would accomplish U.S. policy goals? What are other measures besides economic sanctions that could be effective tools with respect to U.S. foreign policy vis-a-vis Russia?

*Answer.* I do, if they are properly targeted and maintained. I see value to using other tools as well including multilateral visa bans and international pressure campaigns. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to using all available tools, including but not limited to sanctions, to stop Russian malign influence, and will also continue to seek ways to engage the Russian people.

*Question.* What outreach to every day Russians do you intend to do as Under Secretary for Political Affairs?

*Answer.* As the Russian Government increases its suppression of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in Russia, it is even more critical for us to engage with everyday Russians through public statements, broadcast and digital media, and the remaining educational and people-to-people programs that the Kremlin still allows. And even as we focus on responding to the Russian Government's aggression, as the President has stated, "the Russian people, like the American people, are invested in a peaceful and secure future for our world." We need to nurture these inclinations, and Mission Russia has been able to adopt a wide range of new virtual tools and hybrid engagements for this purpose. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing and finding new ways to expand our outreach to the Russian people.

*Question.* As Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs between 2013 and 2017, you were responsible for U.S. policy on Turkey during the 2016 coup attempt and as Turkey descended into the authoritarianism under President Erdogan we see today. What did you and the State Department do in those years to try to prevent Turkey from purchasing the S-400 missile defense system from Russia?

*Answer.* As Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, I oversaw the successful effort in coordination with our NATO Allies to convince the Government of Turkey to overturn its 2013 decision to move forward with a Chinese air defense system. I consistently and repeatedly pushed for Turkey to choose a NATO-interoperable air defense system, emphasizing that PATRIOT would be the best choice for Turkey. I also worked within the U.S. interagency to address Turkey's concerns about the PATRIOT. More broadly, I successfully pushed other NATO Allies to reduce their dependence on legacy Russian military equipment and procure NATO interoperable military equipment.

*Question.* Is there anything you think the U.S. should have done differently in the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt?

*Answer.* Following the devastating July 2016 coup attempt in Turkey in which more than 250 people lost their lives, the United States promptly condemned the coup and extended its heartfelt sympathy to the Turkish people. Since then, we have supported Turkey's efforts to bring perpetrators of the attempted coup to justice in evidence-based prosecutions. However, I am concerned by the significant expansion of scope of the prosecution for attempted coup-related activities to include opposition politicians, the media, and others whose views differ from the Government's.

*Question.* How should the U.S., the European Union, and NATO deal with an increasingly authoritarian Turkey whose decisions are problematic for its people, its allies, and its larger neighborhood?

*Answer.* I share the concerns about the Turkish Government's curbs on freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly that erode the foundations of a democratic society. It is in our shared interest to keep Turkey anchored to the Transatlantic community. If confirmed, I commit to press Turkey to do more to bolster the rule of law, protect human rights, support fundamental freedoms, uphold the rules-based international order, and stand united with the Transatlantic community in addressing global challenges from Iran, Russia, and China.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S. should try to drive a wedge between Russia and Turkey?

*Answer.* Russia attempts to interfere in domestic processes and drive wedges between the United States and its Allies, including Turkey, using manipulative energy tactics, weapons sales, corrupt business deals, and disinformation. Turkish-Russian relations are transactional and frequently divided by strategic rivalries. For example, Russia and Turkey are often on the opposite side of regional conflicts (e.g., Syria and Libya). At the same time, Turkey is heavily dependent upon Russian energy supplies and Russian tourists, construction sector projects, and Russian agricultural purchases are important for the Turkish economy. If confirmed, I will work to prevent Russian influence from weakening a key NATO Ally.

*Question.* Recently, Senator Menendez and I re-introduced the Ukraine Security Partnership Act, which aims to support Ukraine in its fight against Russian-backed separatists in the east and push the country to continue necessary reforms of its military and defense sectors. In the bill, we propose placing of conditions on Foreign Military Financing and International Military Education and Training (IMET). With your experience working on Ukraine policy, what is your view on Ukraine's historical response to conditionality? Do you believe that increasing conditionality on a portion of military support for the country would provide incentive for further reforms?

*Answer.* Reform conditionality on security assistance to Ukraine has been an important driver of positive change in the armed forces, including in ensuring U.S. support is properly used. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to provide robust security assistance to Ukraine, including lethal defensive weapons, and to support continued reforms in Ukraine. The Department will oversee the execution of \$115 million in FMF, \$3 million in IMET, and \$6 million in Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) funds that Congress appropriated for FY 2021. If confirmed, I will also coordinate with the Department of Defense in the execution of \$275 million that Congress appropriated for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI) in FY 2021, including certifying that Ukraine has taken substantial actions to make defense reforms before the final tranche of \$150 million in USAI funding is released. I will continue to urge the implementation of defense reforms, for which Ukraine has made moderate strides. If confirmed, I also look forward to consulting with Congress as we engage the Ukrainian Government on these issues to ensure we have the right mix of incentives for Ukraine to continue its reforms.

*Question.* Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was overwhelmingly elected in 2019 on an anti-corruption platform. After a few promising reforms, Zelenskyy and his government have stalled and even backslid on democratic and market-based economic reforms. The U.S. gives a huge amount of money to support Ukraine's transition, yet much of the country remains under the influence of oligarchs. What do you see as the current priorities for reform in Ukraine, and what pressure or leverage can the U.S. use to ensure Ukraine continues down its previously positive path?

*Answer.* Ukraine needs to make more progress in combatting corruption, institutionalizing rule of law, deepening economic reforms, and strengthening democratic institutions. If confirmed, I will work with Ukraine to hold accountable corrupt actors who stand in the way of reforms or try to undermine the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

*Question.* As Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, you had responsibility for Europe during years of upheaval in the region: the 2014 Ukraine Revolution of Dignity, the 2014 the 2015 European migration crisis, the Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election, and the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey, to name a few. Looking back from today, what would you do differently? What should the U.S. have done differently?

*Answer.* I am proud that the U.S. provided crucial political, economic, and security support to Ukraine during my tenure as Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, in close collaboration with the EU, NATO, and our democratic allies around the world. I regret that the U.S. was not a direct participant in the Normandy negotiations to implement the Minsk agreements because we might have been able to push the process faster and more effectively. As I testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in 2017 and 2018, I also believe we should have done more in 2016 to expose and deter Russian election interference in the U.S.

*Question.* What do you believe you and the U.S. got it right?

*Answer.* The U.S. provided crucial political, security, and economic support to Ukraine, coordinated closely with Allies and conditioned our assistance on meaningful reform. We assembled a global coalition to censure and sanction Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. We also strengthened deterrence along NATO's Eastern border with Russia, reversed the flow of gas in Europe to help Ukraine when Russia tried to cut it off, collaborated with the EU to bring new non-Russian energy sources to Europe, and provided intensive support to the U.N.-facilitated Cyprus peace talks. We also worked intensively in the Balkans to support good governance and reform, and called out those NATO Allies that were backsliding on their democratic commitments.

*Question.* There were reports that you supported arming Ukraine with lethal weaponry during your time as Assistant Secretary, a position at odds with key officials in the Obama administration. Do you remain willing to disagree, when appropriate, with the administration to ensure the best policies are put into place?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will remain committed, as I always have been, to providing my best counsel in the formulation of administration policy, even if that input is at odds with others. Once the President and Secretary have decided on a policy, I will faithfully implement it to the best of my ability. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to continue providing the assistance that Ukraine requires to defend itself against Russia's aggression, including lethal weapons, based on a U.S. and Ukrainian assessment of Ukraine's defense requirements. This includes the provision of defensive lethal assistance that has already expanded beyond Javelin missiles, such as armed Mark VI patrol boats this year, for instance.

*Question.* In the number three spot in the State Department, how do you propose the U.S. reinvigorates the Minsk process and the Normandy Format to pressure Putin to withdraw from Eastern Ukraine? Though not a member of the Normandy Format, what can the U.S. do to support Ukraine and end the war that is in its 7th year?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to vigorously oppose Russia's occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea and support diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Sanctions on Russia will remain in place until Russia ends its occupation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine. I will continue to support the Minsk agreements as the framework for a diplomatic resolution to the Russia-instigated conflict in eastern Ukraine and, in coordination with our allies and partners, will seek opportunities to leverage U.S. engagement on Ukraine-Russia conflict diplomacy.

*Question.* Do you view the sanctions in the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, as a mandatory or discretionary authority?

*Answer.* PEESA is U.S. law, and if confirmed, I will uphold the law. PEESA, as amended, is an important tool to stop the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances rather than undermines its collective security. I understand that the Department continues to assess all potential targets involved in the construction of Nord Stream 2, to identify persons that engaged in conduct that meets the specific terms of the statute and is considering designations.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is possible to prevent the completion of Nord Stream 2, or is it inevitable?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to working with allies and partners to prevent the completion of the pipeline and to ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances, rather than undermines, its collective security. The administration has made clear that Nord Stream 2 is a geopolitical, Russian malign influence project that is a threat to Europe's energy security. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues work to bring an end to the project.

*Question.* Do you believe it would be appropriate for the administration to negotiate a deal with Germany (or any foreign power) involving the waiving of mandatory sanctions absent prior consultations with Congress?

*Answer.* In the spirit of our Transatlantic partnership, the administration is prepared to listen to the concerns of our Allies. That said, to the best of my knowledge, there is no such deal. If confirmed, I will consult early and often with Congress on all sanctions matters. The Department looks forward to continuing to consult with Congress on this matter and others, and if confirmed I would look forward to doing the same.

*Question.* Do you believe that the State Department should implement the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, consistent with con-

gressional intent to stop the completion of the pipeline? Do you commit to ensuring that the State Department adopts an interpretation of PEESA, as amended, consistent with Congress' intent that the sanctions target a broad range of pipe-laying activities, support services, insurance and certification activities, and other conduct that supports or facilitates the construction of the pipeline?

*Answer.* PEESA is U.S. law, and if confirmed, I will uphold the law. The administration is thankful for the tools that Congress has provided to ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances rather than undermines its collective security. Furthermore, the Department continues to work to bring an end to the pipeline, which it views as a threat to European energy security and as a tool of Russian coercion. If confirmed, I will work with the Department to continue to assess and evaluate evidence available to determine the applicability of PEESA, as amended.

*Question.* The five post-Soviet Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, or C5, have been an afterthought in much of U.S. foreign policy. However, the region sits between Russia and China and has often proven eager for U.S. involvement and investment. Former Secretary Pompeo visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in 2020, and USAID has recently expanded its presence in the region. Over the past few years, the coordination between the United States and EU on development programs in Central Asia has markedly strengthened and both partners have published Central Asia engagement strategies. Will you commit to ensuring that Central Asia is a priority region for engagement by the State Department and to continuing to coordinate the U.S.'s Central Asia engagement with the EU?

*Answer.* Changes in Central Asia in the last several years have created both new opportunities and new challenges. If confirmed, I will work with the SCA bureau to continue to advance the U.S. Central Asia Strategy by providing strong support for the independence and territorial integrity of the Central Asia countries, encouraging regional cooperation and connectivity, working to reduce terrorist threats, and promoting the rule of law and respect for human rights. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to sustain U.S. diplomatic support and engagement in the region, including the continued routine contact between EU and U.S. officials overseeing engagement with Central Asia.

*Question.* In your opinion, what are the immediate priority areas in which the U.S. should engage these nations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the U.S. Central Asia Strategy, which lays out six priority policy objectives, including support for the independence and territorial integrity of the Central Asia countries, reduction of terrorism, support for stability in Afghanistan, encouraging regional cooperation and connectivity, promoting rule of law reform and respect for human rights, and furthering regional development. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to sustain U.S. diplomatic support for these priorities and engagement in the region.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S. should continue to look at the Central Asian nations through an Afghanistan-centric, "War on Terror" lens?

*Answer.* While promoting regional security will remain critical, the U.S. Central Asia Strategy lays out several priorities beyond preventing terrorism. If confirmed, I will support these priorities, including support for the independence and territorial integrity of the Central Asia countries, regional cooperation and connectivity, promoting rule of law reform and respect for human rights, and fostering economic opportunities for U.S. businesses in the region. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to sustain U.S. diplomatic support for these priorities and engagement in the region.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* The Saudi regime's human rights abuses are well-documented, and while Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman has tried to present himself as a "modernizer," his social reforms have been accompanied by vast crackdowns on independent voices. He has imprisoned women's rights activists, journalists, and academics, and of course most infamously, our own intelligence services have assessed him to be behind the brutal murder of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. The administration is to be applauded for taking



the important steps of releasing the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) report confirming MBS's complicity in the Khashoggi murder, adopting the "Khashoggi Ban," and applying sanctions to 76 Saudis behind Khashoggi's murder. But MBS was not among those, and continues to face no direct consequences for his role. If confirmed, what steps would you take to hold Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman accountable?

Answer. I agree that the Saudi Government must be held accountable for the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and I support the steps the Biden-Harris administration has taken to elevate the role of human rights within the relationship, address past behavior, and deter future abuses. As you note, the administration followed the law and submitted an unclassified report to Congress on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi; imposed Global Magnitsky sanctions on a former senior Saudi official and the group whose members were involved in the killing, which includes members of the Presidential Guard close to the Crown Prince; and took action pursuant to a new visa restriction policy against 76 Saudi individuals believed to have been engaged in threatening dissidents overseas, including but not limited to the Khashoggi killing. The Department has committed to report on any such extraterritorial activities by any government in its annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. If confirmed, I will push to ensure that human rights concerns remain a central element of our bilateral conversations, and that we obey all aspects of U.S. law in this regard.

*Question.* Since the fraudulent election last August, freedom of expression has been under attack in Belarus. The U.S. has sanctioned some entities and individuals over their roles in the election and the subsequent crackdowns on protesters; yet, the question remains what more the U.S. Government should do to signal its support for the Belarusian people. If confirmed, what measures would you support to hold the Lukashenko regime accountable and support the people of Belarus in their fight for a democratic future?

Answer. I condemn the Lukashenko regime for its violent and repressive tactics against the Belarusian people peacefully protesting for the right to choose their own leaders. If confirmed, I will call for the release of all political prisoners, new elections, and a national dialogue inclusive of the opposition and civil society. I will support coordinated actions with our allies on sanctions and visa bans against individuals and entities involved in human rights abuses and other efforts to undermine democracy. I am committed to finding ways to bolster assistance to support brave Belarusians advocating for democratic change and standing up for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* I applaud the Biden administration's new sanctions designations against the Russian Federation for its malign activities on American soil that undermine U.S. national security. I urge the administration to now follow through with congressionally mandated sanctions against Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline. This pipeline, if completed, would further undermine U.S. national security by increasing the Kremlin's influence in Europe, exacerbating divisions within Europe, and stripping Ukraine of its only source of leverage over greater Russian military activity at a time when Putin is substantially increasing his military capabilities along Ukraine's Eastern border. The Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) and the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act (PEESCA) impose mandatory sanctions on all entities involved in pipe-laying activities for Nord Stream 2. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring the imposition of sanctions as required under PEESA and PEESCA?

Answer. If confirmed, I will advocate using to all available tools to stop the completion of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. I understand that the Department is actively examining entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional persons as appropriate. If confirmed, I will use all tools, to include these authorities as appropriate, to counter Russian malign influence and to work with allies and partners to support Transatlantic energy security goals.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* How would you characterize the nature of the Chinese Communist Party? Do you believe their worldview and value system are compatible with our own?

**Answer.** The Chinese Communist Party is illiberal, authoritarian, and increasingly aggressive. I believe the Chinese leadership seeks not just to compete with the U.S. but to change the global rules of road to favor autocracy. As such, we are in a fundamental struggle with China, and it will be the challenge of our generation to defend and advance democracy, liberalism, universal human rights, and freedom in the face of Chinese ambitions.

*Question.* Is there any doubt in your mind that the goal of the Chinese Communist Party is to become the world's predominant political, military, and economic power, and for the United States to decline in relation to it?

**Answer.** I have no doubt that is China and the CCP's goal.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S. Government's past approach towards the PRC was effective at meeting this challenge?

**Answer.** The strategic environment has changed significantly in recent years, as has China itself. While there was once a broad consensus that economic liberalization in China would lead to political liberalization, the opposite has happened. China has grown more authoritarian at home and more aggressive abroad. The Chinese Communist Party is illiberal, authoritarian, and intends for China to become a dominant world power. Beijing is working across the spectrum to compete with and challenge the United States. This necessitates a new, tougher U.S. approach, working with allies and partners.

*Question.* Do you believe that the CCP can be trusted to uphold its commitments? How do you think the United States' approach to diplomacy with China should change because of its long record of broken promises to the international community?

**Answer.** Beijing has a long track record of failing to honor its international obligations, including in Hong Kong and around the world. As such, the United States must judge Beijing by its actions, not its words, and work with allies and partners to impose costs on China when it violates international norms and agreements.

*Question.* In 2018, during a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing, you said that Beijing is adapting and improving on Russia's methodology and is now running disinformation campaigns and influence operations in Taiwan, Australia and other neighboring countries. Do you believe China is doing the same in the U.S.?

**Answer.** Yes.

*Question.* Given this broad consensus around Confucius Institutes and their role in supporting CCP propaganda, how do you believe the United States should counter Chinese influence operations through programs such as their Confucius Institutes?

**Answer.** A clear understanding of the organizations and entities that China uses to attempt to influence U.S. policy is important. If confirmed, I commit to review these policies to ensure organizations are properly designated and inform relevant stakeholders within the United States, including state and local governments, universities, and business associations, as appropriate.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will the State Department under your leadership push for transparency and accountability to ensure we learn what caused the COVID-19 pandemic and how to prevent the next pandemic? Do you commit to follow up on the Department's January 2021 disclosure of new information on activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and share with Congress and with the public as appropriate further details on those disclosures, including the names of the researchers who fell sick in the fall of 2019 and the nature of the research they were conducting at the time?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I am committed to pursuing transparency and accountability as we seek to determine the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic, assess the shortcomings of the global response, and support necessary reforms to prevent future pandemics. I will continue to urge the WHO to ensure the second phase of the study in China is timely, transparent, expert-led, and free from interference. We do not know and cannot know the full origins of the virus and its spread until we have full transparency from the PRC.

*Question.* Do you concur with Secretary Pompeo's and Secretary Blinken's determination that genocide and crimes against humanity are currently being committed by the CCP against Uyghurs and other Turkic and Muslim communities in Xinjiang? If so, what are the appropriate tools for holding the CCP and its officials accountable for its atrocities?

**Answer.** I agree with the Secretary of State's determination that the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. These atrocities shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences. If confirmed, I will support using all appropriate tools, including those provided for in the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, to pressure the PRC to end these atrocities and to promote justice and accountability for the victims.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that human rights concerns are integrated into every senior bilateral engagement with the PRC, and that specific prisoner cases are raised at the highest levels, both publicly and privately?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will ensure that human rights concerns are at the forefront of our China policy, and I will commit to integrate our human rights concerns into senior bilateral engagements with PRC counterparts. I recognize that advocacy on behalf of individuals who have been abused by PRC authorities should be a critical component of the U.S. Government's approach, and I will engage both publicly and privately to urge the PRC authorities to release unjustly detained individuals unconditionally, consistent with their international human rights commitments.

*Question.* Do you see the link between China's pervasive, egregious human rights abuses and its failure on so many other fronts to be a responsible global actor?

**Answer.** Yes. I am clear-eyed about China's failure to uphold key past commitments, including on human rights, and ongoing abuses. I will keep these failures in mind as I deal with my PRC counterparts. If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and partners to address these challenges from a position of strength, re-engage in international institutions, and push back against attempts to rewrite the rules and procedures of the international system.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you ensure that the State Department maintains a high degree of pressure on Beijing for its violations of Hong Kong's long-cherished autonomy, and prioritizes this key issue above all other competing interests in Hong Kong?

**Answer.** Yes. The United States must clearly address Beijing's assault on freedom, democracy, and autonomy in Hong Kong, in violation of its international obligations and commitments. If confirmed, I will work with partners and allies to strengthen a coordinated approach to the crackdown.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to strengthening the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, including support for the Taiwan Travel Act and supporting and encouraging senior U.S. officials to travel to Taiwan, and senior Taiwanese officials to travel to D.C. to meet their respective counterparts?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I commit to maintaining and strengthening our rock-solid commitment to Taiwan. We must deepen our ties with Taiwan—a leading democracy and a critical economic and security partner, as guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three Joint Communiqués, and the Six Assurances provided to Taipei. Consistent with the “one China” policy, I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is looking for opportunities for visits between Washington and Taipei that advance our unofficial relationship and enable substantive exchanges on issues of mutual concern.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to a regular and robust arms sales process with Taiwan that does not fluctuate in accordance with U.S.-China relations?

**Answer.** Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure that the United States continues to maintain its commitment under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act to maintain Taiwan's defensive capabilities.

*Question.* Japan's Deputy Foreign Minister recently called Taiwan the “red line” of the Indo-Pacific region and expressed Japan's hope that President Biden would come to Taiwan's defense if the PRC attacks it. How would you work together with your counterpart in Tokyo to enhance Taiwan's defense and prevent PRC aggression against it?

**Answer.** The United States and Japan share concerns over Chinese activities that are inconsistent with the international rules-based order, including the use of economic and other forms of coercion, and we oppose any unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea. Given Taiwan's strategic location in the East China Sea, its security is closely linked to Japan's. If confirmed, I will work with Japan to promote peace and stability in the region, including in the Taiwan Strait,

and help create an environment in which Taiwan and the PRC can reach a peaceful resolution of their differences, consistent with the wishes of the people of Taiwan.

*Question.* Do you believe we should have a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Taiwan? If confirmed, will you work with Secretary Blinken to urge USTR to prioritize the launch of trade talks with Taiwan?

*Answer.* I support strengthening the U.S.-Taiwan economic and trade relationship as part of a broader effort to strengthen the U.S. geostrategic position, diversify global supply chains, and benefit U.S. industry.

*Question.* Mongolia sits between two authoritarian states, the PRC and Russia, both of which have taken aggressive action against neighboring countries. Mongolia also plays an important role in Tibetan Buddhism. If confirmed, will you commit to strengthen U.S. relations with Mongolia and shore up its sovereignty if it comes under pressure from its revisionist neighbors? If President Biden follows through with his campaign promise to assemble a summit of democracies, will you ensure that Mongolia is invited to participate?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with my counterparts in Ulaanbaatar and will also push back against the attacks of the Chinese Government on Mongolian language and culture, as well as Tibetan Buddhism. I understand planning for the Summit for Democracy remains in the early stages, and the invitation list is yet to be determined. I understand participating countries will be expected to deliver on both domestic and international commitments that advance democracy, fight corruption, and protect human rights.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure the U.S. promotes free speech in Russia, including by protecting the remaining outlets that count as free and independent press in Russia?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by Russia's intensifying crackdown on freedom of expression, including for members of the media. A prime example of the Russian Government's campaign against independent media is the use of its "foreign agent" law to harass and inhibit the work of USAGM-funded entities in Russia. Another example is the Russian Government's targeting for repression of those who are seeking transparency and accountability from their government. Russia's recent legislative changes further restrict the freedom of expression for members of the media, the political opposition, and civil society. If confirmed, I will press the Russian Government to end its repression of independent media, raise the plight of embattled journalists and outlets in multilateral fora, call out the climate of impunity for violent attacks against journalists, and defend freedom of expression in Russia.

*Question.* The Biden administration's new Russia sanctions, announced on April 15, did not include any sanctions against the Kremlin's most malign geopolitical project, Nord Stream 2. These sanctions are statutorily required under the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) and the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act (PEESCA). Will you commit, if confirmed, to using your position to ensure full implementation of the law including sanctions to prevent the completion of Nord Stream 2? Do you believe this is in the interest of the security of the United States and our allies and partners?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available tools to stop the Nord Stream 2 pipeline from being completed. I understand that the Department continues to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity, is considering designations, and has made it clear that companies risk sanctions if they are involved in the project.

*Question.* Do you agree that Iran is the world's leading exporter and supporter of terrorism?

*Answer.* Iran remains the foremost state sponsor of terrorism. Its support for terrorism threatens international security, our forces, diplomatic personnel, and partners in the region and elsewhere. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's continuing commitment to counter any Iranian threat to U.S. personnel and interests, and will respond to any such threat using all appropriate means.

*Question.* The Biden administration is making clear its intention to return to the fundamentally flawed JCPOA. Do you support the lifting of sanctions, including terrorism-related sanctions, against Iran in an effort to return to the JCPOA?

*Answer.* The framework of U.S. sanctions remains robust, and there are many aspects of our sanctions architecture that would remain in place even in the event of a U.S. return to the JCPOA. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration in-

tends to continue to use its considerable leverage—including sanctions that would remain in place, the threat of sanctions re-imposition, and other joint action with our allies and partners—to protect U.S. interests. In the meantime, I understand the administration’s intention is to maintain and potentially impose new sanctions on Iranian entities providing financial and material support to designated terrorist groups in the region. If confirmed, I am committed to consulting closely with Congress on the path forward.

*Question.* Secretary Blinken in his confirmation hearing was asked if it was in America’s national security interests to lift terrorism sanctions against Iran, including sanctions on the IRGC, Central Bank of Iran and the National Iranian Oil Company. He answered that it was not in America’s interest to lift these sanctions and that he backed “the toughest possible sanctions to deal with Iranian support for terrorism.” Do you agree with Secretary Blinken?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree with Secretary Blinken. The U.S. Government maintains a range of tools to combat Iran’s support for terrorism, and if confirmed, I support continuing to use these tools to counter Iran’s destabilizing activities.

*Question.* Do you acknowledge that there are gaps in the JCPOA that must be addressed to truly stop Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration’s unshakable commitment to preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. The administration’s intention is to build on the JCPOA with respect to its constraints on and transparency into Iran’s nuclear program and to address other issues of concern.

*Question.* Do you believe that for any Iran policy to be sustainable, it needs to have bipartisan support?

*Answer.* Yes. A bipartisan approach to Iran is the strongest way to safeguard U.S. interests for the long term.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is a terrorist organization?

*Answer.* Yes. Iran is the foremost state sponsor of terrorism and facilitates a wide range of terrorist activity. Iran’s support for terrorism threatens U.S. forces, diplomatic personnel, and our partners in the region and elsewhere. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224.

*Question.* Do you believe that a credible option to use military force is an important component of U.S. policy to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and to deter Iran’s regional ambitions?

*Answer.* Yes.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*Question.* As you know, I am the Co-Chair of the Ukraine Caucus along with Senator Dick Durbin. I am very concerned with the recent buildup of Russian forces on the eastern border of Ukraine and on the Crimean Peninsula as well as the recent rise in attacks on the Line of Contact that has resulted in the death of over 20 brave Ukrainian soldiers. Russia’s diplomatic, information, military, and economic aggression throughout Eastern Europe is a stark reminder of the danger revisionist powers pose to the free world. Recent escalations and displays of military strength in the Arctic, the basing of Russian troops in Belarus, and the constant drumbeat of misinformation threaten America’s national security. Russia’s actions constitute a very different vision, where international relations are singularly focused on Russian interests, where its neighbors play a subservient role to Putin’s wishes and desires. These actions by Russia are regressive and incompatible with the aspirations of freedom loving people everywhere. Senator Durbin and I recently led a letter with our fellow members of the Caucus to President Biden expressing our appreciation for his support to Ukraine and encouraging him to provide critical material support in the near and long term to help Ukraine protect from this unwarranted, unprovoked aggression. Over the past 7 years, we have made great strides in our support of Ukraine. I personally feel this is important because not only does this serve as a direct check against the Russians, but also sends a strong

signal to our European allies that we will stand and support those nations that seek freedom and democracy. We have done a great deal in Congress, to include:

- Over \$1.6 billion in military aid through the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative Fund and over \$3 billion in aid overall.
- Provided Island Class patrol boats and anti-ship missiles to defend their coast
- Lethal and non-lethal assistance to include medical support for wounded Ukrainian soldiers.
- In this recent NDAA, one of my initiatives was included to have a Department of State and Defense report to identify capability gaps in the Ukrainian military and develop a strategy to address the shortfalls.

Can I get your commitment to work with me and my Senate Colleagues to find ways to continue our support for Ukraine and other eastern European countries as they work to become democratic countries aligned with our Western ideals?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will support Ukraine's chosen Euro-Atlantic path, including by pushing for progress on rule of law and economic reforms that strengthen Ukraine's democratic institutions and lead to a brighter future for all Ukrainians. I will bring the same commitment to reform to relations with other eastern European countries, such as Moldova.

*Question.* Last year, Ukraine received Enhanced Opportunity Partner status from NATO. Ukraine has also been working hard to make much needed military organization and security sector reforms to meet NATO standards. From your perspective, do you see pathway to NATO membership for Ukraine, and how would that impact the security environment in Eastern Europe?

Answer. NATO's Open Door Policy has long served to promote democratic values and common security across Europe, and that door should remain open to Ukraine. In the 2008 Bucharest Summit Declaration, Allies agreed that Georgia and Ukraine would become NATO members, and in 2019 Ukraine was granted Enhanced Opportunities Partner status. Ukraine is now working to implement its Annual National Program (ANP), which is NATO's primary tool for guiding aspirants' reforms towards Euro-Atlantic standards. If confirmed, I will support Ukraine's chosen Euro-Atlantic path, including by pushing for progress on rule of law, economic, and security sector reforms.

*Question.* Since 2014 Congress has made very strong statements in regards to sanctioning Russia for their invasion of Crimea and backing separatists in the Donbas. While I am supportive of diplomatic efforts to solve the Donbas issue through the Minsk Process, I do not want to do so at the cost of Ukrainian sovereignty or acknowledging the Russian annexation of Crimea as legitimate-which of course, it is not. What are your thoughts on how to best support the peace process and what do you see as a viable way ahead to solve this very complex issue?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to vigorously oppose Russia's occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea and support diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Sanctions on Russia should remain in place until Russia ends its occupation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine. I will continue to support the Minsk agreements as the framework for a diplomatic resolution to the Russia-instigated conflict in eastern Ukraine and, in coordination with our Allies and partners, seek opportunities to use U.S. leverage to see Minsk implemented.

*Question.* Regarding Crimea, do you share my views on the illegitimacy of the Russian claims on what is Ukrainian land? Do you anticipate keeping the sanctions in place?

Answer. Let me be perfectly clear: Crimea is Ukraine. If confirmed, I will continue to oppose vigorously Russia's occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea and support diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Sanctions on Russia must remain in place until Russia ends its occupation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine. Successive administrations have been clear that the United States will never recognize Russia's attempted annexation. Russia must end its occupation of Crimea and return the Crimean peninsula to Ukraine.

*Question.* Combatting corruption has been a central tenant of the Ukrainian Government after the Revolution of Dignity. In opinion polls of the Ukrainian public, respondents consistently rank corruption as top concern along with Russia. However, after the March 2020 government reshuffling, the future of anti-corruption measures have been uncertain. How can the United States utilize the tools of the State Department and interagency to assist Ukraine in tackling corruption?

Answer. I am committed to strengthening our bilateral relationship with Ukraine. If confirmed, I will pursue tight interagency coordination to support Ukraine's chosen Euro-Atlantic path, including by pushing for progress on rule of law, corruption and economic reforms that strengthen Ukraine's institutions and lead to a brighter future for all Ukrainians. If confirmed, I will continue working with Ukraine to hold accountable those who stand in the way of reforms or try to undermine the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Advancing reforms, particularly anticorruption efforts, is just as important for Ukraine's future as opposing Russia's aggression.

*Question.* Senator Chris Murphy and I have worked very closely over the last 4 years to strengthen the Global Engagement Center and through our efforts have gotten increased funding and personnel for the Center. Senator Murphy and I recently sent a letter to Secretary Blinken asking that he increase the funding for the GEC to at least \$138 million. The GEC budget was flatlined last year at \$60 million and I am concerned that the Department will not request robust funding this year. I hope that when you are confirmed you will see the value of the GEC and fund it properly to accomplish its critical mission of pushing back against Russian and Chinese disinformation. We have done too much work on a bipartisan basis to allow the GEC to not reach its full potential. Secretary Blinken kept the former director Lea Gabrielle on for a month, and I really appreciated that. Now there has been a gap in leadership at the GEC and I hope that when confirmed you will work the Secretary to bring on a new director quickly. I feel that the disinformation efforts led by China, Russia, and Iran are a very dangerous threat to the freedom and democracy of our allies and we should do all we can to support and help them.

- Can I get your commitment to work with Senator Murphy and me to continue strengthening the capabilities of the GEC as well as increased funding?

Answer. Yes, you have my commitment, if confirmed, to work with you and your colleagues, as well as the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, to continue strengthening the Global Engagement Center (GEC) and our full range of public diplomacy programs. The GEC's efforts are an important part of the work we must undertake with allies and partners to counter disinformation, define an affirmative and democratic global information space, and ultimately sustain an information environment in which audiences around the world can freely access, contribute to, make informed judgments about, and trust transparent and truthful communication.

*Question.* Recently, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber ruled that the Office of the Prosecutor could proceed with an illegitimate investigation into alleged crimes occurring in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. As you are aware, both the United States nor Israel are signatories to the Rome Statute, and the ICC is ignoring its mandate that stipulates it only initiate a case where there is the absence of a robust legal and justice system. Neither the United States nor Israel fit this criteria, yet the ICC has decided to proceed with this politically motivated investigation anyway. Senator Cardin and I wrote a letter to Secretary Blinken signed by over 30 Senators commending him on coming out against this statement by the ICC and encouraging him to do everything he can to push back against this effort. We have also authored language together that was included in the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) law of 2015, which leverages ongoing trade negotiations to discourage prospective U.S. trade partners from engaging in economic discrimination against Israel. Governments that call upon their own companies to participate in a political boycott of Israel run afoul of clear guidelines in the law.

- On the ICC issue and BDS in general—will you work with me and Congress to push back against efforts to marginalize and discriminate against Israel?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to push back against efforts to marginalize and discriminate against Israel, including the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) campaign, which unfairly singles out Israel. While the Biden-Harris administration will respect First Amendment rights, I understand that it will not hesitate to voice disapproval of the BDS campaign or to fight efforts to delegitimize Israel on the world stage. If confirmed, I will also support the administration's continued objection to the International Criminal Court's efforts to assert jurisdiction over Israeli personnel.

*Question.* For the last six years, I was the Chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. During that time, I worked in a bipartisan way to uncover the ways China exerts its influence here in the United States. We held several hearings issued bipartisan reports that documented how China stifles speech and academic freedom on college campus through its Confucius Institutes, and how it uses talent recruitment programs (like the Thousand Talents Plan) to steal our tax-

payer funded research and Intellectual Property. Based on those findings, we proposed legislative fixes to these issues and I look forward to working with you on them. Last Congress, I introduced the Safeguarding American Innovation Act alongside Senator Carper and group of 19 bipartisan senators (including Chairman Risch) to combat the theft of American taxpayer funded research and intellectual property. Recently, both FBI Director Wray and Attorney General Barr have spoken about this threat, with the FBI opening a new China-related investigation every 10 hours with around 2,500 open counterintelligence investigations across the country. This legislation is designed to get the federal government's house in order to respond to the threat of China's talent recruitment programs. It also ensures that individuals are held accountable for failing to disclose their foreign ties on federal grant applications. Reforms the State Department's vetting process for issuing visas to foreign researchers, and requires more safeguards on sensitive research from our research institutions. One particular section of the legislation would grant the State Department a new authority to deny visas to individuals we know are coming to the United States to steal our research and IP through loopholes in our export control laws. This an authority that career attorneys at the Department have requested across multiple administrations. And we worked closely with those same career attorneys at the State Department to craft the language in our legislation, including with safeguards to ensure that the new authority is not abused.

- Do you agree that government sponsored theft of US intellectual property and technology by the CCP is a serious problem that needs to be addressed?

Answer. Yes. Theft of U.S. intellectual property (IP) from sources within China, including state sponsored entities, spans the entire spectrum of IP, and costs U.S. companies hundreds of millions of dollars a year. If confirmed, I will work with our interagency partners and allies to ensure we are taking the most effective steps to combat all forms of IP theft from the PRC.

*Question.* I understand that as of last week the administration has entered indirect negotiations with Iran to discuss a return to the 2015 JCPOA. Last month I signed a letter with the other GOP ranking members of national security committees outlining our shared vision for a return to new negotiations. While I understand the need to prioritize the nuclear aspect of the Iranian threat to the region, Iran's support for terror proxies must be addressed in these negotiations. Their support for Hezbollah, Shia-backed militias in Iraq, and the Houthi rebels in Yemen are destabilizing the region with innocent civilians paying the highest price. As we witnessed with the previous JCPOA, the money earned through sanctions relief went not to the Iranian people but directly to support terrorism beyond Iran's borders.

- What is your assessment of the threat posed by Iranian backed proxy networks, and how will you balance that assessment with the need to contain Iran's nuclear program and their conventional ballistic missile program?

Answer. Iran's development and proliferation of ballistic missiles, as well as its support for violent proxies and groups across the region, pose a threat to international security, and remain significant challenges. If confirmed, I commit to work on all aspects of the Iran threat, including its nuclear program, its missile program, and its support for extremist groups across the region.

*Question.* The Abraham Accords were an historic achievement that will lead to a new era of peace and prosperity between Israel and its neighbors. Last month, I introduced legislation with Senator's Booker, Cardin, Young, Risch, and Kaine that would strengthen and expand these normalization agreements. This legislation requires the Department of State to develop a comprehensive strategy to expand these agreements, as well as require the State to report on Arab countries anti-normalization laws which punish community and people to people engagement with Israelis

- Do I have your commitment to expand and strengthen the Abraham Accords while using all tools at your disposal to push back on the barriers that still prevent the normalization of Israel in the region?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work to urge other countries to normalize relations with Israel and support other opportunities to expand cooperation among countries in the region.

---



RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take or oversee to enhance the level of our diplomacy in Afghanistan and to help ensure that basic human rights—such as the ability of girls to go to school—are preserved?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure the U.S. stays actively engaged in supporting the peace process, economic development, and promoting human rights, women's rights, and girls' education in Afghanistan, consistent with U.S. policy and values. The results of U.S. investment in the social and economic development of Afghanistan over the past 20 years have been significant, particularly with regards to access to education. In 2001, fewer than 900,000 children—almost all boys—were in school. Today, more than 9.2 million children—40 percent of them girls—are in school. Through robust diplomacy and coordinated assistance, I will work to see these gains further advanced and strengthened.

*Question.* Pakistan, India, and Iran have different views on what the future of Afghanistan should look like. How should the U.S. engage with those in the region on the path forward for Afghanistan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to put the full weight of our government behind diplomatic efforts to reach a peace agreement between the Afghan Government and the Taliban. All of Afghanistan's neighbors share an interest in a peaceful and stable Afghanistan that can serve as an effective partner in combating terrorism, criminal networks, and narcotics trafficking. I would welcome diplomatic efforts by all countries to encourage the negotiating parties to accelerate the peace process through meaningful negotiations. I would also welcome the U.N. playing a constructive role as a convener and facilitator of discussions. Additionally, I recognize that peace, regional connectivity, and economic growth and development are mutually supportive and indispensable to each other. If confirmed, I will encourage regional and international partners to commit to greater cooperation with Afghanistan in support of regional security and economic growth.

*Question.* India has moved closer to the United States and the Quad in recent years and away from their traditional "non-alignment posture." They have adopted something they've termed "strategic autonomy." This is clearly a nuanced shift but a shift nonetheless. As the only Quad member that shares a land border with China, and as a place where fighting between China and India has occurred, they are undoubtedly an important partner. How will you help the U.S. to pursue closer relations with India?

*Answer.* The United States and India share a comprehensive global strategic partnership. The recent Quad leaders' summit marked a new milestone for our collaboration to address a range of security, economic and governance challenges across the Indo-Pacific. Our two nations also enjoy a robust defense and security partnership as evidenced by Defense Secretary Austin's recent visit. If confirmed, I will strive to work with my Indian counterparts to further strengthen our partnership, including our defense and economic cooperation, COVID-19 response, and climate change.

*Question.* On February 11th Secretary Blinken revoked the Foreign Terrorist Organization and Specially Designated Global Terrorist designations of the Houthis, while retaining the designations of five Houthi individuals as Specially Designated Nationals. I supported this call because of what that designation would have meant for the humanitarian situation on the ground as it would have likely led to a famine and further devastated those on the ground. However, despite these steps, fighting in Yemen has intensified, and Houthi forces have been emboldened and have advanced on the city of Marib, the last northern city controlled by the internationally-recognized Republic of Yemen Government. I am glad to have a trusted hand with Tim Lenderking serving as Special Envoy but the situation seems increasingly grim. Should the United States do more to counter Iranian weapons smuggling to the Houthis and protect Saudi territory from Houthi missile strikes? If so, how?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department has been working closely with inter-agency partners to disrupt the Iranian threat network and the smuggling that occurs over land and via sea routes. It is also essential that the U.S. continues to support the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) Coast Guard and Border Guard with non-lethal training so they can police their own borders. The Export Control and Related Border Security program builds the capacity of the ROYG to interdict the illicit transfers of arms and mitigate Iran's malign influence. If confirmed, I would support continued work with Saudi Arabia to bolster its defenses against various Houthi capabilities. These efforts will prevent the Houthis from gaining access

to further advanced capabilities, and also encourage all parties to reach a ceasefire agreement and subsequently end the war.

*Question.* What potential incentives can the international community provide the warring parties to reach an immediate cease-fire?

*Answer.* A ceasefire is just one step in an overall peace process. For a ceasefire to be durable, the warring parties must believe it is in their interest. Toward that end, internationally facilitated incentives should include: a roadmap to an inclusive resolution of the conflict that addresses political grievances, accountability for human rights violations, future reconstruction assistance, and the removal of economic restrictions in support of engagement in negotiations. I understand that Special Envoy Lenderking continues to work in support of U.N. Special Envoy Griffiths' efforts and with the Republic of Yemen Government and Saudi Arabia, with the support of the Sultanate of Oman, and with our European partners, to align these incentives and bring about an end to the conflict. However, I also understand that the Houthis appear intent on continuing their offensive on the city Marib and have been resistant to negotiating the terms of a durable ceasefire. We need more pressure from the international community, to include the U.N., our European partners, and Oman, to encourage the Houthis to engage constructively with the U.N. and other parties if we hope to end the conflict. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting those efforts.

*Question.* How can the United States influence local actors to create an agreed-upon political framework that maintains national unity while addressing regional concerns?

*Answer.* The United States must remain committed to a unified, stable Yemen that contributes to wider regional security and economic cooperation. As the conflict continues, the country becomes increasingly fragmented, and local stakeholders will expect to maintain their new-found autonomy in a post-conflict setting. The buy-in of these local stakeholders will be critical for any future political settlement, and ultimately the long-term stability of Yemen. The future of the Yemeni state is for Yemenis to determine. I understand that Special Envoy Lenderking is working in lockstep with U.N. Special Envoy Griffiths to achieve a ceasefire so we can transition to an intra-Yemeni political process that is representative and can be sustained over the long-term.

*Question.* There have been reports regarding the appointment of a special envoy for Nord Stream 2. Presumably, such a position would coordinate with U.S. partners and allies the imposition of additional, mandatory sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, as required under the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) and the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act (PEESCA). It would not be, in my view, to negotiate a deal that allows the Russian pipeline to be completed. If confirmed, would you support the appointment of a special envoy to ensure full implementation of U.S. sanctions laws and make sure Nord Stream 2 is never finished?

*Answer.* Should the U.S. decide to appoint a Special Envoy for Nord Stream 2, I believe that person's task should be to coordinate and advance increased U.S. pressure consistent with U.S. law to stop the pipeline before it is finished, and to work with European allies toward the same goal.

*Question.* The Biden administration's new Russia sanctions, announced on April 15, did not include any sanctions against the Kremlin's malign geopolitical project, Nord Stream 2. These sanctions are statutorily required under the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) and the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Clarification Act (PEESCA). In your view, why did the Biden administration fail to sanction Nord Stream 2?

*Answer.* Without being inside the Biden-Harris administration, I can't speak to why certain decisions were or were not made. I understand that the Department continues to actively examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity and will designate additional persons as appropriate. If confirmed, I commit to use all available tools to try to stop the pipeline before it is completed.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you work with the administration to implement U.S. sanctions laws on the Kremlin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to use all available tools, including bipartisan legislation passed in the NDAA, to try to stop the pipeline before it is completed, and to engage with key European partners and allies to seek their support in that goal.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is committing a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that is ongoing. The Biden administration had sent differing signals about the degree to which administration officials assessed that genocide is indeed ongoing, but on March 22, Secretary Blinken correctly emphasized “the P.R.C. continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity.” Do you agree with the assessment that the Chinese Government is engaged in a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the XUAR that is ongoing?

*Answer.* I agree with the Secretary of State’s determination that the Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. These crimes include imprisonment, torture, enforced sterilization, and persecution, including through forced labor and draconian restrictions on the freedoms of religion or belief, expression, and movement. These atrocities shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences.

*Question.* What role do you see for the State Department in countering that ongoing genocide, and more broadly the human rights atrocities being committed by the Chinese Communist Party?

*Answer.* I share your deep concern about the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious groups in Xinjiang. I understand the Department has reinvigorated cooperation with partners and allies and has imposed a number of measures to address these atrocities. If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts to broaden this international coalition and call for an independent and unhindered investigation. I also will support using all appropriate tools, including those provided for in the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, to pressure the PRC to end these atrocities and to promote accountability for those responsible and justice for victims.

*Question.* The Obama-Biden administration’s approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict was justified on the basis of a theory of regional relations in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prevented broader Israeli-Arab rapprochement. Among other decisions, that administration implemented discriminatory policies that distinguished between Jewish communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967. That approach culminated in December 2016, when the Obama administration maneuvered the United Nations Security Council into passing UNSCR 2334, which among other things denied Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights and part of its capital Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter. The Trump administration systematically worked to hollow out and render UNSCR 2334 null and void. They did so, including by recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, by moving our embassy to Jerusalem, by seeking to end discriminatory approaches that distinguished legally and for the purposes of aid and trade between different Israeli communities, and by taking several other steps. Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?

*Answer.* In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, Israel’s security must remain paramount. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria, it would be irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, and at the same time, it is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. I support the USG’s long-standing position that Jerusalem is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. As such, all issues related to Jerusalem must be handled with care and sensitivity.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, and at the same time, it is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. I support the USG’s long-standing position that Jerusalem is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. As such, all issues related to Jerusalem must be handled with care and sensitivity.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem?

Answer. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, and at the same time, it is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. I support the USG's long-standing position that Jerusalem is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. As such, all issues related to Jerusalem must be handled with care and sensitivity.

*Question.* On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On February 5, the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. The issue of humanitarianism was central to the public explanation of the decision: officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the "broad" designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen's population live under areas controlled by the group. Since then, the Houthis have escalated their violence across the region, bombarding civilians in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Yemen was already one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the world, in large part because the Houthis and their Iranian backers block aid, steal aid, and attack civilians. Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

Answer. Iran continues to provide the Houthis with training, equipment, and monetary support, which assists them in promoting regional instability; threatening our partners, especially Saudi Arabia; and disrupting international shipping through the Bab Al Mandeb. Further, the Houthis use this support to threaten Yemeni civilians, especially at this time in the city of Marib. The Houthis also impede humanitarian access in the areas they control. If confirmed, I am committed to working with our interagency partners to counter Iran's destabilizing activities, and with our partners on the ground to improve humanitarian access and facilitate the provision of critical commodities and humanitarian aid to Yemeni civilians.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in general.

Answer. As I understand, the revocations were aimed at ensuring that U.S. policies would not impede assistance to those already suffering what has been called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The Biden-Harris administration heeded concerns from the United Nations, humanitarian groups, and bipartisan members of Congress, among others, that the designations could have had a devastating impact on Yemenis' access to basic commodities like food and fuel, which could increase the risk of famine. The short time that passed between the designations and the revocations limited the impact the designations could have had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports, including food and other essential supplies.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

Answer. As I understand, the revocations were aimed at ensuring that U.S. policies would not impede assistance to those already suffering what has been called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. This has been especially critical in Marib, where the escalation of hostilities has caused additional needs and secondary displacement. The lifting of sanctions has allowed for the delivery of life-saving food, emergency shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, and essential non food items, such as blankets and water containers.

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF. Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized for inaction in response to Iranian human rights atrocities, and critics have suggested that those issues were subsumed beneath the administration's commitment to securing a nuclear deal. The Biden administration, which is rushing to secure another nuclear deal with Iran, has already come under similar criticism. Please describe your assessment of the scope and nature of Iran's human rights record.

*Answer.* The Iranian Government severely restricts the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression. If confirmed, I will be vocal about Iran's human rights violations and abuses, which include arbitrary or unlawful detention of numerous individuals, some of whom have faced torture and/or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, and execution after unfair trials. If confirmed, I intend to work with my colleagues to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and abuses.

*Question.* Please describe the degree to which you believe that Iranian human rights concerns should be highlighted vs. considerations related to nuclear negotiations or securing nuclear-related concessions.

*Answer.* I believe we can and must work to ensure Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon, at the same time we continue to pressure Iran regarding its gross human rights violations and abuses, and use all tools at our disposal to promote accountability for those responsible.

*Question.* Do you believe that imposing new human rights sanctions against Iran, or enforcing existing ones, would violate the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or a successor agreement?

*Answer.* The Iranian Government denies Iranians their human rights, including through severe restrictions on the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression. I support continuing to maintain and impose sanctions on Iranian entities perpetrating human rights violations and abuse.

*Question.* Russia and Germany appear to have assessed that the Biden administration will not respond forcefully to their effort to complete the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Can you please describe your assessment of the damage to American national security and to the energy security of our European allies, if Nord Stream 2 was completed?

*Answer.* The Nord Stream 2 pipeline deepens Europe's energy dependence on Russia, threatening European energy security and the security of Ukraine and Central and Eastern European NATO and EU countries, while dividing the continent. It enriches the Kremlin and President Putin's allies at a time when Russia is amassing forces in and around Ukraine and continuing its cyber and disinformation campaigns in the U.S. and globally, among other malign activities.

*Question.* Could you please describe what steps you would take, if you're confirmed, to ensure that Nord Stream 2 is stopped?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work tirelessly with allies and partners, using all the tools at our disposal, including legislation you have authored, to prevent the completion of the pipeline and to ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances rather than undermines its collective security.

*Question.* There have been public reports that the State Department is considering the appointment of an envoy to specifically oversee the State Department's efforts around Nord Stream 2. Additional reports suggest that foreign diplomats have expressed hope that the envoy will work for a deal with the Russians or Germans to allow the pipeline to be completed, or at least serve as a short-term substitute for sanctions. The State Department should absolutely spare no effort or resource in blocking Nord Stream 2, and an envoy position would help mobilize action in that regard—but the envoy must be someone who ensures and oversees the immediate application of congressionally mandated sanctions and makes sure Nord Stream 2 is never completed. Appointing an envoy who negotiated terms for completing Nord Stream 2 would be an absolutely unacceptable outcome. This envoy must not be a substitute for sanctions: it must be someone who immediately delivers them. Do you

intend to seek the appointment of an envoy who would work on Nord Stream 2 specifically?

*Answer.* I understand the Biden-Harris administration is considering appointing an envoy to work on Nord Stream 2 and other issues. Particularly until a new Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs is confirmed, I believe an envoy could help give focus and energy to the interagency effort to stop the pipeline, and to diplomacy with key countries.

*Question.* What responsibilities would such an envoy have?

*Answer.* I have not been privy to any formal position description if it exists. If named, the envoy, I presume, would work inside the U.S. Government to accelerate and sharpen policy and sanctions options and diplomatically to stop the pipeline, using all available tools, including the legislation you authored.

*Question.* What role do you envision such an envoy playing?

*Answer.* Particularly until a new Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs is confirmed, I believe an envoy could help give focus and energy to the interagency effort to stop the pipeline, and to diplomacy with key countries.

*Question.* The administration regards rejoining the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or signing a successor agreement a top priority. The JCPOA was classified by the Obama administration as merely “political commitments” rather than an executive agreement or a treaty. In your hearing you noted the importance of securing “bipartisan support [for rejoining the JCPOA or signing a successor agreement] so an agreement is binding.” Is it your understanding that any form of international agreement between the United States and foreign nations does not hold any legally binding commitment unless Congress ratifies the agreement as a treaty and passes legislation implementing those commitments?

*Answer.* I share President Biden’s conviction that a bipartisan approach to Iran is the strongest way to safeguard U.S. interests for the long term. The JCPOA was negotiated as a non-binding arrangement in 2015. Numerous other important international arrangements have been done in this way. With respect to international agreements, the Supreme Court has long held that not all such agreements require approval as treaties pursuant to the procedures set out in Article II of the Constitution, and the Congress has recognized this through the enactment of the Case-Zablocki Act, which establishes procedures regarding oversight of legally binding international agreements other than treaties.

*Question.* Can you commit that, if the administration plans to rejoin the JCPOA or signs any successor agreement, such agreement will be submitted by the administration to Congress for ratification as a treaty?

*Answer.* I understand that President Biden has pledged to work closely with Congress, and this includes briefing on any plans regarding his administration’s future course of action on Iran. The JCPOA was negotiated as a non-binding arrangement in 2015. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department carefully considers the facts and circumstances of any U.S. return to the JCPOA to determine the implications under INARA and would also assess the appropriate form of any future agreement. The Biden-Harris administration has committed to ensuring that the requirements of INARA are satisfied.

*Question.* The administration continues to emphasize working and coordinating with “allies and partners,” especially in the context of multilateral forums and in addressing major security challenges of our time such as the rise of authoritarian China and the threat of a nuclear Iran. In your view, do the alliances and partnerships of the United States with other nations always produce a net-positive benefit to U.S. foreign policy and homeland defense priorities?

*Answer.* I believe that alliances and partnerships serve as a force-multiplier for the United States in advancing its foreign policy and homeland defense priorities. While we must always maintain our prerogative to operate unilaterally if it is in our national interest, working with allies and partners to address shared challenges often achieves the best outcomes for the United States. Some of the most significant threats we face today—from the COVID-19 pandemic to climate change—cannot be solved by one country alone. Our ability to shape the behaviors of China, Iran, or others with whom we have serious concerns will only be strengthened with likeminded partners by our side.

*Question.* In situations where our allies and partners take a differing or less stringent approach to a major foreign policy or homeland defense priority, in your view is it appropriate for the United States to exercise unilateral leadership? In your re-

sponse, please address the example of differing postures toward China between the United States and the European Union.

*Answer.* The United States should work with its Allies and partners whenever it can but should always reserve the right to act unilaterally if and when necessary. While European views on China have evolved, the U.S. remains more cautious about the challenges and threats China poses to our security, economic interests and global norms and standards. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to discuss China with Europeans both at NATO and in the U.S.-EU China Dialogue to align positions more closely.

*Question.* Do you believe burden sharing in both monetary costs and international commitments between the U.S. and our allies and partners must be addressed before re-engaging or forming new multilateral treaties or forums?

*Answer.* I believe in appropriate burden-sharing with allies and partners in all shared endeavors and international commitments. The U.S. should have full knowledge of the monetary and other consequences before entering into any international commitments, whether through a treaty or other means. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to ensure that the implications of any such commitments are well understood by both branches of the Government.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. VICTORIA NULAND BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* Do you agree with the State Department's determination that CCP-controlled China is committing genocide and crimes against humanity with respect to Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang? Secretary of State Antony Blinken has sustained former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's determination that CCP-controlled China is engaging in genocide and crimes against humanity with respect to Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada have stated the evidence—including from satellite imagery, and eyewitness testimony, as well as the Chinese Government's own documents—is overwhelming. China's extensive program of repression includes severe restrictions on religious freedoms, the used of forced labor, mass detention in internment camps, forced sterilization, and the destruction of Uyghur heritage.

*Answer.* I agree with the Secretary of State's determination that the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. These crimes include imprisonment, torture, enforced sterilization, and persecution, including through forced labor and draconian restrictions on the freedoms of religion or belief, expression, and movement. These atrocities shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences.

*Question.* In your view, should U.S.-based corporations remain silent on the issue of genocide and crimes against humanity in CCP-controlled China?

*Answer.* No. Uyghurs have suffered unspeakable oppression at the hands of China's authoritarian government. The People's Republic of China is engaged in gross human rights violations that shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences. The United States must speak out consistently and jointly with allies and partners, impose costs and sanctions on those responsible, and help those persecuted find safe haven in the United States and other countries. I have been heartened by bipartisan Congressional action on Xinjiang and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this crucial issue.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, how will you support the State Department's efforts to compel U.S.-based corporations that conduct substantial business in China to pitch in to immediately stop genocide and crimes against humanity in CCP-controlled China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts by the U.S. Department of State, along with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to caution businesses about the risks of supply chain links to entities that engage in human rights abuses, including forced labor, in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang) and elsewhere in China. I will also support sanctions imposed on people and organizations complicit in genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, in Xinjiang. I am heartened by bipartisan Congressional ac-

tion on Xinjiang and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this crucial issue.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* How will the State Department invest more resources into protecting fundamental human rights? How will the State Department help protect civic space around the world to ensure local human rights activists, peacebuilders, and humanitarians, particularly women and youth, have the space and resources to prevent violence and promote sustainable peace?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to consult closely with Department, interagency, and Congressional colleagues to ensure we have systems in place that provide flexibility to reallocate resources as needed. I will also work with bureaus and offices that administer democracy programs to capitalize on emerging opportunities, including by pivoting quickly to support programs tailored for these situations. In all cases, I will work to ensure U.S. efforts empower democratic reformers and activists on the ground. In addition, I intend to work bilaterally and multilaterally with U.S. allies and partners to increase mutually reinforcing efforts and burden-sharing in these areas.

*Question.* How will you increase support for members of civil society that champion the full inclusion of disabled persons and expansion of disability rights?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support timely appointment of a Senior Advisor or Special Envoy for International Disability Rights and prioritize disability-inclusive programming that recognizes persons with disabilities among the beneficiaries, supports projects to address gaps in their inclusion, and bolsters the work done by civil society to advance the rights of disabled persons. I also will support the full inclusion of persons with disabilities through Department of State training, data collection, programming, and communication about disability rights. An empowered and knowledgeable workforce can best support members of civil society championing the full inclusion of disabled persons and expansion of disability rights.

*Question.* How will the Biden administration right-size and rebalance what many experts believe are over-militarized interventions to address violent extremism? What steps can you take in this role to restore a more balanced approach to prevention and countering violent extremism?

*Answer.* Military forces and kinetic tools have played an important role in U.S. and international counterterrorism efforts, but it is clear that balanced, sustainable, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches are needed to sustainably defeat terrorism and prevent terrorist radicalization and recruitment. If confirmed, I will promote civilian-led counterterrorism approaches that address underlying grievances that fuel violent extremism and reduce the need for military interventions. I will also work to ensure that U.S. countering violent extremism (CVE) programs—especially prevention work—are prioritized and adequately resourced, and that all U.S. counterterrorism efforts advance the rule of law and respect for human rights.

*Question.* The J Under Secretary and the bureaus he or she oversees can find themselves disadvantaged when working with the regional bureaus during the policy-making process. Do you agree that this is a challenge and, if so, how would you empower the bureaus under you?

*Answer.* I agree that siloing between regional and functional bureaus is a longstanding challenge for State Department policymaking. If confirmed, I would leverage my 27-plus years of service in four regional and three functional bureaus to elevate and achieve better integration of J family issues in the full spectrum of U.S. policymaking, including through improved coordination within the State Department, the interagency, and with the 270-plus U.S. diplomatic missions worldwide. I would elevate the voice and expertise of J family bureaus and office by taking a burden-sharing approach with regional and other functional bureaus on addressing challenges that know no borders—from corruption and narcotics to rising autocracy and extremism worldwide.

*Question.* What steps would you take to attract more individuals - particularly from the Foreign Service - to work in the J family bureaus?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will create an inclusive environment that is welcoming to all employees—both foreign and civil service—and of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds, because diverse teams make strong teams. I will work collaboratively with



the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and the Bureau of Global Talent Management to ensure that J family bureaus and offices are appropriately staffed and attractive to all applicants. I also will focus on retention and advancing a more meaningful professional development and advancement path for all J family team members. This includes increasing training opportunities for all and advocacy for J family Foreign Service Officers in the DCM and Chief of Mission selection processes.

*Question.* Given President Biden and Secretary Blinken's strong emphasis on re-centering human rights and democracy in U.S. foreign policy, do you believe any changes should be made to the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor bureau to ensure that it can effectively play a much larger role in U.S. foreign policy than it has in the past?

*Answer.* Democracy and human rights are under increasing threat globally from democratic backsliding and growing authoritarianism. Responding effectively to these challenges requires more than any one bureau or agency acting alone; it requires a whole-of-government approach. If confirmed, I intend to empower the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor while also working with partners across the Department, other U.S. agencies, and Congress to bolster democratic resilience and promote, protect, and defend human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* How do you think the U.S. arms transfer process should change to better incorporate human rights and civilian harm concerns, and what changes would you advocate for as Under Secretary?

*Answer.* The President and Secretary Blinken have said human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy, including arms transfers and other security assistance. If confirmed, I will work to ensure human rights remains key to reviews of potential Foreign Military Sales and State Department-licensed Direct Commercial Sales. If confirmed, I will encourage the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor's continued participation in arms transfer deliberations. I understand the administration has been clear that the United States will insist on adherence to agreements on the use of U.S.-origin defense equipment, compliance with international law, including the law of armed conflict, and respect for human rights, and it will consider appropriate consequences when violations occur.

*Question.* Do you agree that the U.S. Government should refrain from exporting arms to fragile states or countries at risk of atrocities?

*Answer.* I understand that, consistent with the Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy, all arms transfers are subject to comprehensive case-by-case considerations of U.S. interests - including any risk the transfer may contribute to human rights abuses, including acts of gender-based violence, violence against children, violations of international law, including the law of armed conflict, terrorism, mass atrocities, or transnational organized crime. If confirmed, I will work to ensure human rights remains a key focus of CAT policy documents and discussions, and I will promote measures for the mitigation of harm to civilians.

*Question.* What specific actions will the State Department take under your direction to reassert U.S. peacebuilding and humanitarian leadership and intervention in Syria?

*Answer.* I fully expect the United States will continue to be a leader in the Syria humanitarian response. On March 29, Secretary Blinken called on the UN Security Council to reauthorize all three international border crossings for humanitarian assistance. If confirmed, I will support efforts to increase multilateral diplomatic engagement at the Security Council and will be in close consultations with our allies, in addition to Russia and China, at the UN to find a formula that keeps humanitarian aid flowing. I understand the administration supports the UN-facilitated, Syrian-led process laid out within the parameters of UNSCR 2254. If confirmed, I will use a variety of tools to push for a sustainable end to the conflict to end the Syrian people's suffering and to bring stability, accountability, and security to the Syrian people.

*Question.* How specifically will the United States ensure continued principled humanitarian access into and within Syria?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with partners across the U.S. Government to use a range of tools, including diplomacy, advocacy, multilateral and bilateral engagement with other donors, information-sharing, and financial support, to promote the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those most in need across Syria, whether in areas controlled by the Syrian Government or elsewhere. If confirmed, I intend to do everything I can to realize Secretary Blinken's call to the UN Security Council on March 29 to reauthorize all three border crossings for humanitarian assistance

and to urge the international community to allow humanitarian agencies to use the safest, quickest pathway to reach civilians in need.

*Question.* Since the passage of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, all but one of the special coordinators for Tibetan issues have been an individual who served as Undersecretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights. If you are designated as the US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, will you commit to promoting substantive dialogue without pre-conditions between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government that leads to a negotiated agreement on Tibet, as mandated by the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed and designated as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, I will work intensively with U.S. allies and partners to press Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without pre-conditions, to achieve meaningful autonomy for Tibetans.

*Question.* The Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh continues to face significant challenges following last fall's attack by Azerbaijan. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has provided some funding to address this humanitarian situation, but I believe a lot more needs to be done. If confirmed, what will be your plan of action for providing needed assistance to Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh, including those displaced to Armenia, in both the short and long term?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure continued support to address the humanitarian situation of persons displaced by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I understand the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration closely monitors and assesses the situation on the ground with the support of relevant embassies and humanitarian organizations. I understand the administration is deeply committed to working on lasting solutions for all those displaced by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including persons now in Armenia. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to seek short-term and long-term solutions to alleviate the humanitarian consequences of the conflict.

*Question.* What do you view as PRM's role in responding to the situation versus the role of other U.S. Government agencies and offices, such as USAID?

*Answer.* Pursuant to the legislative authorities of each, I understand the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has lead responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance, protection, and solutions for refugees, asylum seekers, migrants in situations of vulnerability, and stateless persons, while USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) leads in response to natural and man-made disasters, for internally displaced persons, and providing emergency food assistance to refugees. If confirmed, I intend to ensure complementary efforts that utilize the strengths of the humanitarian expertise of both PRM at State and USAID/BHA.

*Question.* The United States continues to suffer the devastating impact of our nation's opioid epidemic, with over 90,000 deaths in 2020, a large portion of which are caused by fentanyl overdoses. China continues to be the largest source of illicit fentanyl and fentanyl precursors. How will you prioritize combatting the illicit fentanyl trade and what diplomatic tools will you use to ensure that countries around the world, including China, take steps to place greater controls on fentanyl and fentanyl precursors?

*Answer.* Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) manufacture the vast majority of the illicit fentanyl driving the opioid crisis using People's Republic of China (PRC)-sourced chemicals, and traffic the fentanyl into the United States via the southwest border. If confirmed, I intend to continue and strengthen the Department's diplomatic efforts to press the PRC to better regulate its chemical industry to prevent chemical diversion, including through targeted engagement on this issue in the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs. I also intend to continue efforts to work with Mexico to bring justice to TCOs that contribute to the deaths of thousands of Americans Mexicans each year.

*Question.* Last year, a United Nations fact-finding mission cited evidence of a systematic campaign of extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, and torture in Venezuela since 2014. According to the report, the Maduro regime's human rights abuses and torture constitute crimes against humanity. How will you use the tools available to you, including oversight for the various bureaus that have equities in this issue, to ensure accountability for and prevent further crimes against humanity in Venezuela?

*Answer.* Human rights conditions in Venezuela are horrendous. I understand the United States is committed to supporting justice and accountability measures and

programs with our allies and partners that strengthen democratic institutions, transparency, rule of law, inclusion, economic empowerment, and access to information. The United States has employed sanctions and imposed visa restrictions on Venezuelan officials and their family members believed to be responsible for undermining democratic governance, perpetrating human rights abuses, or engaging in corrupt practices. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to hold the Maduro regime accountable.

*Question.* How will you support efforts to mobilize international attention to this issue?

*Answer.* The Department should continue to regularly engage the international community to raise awareness of human rights violations and abuses in Venezuela and to urge allies and partners to condemn the Maduro regime's human rights record, hold human rights abusers accountable, and call for the peaceful return to democracy and the rule of law. The Department should continue to encourage international bodies, in accordance with their respective mandates, to investigate crimes committed by the regime and its enablers. If confirmed, I will promote increased efforts to mobilize the international community to hold the Maduro regime accountable.

*Question.* The European movement to ban ritual slaughter by mandating stunning prior to slaughter threatens the existence of religiously observant national Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe. Bans such as those passed in Belgium in 2018 and 2019 make no exception for religious purposes. Most recently, in December 2020, the European Court of Justice dismissed appeals by Jewish and Muslim groups, setting a precedent that may open the door to more such laws. This ruling and the laws it upholds are an infringement on religious freedom and endanger communities sustained by adherence to halal and kosher legal traditions. How will you work to encourage individual European countries to refrain from such legislation and support religious pluralism in Europe?

*Answer.* Religious freedom extends to the observance and practice of religion or beliefs, including dietary regulations. Slaughter in accordance with religious beliefs is a fundamental practice for members of certain religious groups, including Jews and Muslims. If confirmed, I intend to work with the Governments of Belgium, other European countries, and elsewhere, as well as Jewish, Muslim, and other groups, to ensure laws, such as those intended to protect animal welfare, do not have an undue negative impact on religious freedom.

*Question.* Atrocities are being perpetrated by armed actors throughout Ethiopia's Tigray region, including extra-judicial executions, sexual violence, forced displacement, and starvation crimes. Other Ethiopian communities outside of Tigray have also been the target of serious human rights abuses in recent months and years. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights are set to begin a joint investigation; however it is unclear what level of access and cooperation the organizations will be given to conduct their inquiry. How can the U.S. best ensure that there is accountability for atrocities and other grave human rights abuses across Ethiopia?

*Answer.* I understand the United States will support the work of a joint investigation mechanism by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights as a first step in the accountability process. I understand the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa will monitor this process closely and work with international partners to press to ensure that the Ethiopian Government provides the promised access necessary for these investigations to proceed and respects their independence. If confirmed, I will work with international partners and organizations, including the UN and AU, to press for credible, independent, and transparent investigations into human rights violations and abuses. These investigations are critical for long-term transitional justice efforts, including criminal accountability, which are also necessary for reconciliation.

*Question.* Samia Suluhu Hassan has recently assumed the Tanzanian presidency and there is considerable hope she will turn the page on the repressive policies of her predecessor, John Magufuli. However, it remains to be seen whether the new President will pursue a concrete package of much needed political reforms. How can the U.S. best encourage the new administration to urgently improve Tanzania's political climate?

*Answer.* Although I am encouraged by President Hassan's first steps, including reinstating licenses for previously suspended media outlets, the new Tanzanian leadership is still in its early days and much remains to be seen. I understand the U.S. ambassador to Tanzania has already met with representatives of the new ad-

ministration and has raised ongoing U.S. human rights concerns. If confirmed, I will support further engagement with the new Tanzanian Government at the highest levels, to both communicate our expectation of improvement on democracy and human rights markers and to explore how the United States can best support strengthening democratic institutions and preventing further democratic backsliding.

*Question.* Sudan has made significant progress over the last year in moving its political transition forward. Yet deep challenges remain, including persistent violence in Darfur and the still shaky political arrangements between the civilian and military components of the transitional government. What action should the U.S. take to better support a civilian-led, democratic transition in Sudan?

*Answer.* Sudan's civilian-led transitional government has made important progress in implementing economic and political reforms, improving human rights protections, and creating a pathway for ending conflict in Darfur and other areas in Sudan. However, more needs to be done to facilitate a transition to democracy as established under Sudan's Constitutional Declaration, to implement the Juba Peace Agreement, to establish peace accords with other armed groups, and to address the root causes of conflict. If confirmed, I will work with the Africa bureau, the Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, and J family bureaus and offices to develop comprehensive strategies to address these issues and support a peaceful democratic transition.

*Question.* The United States has recently taken actions to address the insurgency in northern Mozambique including terrorist designations of ISIS-Mozambique and its leader, the deployment of a Special Forces training mission, and publicly-acknowledged consideration of an antiterrorism assistance program for the Mozambican police. These actions seem to suggest a security-focused approach to counterterrorism, but I believe that a successful counterterrorism strategy must appropriately balance diplomacy, development, and defense. If confirmed, will you pursue a "3 D's" approach to counterterrorism in Mozambique?

*Answer.* Yes. A successful response to the threat from ISIS-Mozambique must include more than a focus on security. If confirmed, I will support a strategy that focuses equally on development, diplomacy, and security, along with strategic communications, in coordination with regional partners and D-ISIS coalition members.

*Question.* The interim government in Mali has announced that a referendum on a new constitution will take place on October 31 of this year, followed by general elections in February of 2022. What role should the U.S. play in helping ensure a restoration of democracy in Mali?

*Answer.* I believe the United States should continue its support for regional efforts, including those by the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), to broker a restoration of democracy in Mali. The ECOWAS-led effort to push for a civilian-led transition led to the establishment of a transitional government, the recent announcement of the constitutional referendum, and the scheduled series of elections. If confirmed, I will continue the United States' role of coordinating assistance and support with our African and other international partners to continue these positive developments.

*Question.* What actions will you take if confirmed to support a civilian-led transition in Mali?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the ECOWAS-brokered transition effort, including by encouraging the transitional government to maintain its course toward a return to constitutional rule. I understand that due to the manner in which the security services overthrew the last democratically elected government, the United States restricts most bilateral assistance that benefits the Government of Mali except for certain specified categories including humanitarian needs and election support. I understand assistance can resume only once a democratically elected government is in place and, if confirmed, I will coordinate actions by other donor and partner states in support of timely democratic elections.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* How will you work to ensure efficient communication and facilitation among bureaus within the J family, the department, and in the interagency?

*Answer.* Today's challenges are too complex for any one agency, bureau, or individual to undertake alone. Similar to the U.S. Government's efforts on the global stage, the Department's efforts are strengthened when done in partnership with others. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to facilitate cooperation and ensure efficient communication, not only among the J family of bureaus and offices but across the Department, the interagency, and our branches of government. These efforts will build on my 27-plus years of public service and longstanding efforts to strengthen the Department by empowering staff, incentivizing innovation, and promoting a workforce that is diverse in both its personnel and perspectives.

*Question.* If confirmed, you will be in a position historically dual-hatted as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. How will you engage with the Tibetan community? Will you commit to hosting the Tibetan administration representative at the State Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed and designated as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, and consistent with the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, I will maintain close contact with Tibetan religious, cultural, and political leaders, including by seeking to travel regularly to Tibetan areas of the People's Republic of China and to Tibetan refugee settlements in India and Nepal. This engagement will include hosting the Representative to North America of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration at the Department of State.

*Question.* The Atrocity Prevention Task Force is a key tool to understanding and targeting crises around the globe before they become atrocities. This task force lacks structure and a clear mandate. How will you bolster the efforts already in place to ensure this task force can fully mobilize?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support a whole-of-government approach to prevent, mitigate, and respond to atrocities in line with the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018. I understand there is collaboration across the J family and interagency to support a White House review of the structure, process, and interagency coordination of the Atrocity Early Warning Task Force. I understand that effort includes examining how best to integrate atrocity prevention across related administration priorities, including the Global Fragility Act and the Women, Peace, and Security Act. If confirmed, I will support these efforts and work closely with interagency partners, Congress, and civil society to improve U.S. atrocity prevention.

*Question.* The administration has announced a resumption of funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) without securing any reforms. What reforms will you seek to ensure that UNRWA's textbooks and materials will not be anti-Semitic? How many UNRWA beneficiaries have citizenship in another country where they reside?

*Answer.* I understand the Department has urged reforms in UNRWA and received commitments from the Agency prior to announcing the funding resumption. U.S. resumption of aid allows the Department to ensure UNRWA upholds the highest level of neutrality and a commitment to tolerance in educational materials; if confirmed, I will prioritize further progress in this area.

A significant majority of the 2.2 million registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan hold citizenship. Not all Palestinian refugees seek access to UNRWA services.

*Question.* How will you ensure there is not overlap between the work of the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and USAID's Bureau of Democracy, Development and Innovations?

*Answer.* President Biden has made clear in his Interim National Security Strategic Guidance that revitalizing democracy is a priority for U.S. foreign policy. If confirmed, I will work with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) and USAID's Bureau of Democracy, Development and Innovations (DDI) to ensure their close coordination continues in support of this objective. The bureaus have complementary approaches to strengthen democratic institutions, including empowering and protecting local voices and strengthening government bodies. Using a complementary, holistic framework consistent with best practices reinforces prospects for success.

*Question.* Over the last 15 years, we have seen democratic backsliding around the world from countries in every hemisphere. Where is the democracy promotion toolkit failing? How can we improve our democracy promotion efforts?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about the 15-year global trend of democratic backsliding. The United States must continue to respond and adapt to growing authoritarianism and new challenges such as the rise of surveillance tools and the

use of COVID by some governments to justify repression. If confirmed, I will utilize all of the diplomatic and programmatic tools available to address these trends, in close partnership with other U.S. agencies, Congress, and like-minded international partners. If confirmed, I also intend to ensure that U.S. efforts to promote democracy are driven by data to improve effectiveness, measurability and impact.

*Question.* Secretary Blinken has announced that the U.S. will be seeking a seat at the U.N. Human Rights Council for next year without securing reforms to the deeply flawed body. He has also indicated that the reforms the U.S. would seek are the same as the previous administration 1) Agenda Item 7 (Israel Bias) and 2) membership reform. What steps will you take to ensure that true reform is achieved? And if true reform is not achieved, what will the United States do?

*Answer.* I am committed to seeking reforms of the Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and to its membership. When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, it can better advocate to protect Israel from unfair bias on the Council. This year, there has been a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel under Agenda Item 7. I believe the United States can also better engage, in consultation with its partners, to keep some of the countries with the worst human rights records off the Council and encourage countries with better records to run for seats. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues to prioritize needed reforms as part of our re-engagement with the Council.

*Question.* Earlier this month, the State Department released its annual Human Rights Report, press reporting indicates that the Department decided to delete paragraphs which listed out abuses, including murder of Iranian citizens. If confirmed, would you work to ensure that instances like this do not occur in the Human Rights report? Do you believe this occurred because of administration's plan to re-open negotiations with Iran?

*Answer.* The most recent State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Iran lays out in detail-based on credible sources-Iran's abysmal human rights record. It includes numerous reports of unlawful or arbitrary killings; forced disappearance and torture by government agents; life-threatening prison conditions; hundreds of political prisoners and detainees; serious problems with independence of the judiciary, particularly the revolutionary courts; and severe restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet. If confirmed, I will not pull any punches in calling out Iran's human rights violations and abuses and will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible for these actions.

*Question.* The administration has announced that it will host a Summit of Democracies. Can you please provide more details on this proposed summit? What will be the definition of democracy will be used?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is currently formulating its vision for the Summit of Democracy, which is intended to advance concrete commitments on pressing challenges to established and emerging democracies, including corruption, rising autocracy, and defending human rights at home and abroad. If confirmed, I promise to consult with the committee as details become available, including on definitional issues. I also commit to work with the committee to make the Summit as results-oriented as possible.

*Question.* We have multiple allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region with poor human rights records, but who we also cooperate with on economic and security issues that are important to the United States. Some of the allies, like the Philippines, are crucial to overarching U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific. In your view, what are the most effective ways to address human rights issues with countries that fall into this category?

*Answer.* I understand the United States promotes a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific region. Upholding U.S. values, including promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, is a key pillar of U.S. foreign policy and an enormous contributor to security, prosperity, and stability as well as U.S. influence across the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will utilize the full range of diplomatic tools to strengthen bilateral and multilateral relationships, to promote our values, to candidly address human security challenges with allies and partners, to support accountable government institutions, to strengthen local civil society capacity to hold their governments accountable, and to counter malign authoritarian influence.

*Question.* Nicaragua is scheduled to hold general elections in November. In October 2020, the Organization of American States adopted a resolution [AG/RES.2962

(L-O-20)] calling for the restoration of democratic institutions and respect for human rights in Nicaragua through free and fair elections. The Ortega regime responded by approving three statutes with the apparent aim of quashing dissent in Nicaragua ahead of the November 2021 elections. If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing programs and policies that support the efforts of democratic actors in Nicaragua to be a credible challenger to Ortega ahead of the November 2021 elections.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing and maintaining U.S. efforts to create conditions for free and fair elections in Nicaragua. The United States should continue to use the economic and diplomatic tools at its disposal, including targeted sanctions and bilateral and multilateral engagement, to support the democratic opposition and advance free and fair elections. It is not too late for the Ortega regime to make the meaningful reforms required before the May Organization of American States deadline.

*Question.* How can the United States best reconcile its defense commitments to allies and partners, including through arms sales, with its need to adhere to U.S. values?

*Answer.* As President Biden has said, America's values—defending freedom, championing opportunity, upholding universal rights, respecting the rule of law, and treating every person with dignity—are the grounding wire of our foreign policy and our abiding advantage globally. U.S. diplomacy must be rooted in those values, and our defense commitments, including arms sales, are no exception. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we are mindful of both our values and our interests as we engage allies and partners, and that our partners respect their commitments to the United States in turn.

*Question.* The Trump administration began initiatives to mitigate civilian casualties caused by the actions of U.S.-supported partner forces. How can we best build off of these efforts?

*Answer.* Human rights and civilian harm concerns should continue to be a critical consideration for every U.S. arms transfer review. The President and Secretary Blinken have said that human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy, and that includes policy regarding arms transfers and other security assistance.

If confirmed, I will build upon U.S. efforts to assist partners to mitigate risks of civilian casualties and ensure our partner forces are taking steps to comply with international law, including the law of armed conflict, and protect human rights. If confirmed, as programs are re-examined, I intend to make sure they promote these policies with our security partners.

*Question.* Across Sub-Saharan Africa, democratic gains are under threat as long-serving rulers manipulate constitutional and electoral processes to remain in power while stifling dissent and limiting opposition parties and candidates' activities. In 2020 alone, several African ruling parties and incumbent leaders applied authoritarian tactics that manipulated democratic processes and frameworks, including in Cameroon, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. If confirmed as Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights, will reinforcing democratic institutions and norms in Africa be a priority? What is your perspective on balancing competing U.S. priorities in the areas of security, democracy, and human rights in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially when some of our top security partners—including Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Mali—periodically or consistently engage in undemocratic practices? In your view, which should take priority in Africa?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize encouraging governments across Africa to support democratic processes, strengthen democratic institutions, and respect the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. I will also work to ensure that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is a pillar of U.S. foreign policy and that the United States takes a holistic approach to security challenges, ensuring that U.S. security and governance approaches are mutually reinforcing.

*Question.* In the last two years, Sudan and Ethiopia have embarked upon unexpected democratic transitions. While the United States was, and continues to be, eager to support these transitions, rapidly mobilizing adequate resources has been a challenge in both cases. If confirmed, how would you support the Department to respond to rapid democratic transitions and opportunities that emerge unexpectedly?

*Answer.* Democratic breakthroughs present an excellent opportunity for the U.S. Government to help consolidate democratic progress. Doing so often requires marshaling resources quickly to put in place effective programming. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with Department and USAID counterparts to ensure we have systems in place that provide flexibility to reallocate resources as needed. I will also

work with embassies in the field and bureaus and offices that administer democracy programs to capitalize on these opportunities, including by pivoting quickly to support programs tailored for these situations. In all cases, I will work to ensure U.S. efforts empower democratic reformers and activists on the ground.

*Question.* In Africa, USAID maintains a large democracy and governance portfolio. In recent years, it has been the policy of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) to limit programming to countries in Africa without an active USAID presence. Do you agree with this approach? What benefits could be seen from complimentary efforts by USAID, DRL and other State Department bureaus?

*Answer.* I understand the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) is currently active in over 90 countries in the world, including many where there is a USAID presence. I believe that DRL's focus on empowering local activists and grassroots organizations to hold their government accountable complements USAID's work to build more effective government institutions. If confirmed, I will support DRL's efforts to coordinate closely with U.S. embassies, USAID, and other programming entities to maximize their collective impact.

*Question.* Since Georgian Dream's 2012 electoral win, democracy and governance in the Caucasian country has steadily declined. The political situation came to a head after the October 2020 parliamentary election culminated in an opposition boycott of parliament and a breakdown of negotiations between the major parties. What more can be done to steer Georgians of all political parties back on a democratic trajectory? Does U.S. assistance to Georgia need to be conditioned on political progress? What would incentivize the major political parties to come to the negotiating table and compromise? Do you believe the U.S. should consider targeted sanctions on individuals or entities that are exacerbating or prolonging the crisis?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will call on both sides to deescalate the situation, engage in constructive dialogue, and make compromises to allow Georgia to move forward. I believe U.S. assistance is integral to advancing democratic reforms, boosting economic growth, and helping Georgia resist Russian aggression. I understand the United States also assists Georgian civil society and independent media to raise public awareness and advocate for positive change. Any proposed conditionality should be approached with this in mind. I believe it is important that Georgia continues to make progress on institutionalizing democratic values. If progress continues to wane in these areas, and if confirmed, I would consider the deployment of additional tools to address these issues and would seek consultation with Congress.

*Question.* Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was overwhelmingly elected in 2019 on an anti-corruption platform. After a few promising reforms, Zelenskyy and his government have stalled and even backslid on democratic and market-based economic reforms. What do you see as the current priorities for reform in Ukraine, and what pressure or leverage can the U.S. use to ensure Ukraine continues down its previously positive path? While Ukraine's democracy and electoral process is fairly robust and free, the country continues to struggle with entrenched corruption. What further steps can the U.S. take, either through its aid programs or political influence, to help propel forward Ukraine's fight against corruption in all areas of its society? How can we work better with European nations and the EU to leverage our collective support for Ukraine into real reforms? How well do you believe State and USAID coordinate their activities in Ukraine? What would you change to better utilize scarce resources in such a needy country?

*Answer.* I am committed to revitalizing our bilateral relationship with Ukraine. If confirmed, I will support Ukraine's chosen Euro-Atlantic path, including by pushing for progress on rule of law, anti-corruption, and economic reforms that strengthen Ukraine's institutions and lead to a brighter future for all Ukrainians, in coordination with Allies and partners, including the EU. State and USAID are very well coordinated in Ukraine thanks to Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (AEECA) appropriations and the role of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia. If confirmed, I will promote accountability for those who try to undermine Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial and institutional integrity. I believe advancing reforms is just as important for Ukraine's future as opposing Russia's aggression.

*Question.* Several high-profile scandals have exposed the Western financial system's difficulty in preventing corruption. In the FY21 NDAA, the U.S. Congress updated its anti-money laundering laws to shift the burden of disclosure from the banks to the corporations and beneficial owners. And the EU has been working on a rule-of-law mechanism to link EU funds to good governance, as well as cracking



down on “golden visas.” This corruption hurts both the citizens of the countries where the money was stolen and where it is stored. European countries have found themselves at both ends of this corruption cycle. How will the Biden administration collaborate with our democratic allies to tackle corruption in our interconnected financial systems, and what concrete actions will you take? How will State collaborate with the interagency on this goal? With the Treasury Department? How important is it that the United States and its European allies take steps to make our own systems less friendly to kleptocracy and less penetrable by dirty money?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support enhanced coordination with our partners to apply diplomatic pressure, bilaterally and through key multi-stakeholder fora, to prevent and combat corruption, building upon recent Congressional legislation. I will prioritize foreign assistance to strengthen governments’ and civil society’s capacity to do so as well. If confirmed, I intend to work with the Department of the Treasury and our other partners to utilize tools, such as the Global Magnitsky sanctions program and visa restrictions, to protect our financial systems and prevent kleptocrats from using their ill-gotten gains in the United States. It is critical that the United States and European allies work in tandem to curb corruption’s destabilizing impact.

*Question.* Several members of the EU’s eastern bloc have experienced a rise in corruption, a decline in rule of law, and a strain on democratic institutions. Free and independent media in Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, to name a few, has been reduced and persecuted. Ruling parties have consolidated power in important industries and in the government. The EU has begun the process of implementing rule-of-law conditionality to the disbursement of EU funding as a means to combat this trend. Does the United States have a role to play in EU and EU member states’ anti-corruption efforts? If yes, what is that role?

*Answer.* I am concerned about the rise of corruption and attacks on the rule of law, media, and democratic institutions in a number of European states. I firmly support democratic values, including the rule of law and media freedom, and, if confirmed, will work to advance these values in multilateral fora to include the U.N. Convention against Corruption’s Conference of States Parties and the G20 Anticorruption Group. These shared values underpin the United States’ relationship with the EU and, I understand, are a topic of frank discussions with member state governments. If confirmed, I intend to use all tools at our disposal to address corruption within Eastern Europe and will encourage our EU partners to establish similar tools.

*Question.* The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (*J/TIP*) authors one of the most important diplomatic tools we have each year, the Trafficking in Persons Report, which countless bodies rely on for crucial information, including Congress. Yet, this report is criticized for undue influence from regional bureaus or other parts of the department. What steps will you take, if confirmed, to ensure that the information and tier rankings in the TIP report accurately reflect anti-trafficking efforts and the real situations on the ground in-country?

*Answer.* The United States has always been a global leader in the fight against human trafficking. The Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report is one of the most important diplomatic tools and information sources on this issue. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure the TIP Report is as objective and accurate as possible, and that tier rankings are based solely on each country’s efforts to combat trafficking, as required by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

*Question.* The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) mandates that foreign assistance restrictions placed on countries receiving a “Tier 3” ranking can be waived. The previous administration used this tool, but the rollout was messy due to lack of guidance on what exactly non-trade, non-humanitarian assistance was. Will you continue to recommend to the Secretary that these Tier 3 restrictions be used for appropriate countries? Will you commit to working with Congress on clarifying the scope of non-trade, non-humanitarian assistance?

*Answer.* I understand the Department considers Tier 3 restrictions and waivers carefully every year. This review informs the Secretary’s recommendations to the President, whom the TVPA requires to impose or waive restrictions. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that the State Department’s recommendations to the President on restrictions and waivers are grounded by the facts on the ground in each country and an assessment of what would most effectively lead to improvements in those countries. I will welcome consultation with Congress on how to apply the trade-related exception.

*Question.* The International Criminal Court has open investigations in Afghanistan and the West Bank and Gaza. How will GCJ plan to engage with this court on these two cases? Do you agree that both cases are squarely outside of the court's jurisdiction?

*Answer.* I strongly agree with the administration's objection to attempts by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to assert jurisdiction over U.S. and Israeli personnel. The United States and Israel are not States Parties, and the Palestinians do not qualify as a sovereign State. If confirmed, I will work to address U.S. concerns about these cases through engagement with all stakeholders in the ICC process. The Office of Global Criminal Justice provides critical subject-matter expertise, advising the Secretary and other senior leaders formulating U.S. policy on accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. If confirmed, I intend to ensure engagement with the Court on these cases is part of an administration-wide strategy.

*Question.* Secretary Blinken has agreed to examine a genocide determination for the Rohingya. Do you agree with this examination and how would you execute it?

*Answer.* I am appalled by the Burmese military's reign of terror against Rohingya and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, as well as those related to the devastating military coup. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary in any review process, and ensure the Department remains focused on promoting accountability for those responsible for abuses, seeking justice for victims, advocating for unhindered humanitarian access, supporting the return to Burma's democratic transition, and promoting reforms that will help prevent the recurrence of atrocities and other human rights violations and abuses across Burma.

*Question.* How will this administration engage with the office of Global Criminal Justice? Given crises like the Rohingya and Syria, engagement from you, if confirmed, alongside GCJ is important to curbing the atrocities being committed against some of the most vulnerable populations.

*Answer.* The Office of Global Criminal Justice (GCJ) provides policy advice and technical expertise to the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights on preventing, mitigating, and responding to atrocities, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The office also plays a central role in coordinating U.S. policy to promote transitional justice and accountability, which is vital to atrocity prevention and prospects for lasting peace and stability. If confirmed, I will ensure GCJ's expertise is incorporated into U.S. policy formulation on these issues as part of the administration's efforts to promote respect for human rights and the rule of law.

*Question.* The CCP is actively committing genocide against the Uyghurs and other ethnic Muslims in Xinjiang. However, the IOC has given it the prestige of holding the Winter 2022 Olympics and Paralympics. Do you support China hosting the Winter Games in 2022? What other alternatives would you propose?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support extensive U.S. engagement and coordination with allies and partners to deny the CCP the ability to use the 2022 Winter Olympic Games to obscure China's abysmal human rights record. This would include outreach to the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, Olympics sponsors, and equipment and apparel suppliers to raise awareness of and promote accountability for the PRC Government's atrocities and human rights abuses, including genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, as well as forced labor. I will also consult closely with allies and partners to define our common concerns and establish a shared approach to the PRC in advance of and during the 2022 Winter Olympics.

*Question.* Can you please explain the mandate and operations of the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations? How does it add value to the work of the Department? How does CSO's work differ from or overlap with USAID's Office of Transitions Initiative?

*Answer.* I understand the mission of the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is to anticipate, prevent, and respond to conflicts that undermine U.S. national interests. CSO's work differs from USAID/OTI in that, as part of the State Department, CSO plays a vital role in enhancing the Department's strategies, policies, and programs on conflict prevention and stabilization. Top CSO priorities include implementation of the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018 and the Global Fragility Act of 2019, which builds upon the 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review and the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. If confirmed, I welcome Congressional consultation on CSO's mandate and operations.

*Question.* The Global Fragility Act (GFA) required the formulation of a whole-of-government strategy to identify and address the drivers of violence and conflict in fragile states and regions. Under the previous administration, a broadly accepted strategy was released. Unfortunately, the process for selecting the target countries and regions in which the strategy would be tested was fraught with challenges. Moreover, pilot initiatives brought to light how competing interests—namely between the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations and U.S. Embassies and USAID Missions—and a lack of appropriate consultation with the field could undermine the future success of GFA initiatives. The Biden administration will now be charged with relaunching the GFA country and region selection process and implementation plans in a manner that reflects these critical lessons learned. If confirmed, how will you approach the GFA selection process for target countries and regions? What, if anything, within the country/region diagnostic and selection process needs to be changed? Should the Sahel and the Northern Triangle automatically be included as priority regions given the national security interests at stake, or would you recommend reserving judgement and allowing selection to be strictly guided by the data?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the White House is leading a renewal of the GFA country and region selection process to evaluate previous recommendations and consider others, followed by Congressional consultation and final approval by the President. I understand the review takes into account the impact on fragility of COVID-19, the global economic crisis, gender inequality, and climate change. I also understand the selection process is based on objective criteria outlined in the GFA, including assessed levels and risks of fragility, violent conflict, atrocities, gender inequality, and resilience; political will and capacity; opportunity for impact; as well as U.S. national security and economic interests. If confirmed, I will support these efforts.

*Question.* There are also concerns about an apparent lack of senior-level buy-in from the Department of Defense, poor coordination between the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) and other key functional bureaus within the Department of State (such as Counterterrorism and Political Military Affairs), and poor communication with U.S. Embassies and Missions in the field. If confirmed, how would you work across departments and agencies to implement the GFA? How will Embassy and Mission priorities be reflected in selection and implementation plans? Should GFA implementation continue to be run out of CSO, or should leadership be elevated to a higher level, as Congress intended?

*Answer.* Successful GFA implementation will require fundamental changes in the way the U.S. Government works on issues of fragility and conflict, integrating more closely the work among functional and regional bureaus, different agencies, the field, and Washington. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary for Political Affairs to ensure strong partnerships with embassies and missions. I believe elevated senior staff buy-in and CSO's expertise and coordination role are critical to effective implementation of the GFA, which will require ongoing learning, monitoring, and adaptive management to inform policy and programming decisions.

*Question.* A criticism of the previous administration was its focus on international religious freedom issues. How will you, if confirmed, ensure this administration does not overcorrect on IRF issues and therefore ignore the serious concerns of religious freedom issues globally?

*Answer.* I am committed to promoting and defending religious freedom, which has long been a key U.S. foreign policy objective I was proud to advance in my prior role as Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. If confirmed, I will look to leverage the tools of U.S. diplomacy and foreign assistance to advance this universal right, ensuring that efforts to promote respect for religious freedom are fully integrated into broader policies that promote freedom and dignity for all people.

*Question.* How will you work to empower the office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism?

*Answer.* I am deeply committed to combatting anti-Semitism at home and abroad and share the concerns of Congress about rising anti-Semitism around the world. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Special Envoy to reinforce her or his efforts, elevate the fight against global anti-Semitism in our engagements with foreign interlocutors, and ensure the office of the Special Envoy has the staff and resources it needs to execute its mission effectively.

*Question.* The Office of Global Women's Issues continue to be a separate office within the S bureau. Under the last administration, there was an effort to align this

office within the J family. Will this continue to be an S office, or do you, if confirmed, plan to continue re-alignment of S/GWI under the J family? What steps will you take to integrate global women issue initiatives throughout the J family and the interagency, especially on projects like Women, Peace, and Security, and Women's Global Development and Prosperity Fund (WGDP)?

*Answer.* I am committed to supporting President Biden's goal of advancing gender equality and the full empowerment of women and girls around the world. The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) plays a pivotal coordination role in ensuring the Department is bringing the full diplomatic toolbox to bear in support of gender equality goals, including through robust collaboration with J family bureaus and offices. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring how the J family can enhance coordination with S/GWI and mobilize its unique resources to support women and girls as part of a comprehensive U.S. Government gender equality strategy.

*Question.* The 2020 DEA report on fentanyl flows to the United States identifies the People's Republic of China as the primary source of fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances trafficked to the United States, increasingly through Mexico. Mexican transnational criminal organizations are producing increased quantities of fentanyl and cartels, such as the Sinaloa and the New Generation Jalisco Cartel, are the primary trafficking groups responsible for smuggling fentanyl into the United States from Mexico. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs programs are focusing on meaningfully reducing the flow of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids to the United States?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs to stop fentanyl trafficking by: reducing diversion and illicit production of synthetic drugs; strengthening the capacity of our partners to detect, interdict, and share information on synthetic drug threats; building capacity to target illicit online sales; shrinking the drug market by reducing global drug demand; and enhancing partnerships with governments, industry, and international organizations. If confirmed, I will work with partners such as Mexico to reduce production and improve interdiction, and I will continue U.S. efforts to press the People's Republic of China to better regulate its chemical industry and synthetic opioid precursors.

*Question.* On March 1st, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report with specific recommendations for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) to strengthen risk management for programs under the Merida Initiative (GAO-21-335). If confirmed, do you commit to ensure INL takes swift action to implement the recommendations in this report?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) swiftly implements Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommendations to strengthen risk management for programs under the Merida Initiative. I understand the Department concurred with GAO's important recommendations, and, for programs under the Merida Initiative, INL is in the process of completing an anti-fraud risk assessment; developing and implementing an anti-fraud strategy; developing and implementing a mandatory fraud awareness training program for staff; and re-evaluating practices for local vetting of non-security personnel.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of the relationship between the Government of Cuba, the U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional (ELN), and the Maduro regime in Venezuela.

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the actions of the Government of Cuba, from its treatment of its own people, to its connection to and substantial support for the brutal Maduro regime. I understand members of the Colombian-origin National Liberation Army (ELN), including senior leadership, traveled to Cuba in 2018 for now-defunct peace negotiations with the Government of Colombia. When negotiations failed, Cuba continued to provide safe haven to ELN leadership. In January 2019, ELN claimed responsibility for a deadly bombing in Colombia. Citing peace protocols signed before the ELN negotiators traveled to Cuba, Cuba has refused to extradite ELN leaders to Colombia. With respect to Venezuela, Maduro and his associates use criminal activities to help maintain their hold on power, fostering a permissive environment for known terrorist groups, including the ELN and its sympathizers.

If confirmed, I will commit to closely reviewing the status of ELN leadership in Cuba and consulting with Congress as the Biden-Harris administration reviews U.S. policy toward Cuba.

*Question.* There are around 10,000 ISIS fighters at various detention facilities, including 2,000 foreign fighters (FTF) that U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) characterizes as “hardcore foreign terrorist fighters.” Internally Displaced Camps (IDP) in Syria, like al Hol, have become areas of systemic ISIS indoctrination of IDPs and refugees. The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants plays a critical role in transitions from war to peace. Yet, countries around the world with foreign terrorist fighters have failed to make any progress to date. How does the Biden administration plan to address this problem?

*Answer.* I understand the Department urges countries of origin to repatriate their foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and associated family members from detention facilities and camps in northeast Syria, and to rehabilitate, reintegrate and prosecute those individuals as appropriate. I understand the Department does this through intensive diplomatic engagement, including through the Global Coalition to defeat ISIS, by helping to repatriate individuals whose countries of origin are willing to accept them, and helping develop rehabilitation and reintegration protocols and programs. If confirmed, I will urge FTF repatriation and leverage multilateral platforms in those efforts to prevent ISIS from reconstituting capability in Syria and Iraq.

*Question.* 10 USC 127e authority allows the Secretary of Defense, with the concurrence of the relevant Chief of Mission, to expend up to \$100 million each year to support foreign forces, irregular forces, groups, or individuals engaged in supporting or facilitating authorized ongoing military operations by United States special operations forces to combat terrorism. Despite the important counterterrorism (CT) collaboration between Department of Defense (DoD) and State Department, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC) and the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) lack visibility into this space. Traditionally, SFRC and HFAC have not been afforded any insight into 127e programs and what our Chiefs of Mission are concurring with. Do we have your commitment to return to this committee and brief on areas of DoD and State CT cooperation, particularly the integration between 10 USC 127e and Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) programs?

*Answer.* I understand the Department of State works closely with the Department of Defense on a broad range of counterterrorism issues, including in the Department of Defense’s activities under its Title 10, Section 127e authorities. I recognize that Congress has an important oversight role to play in the U.S. Government’s counterterrorism efforts, and if confirmed, I will be committed to engaging with Congress to discuss these and other counterterrorism lines of effort.

*Question.* The previous administration disbanded the Defense Department’s Defeat-ISIS Task Force, leading its then director Christopher Maier to resign in November 2020. Former President Trump similarly moved State Department’s Special Envoy to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS under the Bureau of Counterterrorism, with Acting John Godfrey serving as that special envoy. Is this the right staffing and organizational structure to prevent an ISIS resurgence?

*Answer.* I understand that achieving the enduring defeat of ISIS remains a central priority of the administration. I do not believe the dual-hatting of the CT Coordinator and Special Envoy reflects a diminution of the position of the Special Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. It instead reflects the evolving nature of the ISIS threat to encompass areas outside Iraq and Syria, and a desire to situate the enduring D-ISIS mission within the established CT Bureau architecture. Doing so enables effective leverage of CT Bureau’s civilian counterterrorism capacity-building assets and closer coordinate with other bureaus. If confirmed, I will ensure that both roles are prioritized and sustainably resourced.

*Question.* The Biden administration has launched a review of the February 29 agreement with the Taliban, including the CT assurances and posture issues associated with it. This is an issue with obvious and important CT ramifications given the origins of this war and the terrorist threats that endure. What role do you anticipate your bureau playing in this review? How do you plan on ensuring U.S. CT interests in Afghanistan are addressed?

*Answer.* I understand the Department of State, including the Bureau of Counterterrorism, is a part of the interagency effort to monitor and disrupt significant terrorist threats not only in Afghanistan but anywhere else they might arise. If confirmed, my focus will be to ensure our counterterrorism efforts maintain consistent pressure on terrorist groups to deny them the time, space, and resources they need to conduct complex, international attacks, including against the U.S. homeland.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* My most meaningful achievements in promoting human rights and democracy involve expanding coalitions to advance universal human rights, countering malign influence, and elevating protection for human rights defenders worldwide. In prior State Department leadership roles, I expanded the first public-private partnership (PPP) for LGBT equality to include private sector stakeholders, launched the first global PPP against gender-based violence, and created new regional platforms to protect journalists under siege. I helped persuade France to cancel a multi-billion dollar defense sale to Russia in the wake of the Crimea invasion, and successfully countered Russian disinformation efforts to interfere with France's 2017 election. I persuaded India to launch its first-ever third-country democracy promotion efforts with the United States, including programs to generate self-employment opportunities for Afghan women and build other nations' capacity to conduct free and fair elections.

*Question.* The Hong Kong National Security Law, which mainland Chinese authorities have imposed on Hong Kong, has already begun to fundamentally transform the space for democracy and human rights in the city. In your view, what steps should the U.S. Government take to help defend the space for press freedom, free expression, and democracy in Hong Kong?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will stand united with our allies and partners against the PRC's assault on Hong Kong's freedoms and its blatant disregard for its international obligations and commitments. I will use all available diplomatic tools at the U.S. Government's disposal, including sanctions, visa restrictions, and other measures, to promote accountability for the egregious actions of authorities in Hong Kong and Beijing, and I will urge our allies and partners to do the same. If confirmed, I will also help those who have been persecuted by the Hong Kong and Beijing authorities find safe haven in the United States and other countries.

*Question.* Since the February 1 coup by the Burmese military, the space for free expression and association has dramatically constricted as the junta attempts to suppress a sustained and countrywide civil disobedience movement against its rule. More than 700 civilians have been killed, and several thousand are currently detained. The solidarity already shown by the U.S. Government to the protestors is encouraging, but what further specific steps do you envision that this administration can take to ensure maximum support for human rights activists, journalists, and prominent voices of conscience at risk, and to urge the military to peacefully return power to the duly-elected government as soon as possible?

*Answer.* The United States, under the Biden-Harris administration, has condemned in the strongest possible terms and taken actions against those responsible for the military coup in Burma, the horrific violence against protesters, and the ongoing, unjust detentions of State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint, and other democratically-elected leaders as well as more than 3,000 civil society actors from across ethnic and religious groups. If confirmed, I will use all available U.S. diplomatic tools, including sanctions, visa restrictions, and other measures, to promote accountability and build global coalitions to support the Burmese people's efforts to reestablish and safeguard their path to democracy.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* You were listed in the acknowledgements section of a 1990 book titled "Stealth PACs: How Israel's American Lobby Took control of U.S. Middle East Policy," published by your employer at the time, the American Educational Trust. Can you confirm today that you do not share the anti-Israel claims in this book or of the American Educational Trust? Do you believe pro-Israel Americans, and pro-Israel members of Congress, have dual loyalties?

*Answer.* I categorically reject the anti-Israel claims in this book and espoused by the American Educational Trust. Further, I had nothing to do with the content of the book. My entry-level employment at the American Educational Trust ended some 31 years ago, I have had no contact with the organization since then, and I reject the organization's positions with respect to Israel. I deplore any suggestion

that American Jews or members of Congress who advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship have dual loyalties or are disloyal to the United States.

*Question.* The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs routinely publishes a list of members of Congress who receive donations from pro-Israel Americans. Do you believe there is something untoward about pro-Israel Americans engaging in the political process?

*Answer.* I strongly support the right of every American, including those who strongly support the U.S.-Israel alliance, to engage in the U.S. political process, and see nothing untoward in this activity. As I noted, my entry-level employment at the American Educational Trust ended some 31 years ago, I have had no contact with the organization since then, and I categorically reject the organization's positions with respect to Israel. I strongly support the Biden administration's commitment to renewing democracy abroad and at home, and believe the latter is underpinned by the rights of every American to fully exercise their constitutional rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of religion, freedom to petition one's government, and equal protection under the law.

*Question.* What is your view of the U.S.-Israel relationship?

*Answer.* I support the United States' unwavering and ironclad commitment to Israel's security. If confirmed, I will support the administration in working to further strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israel alliance, including with respect to countering Iranian state-sponsored terrorism, increasing international solidarity against Hezbollah and other Iran-supported foreign terrorist organizations, expanding global coalitions against anti-Semitism, building upon Israel's normalization agreements with key Arab Governments, and eliminating anti-Israel bias in the U.N. system, including the U.N. Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court.

*Question.* Do you agree that U.S. policy in the region is best advanced when working closely with our ally Israel?

*Answer.* Yes. President Biden has been one of Israel's strongest supporters over the last fifty years. I understand the U.S.-Israel alliance is deeply personal to him and, indeed, he's met and worked closely with every Israeli Prime Minister since Golda Meir. I understand the President believes the ties between our two countries, rooted in strategic interests and shared values, should transcend domestic politics. In this vein, I understand the administration will not only further strengthen the U.S.-Israel alliance, but also ensure that it enjoys bipartisan backing. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals to work closely with Israel, to include building on normalization agreements to strengthen cooperation between Israel and its neighbors.

*Question.* Do you fully support Israel's right to defend itself from terrorist attacks, including taking pre-emptive action to disrupt weapons shipments from Iran to its terrorist proxies?

*Answer.* Israel has the right to defend itself from terrorist attacks, and I understand the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to Israel's security to be a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. I support the administration's policy to continue U.S. security assistance to Israel and uphold Israel's Qualitative Military Edge, which is critical to ensuring Israel has the means to defend itself. If confirmed, I will support action, in coordination with our allies and partners, to deter and counter Iran's destabilizing activities. If confirmed, I will strongly support the administration's goals regarding Israel's security.

*Question.* Do you support full funding for United States security assistance to Israel as laid out in the current 10-year MOU? Do you support the position of President Biden that conditioning aid to Israel is wrong?

*Answer.* I understand President Biden's commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. The President played an important role in helping to negotiate the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on security assistance, among the largest aid packages in U.S. history. If confirmed, I will support the administration's pledge to preserve the terms of the MOU without reservation.

*Question.* What is your view of the Iranian regime and the country's human rights record?

*Answer.* The Iranian Government has the dubious distinction of being the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, a destabilizing force in the region, and a longtime and systematic human rights violator. Iran severely restricts the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of ex-

pression. If confirmed, I will call out Iran's human rights violations and abuses, which include arbitrary or unlawful detention of numerous individuals, some of whom have faced torture and/or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, and execution after unfair trials. I also will work with my colleagues to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for human rights violators.

*Question.* Are you committed to robust human rights programming in Iran, regardless of how such programming may impact nuclear negotiations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support robust human rights programs in Iran. The Iranian Government denies Iranians the ability to exercise their human rights, including through severe restrictions on the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression. If confirmed, I will support all appropriate diplomatic tools to support the Iranian people so their voices are heard and they can hold their government accountable for its actions.

*Question.* Since the passage of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, all but one of the U.S. Special Coordinators for Tibetan Issues have concurrently held your position. If you are designated the Special Coordinator, will you commit to promoting substantive dialogue without pre-conditions between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government that leads to a negotiated agreement on Tibet, as mandated by the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed and designated as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, I will work with our allies and partners to press Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to achieve meaningful autonomy for Tibetans.

*Question.* If Beijing continues to refuse to engage in dialogue, as it has done since 2010, will you insist that our dialogue with Beijing on some issues of importance to them be linked to their resumption of dialogue with the Tibetans?

*Answer.* If confirmed and designated as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, I will work with our allies and partners to press Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives to achieve meaningful autonomy. I will also call upon Beijing to respect the human rights of Tibetans and to preserve Tibet's environment as well as to respect its distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you stand firm in communicating to Beijing the United States position that we will not under any circumstances accept a Chinese-controlled process to select the Dalai Lama's successor? If the Chinese authorities attempt to force a politically chosen successor on the Tibetan people, will you commit to imposing serious sanctions in response?

*Answer.* The PRC Government must have no role in the succession process of the Dalai Lama. PRC authorities' interference in the succession of the Panchen Lama 26 years ago, including disappearing the Panchen Lama as a child and attempting to replace him with a PRC Government-chosen successor, remains an outrageous abuse of religious freedom that I denounced as Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. If confirmed, I am committed to promoting respect for Tibetans' religious freedom and to taking all appropriate measures to promote accountability for PRC Government officials who attempt to interfere in the Dalai Lama's succession, consistent with the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020.

*Question.* Do you believe that the CCP is committing cultural genocide, also known as cultural erasure, against the Tibetans, whose civilization is distinct from that of China and boasts its own rich language, literature, religious tradition, and culture? Will you commit to undertaking programmatic and policy initiatives that will protect Tibetan culture and language in Tibet and in exile?

*Answer.* The Chinese Government has been relentless in seeking to suppress the distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions of Tibetans. If confirmed, I will call on Beijing to end these policies and will explore every opportunity, including through policy and program initiatives, to help Tibetans preserve their traditions. This will include working with allies and partners to press Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to achieve meaningful autonomy for Tibetans.

*Question.* Will you commit to regularly raise the case of the Panchen Lama and press for his release? Will you ensure that no U.S. official meets with, or provides a public platform, for the individual that Beijing appointed in his place?



*Answer.* Yes. I am saddened that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima—the Panchen Lama—remains disappeared since his 1995 forced disappearance by PRC authorities, separated from his community and denied his rightful place as a prominent Tibetan Buddhist leader. If confirmed, I am committed to supporting Tibetans’ religious freedom, including their ability to select, educate, and venerate their religious leaders, like the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, according to their own beliefs and without government interference. I will also call on the PRC Government to publicize verifiable proof of the Tibetan-selected Panchen Lama’s whereabouts and wellbeing and allow him to speak for himself.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit that the Biden administration will not provide aid to the PA if Palestinian officials have not ceased payments to those convicted of terrorist acts according to U.S. law?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration has been clear that all U.S. assistance for the Palestinians, including the recently announced assistance, will be provided consistent with U.S. law.

*Question.* UNRWA currently only discloses contracts over \$100,000 in its quarterly filings. However, the Annual Statistical Report on U.N. Procurement states that U.N. agencies must disclose all contracts over \$30,000. Will you hold UNRWA accountable for disclosing all contracts over \$30,000?

*Answer.* I understand UNRWA discloses all of its awards, including those above the \$30,000 threshold, to the United Nations Office for Procurement Services which then reports them together with all other U.N. agencies in the Annual Statistical Report on U.N. Procurement, published on the U.N. Global Market website (UNGM.org). If confirmed, I will seek to ensure UNRWA continues to abide by all relevant U.N. policies and regulations.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to supporting Cuba democracy programs?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that support for democracy and human rights is at the core of our efforts to empower the Cuban people to determine their own future. The recently released 2020 Human Rights Report notes the significant human rights abuses perpetrated by Cuban Government officials. If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Government continues its steadfast support for and engagement with Cuban human rights defenders, activists, and civil society members to bolster their important work. I also will promote human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democracy, and will facilitate the free flow of information to the Cuban people.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you support Cuba’s democracy, civil society and human rights defenders in Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Government continues its steadfast support for and engagement with Cuban human rights defenders, activists, and civil society members to bolster their important work. I also will promote human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democracy, and will facilitate the free flow of information to the Cuban people. I will also denounce the Cuban Government’s abuses and push for democratic reform. If confirmed, I will consult with Congress about Cuba policy.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*Question.* North Korea is a topic of personal significance to me. Last year I gave a speech on the Senate floor to honor Otto Warmbier on the third anniversary of his passing, and I remain in contact with Fred and Cindy—Otto’s parents who are constituents. How will this administration approach the challenge of North Korea from a national security and human rights perspective?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to placing human rights at the center of our foreign policy, including with North Korea, and working with like-minded partners to call out human rights abuses. I am deeply concerned by North Korea’s deplorable human rights abuses, including its network of political prison and labor camps, use of forced labor, and severe restrictions of religious freedom, and horrific treatment of unjustly detained Americans like Mr. Warmbier. If confirmed, I will prioritize addressing North Korea’s egregious human rights record and promoting respect for human rights in the closed country. I will also prioritize increased coordination with our allies and partners and will use all diplomatic tools at the U.S. Gov-

ernment's disposal to promote accountability for those responsible for the unspeakable abuses that occur in the country.

*Question.* I am deeply concerned regarding the ongoing reports of atrocities and human rights abuses occurring in the ongoing civil war in Ethiopia. As you are aware, civil wars are a unique threat, as this type of conflict often destabilizes neighboring states, attracts foreign fighters as well as third party proxy support for sides in the conflict. How can we ensure that Ethiopia's fragile transition toward democracy can continue given the current circumstances, and how can the United States ensure accountability for crimes occurring not just in the Tigray region, but all of Ethiopia?

*Answer.* The President and the Secretary of State have made clear that securing a ceasefire and supporting a political dialogue to defuse the political crisis in Ethiopia, including in Tigray, is an urgent priority, and I understand they plan to appoint a special envoy to lead a robust diplomatic effort to advance these goals. If confirmed, I will work closely with the special envoy in this regard. In addition, I will support the work of a joint investigation mechanism by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights as a first step in the accountability process. Credible, independent, and transparent investigations into human rights violations and abuses are critical for long-term justice, accountability, and reconciliation.

*Question.* Yesterday, President Biden announced his intention to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan by the 20th anniversary of the September 11th attacks. While the American people are understandably weary after two decades of war, any move to draw down our military presence in Afghanistan should be based on conditions on the ground, not in accordance with an arbitrary date. The Taliban have not upheld their commitments during the peace negotiations process. Before any withdrawal, we must ensure that the Taliban respects the legitimate governing authority of Afghanistan and see a de-association from extremist groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIS. We cannot repeat the mistakes of the past, such as the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq in 2011. That decision led to more military intervention from the United States, not less, while giving rise to new extremist groups that filled the vacuum of instability. Do you share in my concern that a complete withdrawal of all U.S. forces in September without any sign that the Taliban is prepared to become a responsible partner in governing? What are the chances that Afghanistan becomes a failed state and a haven for terrorists who could once again strike the United States Homeland?

*Answer.* I support the administration's decision to complete a full military withdrawal by September 11, and to focus on diplomatic efforts to facilitate a negotiated settlement between the Taliban and the Afghan Government. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we remain vigilant to the terrorist threat and that U.S. humanitarian assistance preserves gains for Afghan women and civil society and mitigates prospects for state failure. I understand the administration will work with Afghan partners and Allies to counter any reemergence of a terrorist threat and to hold the Taliban to its commitment to ensure al Qaeda does not threaten the United States, our interests, or our allies.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is committing a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that is ongoing. The Biden administration had sent differing signals about the degree to which administration officials assessed that genocide is indeed ongoing, but on March 22, Secretary Blinken correctly emphasized "the P.R.C. continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity." Do you agree with the assessment that the Chinese Government is engaged in a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the XUAR that is ongoing?

*Answer.* I agree with the Secretary of State's determination that the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. These crimes include imprisonment, torture, enforced sterilization, and persecution, including through forced labor and draconian restrictions on the freedoms of religion or belief, expression, and

movement. These atrocities shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences.

*Question.* What role do you see for the State Department in countering that ongoing genocide, and more broadly the human rights atrocities being committed by the Chinese Communist Party?

*Answer.* I share your deep concern about the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious groups in Xinjiang. I understand the Department has reinvigorated cooperation with partners and allies and has imposed a number of measures to address these atrocities. If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts to broaden this international coalition and call for an independent and unhindered investigation. I also will support using all appropriate tools, including those provided for in the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, to pressure the PRC to end these atrocities and to promote accountability for those responsible and justice for victims.

*Question.* The Obama-Biden administration's approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict was justified on the basis of a theory of regional relations in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prevented broader Israeli-Arab rapprochement. Among other decisions, that administration implemented discriminatory policies that distinguished between Jewish communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967. That approach culminated in December 2016, when the Obama administration maneuvered the United Nations Security Council into passing UNSCR 2334, which among other things denied Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights and part of its capital Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter. The Trump administration systematically worked to hollow out and render UNSCR 2334 null and void. They did so, including by recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, by moving our embassy to Jerusalem, by seeking to end discriminatory approaches that distinguished legally and for the purposes of aid and trade between different Israeli communities, and by taking several other steps. Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?

*Answer.* In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, I understand the administration gives great weight to Israel's security. The current Syrian regime and its Iranian allies pose a significant risk to Israel. It is apparent that the Golan Heights is critically important to Israel's security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria, it would be irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* I understand the administration recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* I understand the administration recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* I understand the administration recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and its ultimate status is a final status issue which will need to be resolved by the parties in the context of direct negotiations. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On

February 5, the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. The issue of humanitarianism was central to the public explanation of the decision: officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the “broad” designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen’s population live under areas controlled by the group. Since then, the Houthis have escalated their violence across the region, bombarding civilians in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Yemen was already one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the world, in large part because the Houthis and their Iranian backers block aid, steal aid, and attack civilians. Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

Answer. Iran continues to provide the Houthis with training, equipment, and monetary support, which assists them in promoting regional instability; threatening our partners, especially Saudi Arabia; and disrupting international shipping. Further, the Houthis use this support to threaten Yemeni civilians, especially at this time in the city of Marib. If confirmed, I am committed to working with our inter-agency partners to counter Iran’s destabilizing activities.

The Houthis impede humanitarian access in the areas they control. If confirmed, I will support U.S. efforts to work with our partners on the ground to improve humanitarian access and facilitate the provision of critical commodities and humanitarian aid to Yemeni civilians.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration’s decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in general.

Answer. As I understand, the revocations were aimed at ensuring that U.S. policies would not impede assistance to those already suffering what has been called the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. I understand the administration heeded concerns from the United Nations, humanitarian groups, and bipartisan members of Congress, among others, that the designations could have had a devastating impact on Yemenis’ access to basic commodities like food and fuel, which could increase the risk of famine. The short time that passed between the designations and the revocations limited the impact the designations could have had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports, including food and other essential supplies.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration’s decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

Answer. As I understand, the revocations were aimed at ensuring that U.S. policies would not impede assistance to those already suffering what has been called the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. This has been especially critical in Marib, where the escalation of hostilities has caused additional needs and secondary displacement. The lifting of sanctions has allowed for the delivery of life-saving food, emergency shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, and essential non-food items, such as blankets and water containers.

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF.

- Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized for inaction in response to Iranian human rights atrocities, and critics have suggested that those issues were subsumed beneath the administration’s commitment to securing a nuclear deal. The Biden administration, which is rushing to secure another nuclear deal with Iran, has already come under similar criticism. Please describe your assessment of the scope and nature of Iran’s human rights record.

**Answer.** The Iranian Government severely restricts the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression. If confirmed, I will call out Iran's systematic human rights violations and abuses, which include arbitrary or unlawful detention of numerous individuals, including American citizens. I will work with my colleagues and U.S. allies and partners to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for regime officials responsible for human rights violations and abuses, including torture, executions, persecution of religious minorities, and digital repression.

**Question.** Please describe the degree to which you believe that Iranian human rights concerns should be highlighted vs. considerations related to nuclear negotiations or securing nuclear-related concessions.

**Answer.** President Biden has been clear that Iran must never obtain a nuclear weapon. Iran's development and proliferation of ballistic missiles pose a threat to international security and remain a significant nonproliferation challenge. The President has also emphasized that human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy. If confirmed, I will call out Iran's human rights violations and abuses, which I did forcefully in my prior role as Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. If confirmed, I intend to work with colleagues and U.S. allies and partners to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for Iranian regime officials responsible for pervasive human rights violations and abuses.

**Question.** Do you believe that imposing new human rights sanctions against Iran, or enforcing existing ones, would violate the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or a successor agreement?

**Answer.** The Iranian Government denies Iranians the ability to exercise their human rights, including through severe restrictions on the rights to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression.

I support continuing to maintain and impose sanctions on Iranian individuals and entities perpetrating human rights violations and abuses. Human rights sanctions are independent of JCPOA provisions and remain an invaluable, bipartisan tool to achieve the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to center human rights and democratic values in U.S. foreign policy.

**Question.** In July 1989, you were hired as director of the American Educational Trust's speakers' bureau, according to the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, which is published by the organization. The organization and outlet routinely suggest that American Jews who advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship invite hostility and even violence because of their advocacy, that political expenditures and activities by Americans and especially American Jews are unseemly, and that such activities raise questions about their loyalty to the United States. The Washington Report has also lists of members of Congress who receive donations from Americans who politically advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship.

- Do you agree that these sorts of rhetoric and tropes, including accusations that American Jews who advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship are disloyal to the United States, are inappropriate?

**Answer.** Yes. I deplore any suggestion that American Jews who advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship are disloyal to the United States. My entry-level employment at the American Educational Trust ended some 31 years ago, I have had no contact with the organization since then, and I categorically reject the organization's positions with respect to Israel.

**Question.** Do you agree that these sorts of rhetoric and tropes, including accusations that American Jews who advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship are disloyal to the United States, are anti-Semitic?

**Answer.** Yes, I agree that accusations of dual loyalty against American Jews supportive of the U.S.-Israel alliance constitute anti-Semitic speech. I fully endorse the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism, under which certain criticisms leveled against Israel, or Jewish persons as a collective, can be considered anti-Semitic. I strongly support the Biden administration's embrace of the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism and join the Biden administration in categorically condemning all forms of anti-Semitism. If confirmed, I intend to combat anti-Semitism and intolerance in all forms and will work to expand international coalitions towards this objective.

**Question.** Do you agree that it is inappropriate to suggest that Americans who believe in a strong U.S.-Israel relationship should be excluded from engaging in political activities, including donating to members of Congress?

**Answer.** Yes. I categorically reject any suggestions that Americans who believe in a strong U.S.-Israel relationship should be excluded from engaging in political activities, including donating to members of Congress. I strongly support the Biden administration's commitment to renewing democracy abroad and at home, and believe the latter is underpinned by the rights of every American to fully exercise their Constitutional rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of religion, freedom to petition one's government, and equal protection under the law.

*Question.* Do you believe that a strong U.S.-Israel relationship boosts American national security?

**Answer.** Yes. I strongly support the Biden-Harris administration's unwavering and ironclad commitment to Israel's security and, if confirmed, will work to further strengthen all aspects of U.S.-Israel partnership. The ties between the United States and Israel are rooted in strategic interests and shared democratic values, and in this vein, I understand the Biden-Harris administration will seek to further strengthen the U.S.-Israel alliance. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals to work closely with Israel, to include countering anti-Israel bias in the U.N. system, strengthening international coalitions against anti-Semitism, and building on normalization agreements to strengthen cooperation between Israel and its neighbors.

*Question.* The term "universal human right" is frequently used throughout the international community, and it was a reference you made consistently throughout the hearing. Please provide in your own words a definition of universal human right.

**Answer.** The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) represents a common understanding, which I share, of universal human rights and freedoms around the globe. The UDHR begins by stating that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. It sets out, for the first time at the international level, rights and freedoms to be universally protected. To me, many of these rights are inspired by those enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and hold U.N. member states to a common standard. The universality of human rights articulated in the UDHR also counters false arguments put forth by China, Russia, and other autocracies of a U.S. or Western agenda being imposed on the rest of the world.

*Question.* In your view, is the concept of a "human right" fluid or relative?

**Answer.** As human rights are universal, they are neither fluid nor relative. As an example, the right to freedom of expression has not changed since it was articulated even though our understanding of the application of the right has been challenged as we adapt to new methods of communication. From time to time, our understanding of rights may expand; for example, where once societies held other human beings in bondage, it is now universally recognized that slavery is a violation of one's human rights. This does not make human rights fluid or relative, but reflects the reality that the understanding and application of human rights standards can evolve in a positive direction alongside societal progress.

*Question.* Do you believe that certain rights are unalienable?

**Answer.** In its preamble, the Declaration of Independence states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." I believe that these unalienable rights and those enshrined in the U.S. Constitution apply to all Americans, cannot be denied by government, and that there is no hierarchy of rights. Similarly, in the context of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I understand and support the concept of "inalienable" rights that cannot be denied or taken away from people, and which governments have a duty to protect and to refrain from violating.

*Question.* The Biden administration rejoined the United States to the United Nations Human Rights Council, a body that features some of the worst human rights violators in the world including China, Cuba, Somalia, and Venezuela. In your hearing you argued a lack of U.S. presence at the Council would create a "vacuum" for bad actors to direct policy initiatives. What substantive policy areas does the U.N. Human Rights Council hold jurisdiction over or govern?

**Answer.** The U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC), while not without flaws, provides a venue to raise human rights violations from around the world. It can play an important role in shining a spotlight on the world's worst human rights violators. For example, the HRC is one of the few places in the U.N. where China has been called out for its abuses in Xinjiang and Hong Kong. HRC engagement allows the

United States to keep countries with the worst human rights records off the Council and encourage more rights-respecting nations to run for seats. U.S. engagement decreased unfair HRC bias against Israel.

*Question.* If we accept the “vacuum argument,” is it your view that United States participation in the U.N. Human Rights Council should include the following (please explain your response for each): Advocate for the removal of well-known human rights violators from the Council; Withhold funding for certain activities or initiatives as a tool to produce changes in behavior from malign actors; Use the voice and vote of the United States at the Council to highlight human rights atrocities, including violations of protecting the right to life, by other nations, including nations who sit on the Council.

*Answer.* I understand the administration is committed to working with partners to ensure the Human Rights Council shines a spotlight on countries with the worst human rights records and serves as a forum for those fighting injustice and tyranny. U.S. re-engagement should advocate to keep some of the countries with the worst human rights records off the Council and encourage more rights-respecting nations to run for seats. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States continues to seek Council reforms, including elimination of anti-Israel Article Agenda Item 7, and promote all appropriate, available, and effective accountability mechanisms for those who commit atrocities, to include forced abortions and sterilization, rape, torture, and mass killings.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO UZRA ZEYA BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* What is your understanding of U.S. law with respect to engagement with Hamas? News media reports indicate the Biden administration has committed to “resetting the U.S. relationship with the Palestinian people and leadership,” including robust engagement and provision of aid. On April 7, the State Department announced its intent to “restart U.S. economic, development, humanitarian assistance for the Palestinian people” by providing \$75 million in aid to the West Bank and Gaza.

*Answer.* Hamas is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224. I strongly support the Biden-Harris administration commitment to disrupt and deter terrorist organizations worldwide, including Hamas. I understand U.S. engagement in the West Bank and Gaza and with the Palestinians is consistent with U.S. law and involves no engagement with Hamas, a designated FTO.

*Question.* What are the implications for U.S. engagement and provision of aid if the Palestinian Legislative Council includes, or is led by, members of Hamas? Under the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006, the United States is prohibited from providing assistance to a Palestinian Authority effectively controlled by Hamas.

*Answer.* I understand U.S. assistance for the Palestinians is provided consistent with U.S. law. I also understand the Department routinely assesses its foreign assistance programming, and would do so following Palestinian elections or any other significant change related to the Palestinian Authority.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit that the Biden administration will not engage with Hamas officials and will not seek to find technical loopholes to engaging with Hamas officials such as considering them as members of the PLO, which they are not?

*Answer.* Hamas is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224. I understand U.S. engagement in the West Bank and Gaza and with the Palestinians is consistent with U.S. law and involves no engagement with Hamas, a designated FTO. If confirmed, I will comply with U.S. law and seek to ensure that “J family” bureaus and offices do the same.

---





## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Markey, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Ambassador Jenkins, former Secretary Fernandez, congratulations on your nominations and my thanks for your willingness to return to the State Department with your demonstrated experience, strength, and commitment to advancing our national interests.

I have spoken often of the pivotal foreign policy challenges facing our country and the State Department, and this hearing will be no different. If confirmed, both of you will confront serious issues and challenges and a department in need of repair and rebuilding.

I am heartened by the Biden administration's emphasis on nominating knowledgeable and seasoned leaders with rich foreign policy experience.

Ambassador Jenkins, the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security is one of the most vital senior positions in the Department of State. Its portfolio ranges from nuclear weapons to terrorism and from nonproliferation to landmines. It requires orchestrating global cooperation with both allies and adversaries on critical issues.

As you and I have discussed, I have long been concerned over the way that the Department of Defense has assumed the security assistance mission that should be the exclusive purview of the State Department and the Secretary of State.

I greatly respect the service of the men and women in our armed forces and particularly your own 20 years of naval service. But the person delivering assistance to officials of a foreign government should not be wearing a uniform. They should, instead, have the authority to advance and promote a comprehensive foreign policy vision consistent with our core values.

We also discussed the need for the State Department to respect this committee's crucial statutory oversight role over the arms sales process, including when the laws and regulations governing those sales may have been violated.

This relationship was poisoned by the last administration. Thus far, the relationship has been much improved, but more work is necessary to create an effective partnership.

Make no mistake. One way or another, this committee will conduct effective oversight, and I hope and expect that we can depend on your cooperation.

Finally, we stand at a crossroads in our nuclear relationship with Russia and China. We have extended the New START Treaty with Russia for five years. The question is now where do we go from here.

Do we seek deeper reductions in Russian strategic forces? Should we focus on shorter-range nonstrategic nuclear weapons not covered by New START?

Should we focus on engaging China which, although its force structure remains smaller than the United States or Russia, is rapidly modernizing and expanding its nuclear forces?

So I look forward to hearing your thoughts on those matters today.

Mr. Fernandez, if confirmed, I expect that your previous experience as Assistant Secretary for Economics, Energy, and Business Growth will serve you well. This is vitally important because the last four years have been especially difficult for the bureaus that you have been nominated to lead.

They suffered from neglect, a loss of an institutional experience, and an undervaluing of diplomacy at the highest levels. The former administration never even bothered to nominate an Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

Given the sad state of affairs, your first priority, I believe, has to be rebuild the E Bureaus, restore morale, and provide clear leadership. This is especially important because President Biden has elevated the mission of the E Bureau by prioritizing climate change as a foreign policy imperative.

Energy, the environment, economic growth, leadership in all of these arenas is necessary to restore U.S. leadership and successfully combat the climate crisis.

If confirmed, you will also head the economic diplomacy wing at the State Department. I am interested in hearing about your views on building back better America's economic statecraft toolkit.

Economic diplomacy is an absolutely critical domain for competition in the 21st century, and there are many questions to be answered about a strategy for the post-COVID reconstruction of the global economy, as well as how to help poor countries administer vaccines and build resilience to the economic strains brought by the pandemic.

I am particularly interested in your views on Secretary Yellen's proposed \$650 billion in special drawing rights and how it promotes global economic stability and growth, and I would like to understand how you plan to engage on economic sanctions both within the department and in the interagency process.

So, Ambassador Jenkins and Mr. Fernandez, both of you face steep challenges ahead, but I have no doubt that you are up to the task.

And with that, we look forward to your testimony and turn to the distinguished ranking member for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The two nominations before us today are important and, indeed, really critical to our nation's foreign policy. I would first like to start with the nomination to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

For the past few decades, the global threat landscape has been going through a paradigm shift. Unfortunately, many in the West have clung to the notion that we can simply rely on the policies of the past to keep us secure today.

Nothing could be further from the truth. In just the last 10 years since the New START Treaty was ratified, the threats facing the United States, its allies, and our collective security have only grown.

Russia has completely modernized its nuclear forces and has done so outside existing treaty limits. It is growing its nuclear stockpile and is developing new so-called exotic missile delivery systems.

In addition, State Department compliance reports have laid out a consistent pattern of Russian noncompliance, also known as cheating, with a majority of the international arms control obligations it has signed.

Meanwhile, China is on pace to at least double its nuclear stockpile over the next decade. It has tested more ballistic missiles in 2018 and '19 than the rest of the world combined, and is likely engaged in nuclear testing activities.

Currently, China is modernizing every element of its nuclear triad, including larger land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, new ballistic missile submarines, and long-range stealth bombers, and the Department of Defense assesses that China is raising the alert level of much of its nuclear force indefinitely.

Combined with lack of transparency, these actions contribute to potential miscommunication or inadvertent escalation in a conflict and each of these threats demands immediate attention.

Beyond Russia and China, we continue to face mounting threats from other malign actors like Iran and North Korea, who continue to vie for a place on the world stage by advancing their nuclear and missile programs and engaging in proxy and cyber warfare.

This arms race encourages other nations to question whether they too need to develop nuclear weapons—certainly, not a pretty picture—and in the process, it undermines—all of this undermines Cold War—the Cold War architecture.

The role of the Under Secretary for Arms Control is our lead negotiator and accountability monitor to keep other countries honest on these issues. This person must not only have a deep level of technical knowledge but also the skills and wherewithal to sit

across the table from leaders of these nations and push back against empty offers and veiled threats.

It is also critical that this administration recognize the interdependence between arms control and nuclear modernization, as explicitly as explicitly codified in the ratification of the New START Treaty.

The Obama administration committed to nuclear modernization in order to win ratification of the New START Treaty but promptly scrapped those promises and abandoned those commitments just a year later.

Trust must be rebuilt between Congress and the executive. To rebuild this trust, the Biden administration must commit to a full modernization of the nuclear triad and nuclear weapons complex.

This is vital to reassure our allies who have forgone developing nuclear weapons and instead rely on our nuclear umbrella that we provide for them. Dismantling our capabilities while our adversaries build their stockpiles, is inherently destabilizing and undermines international security.

Which brings me to the last but, certainly, one of the most important topics for this nominee, the Senate's role in approving arms control agreements and treaties. The Constitution plainly lays out the Senate's role in approving these types of international agreements.

I cannot stress enough that any international agreement in the arms control space, including reentry into a previous agreement, must be put to the Senate for its advice and consent, as demanded by the Founding Fathers and our Constitution.

And to win consent, the administration should take concrete steps to rebuild the trust previous congresses have placed in the executive branch.

Next, we have the nomination of the Honorable Jose Fernandez to be Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and Environment. Our economy is one of our greatest assets and we all know economic policy is a crucial part of foreign policy.

The United States represents about 4.5 percent of the world's population, but we account for 22 percent of the world's economic activity. American creativity, innovation, and determination are hallmarks of the U.S. economic model and it is not surprising that countries around the world long to duplicate our success.

More government spending of borrowed money or of government-appropriated private capital is simply not the answer to our problems or those of other countries. Spending enormous sums at home and abroad in the hope that it will create a better world is not sustainable.

Instead, we must carefully define our objectives. Whether it is economic energy or environmental policy, we must be advocates of a free market system that resists the temptation to impose a one-size-fits-all solution to these incredibly diverse and difficult issues.

Further, how we steward our economy and help other countries develop is important to expanding the rule of law, encouraging compliance to international norms, and pushing back on corruption.

We must continue to promote the private sector-driven market-based economy that has led to the United States and its allies

achieving a level of prosperity for our citizens never before seen in history.

It is only through promoting this system that the West will truly be able to offer the world a better alternative to the socialists and parasitic Chinese economic policies and to reinforce the system of fair play rules we, along with other free and democratic countries, have constructed.

This is the economic landscape that lies ahead of us. With our allies, we must rise to this challenge. I look forward to hearing from both the witnesses on how they plan to address these very important issues.

Thank you, Senator Menendez.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

So we will turn to our two nominees. Your full statements will be included in the record. We ask you to summarize them in about five minutes or so we can have a conversation.

And we will start off with Ambassador Jenkins.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. AMBASSADOR BONNIE D. JENKINS  
OF NEW YORK, NOMINATED TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

Ms. JENKINS. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am grateful to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for their trust and faith in nominating me to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

It is a great honor for me to come before this committee. If confirmed, I pledge to work tirelessly for the American people and in close coordination with members of Congress and this committee to advance our shared ideals for this great nation.

I would like to thank my mother, Dorothy Jenkins, my family, and my friends and colleagues who have inspired and supported me for so many years. I have been honored to serve the U.S. Government as both a civilian and in uniform from working on arms control treaties as a lawyer with the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the 1990s to over 20 years in the U.S. Air Force and Navy Reserves.

Most recently, I had the honor of being confirmed to serve as ambassador for the State Department Threat Reduction Programs from 2009 to 2017, working to bring the issues of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear security front and center.

My commitment to public service has always included advancing opportunities for all Americans. In 2017, I founded the nonprofit Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation in an effort to make sure that our nation's policymakers are engaging in and constitute all of our experts, regardless of race, gender, or background.

I am also a professor at Georgetown and George Washington Universities teaching our future generation of policymakers. If confirmed, I will bring this breadth of experience to bear on the challenges that our country is facing today.

An increasingly authoritarian People's Republic of China is pursuing a destabilizing military modernization project and rapid nuclear buildup, endangering the international rules-based order and inflaming regional and global tensions.

Iran has continued to expand and accelerate its nuclear program and ballistic missile development, in addition to its ongoing support for terrorist groups and violent armed militias.

Russia continues to violate arms control agreements and commitments, and we face new cybersecurity and emerging technology threats from our adversaries. Reducing the risk of war through effective arms control, limiting Russian and Chinese nuclear expansion, strengthening our efforts in biosecurity, pursuing accountability for the use of chemical weapons, and promoting a diverse workforce will be among my top priorities, if confirmed.

We must strengthen deterrence alliance in the Euro Atlantic and Indo-Pacific to better deter and defend against growing threats. We must develop and implement norms of responsible behavior in outer space.

We must grapple with advancements and emerging technologies that can threaten strategic stability. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure that arms transfers and security assistance are focused on building value-based security partnerships.

I will carefully assess all critical factors, including nonproliferation, arms control, and human rights, and will ensure other key commitments, such as maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge, are upheld.

I look forward to working with this committee, if confirmed, to look strategically at how our security assistance authorities are structured and how they are balanced and resourced across the Departments of State and Defense to ensure that our tools, including our security cooperation agreements, are the most efficient for the U.S. taxpayer and the most effective for U.S. national security.

Renewed American leadership, as set out in the administration's interim national security strategic guidance, will be essential to reducing the dangers from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.

Further, working with allies and partners the United States must continue to stand up for an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet and stable cyberspace where international law and voluntary nonbinding norms apply to state behavior.

You have my commitment that if I am confirmed I will work in close coordination with you in our efforts to restore Congress' role in formulating foreign policy and to ensure the policies we enact are in the greatest interest of our national security of the American people.

The interests we face are numerous, but our commitment to our allies and to our American people is rock solid. We have much work to do and I am ready to get started.

With that, I welcome your questions and I look forward to our discussion today. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Jenkins follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am grateful to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for their trust and faith in nominating me to be the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security. It is a great honor for me to come before this committee. If confirmed, I pledge to work tirelessly for the American people and in close coordination with Members of Congress and this committee to advance our shared ideals for this great nation.

I would like to thank my mother, Dorothy Jenkins, my family, and my friends and colleagues who have inspired and supported me for so many years.

I have been honored to serve the U.S. Government as both a civilian and in uniform, from working on arms control treaties as a lawyer with the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the 1990s, to over 20 years in the Air Force and U.S. Navy Reserves. Most recently, I had the honor of being confirmed to serve as Ambassador for the State Department's threat reduction programs from 2009 to 2017, working to bring the issues of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear security front and center.

My commitment to public service has always included advancing opportunities for all Americans. In 2017, I founded the non-profit Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security and Conflict Transformation in an effort to make sure that our nation's policy makers are engaging in and constitute all of our experts, regardless of their race, gender, or background. I am also a professor at Georgetown and George Washington Universities, teaching our future generation of policy makers.

If confirmed, I will bring this breadth of experience to bear on the challenges that our country is facing today. An increasingly authoritarian People's Republic of China is pursuing a destabilizing military modernization project and rapid nuclear buildup, endangering the international rules-based order and inflaming regional and global tensions. Iran has continued to expand and accelerate its nuclear program and ballistic missile development, in addition to its ongoing support for terrorist groups and violent armed militias. Russia continues to violate arms control agreements and commitments. And we face new cybersecurity and emerging technology threats from our adversaries.

Reducing the risk of nuclear war through effective arms control, limiting Russian and Chinese nuclear expansion, strengthening our efforts in biosecurity, pursuing accountability for the use of chemical weapons, and promoting a diverse workforce will be among my top priorities, if confirmed. We must strengthen deterrence alliances in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific to better deter and defend against growing threats. We must develop and implement norms of responsible behavior in outer space. And we must grapple with advancements in emerging technologies that can threaten strategic stability.

If confirmed, I will strive to ensure that arms transfers and security assistance are focused on building values-based security partnerships. I will carefully assess all critical factors, including nonproliferation, arms control, and human rights, and will ensure other key commitments, such as maintaining Israel's Qualitative Military Edge, are upheld.

I look forward to working with this committee, if confirmed, to look strategically at how our security assistance authorities are structured, and how they are balanced and resourced across the Departments of State and Defense, to ensure that our tools, including our security cooperation agreements, are the most efficient for the U.S. taxpayer, and the most effective for U.S. national security.

*Renewed American leadership*—As set out in the administration's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance—will be essential to reducing the dangers from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, and their delivery systems. Further, working with allies and partners, the United States must continue to stand up for an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure Internet and a stable cyberspace, where international law and voluntary, non-binding norms apply to state behavior.

You have my commitment that if confirmed I will work in close coordination with you in our efforts to restore Congress' role in formulating foreign policy, and to ensure the policies we enact are in the greatest interest of our national security and of the American people. The threats we face are numerous, but our commitment to our allies, and to the American people, is rock solid. We have much work to do, and I am ready to get started. With that, I welcome your questions and look forward to our discussion today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.  
Mr. Fernandez?

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOSE W. FERNANDEZ OF NEW YORK, NOMINATED TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT); UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK; AND UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Menendez. Thank you, Ranking Member Risch, and other members of this committee for the opportunity that you have given me before—to appear before you today.

I would like to take a couple of seconds to introduce my family. I am blessed to have a supportive and loving family made up of three remarkable women. All three of them walk the talk of public service and I am very proud of them.

My wife, Andrea Gabor, is a professor at Baruch College in New York and the author of four books, in addition to being the mother of Sarah and Annie. Sarah, who is also here, spent a big chunk of her law school years volunteering at a death penalty clinic and is on her way to a graduate degree in psychology.

And not with us but very much in our thoughts is our second daughter, Annie, who is pursuing a joint public health and medical degree in California. I could not be here without them. So thank you for giving me the opportunity to introduce them.

I am honored to come before you as President Biden's nominee for Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment. I am grateful for the confidence shown in me by the president and by Secretary Blinken.

If confirmed, I will consult frequently with this committee as we work to serve the interests of the American people.

Nearly a dozen years ago, in the midst of the Great Recession, I appeared before this committee as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs.

I come to you today under circumstances that are different from those that we faced in 2009. But the reasons that brought me here have not changed.

My family and I left Cuba as refugees in 1967. We were fed in food kitchens by charities and we lost the lease in our first home. But when we settled in New Jersey in the town next to Union City in Hudson County, we began to rebuild lives that had been upended by revolution, fear, and deprivation.

A decade later, a country that owed us nothing had given me scholarships at Dartmouth College and Columbia Law School where I was challenged and nurtured by educators I will never be able to repay.

In short, I have lived the promise of America. I know that trading essential liberties for economic security is a false bargain, and I believe to my core that a humble but confident nation that celebrates its diversity while striving to reach a more perfect union can inspire others to tackle the existential challenges of our time.

With the exception of my four years here as Assistant Secretary, I practiced commercial law in New York since 1980. I have rep-



resented U.S. investors doing business abroad and foreign investors operating in the United States.

I have advised governments in Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere on pro-growth policies, and, unfortunately, over the last year I have also witnessed how workers and businesses everywhere have suffered in economies ravaged by COVID-19.

If confirmed, I will advance—seek to advance foreign policy initiatives that will benefit the American people and, particularly, our middle class, and I will focus on five priorities.

My first will be to support the State Department's critical role in stopping COVID-19. As Undersecretary, I would work to advance global vaccination, secure critical supply chains, promote economic recovery, and promote effective global systems.

My second priority will be to work on environmental and energy policies to accelerate economic growth. President Biden's executive order on tackling the climate crisis has established this goal as a national priority.

There is no greater challenge than climate change and we must work to include all countries in the effort while ensuring that our workers will share in the benefits of the new economy.

My third priority will be to ensure that our country will benefit from free, fair, and reciprocal trade. We need to focus on common goals with our trade partners while working to remove trade irritants.

We also need to support American innovation by protecting intellectual property rights overseas and preventing strategic competitors from gaming the system.

A fourth priority of mine will be to help maintain American leadership in the digital economy and emerging technologies.

U.S. technology companies face increasing challenges in maintaining U.S. preeminence in cutting-edge science and technology, and we need to engage diplomatically and with industry stakeholders so that international norms and standards are fair and transparent.

Finally, my last task will be to do what I have been doing now for almost 40 years and that is to facilitate new market opportunities for U.S. firms. Competing in the international arena is a strategic imperative for the United States and an opportunity for our companies and our workers.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fernandez follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored to come before you as President Biden's nominee for Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment. I am grateful for the confidence shown in me by the President and Secretary Blinken. If confirmed I will consult frequently with this Committee as we work to serve the interests of the American people.

Nearly a dozen years ago, in the midst of the Great Recession, I appeared before this committee as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs. I now come to you at a moment that is no less dire. A pandemic has robbed the lives of more than 570,000 Americans and millions more around the world. Generations wonder whether we can avert a climate cataclysm.

Emboldened rivals seek to expand their influence at America's expense. And traditional allies question whether the United States will remain at their side.

I come to you today under circumstances different from those we faced in 2009, but the reasons that brought me here have not changed. My family and I left Cuba as refugees in 1967. We were fed in food kitchens run by charities and lost the lease in our first home, but when we settled in New Jersey and my mother took a job as a seamstress in a local factory and my father became a bank clerk, we began to rebuild lives upended by revolution, fear and deprivation. A decade later, in a country that owed us nothing, I had received scholarships to Dartmouth College and Columbia Law School, where I was challenged and nurtured by educators I will never be able to repay.

In short, I have lived the promise of America. I know that trading essential liberties for economic security is a false bargain. And I believe to my core that a humble but confident nation that celebrates its diversity while striving to reach a more perfect union can inspire others to tackle the existential challenges of our time.

With the exception of my four years in Washington as Assistant Secretary, I have practiced commercial law in New York since 1980. I have represented U.S. investors operating in troubled countries, and foreign investors seeking to raise funds in our capital markets or navigate the U.S. foreign investment system. I have advised governments in Africa and Latin America on pro-growth policies. Unfortunately, over the last year I have also witnessed how workers and businesses everywhere have foundered in economies ravaged by COVID-19.

If confirmed I will seek to advance foreign policy initiatives that will benefit the American people, and particularly our middle class, focusing on five priorities:

1. *The State Department's critical role in stopping COVID-19:* As Secretary Blinken has said "This pandemic won't end at home until it ends worldwide." As Under Secretary I would work to advance global vaccination, secure critical supply chains, support safe international transportation systems, and—more broadly— promote inclusive economic recovery and effective global health systems.
2. *Environmental and energy policies to accelerate economic growth:* President Biden's Executive Order on tackling the climate crisis established as a national priority raising global climate ambition and integrating climate considerations across a wide range of international fora. There is no challenge greater than climate change, and we must work to enlist all countries. We also need to ensure that our workers will share in the benefits of the new economy.
3. *Free, fair, and reciprocal trade:* The United States needs to focus on common goals with our trade partners while working to remove trade irritants. We also need to support American innovation by enlisting partners to protect intellectual property rights overseas and prevent strategic competitors from circumventing the rules.
4. *Leadership in the digital economy and emerging technologies:* U.S. technology companies face increasing challenges in maintaining U.S. preeminence in cutting-edge science and technology. We need to engage diplomatically and with industry stakeholders to maintain U.S. competitiveness and ensure that international norms and standards are fair and transparent.
5. *Facilitating new market opportunities for U.S. firms:* As the Department's senior economic official, I would direct our network of economic officers in embassies around the world to help U.S. firms expand overseas, creating jobs in the United States and contributing to our economic growth. Competing in the international arena is a strategic imperative for the United States and an opportunity for our companies and workers.

Let me conclude by stressing that, if confirmed, I would be honored to serve with Secretary Blinken and my counterparts throughout the U.S. Government in support of the President's economic policy agenda. I will also seek your counsel throughout my tenure.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you both for your testimony. We will begin a series of five-minute rounds for members, and I will at the beginning say I have to go to introduce two judges to the Judiciary Committee. So I will—

Senator RISCH. I will take over.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah, absolutely. I know you would be happy to. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. I have no doubt about that. So I will start off with my questions. Then I will turn to Senator Risch. I should be back by then. But if not, Senator Risch, if you would acknowledge according to the list that we have here.

Let me start off with you, Ambassador. I am glad I heard in your statement about your commitment to work with the committee. The leadership of State in the last administration had a very contentious relationship with this committee on arms sales matters, and it was clear that our legitimate statutory oversight role was neither recognized nor respected.

So far, Secretary Blinken has fostered a very different relationship that is professional, respectful, and consultative. Will you continue and broaden this relationship on arms sales oversight and will you commit to consult with us regarding policy changes and initiatives and not merely inform us of your decisions?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you for your questions, Senator.

Yes, I can confirm that I am more than happy to consult with you.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Now, I have been concerned for some time that a Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau does not have appropriate influence on the arms sales process. The Biden administration seems better disposed to consider the human rights components of the arms sales process.

I plan to reintroduce my Safeguarding Human Rights in Arms Sales Act, which seeks to reemphasize and enhance DRL's role. I have no ideological prohibition to having U.S. arms be sold abroad. I have no problem with that.

I do have a problem when we sell it to countries that violate human rights or act outside of the international norm and the use of those weapons.

So, if confirmed, will you enhance DRL's role in the arms sales process?

Ms. JENKINS. Yes, Senator. What I can certainly say is, as I said in my statement, I view human rights as forefront and fundamental to arms sales and arms transfers. So I will, certainly, do what I can, if I am confirmed, at State to include all issues and individuals in terms of promoting human rights.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, I want to turn to the question that I raised earlier, and I think you and I had an opportunity to discuss this. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, DOD has reproduced more and more of State's security assistance authority.

It has recently attempted to reproduce State's international military education and training program with a focus on its own priorities as it has done with other duplicated programs. It, essentially, runs its own foreign military financing grant program, which is considered far more flexible than State's.

If confirmed, will you give equal focus to all the issues in all of the bureaus and offices under your supervision and actively defend State's equities and authorities in this regard?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, Senator.

Yes, I am very concerned and would, certainly, be working with all the authorities and the offices within State and the interagency to strengthen the role of the State Department in this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Mr. Fernandez, it is good to see your family here, incredibly gifted family, I must say. You have got all the bases covered. You can get educated, your health care is going to be taken care of, and that is a pretty good deal.

So I want to know—I hope you have had an opportunity maybe to see what this committee did last week, in a 21 to 1 vote, passed out the Strategic Competition Act, which is something that Senator Risch and I authored, along with many members of this committee, intended to restore our global economic leadership, including passages calling on the president to work with our G-7 allies in matters relevant to economic and democratic freedoms.

We see in this committee on a bipartisan basis as China being our most strategic competitor, a nation that we must confront when they violate international norms but we must also compete with.

If confirmed, what will be your goals when it comes to the global economy and in its post-COVID recovery, particularly as it relates to competing with China?

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Thank you for your question, Senator, and I commend you and the committee for the work that you did last week on the China bill. It is an issue that I think will be an important part of my role at the State Department.

The fact of the matter is that, as you know, China is no longer biding its time. It is challenging us in the economic sphere every chance that it gets and it is doing so through practices that are inimical to many of the rules that it had to follow in order to get to where it is. The Chinese are now trying to challenge those rules.

We have pushed back but I think we must do more, and I think the bill that you worked on last week will be—will give us an additional tool to do that.

One of the areas on which I think I would like to concentrate my efforts will be to work with our allies more, to work with our private sector more, and to provide alternatives to other countries doing business with China.

Oftentimes, they may not have other choices, and I think part of what we need to do is to work with our allies and to work with our companies to talk to them about the opportunities abroad and to get them much more involved in international business.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I am going to turn to Senator Risch. I am going to let Senator Risch preside in this period of time. After Senator Risch, Senator Cardin is next and then Senator Hagerty after that. But I should be back by that time.

Thank you, Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH [presiding]. I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am going to ask a few questions here and then we will turn to Senator Cardin.

Ambassador Jenkins, as you know, the United States withdrew from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, commonly known as the INF Treaty. We believed it was the right thing to do—that is, the United States did—and so did NATO. NATO found that the U.S. was justified in withdrawing from INF. I am told you do not particularly agree with that decision. Is that correct?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, sir.

At the time the decision was made, my concern was whether, in fact, in my view, we had a significant strategy as a next step after that. So that was my concern at the time.

Senator RISCH. Do you still—are you still in the same spot you were?

Ms. JENKINS. I think that after I had time to see this, I am still concerned about the strategy, going forward. But I, certainly, understand why the U.S. withdrew. Senator Risch: All right. And, of course, that was the result of the fact that the treaty was a one-way street. That is, we were complying but the Russians were not. Fair statement?

Ms. JENKINS. Yes. Yes, a fair statement.

Senator RISCH. Do you have any plans of turning that around?

Ms. JENKINS. The statement or—

Senator RISCH. No.

[Laughter.]

Senator RISCH. The statement is the statement. I am talking about the—about the facts, about trying to get them back in the lane they are supposed to be in.

Ms. JENKINS. Well, I think what we—what the administration does have planned for the future, and if I am confirmed I would be, hopefully, involved in these kind of discussions, is a way forward to work with Russia, and the idea would be to have what they are calling strategic stability talks, in which time it would be an opportunity to really look at all the different issues with Russia. But also we want to continue to engage our allies on issues in—regarding Europe and NATO.

So I think that the idea now is to have some of these discussions with our allies and, of course, we will have our discussions with Russia, and then we will see where we are after we have had a chance to start these dialogues.

Senator RISCH. How about the Chemical Weapons Convention and Russia's compliance or, rather, noncompliance? Do you have thoughts on that?

Ms. JENKINS. Well, the use of chemical weapons is reprehensible and I—you know, I know the U.S. has instituted sanctions against Russia as a result of the use of nuclear—chemical weapons against their own citizens.

The U.S. continues to make the point at the OPCW in The Hague and also to raise the point with our allies as well. So my view is that that use of chemical weapons is, as I said, reprehensible.

Senator RISCH. I think we all agree with that. But the question is, how do you get them—how do you bring them to heel to comply with the convention that they have subscribed to?

Ms. JENKINS. Sir, you continue to use sanctions. You continue to work with our allies to put pressure on them. You continue to work with multilateral organizations like the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

You work through the U.N. You use all the tools that you have—in my view, use all the tools that you have at your disposal, whether they are diplomatic or others, to actually try to get the Russians to actually abide by what they are supposed to be doing.

Senator RISCH. How about the Biological Weapons Convention?

Ms. JENKINS. The Biological Weapons Convention is a convention that is significant and we need to continue to put more emphasis on the Biological Weapons Convention, to reinvigorate it.

It is another opportunity and another way that we can encourage Russia to abide by things that we think they should be abiding by.

Senator RISCH. And what about nuclear testing with Russia?

Ms. JENKINS. The concern there is, as you probably know, all of the P-5 countries, all the nuclear weapons countries, currently have a moratorium on nuclear testing. The concern there is if countries start to test again it can open a box to nuclear testing.

We have had a moratorium for a number of years so we want to try to prevent a situation where countries feel that that is something that they could be doing again.

Senator RISCH. I am assuming you are familiar with the 2020 State Department compliance report that Russia is, in fact, violating each one of these agreements. Are you familiar with that from the agency that you are about to join, that report?

Ms. JENKINS. I am aware of the compliance report. Obviously, I did not have any input on that.

Senator RISCH. Of course.

Ms. JENKINS. And I will have much more time to examine it after—of course, after—if I am confirmed, but after today.

Senator RISCH. Are you in disagreement with their conclusions that Russia is in noncompliance and violating all of these conventions and treaties that we have just talked about?

Ms. JENKINS. No, I am not in—I would not be in disagreement with that, sir.

Senator RISCH. Well, I think that underlies the heavy lift that you have ahead of you. You have talked to me generally about that. Can you give me any more specifics on your—on how you intend to go down that road?

Ms. JENKINS. Well, sir, I mean, I think that what we need to do is as the Government is planning—and I am not there so I cannot really attest to all of the discussions that are actually taking place in their interagency.

But as I said, what I am aware of are the next steps in terms of engaging on issues of nuclear weapons, the use of sanctions against Russia that have just been done. We can continue to do sanctions, continue to put pressure on them in other ways using the whole-of-government and all of the different tools that we have, using diplomacy, which is—which we have different avenues for that both bilaterally, multilaterally, through our multilateral organizations.

You know, we think—I think we just have to use all the tools that we have at our disposal to try to convince and to push Russia to comply with treaties.

Senator RISCH. In looking over some of the things that you have written, I was a little perplexed. On April 21st, 2019, you wrote, and I quote here, “Men make nuclear weapons more dangerous,” end quote.

I am a little perplexed by that. How do I make nuclear weapons more dangerous? What—could you drill down on that a little bit for me?

Ms. JENKINS. Yeah. I do not quite recall that statement. I am not saying I did not make it, but out of context I do not recall. If it is—I would have to know which article that was.

But I know that I have written about the importance of having diverse perspectives in terms of national security and foreign policy, in terms of having different viewpoints, in terms of having more women at the table. I assume that that is the context that you are—you are pulling that from.

Senator RISCH. Well, the—I am looking at it here and the exact quote is, “Men make nuclear weapons more dangerous,” a completed sentence. And I guess I am just perplexed as to how men make nuclear weapons more dangerous.

Ms. JENKINS. Well, I think what—if I can recall what you are pulling it from, essentially, what I am saying there is that we have a situation now where we have to reassess where we are in terms of where we have been.

We need to look at bringing more different diverse people to the table. To date, we have not had enough significant diversity, and it has been a situation where it has been, essentially, men at the table.

So it is more of an issue of we need to include more people and more diverse people because we only know what we have right now, and we do not have that.

Senator RISCH. I do not think anyone is in disagreement that diversity is appropriate. But I just do not understand how men make nuclear weapons more dangerous. That is very perplexing.

Ms. JENKINS. I think—yeah, what you are pushing at is that the context that men—without having to make any certain statements here, that the belief that women in conflict situations, and there has been study on this, that when women at the table that there is more peace and peace tends to last longer.

Senator RISCH. Senator Cardin, you are up.

[No response.]

Senator RISCH. Okay. We will go down in the list of people who signed up. Senator Van Hollen, are you with us by WebEx?

[No response.]

Senator RISCH. How about—

Senator CARDIN. No, I am sorry. Mr. Chairman?

Senator RISCH. Senator Cardin, it sounds like you, but I do not see you.

Senator CARDIN. I think I am now with you. Thank you very much, and let me thank both of our nominees for their willingness to serve in these two very important roles.

In both of your testimonies, you have indicated the importance of American values in our policies. Ambassador Jenkins, you specifically said that we need a value-based policy as it relates to our arms issues.

And certainly, Mr. Fernandez, your family experience points out the importance of value-based policies. So I want to ask both of you a question but, first, let me start with Ambassador Jenkins. And that is, our arms policy needs to be based upon our values and our values are respect for human rights.

So when we get involved in arms sales with countries that allow these arms to be used inappropriately against their own people, or

to deny human rights to others, we should not permit that to happen. We need to filter our considerations of arms sales through our human rights concerns.

What commitments can we have from you that, as you are at the table as these types of decisions are being made that, indeed, we will promote our values, our human rights, even though at times it might run some challenges in our bilateral relations with other countries?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you for the question, Senator.

Yes, as I said, that we need to look at our values but also we need to highlight the importance of human rights. In that, I can—what I am aware of is that there is now a review ongoing on our conventional arms transfer policy which will inform decisions on transfers, and that I can certainly say, if I am confirmed, that things will change. It will not be business as usual.

So we need to continue to look at these on a case by case basis. We need to look at our national security concerns. We need to look at our strategic concerns that we have in the region, region stability, and we also need to continue to reassess anything that we decide to transfer to another country.

But, ultimately, we have to consider human rights in these issues, and if I am confirmed, I will be looking at the revised CAT policies that are being discussed right now.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. I will be working with you on those areas. I have introduced some legislation in this regard, and I am glad to see it is not business as usual. It is absolutely essential that, as we talk about arms sales that human rights be a component of those discussions.

Mr. Fernandez, I want to raise a subject I have raised consistently with nominees that have come before our committee, and that is the importance to standing up against corruption.

We have several tools that are available that are in your toolkit, including the use of the Global Magnitsky statute. There are pieces of legislation pending before this committee that I have authored on a bipartisan basis with other members of our committee that would set up a requirement that our missions evaluate every country's commitment to anti-corruption and evaluate how well they are doing, as well as making funds available to fight corruption.

Can I get your commitment—I have gotten this from so many of the members of the Biden administration—that you will be focused in your work on an anti-corruption agenda, recognizing that corruption many times is the fuel for anti-democratic regimes being able to stay in power and abuse power?

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Senator, thank you for your question. Absolutely. You have my commitment. In fact, I will tell you that I am a firm believer from my time in the private sector that we are never going to out compete other countries through low environmental standards, intellectual property theft, corruption, or lack of respect for human rights.

Transparency is part of our DNA. It is part of what we are about as a country and it is also—I have seen it. I have seen it be a competitive advantage.



I have seen countries say, we are going to use an American company to build this road because we know that that contract was not obtained through illicit means. So you have my commitment and, in fact, I would love to work with you some more on these issues. It is something that is in my DNA as well, and I very much would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with you.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you, and again, I want to thank both of our nominees and their families. This is a tough time to serve in government.

Both of your roles that you have been nominated for are critically important to our national security and have challenges, and thank you for stepping forward and I look forward to working with both of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Cardin. I understand Senator Hagerty is with us virtually.

Senator HAGERTY. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. You are recognized, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch. I appreciate your holding this meeting.

My first question is for Ambassador Jenkins. Thank you for being here today, Ambassador.

We are in a period right now where China is ramping up its nuclear weapons capability. At the same time, Russia is articulating a strategy of “escalate to de-escalate”. They are developing weapons like the Poseidon that has the capability of destroying cities.

So at this time, I want to get your perspective on which way the Biden administration is going to go, and if I could, I would like to read a couple of quotes and then get your thoughts on what direction we are going.

During her nomination hearing, Deputy Secretary of Defense Kath Hicks said that “The Triad has been the bedrock of our nuclear deterrent and I think it must be modernized in order to be safe, secure, and credible.”

Yet, on April 10th, 2021, two Biden administration officials gave an interview in Japan with the Asahi Shimbun with a fundamentally different message about U.S. nuclear policy.

During that interview, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance Alexandra Bell and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Missile Defense Policy Leonor Tomero said that, quote, “There is no doubt that President Biden’s goal is to reduce the role of nuclear weapons.”

So, Ambassador Jenkins, if you are confirmed, will you commit to supporting the modernization of nuclear weapons?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, sir. I think I, like President Biden, really support a safe, secure, and strong nuclear arsenal for as long as we do have our nuclear arsenal, and I know that this is a—this has been something that has had bipartisan support.

I know that right now this is being led—issues of modernization are led by our Department of Defense, our Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Department of Energy. So what I can say is that, obviously, I am not in the Government right now to know what is being discussed.

But I can, certainly, say that if I am confirmed I look forward to engaging with military components as well as Department of Energy in the modernization and process.

And, you know, I think we can agree—as I said, it is bipartisan—that we do need a safe, secure, and effective arsenal.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, help me rectify this, because we are at a time right now when China and Russia are both stepping up their nuclear programs and you have got people in the department that, if you are confirmed, the department that you will run, who are saying that they feel that President Biden wants to see us reduce our nuclear capability.

How do you square that?

Ms. JENKINS. I think the way to square it is it is going to be a whole-of-government approach in terms of how we—how we approach these issues. I think having a strong nuclear arsenal is not necessarily a contradiction in terms of looking at how we can also find a way in which we can safely and adequately reduce our arsenal.

I think a lot will depend on what is decided in terms of how we work with countries like Russia. It will determine, I assume, on ongoing discussions with China. So I cannot say because I am not in the Government.

But I think that we should be able to square this by having a whole-of-government approach in how we look at all of these issues of the nuclear Triad, the Nuclear Posture Review, and also the way in which we will approach countries on arms control and disarmament.

Senator HAGERTY. Ambassador, thank you. I will just say this. We live in a competitive world. We need to take account of what China is doing, what Russia is doing. We need not be naive in our process.

So I hope you will take a very careful look at what your staff, if you are to be confirmed, are saying and make certain that we have a consistent policy and that we are not articulating a confusing position to our own nation and to our adversaries.

Can I turn now to a discussion that I have been looking forward to having with Mr. Fernandez?

Mr. Fernandez, I would like to talk with you about the Clean Network initiative that you and I have discussed. It has been an undisputed success with some 60 countries that have already signed up. Two hundred companies have been involved in the Clean Network initiative, again, an initiative that enables us to keep untrusted vendors out of our infrastructure.

We have talked about this in the past. It has built tremendous brand equity, and given your background in mergers and acquisitions, I am certain you realize that that type of momentum has a great deal of value, something that we would certainly like to see captured and the momentum continue.

If you are confirmed, would you commit to working with Congress to secure the resources and any new authorities that you may need to continue to move this program forward?

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Senator, thank you for your question, and we had a conversation yesterday about this and let me repeat what I said then, which is I very much agree that the stakes could not be

higher, that we need to trust that—and our allies need to trust that the 5G equipment that they purchase will not threaten national security, privacy, or basic infrastructure, and the Biden administration has reaffirmed the importance of a 5G strategy.

The Clean Network Initiative is currently under review. We share the goal. There has been lots of progress, and it is my intent to try and further those goals.

In a new administration, there may be some tweaks. But you have my commitment and you have my word that we will pursue the same goals because they involve national security at its core, not just for the United States but for the entire world.

And so I look forward to working with you on that and I would be delighted to spend some time working on furthering that objective.

Senator HAGERTY. Excellent, Mr. Fernandez, and I look forward to working with you, actually taking this approach across other sectors—technology sectors, energy sectors—as we think about, you know, the new infrastructure of the future, autonomous vehicles, et cetera. I think there is a lot of opportunity there.

One follow-up question. The State Department compiled a list of 1,100 companies that are involved in financing the PRC military. That list is very helpful to investment advisors as they think about and advise their clients on which companies to divest.

When will the State Department update that list of 1,100 companies?

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Senator, thank you for the question. I am not familiar with those plans. I would be happy to get back to you on that. But I am not familiar with the—with that list of the names that are there or the plants that the State Department has to update them. I will certainly get back to you on that.

Senator HAGERTY. Great. It is very useful tool, and I appreciate the update schedule when you can get it. Thank you so much.

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Of course.

#### MR. FERNANDEZ'S RESPONSE TO SENATOR HAGERTY'S QUESTION

Mr. FERNANDEZ. I understand that the State Department, in consultation with the Treasury Department, is currently evaluating entities based on required criteria under Executive Order 13959, as amended, and relevant published Frequently Asked Questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, and congratulations to both witnesses on their nominations. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

Madam Ambassador, I want to follow up a little bit on some of the questions that Senator Hagerty raised, at least that line of questioning. I think we have long agreed on a bipartisan basis that our sort of strategic defense depends on a reliable and effective nuclear deterrent.

But we have also recognized that we can make ourselves safer through smart arms control agreements with previously the former Soviet Union and now with Russia and others, and I was pleased to see that President Biden chose to extend the New START agreement by five years.

That had some bipartisan support here. I had introduced a resolution with Senator Young to encourage that and I am glad that the administration moved forward, and that has the support, as you know, of our military leadership as well, who recognizes—who recognized that that is an important part of our stability, predictability, and verification regime.

But this five years will now give us an opportunity to look at follow-on negotiations, strategic nuclear negotiations, or other nuclear weapons negotiations with Russia.

How do you anticipate moving forward on that? Do you agree that we should be looking for deeper cuts in strategic nuclear weapons and looking at some of the Russian capabilities and bringing them within the fold of the next arms control agreement?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, sir. And I think, looking forward, and as I said, this is something also being looked at by the administration and they are also in the process of planning the next steps for engagement with Russia on these issues, certainly, I think the idea would be deeper cuts.

But I think a lot of that depends. A lot of that depends on what happens with the strategic stability talks that are being planned.

We, certainly, want to include discussions on some of the novel weapons that Russia have. We, certainly, want to look at their non-strategic nuclear weapons that they have, which they have a lot more and are planning to build more of these type of weapons.

So we, certainly, want to have a discussion in which we will bring in all of these weapons systems, as I said earlier, so we can—we can determine exactly where we need to have a conversation on deeper cuts.

And as you—and as you have acknowledged, this will be a decision by the administration looking at all the different relevant factors, including having a strong nuclear arsenal.

Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you.

Let me turn quickly to China. While China is working to develop and modernize its nuclear forces, there remain big, you know, differentials between both the size and the quantitative edge with respect to our nuclear arsenal.

That does not mean, however, that there is not room for some negotiations with China to avoid miscalculations. Could you talk a little bit about your vision of how we engage with China when it comes to nuclear arms control?

Ms. JENKINS. China is an important country in terms of nuclear arms issues. They are a significant threat to us, as we have noted earlier. As noted, they are trying to increase their nuclear arsenal two times by the end of the year. They are strengthening their nuclear Triad. They are looking at trying some novel systems.

So, certainly, we have to find a way to have a—to get them at the table. As you know, it has been a challenge to do that. There have been attempts to try to make that happen.

But I think we have to focus on results more than form. We do think and I think the administration thinks that a bilateral effort is the way to go and because there are certain security issues that I think that we want to look at specifically with China.

So we want to engage them and I believe the administration is discussing next steps for to engage—to engage China bilaterally to try to start the discussion so we can prevent miscalculation, we can have more transparency, and get a much better understanding of what is happening for everybody's security.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you.

And, Mr. Fernandez, just briefly, I want to mention Power Africa and whether you would agree that that has been a very useful tool in terms of engaging with Africa and trying to accomplish some of our objectives there and whether it makes sense to expand the use of Power Africa.

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Thank you, Senator. Thank you for your question, and I am very familiar with your interest and commitment to working in Africa.

I think Power Africa has been a success. It has been a success on the renewables front. It has been a success on regulatory reform in Africa. I think we need to expand it. I think, as I said in my opening statement, one of the benefits, one of the competitive advantages that we have over countries such as China is a private sector, and we need to get our private sector involved in infrastructure in Africa.

That may be a tall order. But I think programs such as Power Africa are programs that we ought to deepen, and you have my commitment to work with this committee to do that, going forward.

I have spent a fair amount of time in Africa. I used to commute to Ghana for about two years, privatizing its phone company. It is a country that has great potential and it also presents an opportunity for U.S. business and U.S. workers.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Markey, I understand, is with us virtually.

Senator Markey?

Senator MARKEY. Can you hear me, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. You are recognized.

Senator MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, can you hear me?

The CHAIRMAN. I can, and you are recognized.

Senator MARKEY. Beautiful. Thank you.

Ambassador Jenkins, President Trump systematically dismantled the arms control architecture that you will oversee as undersecretary. He was egged on—President Trump—by John Bolton.

But, ultimately, President Trump tossed aside the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty, the Iran nuclear deal, the treaty on open skies, and he flirted with taking a wrecking ball to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty by signaling an interest in conducting a, quote, “demonstration” nuclear test just last year.

And at home, President Trump broke with his predecessors by increasing the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in military strategy by deploying a low-yield warhead on our strategic ballistic submarines and developing a new nuclear sea launch cruise missile after President George Herbert Walker Bush retired them three decades again.

So it is clear we need to build back a better nuclear posture, and so my question to you is are—is the Biden administration going to

carry out a review of its nuclear policy and do you agree that every effort should be made to follow the tradition of presidents on a bipartisan basis, going back to George Herbert Walker Bush but exempting Donald Trump?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you, sir. It is my understanding that there is review taking place on the Nuclear Posture Review. There are reviews and interagency discussions, to my understanding, on a number of issues relating to arms control, relating to nonproliferation issues, and all the other—many of the other issues that we are discussing today.

So there is a review of that and I, certainly, look forward to and hope, if I am confirmed, that we can have a bipartisan process for going forward on all these issues that are within the T Bureau, particularly the ones we are talking today about arms control and nonproliferation, and finding ways that we can reassert the U.S. leadership role in arms control and nonproliferation.

Thank you.

Senator MARKEY. Yeah, thank you.

Well, in 2013, President Obama's nuclear employment guidance concluded that we could reduce our deployed stockpile by up to one-third and still meet our deterrence and reassurance commitments, and I hope that is the position that the Biden administration is once again going to reaffirm.

The Trump administration reportedly flirted with conducting the first U.S. nuclear test in over a generation in a clumsy attempt to bring Russia and China to the negotiating table. My PLANET Act last year helped to deny funds to make good on those Dr. Strange-love visions.

In your view, if we were to carry out such a test, what would the consequences be to the nuclear nonproliferation regime?

Ms. JENKINS. Sir, for the U.S.—if the U.S. did a test that would certainly—we, certainly, would not be considered leaders in the nonproliferation area. We have—we would go against our moratorium that we have on nuclear testing.

There would be lots of questions about why we are testing, what that mean in the future. So that would create a lot of confusion in the international community. It would create a lot of confusion by countries in terms of our overall role and obligations in arms control and it, certainly, would not bode well, in my opinion, in terms of our role and our position on nuclear testing.

Senator MARKEY. Good, thank you. And one final question. If confirmed, will you advocate for the president to recommit to the Arms Trade Treaty and work with members of this committee to build support for future senate advice and consent on that treaty?

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you for the question. If I am confirmed, I would, certainly, be interested in conversations and in the interagency on next steps or next possible steps for the U.S. in the Arms Trade Treaty.

Senator MARKEY. Okay. Beautiful. Thank you, and thank you for your service to our country.

Ms. JENKINS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to both of you for being willing to serve.

Ambassador Jenkins, there was a recent DOD report in which they essentially conceded an inability to track—to do end-use monitoring of arms in conflict areas like Ukraine and Afghanistan. We have seen American-made so-called nonlethal weapons used in Egypt and in Hong Kong.

I have a couple of questions about how we do end-use monitoring. I know there is a good partnership at the—at the State Department with the Department of Defense to track the weapons that we sell or provide to our foreign partners.

My understanding is that the Security Cooperation Office at our embassies is responsible for conducting these end-use checks. But often the people in these offices are stretched thin, and I am wondering if this is an area where a few more people or some new use of technology could strengthen our oversight in terms of weapons exports.

Can you comment on this and talk about what opportunities you see to improve the resources we dedicate to end-use monitoring checks?

Ms. JENKINS. Yes, thank you. Thank you, sir, for that question.

Yes, end-use monitoring is very important in terms of ensuring that the arms transfers actually end up where they are supposed to be.

So we, certainly, want to do everything we can to strengthen and make sure that end-use monitoring is happening. I am aware that there are cases, and I cannot recall which—in which case at the moment, but I know that it has been more successful I know in some cases where countries have actually gone out and done—have done more in terms of end-use monitoring and have more agreements.

I think one thing that we need to do, as you said, I think we should always look at more options if there is technology that can help. I think that, you know, if I were confirm happy to look at different options that can help us. Strengthening—if there is a need for more people to help out with that, I think that is great.

But I think, as I was saying earlier, as we have much more emphasis in the future on human rights, as we more have a much stronger emphasis on these issues in general in terms of where these—where these arms end up, I am, certainly, open to more discussion on what we can do to make it better, in particular, in light of the fact that we are relooking at our CAT policy and everything else.

Senator SCHATZ. So I think there are a couple areas for improvement.

First of all, technology. Second of all, just flat out resources. You need more human beings to do this work. And then third, sort of undergirding that, you do not want to just lay down a layer of technology on an old system under old assumptions.

And so I do think we need to do a comprehensive look and just concede it is not working right now. It may be working to greater and lesser degrees in certain countries, but where it needs to work it is not working.

Now, there is another question that I think is essential to this, which is that it is not just the geographic location of whatever arms have been transferred. It is how they are used, right, and that is a policy question.

I am wondering if we can work together on that, because it may be that it is in the possession of those—of that country that we transferred it to but used for something that is antithetical to our values.

And I think that is a more ticklish kind of difficult policy question to get to because it is after the fact. But I still think that is our basic obligation when we think about and use monitoring. I wonder if you can comment on that.

Ms. JENKINS. No, I think—I think you are right. I think—I think, I mean, obviously, as you said, one question is where do the arms land and the other one is how are they used, you know, and giving them to a country for one purpose and they are being used for something else.

You know, it is a challenge. You know, it is a challenge to always—to know exactly how it is going to be used. But I think that we, certainly, want to strengthen whatever we have now to make sure that we can do that.

If I am confirmed I am, certainly, happy and ready to work with you on that.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Mr. Fernandez, just a final question. Our science bureaus play an important role in terms of our relationships with countries in Oceania. Their work is key to protecting marine resources and combating IUU fishing and tackling the climate crisis.

But I worry that these issues get a little bit isolated, stovepiped, from the day-to-day diplomacy run out of the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau.

Can you talk about how we can make sure that oceans and climate are elevated in our approach to Oceania so that it is not that we are separating science and conservation questions from the sort of big boy and big girl conversation around geopolitics, but that those are one and the same, especially in those areas where when you are dealing with heads of state where climate is their main issue, right?

When you have an inundated runway or you have an inability to farm or fish, climate is not some secondary optional conservation question. It is an existential question.

But I think that our bureaucratic systems have to reflect that prioritization, particularly in Oceania but also elsewhere.

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Thank you for your question, Senator, and I could not agree with you more that this is an existential question for the countries in Oceania. They are—they are facing, in some cases, extinction because of climate change. So I share very much your concern.

I also think that many of them—it also cuts across a number of other areas. They also are targets of Chinese influence, and so that is another national security challenge.

On the pollution front on the ocean, illegal fishing and those kinds of crimes, we have offices that are all over that and I have



spoken to a number of them already, and I think there is more we could do, going forward.

So I would very much welcome, if confirmed, the opportunity to talk to you about that and you have my commitment that we will certainly look at those again, because I do agree with you. Sometimes these issues do get overlooked.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Now, I understand there are no other colleagues seeking recognition, virtually or otherwise. So I have one final question.

Mr. Fernandez, during my time in this committee, I focused on reinvigorating the tools and instruments of our economic statecraft so that the Department of State, Treasury, Commerce, U.S. Trade Representative, and other elements of the U.S. Government are working in tandem to promote international development, U.S. business opportunities, and U.S. best practices for corporate social responsibility.

I am amazed—you know, we have the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which we should. It does not allow U.S. businesses to suborn some entity or official abroad. Other countries do not have that. This has been one of Senator Cardin's passions on the question of corruption.

I go abroad and I see the chancellor of Germany with a trade mission directly engaged in trying to promote her country's services and products. Until recently, the Brazilians had a very powerful economic tool in their centralized effort.

So my question is what tools do we have, in your opinion, that are currently working? What tools are not working as effectively?

What additional authorities might you believe you might be needing and how do we bring a whole-of-government approach to an economic statecraft that creates greater opportunities for U.S. companies in selling their products and services abroad, opening up more markets, also instilling the business practices that are better than many others in the world so it has an economic benefit here at home?

We sell products abroad, our services abroad. We create jobs here at home. When we instill the right business practices, we improve governance in those countries.

Can you give me some insights as to how you are thinking about this?

Mr. FERNANDEZ. Sure. Thank you for the question. That is a big question and I am glad that you asked.

The CHAIRMAN. That is why you are going to get paid the big bucks if you get confirmed.

[Laughter.]

Mr. FERNANDEZ. I am very glad that you brought it up. You know, when I was here in—between 2009 and 2013, I was amazed by the fact that I would go to countries in the Middle East and, you know, I would go on my regular commercial flight and next to me would be the president of another country, and that president would come down the aisle and right behind them were a number of companies, were a number of business people.

It was not so much of a presidential visit as much as a Chamber of Commerce visit. We do not have that kind of ethos yet at the

State Department. We are working on it and you have given us a number of tools.

I think what was done with the DFC is something that that ups the ante on where we can compete with the Chinese and with others.

We need to—and I intend to do this, if confirmed, at the State Department—we need to do more on the training front. Our State Department employees have to have economic statecraft at the forefront of their tasks. It has got to be part of what they get graded on.

And I think I would like to focus more on the training side. I think getting more whole-of-government cooperation, for example, on deal teams that where we embed economic officers in some of the embassies to support American business.

We need to do more of that because at the end of the day, becoming involved in international opportunities are not just a strategic imperative for the United States but also business opportunities for companies and an opportunity to create better jobs in the United States.

And so, if confirmed, I will continue my push to try and get economics at the forefront of what the State Department does.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I am thrilled to hear you say that. I think that one of our challenges is trying to permeate throughout the State Department and its offices, particularly our embassies abroad, the concept that economic statecraft is one of the core missions that are critical for an ambassador and their staff to promote.

When I go abroad and visit our embassies—and they do incredible work and our people are just fantastic individuals—but I do not get the—I hear about the political component of what is happening in the country or our bilateral relations in dimensions that are everything but economic, in most cases.

And having that permeate to the thought that, in fact, what we are doing to promote U.S. economic interests, which I would argue also are about good governance issues as well within the country and better products and services for the nations receiving it, is, I think, an incredibly important element.

So we look forward upon your confirmation and working with you on this because I think this is a critical issue and it creates a real connection to Americans to understand if my business or the company I work for gets to sell X product abroad, my job here is not only more secure but maybe more prosperous. And so that is something we need to do a better job of.

Let me thank—oh, I am sorry.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. So we look forward to working with you on that. I am going to say we have a colleague who is supposedly on his way here and in deference to him I will wait.

But I will say that when he finishes his line of questioning, the record will remain open until the close of business Friday, April 30th. I would urge both of you there will be questions for the record. I would urge both of you to respond to them fully and expeditiously as possible so that—excuse me, so that your nominations can be considered at a business meeting of the committee and move the process forward.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. Excuse me for one moment.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. All right. I am not quite sure when our colleague would be here, and in deference to the rest of the committee, I am sure he will be able to pursue his questions for the record. He may call you as well.

I do not know if Senator Kaine has had an opportunity to engage with both of you. But if he has then I would urge you to do so.

And with the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:16 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *Arms Control with China*

*Question.* The recently passed “Strategic Competition Act” provides a blueprint for using all of the United States’ strategic, economic, and diplomatic tools to effectively compete with China. One section of this bipartisan bill lays out the need for effective arms control in the face of China’s military modernization and expansion. The previous administration made a clumsy attempt to engage China in arms control, which the PRC firmly rejected.

- What approach should the United States use to begin strategic stability talks or arms control with China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work within the administration, in consultation with U.S. allies and partners, to pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People’s Republic of China’s growing nuclear arsenal. It is to be hoped that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its security interest: not a trap designed to weaken China’s defenses, but rather a mechanism to reduce risk and the chances of uncontrollable arms races. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress regarding the arms control approach the administration foresees pursuing with China.

*Question.* What issues do you believe the United States should focus on? Risk Reductions? Arms limitations?

*Answer.* The United States should pursue arms control, in the form of both numerical limitations and broader risk reduction measures, that advances the security of the United States, U.S. allies, and partners.

*Question.* What role should U.S. Indo-Pacific allies play in our arms control dialogue with China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work within the administration, in consultation with U.S. allies and partners, to pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People’s Republic of China’s growing nuclear arsenal. It is to be hoped that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its security interest: not a trap designed to weaken China’s defenses, but rather a mechanism to reduce risk and the chances of uncontrollable arms races. If confirmed, I will work with U.S. allies, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, to regularly urge Beijing to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control, as doing so is essential to reducing global nuclear risks.

*Question.* Should the United States seek trilateral arms control talks involving both Russia and China?

*Answer.* The United States should pursue arms control measures with Russia and China that advance the security of the United States, U.S. allies, and partners. While there may be opportunities for trilateral initiatives that meet this criterion, I believe the United States should engage each country on a bilateral basis as well.

*Open Skies*

*Question.* In November of last year, the Trump administration made the reckless decision to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty, leaving the United States and our allies less secure against Russia. The administration's decision to abandon the Treaty fits into a broader pattern of discarding arms control and non-proliferation agreements, which has raised deep concerns among our allies about our commitment to their security. I have urged the Biden administration to rejoin the Treaty in a manner consistent with our constitutional structure, but recognize that it will not be easy, and that the Open Skies treaty, while valuable, does not address many of the current security challenges we face from Russia.

- Do you believe the United States should seek to rejoin the Open Skies Treaty?

*Answer.* I share President Biden's view that it was a mistake to withdraw from the Treaty, notwithstanding Russian compliance issues. Many of our Allies pointed out that none of these compliance concerns impacted the overall operation of the Treaty. That said, leaving a treaty, and rejoining a treaty while Russia continues to violate it are two different things. I understand an interagency review of Open Skies is underway. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the internal discussions on the matter.

*Question.* The State Department and Congress have consistently expressed concerns about Russia's violation of some its treaty obligations; for example, limiting the length of flights over Kaliningrad and restricting flights near Russia's border with Georgia. If the United States decided to rejoin the treaty would the United States insist on resolving these compliance issues?

*Answer.* The United States has made it quite clear that Russia must return to compliance and that Russia's violations are an important consideration in our review of U.S. policy on the Treaty. I know the administration is committed to effective arms control that advances U.S., Allied, and partner security and will only join agreements that are deemed to be in our security interests. Compliance is an essential consideration in that regard.

*Question.* If the Biden administration decides not to rejoin the treaty, what steps should we take to reassure our allies that we still seek a European security system based upon transparency and cooperation?

*Answer.* I know the United States is committed to effective arms control, transparency and confidence building measures that advance U.S., Allied, and partner security. If confirmed, I would continue the ongoing U.S. effort to work closely with our allies in this regard and on a host of broader security issues at NATO and OSCE. These include ongoing efforts to modernize the Vienna Document to strengthen transparency on military activities and increase stability in Europe.

*Firearms Export Control*

*Question.* As a candidate, President Biden pledged to return the export control jurisdiction of semiautomatic weapons from the Department of Commerce to the Department of State. As part of "THE BIDEN PLAN TO END OUR GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC", the following commitment was made:

Additionally, Biden will ensure that the authority for firearms exports stays with the State Department, and if needed, reverse a proposed rule by President Trump. This will ensure that the State Department continues to block the code use to 3D print firearms from being made available on the Internet.

Just this week, the appeals court for the Ninth Circuit lifted an injunction that prevented the transfer of 3D Printed firearm technical information from also being transferred to the Department of Commerce, whose regulations and ability to control the publication of such information is significantly more limited than that of the State Department's International Traffic in Arms (ITAR) regulations. This is a loosening of controls on these very dangerous "ghost guns".

I am concerned that the Department of State is not doing all it can to fulfill the President's promise to the American People. State has not yet even answered a letter I sent to Secretary Blinken on February 1 on this issue.

- If confirmed, what will you do, specifically, to fulfill the President's campaign promise?

*Answer.* I share the concerns expressed regarding the unregulated proliferation of "ghost guns." If confirmed, I commit to working, together with my interagency colleagues, to ensure that there are effective controls over the export of information necessary for the manufacture of firearms, or any defense articles, no matter how those items are manufactured.

*Question.* What options exist in the ITAR or other State authorities to maintain controls on 3D Gun Printing information?

*Answer.* The Arms Export Control Act provides the President with the authority to designate those items which shall be considered defense articles and defense services and to promulgate regulations for the import and export of such articles and services. That authority has been delegated to the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Defense, in accordance with Executive Order 13637. It is my understanding that the Department conducts regular reviews of the United States Munitions List, in consultation with the Department of Defense and other relevant U.S. Government agencies, to ensure that any defense article or defense service designated on the USML provides a critical military or intelligence advantage such that it warrants control under the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR).

*Question.* ITAR Sec. 126.2, “Temporary suspension or modification of this subchapter,” states that “[T]he Deputy Assistant Secretary for Defense Trade Controls may order the temporary suspension or modification [emphasis added] of any or all of the regulations of this subchapter in the interest of the security and foreign policy of the United States.”

- Do you construe that passage to mean that you, if confirmed, could direct this Deputy Assistant Secretary to, on a temporary basis, alter the provisions of Category 1 of the ITAR to retain the technical information that enables the 3D Printing of firearms and components?

*Answer.* Under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act and Executive Order 13637, the authority to designate defense articles and defense services on the United States Munitions List for the purpose of export and temporary import is delegated to the Secretary of State. If confirmed, I commit to working, together with my interagency colleagues, to control those defense articles and defense services that provide the United States with a critical military or intelligence advantage. In so doing, I will ensure that the United States Munitions List is appropriately revised and updated using the regulatory mechanisms that best clarify the controls and offer the greatest transparency and opportunity for public comment and agency consideration.

*Question.* Will you do so, if confirmed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States Munitions List is appropriately revised and updated using the regulatory mechanisms that best clarify applicable controls and offer the greatest transparency and opportunity for public comment and agency consideration.

#### *Compliance with Committee Oversight*

*Question.* The Political-Military Affairs Bureau has refused to provide answers to my questions or those from my staff about their investigative and compliance activities. They have claimed that “it was not the policy or practice” to answer such questions, even to questions concerning whether certain activities are considered “defense services” and subject to licensing. In response, I have initiated a GAO investigation.

- If confirmed, will you continue this policy of blocking the legitimate oversight of this committee, or will you change this “policy and practice”?

*Answer.* I appreciate the critical role that Congress plays in providing oversight. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to ensure that it is able to effectively perform its oversight activities. In addition, if confirmed, I will seek to maintain the integrity of the Department’s investigations into potential export control violations, which includes pursuing investigations of potential export control violations in a vigorous and timely manner.

#### *CAATSA 231*

*Question.* CAATSA section 231 imposes secondary sanctions on entities that conduct significant transactions with the Russian defense and intelligence sectors. The law has been instrumental in denying billions of dollars to the Russian defense sector, but there was no senior level leadership under the last administration in pushing for full implementation. I expect that to change and that the State Department will renew its diplomatic efforts at every post to ensure that every effort is being made to deter these transactions from taking place.

- Do I have your commitment to reinvigorate the department’s efforts to ensure robust implementation of this law? Do you commit to report back to me on the specific actions taken by the department on CAATSA 231 implementation?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to full implementation of CAATSA 231 and to ensuring that the Department keeps you and other appropriate Congressional Members fully apprised of our implementation efforts.

*Nagorno-Karabakh*

*Question.* Azerbaijan's use of cluster munitions, rockets, and other such weapons during its attack on Nagorno-Karabakh last fall has increased the need for demining funding there, which the previous administration cut off. In his QFR responses, Secretary Blinken said that he "strongly support[s]" U.S. funding for demining efforts in Nagorno-Karabakh.

- If confirmed, will you support the resumption of U.S. funding for humanitarian demining in Nagorno-Karabakh?

Answer. The administration is deeply concerned by the renewed hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the ongoing humanitarian needs in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. Secretary Blinken has signaled strong support for funding demining efforts in Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as his intent to work with Congress, international organizations such as the U.N., and our allies and partners to meet humanitarian needs in the region. I understand that the Department is evaluating the needs of affected populations and clarifying practical questions related to the United States' ability to commit funding and implement programs effectively.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Do you believe there is a symbiotic connection between nuclear deterrence and arms control?

Answer. Yes, a credible, modern deterrent and arms control should work together to address nuclear threats and increase our security.

*Question.* Is it your understanding that that the New START Treaty was ratified only after the Obama administration agreed to modernize the nuclear triad and nuclear weapons complex, and that any unilateral reduction of these programs would make the Senate far less likely to ratify future arms control treaties?

Answer. I understand that the Obama administration pursued a combination of diplomacy, arms control, and nuclear deterrence to reduce nuclear dangers. If confirmed, I will provide analysis and advice to the Secretary of State on measures for reducing nuclear dangers, and I will be prepared to consult with members of Congress.

*Question.* Do you believe that unilateral U.S. reductions in the nuclear triad and the nuclear weapons complex would enable the United States to negotiate with Russia and China from a position of strength?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring the United States maintains an effective, credible and modern deterrent, while simultaneously using arms control to address nuclear threats and increase our security.

*Question.* Do you believe the President can rejoin the Open Skies Treaty without it being submitted to the Senate for advice and consent per the Treaty Clause of the U.S. Constitution?

Answer. I believe that Congressional authorization would be required for the United States to rejoin the Treaty on Open Skies.

*Question.* How should Russia's long-standing and ongoing violation of the Biological Weapons Convention and China's disinformation surrounding COVID-19 affect our efforts to strengthen U.S. biosecurity initiatives?

Answer. Russia's Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) violation and the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the need to address the full range of biological threats—whether deliberate, accidental, or natural in origin. We must counter known BW programs and, increasingly, organized disinformation efforts. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to strengthen the BWC's ability to manage the risks of dual-use research and advanced biotechnologies and to improve global laboratory biosafety and biosecurity, as well as international preparedness. I will take a clear-eyed approach, recognizing that not all countries will share our goals, and I will work with Global Engagement Center colleagues to counter COVID-19 related and other disinformation campaigns.

*Question.* How can we best ensure accountability for Russia and Syria's use of chemical weapons?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to work with allies and partners, including through the U.N. and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), to hold Russia and Syria to account for their repeated violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). At the OPCW, the United States supported actions to add two Novichok families to the CWC Annex on Chemicals and to suspend Syria's rights and privileges under the CWC. The United States has also used other measures, including sanctions authorities against Russia and Syria. If confirmed, I will explore further measures to address any violation of the CWC.

*Question.* Which emerging technologies most threaten strategic stability, and why? How can we best address these technologies?

*Answer.* I would be most concerned about any technology that undermines the effectiveness of U.S. nuclear forces, especially the credibility of our second-strike capability. The best way to address potential threats is by taking steps to ensure our strategic deterrent remains effective and credible and pursuing arms control that enhances U.S., allied, and partner security.

*Question.* In your testimony, you reference building "values-based security partnerships." How do you define a values-based security partnership? Do you believe that the U.S. should only pursue security partnerships with liberal democracies?

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken has said, the administration's foreign policy will reflect our values and human rights will be at the center. We will stand firm behind our commitments to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, and our security partnerships are no exception. While the United States will necessarily have security relationships with countries that are not liberal democracies, if confirmed, I will champion values like accountability, transparency, professionalism, and respect for human rights as we engage our security partners and help build their capacity to address shared challenges.

*Question.* Should the United States re-sign and then ratify the Arms Trade Treaty? Why or why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I support reviewing the implications of decisions taken to date on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), both in the United States and in the ATT Conferences of States Parties, to determine the proper relationship of the United States to the Treaty. I believe this review should be situated within a larger evaluation of U.S. policy on conventional arms transfers. The United States is the largest arms exporter in the world, and it is imperative that U.S. transfers of conventional arms are consistent with our laws, values, and interests.

*Question.* The Obama administration repeatedly declassified the topline number of the total U.S. nuclear stockpile. Russia and China never reciprocated. Would you support declassifying our nuclear stockpile number without any reciprocity by Russia or China today?

*Answer.* I believe that declassifying topline U.S. nuclear stockpile numbers demonstrates the United States' serious commitment to transparency and confidence building measures that can enable further progress on reducing nuclear risks. If confirmed, I will work to encourage Russia and China to be more transparent. The declassification of U.S. stockpile numbers has not harmed U.S. national security and has shown U.S. leadership in nuclear fora. Others have welcomed our transparency and joined us in calling on Russia or China to do the same.

*Question.* In your opinion, why does Russia maintain a nuclear-capable missile defense system consisting of 68 nuclear-armed interceptors?

*Answer.* Despite Moscow's complaints regarding U.S. ballistic missile defense programs and capabilities, it is clear that the Russian Federation also believes in the importance of developing, deploying, maintaining, and modernizing its ballistic missile defense capabilities.

*Question.* It was a significant concern of the Senate during the ratification of the New START treaty that it not constrain U.S. missile defense. Do you agree it is imperative that the U.S. not commit to arms control agreements that would limit U.S. missile defenses?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue U.S. support for effective missile defense programs and will only pursue agreements that enhance U.S., allied, and partner security.

*Question.* The administration has made clear its intent to negotiate another United States-Russia arms control treaty. At the same time, U.S. intelligence lead-

ers have found that Russia now “possesses up to 2,000 such non-strategic nuclear warheads not covered by the New Start Treaty” and now has “dozens of these [non-strategic delivery] systems already deployed or in development”. Indeed, 10 years after New START was ratified, Russia’s advantage under the treaty is now so profound that, according to Secretary of State Pompeo “[o]nly 45 percent of Russia’s nuclear arsenal is subject to numerical limits.[m]eanwhile, that agreement restricts 92 percent of America’s arsenal.” Do you agree, as expressed in its Resolution of Ratification for New START, that the next arms control treaty between the United States and Russia must include these unconstrained nuclear weapons, and not just so-called strategic nuclear weapons?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we use the time provided by a five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons. Incorporating Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons into arms control is a longstanding and bipartisan U.S. objective.

*Question.* Russian President Vladimir Putin has proffered a “deployment freeze” on intermediate range missiles in Europe. What is your view on this plan? In your opinion, what are President Putin’s motivations for making this proposal?

Answer. While the United States plans to pursue arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons and engage Russia in strategic stability discussions, we must be clear that Russia’s proposed deployment moratorium proposal, which the administration opposes, would not actually prevent a Russian build-up of ground-launched intermediate-range missiles because Russia has already produced and deployed multiple battalions of the 9M729, including in Western Russia.

*Question.* Stakeholders are generally disappointed by the results of U.S.-UK and U.S.-Australia Defense Trade Treaties, despite the best efforts of both nations. In your opinion, why have the treaties not fulfilled their promise? What can the State Department or the interagency do to make them more useful?

Answer. I understand that, initially, companies did not take advantage of the U.S.-UK and U.S.-Australia Defense Trade Cooperation Treaties (DTCTs), as they found the requirements for using them to be overly burdensome and costly. Subsequently, many of the benefits envisioned under the DTCTs were superseded by the success of Export Control Reform, which moved many less sensitive items to the more flexible jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce. The Department continues to work closely with U.S. interagency colleagues and our UK and Australian counterparts to pursue novel solutions to defense trade issues.

*Question.* In your opinion, why did China stop reporting to the IAEA on its plutonium activities and holdings after 2017? What are the potential implications for U.S. security as a result of China’s decision to stop reporting?

Answer. While I cannot speculate on why China stopped reporting, if confirmed, I will call on China to submit its declaration report to the IAEA per Information Circular INFCIRC/549 concerning “Guidelines for the Management of Plutonium.” China’s lack of transparency on nuclear issues is very troubling, and if confirmed I will pursue measures with the PRC that preserve our national security interests.

*Question.* Given China’s rapidly growing nuclear and conventional military capabilities and pattern of aggression against many of its neighbors, do you believe that China has become over-confident in its ability to control escalation in a conflict? If so, how do you propose the United States deal with that reality?

Answer. I agree that China has increased its aggressive behavior in many spheres, but defer to the Intelligence Community for a specific assessment regarding China’s confidence to control escalation in a conflict.

*Question.* You have previously advocated for the United States to adopt a No First Use (NFU) policy for nuclear weapons. Do you still hold that view today?

Answer. I understand that the administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. I have thought, as many do, that the United States might consider changes to U.S. declaratory policy that could increase stability. I understand that there are varying perspectives on the issue, but I believe most agree that we want to reduce nuclear risks to the United States and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the interagency and allies and Congress to find the best ways to do this.

*Question.* The Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, Adm. Charles Richard, recently commented that the exceptions in China’s No First Use policy are “large



enough to drive a truck through". What are your thoughts on the efficacy of China's No First Use policy? Why would one support a NFU policy for the United States when China's NFU policy is so ambiguous?

*Answer.* There is ambiguity over the conditions under which Beijing would act outside of its professed no first-use policy. China's ongoing advances to its nuclear arsenal, from an exploration of low-yield warheads to the development of a launch on warning posture, raise questions regarding China's intent and undermine its claims to seek a minimum nuclear deterrent backed by a no first-use policy. I understand that the administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will include declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will participate in that process and will consult with Congress and our allies on any policies or actions in this area.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should adopt a No First Use policy without the same concessions and policy reciprocity from Russia and China?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will include declaratory policy. I have thought, as many do, that the United States might consider changes to U.S. declaratory policy that could increase stability. I understand that there are varying perspectives on the issue, but I believe most agree that we want to reduce nuclear risks to the United States and our allies. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the interagency and allies and Congress to find the best ways to do this.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States should adopt a Sole Purpose doctrine? How would adopting such a doctrine impact our deterrence options?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. I have thought, as many do, that the United States might consider changes to U.S. declaratory policy that could increase stability. I understand that there are varying perspectives on the issue, but I believe most agree that we want to reduce nuclear risks to the United States and our allies. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the interagency and allies and Congress to find the best ways to do this, while ensuring that the United States maintains a credible strategic deterrent.

*Question.* Our extended deterrence commitments to allies in the Indo-Pacific are foundational to U.S. strategy in the region. That has been the case for seven decades. Do you agree that extended deterrence is key to regional stability in the Indo-Pacific, and that the United States must continue to honor, uphold, and strengthen these commitments?

*Answer.* Yes. Extended deterrence plays a foundational role in advancing U.S. national security objectives in the Indo-Pacific, and our strategic deterrent, including U.S. nuclear forces, underpins extended deterrence. It does so by providing assurance to allies and partners, which are our greatest strategic asset. If confirmed, I would work to ensure, in coordination with the rest of the Biden-Harris administration, that U.S. extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies remain strong and credible.

*Question.* How would the adoption of a No First Use policy or a Sole Purpose doctrine impact our extended deterrence commitments? If we weaken or dilute our extended deterrence commitments in the Indo-Pacific, what do you assess would be the impact on the security environment in the region, given the threats from China and North Korea?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will include declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will participate in that process and will consult with Congress and our allies on any policies or actions in this area. This administration is committed to reinvigorating and modernizing alliances and partnerships around the world; this includes ensuring U.S. extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies remain strong and credible.

*Question.* The PRC currently has thousands of missiles pointed at Taiwan, and Admiral Davidson, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, has noted that "Taiwan is clearly one of [the PRC's] ambitions. during this decade." How can the United States best support Taiwan's defense against this threat?

*Answer.* The United States has long maintained our abiding interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. If confirmed, I commit to maintaining America's rock-solid commitment to Taiwan. The United States will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy. The United States sold nearly \$30 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but arms sales alone cannot ensure Taiwan's ability to defend itself.

Our expanding security cooperation seeks to encourage Taiwan to prioritize asymmetric capabilities including reserve force reform.

*Question.* Please describe your views on U.S. export control policies as they relate to China. What types of technologies should we seek to limit or cut off from nefarious end users in China?

*Answer.* Export controls are a critical tool to counter Chinese President Xi Jinping's strategy to bolster the PRC's military and security services and to challenge U.S. and allied technological leadership. It is imperative that U.S. arms embargo on China remains in place. If confirmed, I will work with the Commerce Department and other Departments, as appropriate, to keep dual-use controls as tight as possible for products and end-users that pose national security concerns, as called for by the Export Control Reform Act of 2018.

*Question.* Do you believe Huawei and its affiliates should remain on the Entity List? Are there any circumstances under which you would consider recommending the removal Huawei or any of its affiliates from the list?

*Answer.* I have no reason to believe that Huawei should be removed from the Entity List. Parties are placed on the Entity List for several reasons, including posing a threat to U.S. national security and foreign policy, and the threat that Huawei poses will remain a key factor moving forward. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues at the Department of Commerce to prevent U.S.-origin technology from being used in ways that threaten U.S. interests.

*Question.* Do you agree that it is in our national interest to strengthen our security cooperation with Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand? If so, please elaborate. If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to advance security partnerships with these nations, including your views on continuing arms sales, engaging in capacity-building, and cooperating on advanced technology with South and Southeast Asian partner countries facing China's coercion and growing military power?

*Answer.* It is absolutely in the national interest of the United States to strengthen security cooperation with Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand. Security cooperation with these allies and partners is essential to ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific region, building interoperability and bolstering U.S. force projection, ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, upholding rule of law, countering transnational crime and terror organizations, responding to natural and humanitarian crisis, and reassuring our allies and partners of U.S. commitment to the region, empowering them to stand up to coercion and malign influence. It also provides opportunities to reinforce our allies' and partners' commitment to the rules-based international order.

If confirmed, I will work to expand engagement with these nations at all levels, including by promoting the United States as the region's security partner of choice and ensuring they have the arms and training capabilities they need to protect and advance our shared interests in the region. I will also seek to deepen and expand our overall defense cooperation with these nations by advancing key foundational defense agreements, which will help enable the transfer of defense articles and establish mechanisms that allow for greater overall defense cooperation.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the U.S.-Philippine relationship and its importance to U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region more broadly? Do you support continuing a robust security partnership with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including through appropriate arms transfers consistent with existing U.S. law?

*Answer.* The alliance with the Philippines is foundational to the U.S. role in the Indo-Pacific, and the relationship is based on shared strategic interests, shared history, culture, and strong connections between our nations. If confirmed, I support continuing our robust security partnership with the Armed Forces of the Philippines. I would ensure that all arms transfers are appropriate and consistent with existing U.S. laws, including the Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, Arms Export Control Act, and the Foreign Assistance Act. In this regard, I would continue the current global policy of reviewing proposed arms sales according to a number of factors, which include: the degree to which the transfer contributes to ally and partner burden-sharing and interoperability in support of strategic, foreign policy, and defense interests of the United States; the recipient's ability to field, support, and employ the requested system effectively and appropriately in accordance with its intended end use; and the risk the transfer may be used to undermine international peace and security or contribute to abuses of human rights. When appropriate, that review includes consultations with Congress and input from DoD and other inter-agency partners.

*Question.* In your view, can U.S. security partnerships be a force for good in improving human rights conditions in a particular country?

*Answer.* The President and Secretary Blinken have stated that human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy. Strong U.S. security partnerships around the world come with a multitude of benefits, including the opportunity to positively influence a country's human rights practices. These relationships allow us to work closely with partners, set an example for human rights standards, and provide training, when appropriate.

If confirmed, I will support assistance to help ensure our partner forces are taking steps to comply with international law and protect human rights. Additionally, I will work to ensure human rights concerns are given full weight in arms transfer decisions, and I will support the Leahy laws, which prohibit assistance to foreign security forces units that are credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights.

*Question.* Will you ensure that the U.S. Department of State consults with Congress before taking action on issues that could jeopardize U.S. access to or create significant tensions in our relationships with key defense partners in the Indo-Pacific, especially those in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that the Department engages with Congress, as appropriate, on actions affecting our security partnerships.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the Russian Federation's nuclear doctrine and how it may be enacted in practice? Which aspect of Russia's nuclear doctrine do you find potentially most problematic for U.S. defense and strategy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with the U.S. intelligence community on Russian nuclear policy, strategy, doctrine, and forces. It is clear that Russia has a large arsenal of up to 2,000 non-strategic nuclear weapons that is projected to grow. It has developed a wide range of new dual-capable ground-, sea-, and air-based short- and intermediate-range missile systems. Such weapons can range U.S. allies and partners in Europe and East Asia—as well as U.S. forces stationed there—and both our deterrence strategy and our approach to arms control must address these threats.

*Question.* Which of the Russian Federation's new, so-called "exotic" weapons systems do you find the most geostrategically concerning? Please enumerate your specific concerns and explain why this system worries you more than the others.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with the U.S. intelligence community on Russia's "exotic" weapon systems and I will engage with the Department of Defense on the military implications of these systems. Based on the unclassified information that is available, the nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed cruise missile appears to be volatile, unreliable, and dangerous, posing a threat to the entire world, including Russia.

*Question.* It is likely that Russia has placed nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad, and there is great concern that they may do the same in occupied Crimea. How should the U.S. respond, if at all, should Russia place nuclear weapons in Crimea? Would that action, in your view, dramatically change the way that the U.S. looks at Black Sea security?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with the U.S. intelligence community on the location of Russian theater-range nuclear weapons and I will engage with the Department of Defense on the military implications of Russia's nuclear posture.

*Question.* The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) was founded in 2005. Over the last 15 fiscal years, GPOI has received almost \$1.3 billion in funding. This funding has accomplished several objectives, including building self-sufficient peace operations training, supporting partner country development, enhancing partner country operational readiness, and expanded the participation, integration, and leadership women in peace operations, to name a few.

- GPOI has improved the capacity and operations of U.N. peacekeeping forces in Africa and globally. Please describe the efforts you will take to continue to integrate women into GPOI's work in both peacekeeping troops and in leadership positions in peacekeeping missions.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support GPOI's continued work to increase the meaningful participation of women in peace operations by promoting efforts to: encourage partners to increase recruitment, training, and deployment of women in all levels and aspects of peace operations—including in leadership and decision-making positions; train women peacekeepers; incorporate women, peace, and security (WPS) topics into peacekeeping training for all peacekeepers; invest in gender-responsive up-

grades at partner countries' training centers, including female barracks and latrines; and support the U.N.'s development of WPS training materials.

*Question.* GPOI provides critical training to partner countries looking to deploy peacekeepers, which includes topics like preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), violence against women, as well as technical training. Given the high number of instances of SEA committed by peacekeeping troops globally, how would you direct GPOI to enhance trainings to counter these occurrences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct GPOI to pursue activities that enhance existing SEA prevention and accountability training incorporated into pre-deployment training assistance. I will also support GPOI's joint efforts with the U.N. to launch a training-of-trainers course for National Investigation Officers who investigate allegations of SEA against military peacekeepers, as well as to fund a U.N. pilot course to train engagement platoons, at least half of which are women, to interact with the local population, identify vulnerable areas and at-risk populations, and conduct gender-responsive assessments to improve situational awareness.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* My entire professional life has been dedicated to public service, often in direct promotion of human rights and democracy. For example, while at the Ford Foundation, I oversaw the funding of activities, programs and research on issues of human rights and democracy in my role as Program Officer of U.S. Foreign and Security Policy, and approved joint funding with the Human Rights officer. In addition, I also had a pool of funds for organizations doing work in the area of "conflicts," where the funds went to the issues of child soldiers, women in peacekeeping, and the problem of illicit trafficking of diamonds and its negative effects. At Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security and Conflict Transformation, of which I am now the Executive Director, I have started a working group on Human Rights to host events and activities on issues of human rights. I am also engaged in several activities at the U.S. Institute of Peace, including serving on the Women Building Peace Council. Finally, my 22 years in the Air Force and Naval Reserves have been dedicated to promoting democracy both in the U.S. and internationally.

*Question.* Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

*Answer.* My commitment to public service has always included advancing opportunities for all Americans. Fostering diversity and inclusion in the national security workforce is incredibly important to me personally, and I strongly support President Biden's policy of prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as a national security imperative to ensure critical perspectives and talents are represented in the national security workforce. If confirmed, I commit to working with the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, the Bureau of Global Talent Management, the Secretary's Office of Civil Rights, and other Department leadership to foster an inclusive workplace in the T family so that every employee's contribution is valued. If confirmed, I will hold T family senior leadership accountable for the conduct of their teams and for promulgating an environment where each individual is heard and seen.

*Question.* Fighting corruption is one of the most important ways that we can promote democracy and human rights worldwide. What steps would you take to address global corruption within the role for which you are nominated?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with experts across the Department and interagency to promote and defend democracy. Through the targeted deployment of accountability tools, foreign assistance, and diplomatic engagement, we can address endemic corruption and human rights abuses. I will also prioritize working with allies, seeking opportunities to promote our shared ideals together.

*Question.* Do you commit to work with Congress to strengthen U.S. policies to combat global corruption?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will commit to working with Congress to strengthen U.S. policies, to the extent that my portfolio allows, to combat global corruption, in-

cluding efforts to improve global standards of transparency, accountability, and good governance.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*China*

*Question.* Do you agree that Chinese state-directed Huawei is a threat to U.S. and global security?

*Answer.* Yes. Telecommunications equipment made by untrusted vendors, including Huawei, is a threat to U.S. and global security. Allowing untrusted telecommunications suppliers to participate in or control any part of a 5G network creates unacceptable risks to critical infrastructure, privacy, and human rights. In addition, the Chinese Government provides significant support to Huawei, including through subsidies and coercive tactics against host governments, that unfairly disadvantages market-based rivals. Huawei's history of unethical and unlawful behavior, including intellectual property theft, compounds the national security risks that it poses.

*Question.* Do you commit to use your position to oppose any measure to remove Huawei from the Commerce Department Entity List, including any measure to water down or provide licenses under that listing or the Foreign Direct Product Rule?

*Answer.* I have no reason to believe that Huawei should be removed from the Entity List. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues at the Department of Commerce to prevent U.S.-origin technology from being used in ways that threaten U.S. interests.

*Question.* On January 15, 2021, the State Department issued a fact sheet on activity at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which raised the possibility that the COVID-19 epidemic could have emerged from a laboratory accident. Do you agree that this is possible?

*Answer.* Yes, my understanding is that a range of possibilities exist, including the possibility of a laboratory accident. I believe that the full range of these possibilities should be considered. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration supports a robust and transparent investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. An impartial public health investigation, based on science, is vital to protecting against future health security threats.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit that the administration will take steps to investigate the origins of COVID-19, including pressing for a full forensic investigation of the labs in question?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has been clear about its concerns with the PRC's lack of transparency regarding the pandemic, including Beijing's refusal to provide the international health community timely and full access to data, scientists, records, and samples. This information is essential to our full understanding of the origins of the virus and how it spread. If confirmed, I am committed to providing the appropriate diplomatic and technical support to any relevant efforts as they relate to my portfolio.

*Question.* Are you concerned about China's development of biological and chemical weapons? If confirmed, how do you plan to address these issues?

*Answer.* In 2021, the State Department's Compliance Report found that the PRC engaged in biological activities with dual-use applications, which raises concerns regarding its compliance with Article I of the BWC. The report also noted uncertainty regarding the status of China's assessed historical biological warfare program. This year's Condition 10(c) report raised similar concerns related to chemical activities that prevented the U.S. from certifying the PRC's compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. I understand that the U.S. was unable to engage with the PRC on these issues in 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and the PRC's unwillingness to meet virtually. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to address these concerns, including in bilateral meetings.

*Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)*

*Question.* If confirmed, would you advise the Biden administration in the next nuclear posture review to return to language closer to the 2010 NPR?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will participate in that process and will consult with Congress and our allies on any policies or actions in this area.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States nuclear posture is also critical for our allies and partners?

*Answer.* Yes. Extended deterrence plays a foundational role in advancing U.S. national security objectives, and our strategic deterrent, including U.S. nuclear forces, underpins extended deterrence. It provides assurance to allies and partners, which are our greatest strategic asset. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to reinvigorating and modernizing our alliances and partnerships around the world; this includes ensuring our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States nuclear arsenal is an effective deterrent against the use of these non-nuclear weapons against our allies?

*Answer.* All U.S. military capabilities contribute to extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies. The Biden-Harris administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will participate in that process and will consult with Congress and our allies on any policies or actions in this area.

*Question.* The Obama administration declassified the topline number of the total U.S. nuclear stockpile. However, Russia and China never reciprocated. Would you support declassifying our nuclear stockpile number without any reciprocity by Russia or China?

*Answer.* I believe that declassifying topline U.S. nuclear stockpile numbers demonstrates the United States' serious commitment to transparency and confidence building measures that can enable further progress on reducing nuclear risks. If confirmed, I will work to encourage Russia and China to be more transparent. The declassification of U.S. stockpile numbers has not harmed U.S. national security and has shown U.S. leadership in nuclear fora. Others have welcomed our transparency and joined us in calling on Russia or China to do the same.

#### *North Korea*

*Question.* Do you agree that the only path forward for North Korea that the U.S. could accept is the complete, irreversible, verifiable, denuclearization of North Korea?

*Answer.* North Korea's unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs constitute serious threats to international peace and security and the global nonproliferation regime. The Biden-Harris administration recently completed a comprehensive review of U.S. policy towards North Korea that reiterates the goal of complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the administration's efforts to pursue calibrated and practical diplomacy with North Korea, in close consultation with our allies and partners, in order to increase the security of the United States, our allies, and our deployed forces.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that the voices of North Korean defectors are included in negotiations of any agreement with North Korea?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned about North Korea's egregious human rights record and how to promote respect for human rights in the closed country. If confirmed, I will be committed to placing human rights at the center of our foreign policy with North Korea and to integrating the voices of the North Korean defector community into our approach, including by meeting with North Korean escapees to hear their thoughts and recommendations.

#### *Russia*

*Question.* Do you agree that Russia was in violation the Treaty on Open Skies?

*Answer.* Yes, Russia has violated, and continues to violate, the Treaty on Open Skies. I am not aware that Russia has taken any action to return to compliance. As stated in the most recent compliance report, Russia has not rescinded its illegal 500-kilometer sublimit over Kaliningrad. Russia also remains in violation for refusing to allow observation flights to approach within 10 kilometers of its border with the Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. While not a violation, Russia has also declared an airfield in Crimea as a Russian Open Skies refueling airfield, in an attempt to politicize the treaty.

*Question.* Do you agree that Russia's abuses the Open Skies Treaty and its actions posed an unacceptable risk to our national security?

*Answer.* In my view, while concerning, Russia's violations of the Treaty on Open Skies by themselves do not pose a direct and immediate threat to our national security. Russia's use of the treaty to collect information on military and civilian infrastructure, while not prohibited by the treaty, could pose a risk, although I understand there are measures in place to mitigate that risk.

*Question.* Russia has been implicated in the use of chemical weapons on several different occasions in the last several years, including assassination attempts. What should be done to counter Russia's use of chemical weapons and its violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)?

*Answer.* Russia's use of chemical weapons in assassination attempts against not only Sergei Skripal and his daughter, but also Aleksey Navalny, is reprehensible. In response to these attacks, the United States exercised its sanctions authorities and imposed other measures to send a clear signal that Russia's use of chemical weapons and abuse of human rights have severe consequences.

At the OPCW, the United States has worked with allies and partners to address Russia's violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, including submitting a technical change proposal to add two families of Novichoks to the CWC Annex on Chemicals, which the OPCW Conference of the States Parties adopted in 2019.

If confirmed I will work within the administration to take steps to deter Russia's use of chemical weapons, including engaging Russia bilaterally and multilaterally as well working with allies and partners at the OPCW Executive Council and Conference of the States Parties, and in U.N. fora, including the Security Council. If confirmed, I will explore further measures to address Russian non-compliance with the CWC. There can be no impunity for the use of chemical weapons.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* For all of the missteps in converting the Singapore Summit Communique that President Trump agreed to with Chairman Kim Jong Un in 2018 into meaningful action, it did lay out a useful framework that committed the two countries to work towards better relations, cooperate on the return of Prisoner of War remains, and work towards peace and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. Given the reality that any full denuclearization agreement is a long term endeavor, will you support efforts that make progress on the other elements agreed to in Singapore, provided such actions are in concert with U.S. allies and partners, and achieve the objective of lessening the nuclear weapons threat from North Korea as well as the threat of war?

*Answer.* North Korea's unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs constitute serious threats to international peace and security and the global nonproliferation regime. I understand that the administration recently completed a comprehensive review of U.S. policy towards North Korea that both reiterates the goal of complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and seeks to build on the Singapore Summit commitments. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the administration's efforts to pursue calibrated and practical diplomacy with North Korea, in close consultation with our allies and partners, in order to increase the security of the United States, our allies, and our deployed forces.

*Question.* I understand the total number of Washington DC-based full-time equivalents in the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance as of January 2017 was 113. The number of Washington DC-based FTEs as of late 2019 in the AVC Bureau was 94. In 2014, the Office of Inspector General reported 48 percent of the AVC workforce would be eligible to retire by 2019. If confirmed, what actions will you take to address the large number of FTEs eligible to retire, how can the "T cone" prioritize recruitment and hiring of diverse candidates, and what additional flexible hiring authorities—if any—does the Department need to fill this gap?

*Answer.* Rebuilding the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance is one of my top priorities. If confirmed, I will exercise the Excepted Service Appointment Authority to bring in a diverse cadre of arms control experts. Diversity is the key to unlocking an organization's potential because diverse teams consistently demonstrate high performance due to their creativity and innovation. The Department must rebuild the AVC workforce and ensure it is well-equipped to address the dan-

gers posed by chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, and their delivery systems. If confirmed, I commit to uphold and fully implement the Department's leadership and management tenets, including support for diversity and inclusion, to strengthen teams across the T family of bureaus.

*Question.* Has the President provided any guidance to the Departments of State, Defense, and any other agencies, detailing his instructions for a review of U.S. nuclear policy and posture? If so, approximately when will that review be completed?

*Answer.* I understand that the President has directed his administration to conduct reviews of various nuclear policies. In accordance with the Biden administration's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, the administration will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in the U.S. national security strategy, while ensuring the U.S. strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that U.S. extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies remain strong and credible. In that process, the administration will consult with U.S. allies and partners, including those in the Indo-Pacific, as well as with Congress.

*Question.* The United States is not one of the 164 States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa Convention, which bans the production and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines. President Trump opened up the geographies where the United States can use landmines provided they have a self-destruct mechanism, which superseded an Obama administration policy which narrowed persistent landmine use to the Korean Peninsula. The Biden administration has yet to rescind the permissive Trump administration-era policy. When confirmed, can you commit to advocate as the head of the "T cone" for President Biden to adopt a U.S. policy that brings us closer in line with the obligations under the Ottawa Convention? Additionally, will you support a robust budget request for de-mining activities in conflict zones?

*Answer.* As Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield noted last month, "President Biden believes we need to curtail the use of landmines. [L]et me speak plainly: President Biden has been clear that he intends to roll back [the Trump administration] policy, and our administration has begun a policy review to do just that." If confirmed, I will commit to supporting the administration's landmine policy review and will advocate for a clear and explicit role for the State Department in any future policy on landmines. I also will commit to consult with experts inside and outside of the Department, and with you in Congress, on the question of whether and how the United States should bring its policies closer in line with the provisions of the Ottawa Convention.

Thanks to bipartisan Congressional support, the United States has been the world's leader in fighting proliferation by safely destroying at-risk conventional weapons and saving lives by clearing of landmines and other explosive hazards for more than 25 years.

*Question.* The Biden administration is currently undertaking a global sanctions review to ensure that U.S. and multilateral sanctions do not inadvertently prevent humanitarian aid from getting to those in need. While food and medicine is exempt under U.S. and U.N. sanctions, aid workers are often forced to navigate massive red tape just to bring laptops to North Korea, which are considered "luxury goods," or even treatments for drug resistant tuberculosis. If confirmed, can you commit to work with interested Members to make practical changes to the implementation of existing exemptions to U.S. sanctions and seek additional exemptions in the U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee of items related to providing life-saving assistance to North Koreans?

*Answer.* Sanctions are in place to address the threat posed by North Korea, including its ability to continue developing its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The U.S. Government maintains a number of sanctions exemptions and authorizations related to humanitarian aid, and has also led efforts to streamline the process for humanitarian exemptions in the U.N. sanctions committee. North Korea itself has created the most significant barriers to the delivery of aid by closing its borders and limiting access for the personnel responsible for implementing such projects. If confirmed, I will work to support efforts aimed at helping humanitarian aid reach the people of North Korea.

---



RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*Question.* The position of arms control and international security is one of paramount importance to our nation's defense. Both Russia and China have made strides in their own force modernization and we must take steps to ensure that our adversaries are in compliance with existing arms control agreements while we look to new initiatives as well.

*New START and U.S. Nuclear Force Modernization:* In January 2021, the Biden administration agreed to an extension of the NEW Start treaty for a period of five years, while committing to pursue new arms control agreements with both Russia and China. As you are aware, New START does not limit non-strategic nuclear warheads which are a growing concern as Russia outnumbers the United States 10-1 in this category. China is on pace to more than triple its nuclear force in the coming decade. Clearly, more work is needed to ensure that our adversaries do not outpace U.S. capabilities in this space.

- The Obama administration in 2010 committed to Congress that it would address the disparity between the United States and Russia regarding non-strategic nuclear warheads, however several administrations have failed to make progress. What actions will you take, if confirmed, that will address this disparity?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that we use the time provided by a five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons. Incorporating Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons into arms control is a longstanding and bipartisan U.S. objective.

*Question.* Both Russia and China are in the process of expanding, diversifying, and modernizing its nuclear arsenals. The United States is just beginning this effort. Do you believe that a modernization of the U.S. Triad is necessary to negotiate from a position of strength?

*Answer.* A credible, modern deterrent and arms control should work together to address nuclear threats and increase our security.

*Question.* Do you believe that a unilateral reduction of our nuclear forces endangers U.S. national security?

*Answer.* I would never support any reductions in nuclear forces that endanger U.S. national security, but I do not believe that any type of reduction would automatically undermine U.S. and allied security.

*Question.* Iran's Ballistic Missile Program and the Abraham Accords: Iran's ballistic missile program and armed drones, including proliferation of these technologies to terrorist organizations, are increasingly becoming a regional threat in the Middle East. The continued threat from Iran is just one of the many reasons why many neighbors of Israel decided to sign normalization agreements such as the Abraham Accords last year.

Last month, I introduced a bill called the Israel Relations Normalization Act with Senator's Booker, Cardin, Risch, and Young, to require the Department of State to expand and strengthen these normalization agreements.

- Do you support these normalization agreements as a means to strengthen security in the region and pledge, if confirmed, to pursue additional normalization agreements?

*Answer.* As President Biden and Secretary Blinken have said, this administration welcomes and strongly supports the recent normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world. I understand that the Department is leading the U.S. Government's efforts, working with the National Security Council and U.S. Government interagency, to deepen existing agreements and urge other countries to normalize relations with Israel. If confirmed, I will look for other opportunities to expand cooperation among countries in the region, which is critical to strengthening regional security.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

*Question.* In April 2019, President Trump notified the Senate that he had decided to withdraw the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty from the Senate and requested the Senate return the treaty to the President. The United States notified the United Nations Secretary General that the “United States does not intend to become a party” to the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty despite its signature, adding that the United States “has no legal obligations arising” from its treaty signature.

- What is the current status of the United States with regards to the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty?

*Answer.* On December 9, 2016, the Department transmitted the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) to the Senate for its advice and consent to ratification. On July 18, 2019, the Trump administration informed the Treaty Depository that the United States did not intend to become a State Party to the Treaty and that the United States had no legal obligations arising from its signature. The United States is participating in ATT meetings as an observer to protect U.S. national security interests, economic interests, and industry equities.

*Question.* Based on your knowledge and experience in this field, what position have you formulated on whether the United States should ratify the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I support reviewing the implications of decisions taken to date on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), both in the United States and in the ATT Conferences of States Parties, to determine the proper relationship of the United States to the Treaty. I believe this review should be situated within a larger evaluation of U.S. policy on conventional arms transfers. The United States is the largest arms exporter in the world, and it is imperative that U.S. transfers of conventional arms are consistent with our laws, values, and interests.

*Question.* Have you ever supported, implicitly or explicitly in writing or in speech, the United States joining the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty? Please provide details.

*Answer.* To the best of my recollection, I have not made any statement on the issue of the United States joining the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty.

*Question.* What changes to our nation’s policies, regulations, or laws would be needed to comply with the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the United States would not need to change any policies, regulations, or laws to comply with the Arms Trade Treaty. U.S. national control systems and practices to regulate the international transfer of conventional arms already meet or exceed the requirements of the Treaty.

*Question.* The United States Constitution protects the rights of Americans to keep and bear arms. The Arms Trade Treaty would infringe on the second amendment. Article 12 of the Arms Trade Treaty encourages countries to maintain records on the importation of conventional arms including small arms. It specifically requests that states maintain records on the quantity, value, model/type and end user. These records must be maintained for a minimum of ten years. Article 13 requires signatory states to issue annual reports to the United Nations on all imports and exports.

- Do you support the United Nations establishing and maintaining a gun registry on law abiding U.S. gun owners?

*Answer.* No. If confirmed, I will not support the United Nations establishing and maintaining a gun registry on law-abiding U.S. gun owners. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) establishes standards for regulating only the international trade in conventional arms, not domestic trade or possession. The ATT does not touch on purely domestic arms transfers or private ownership, which are matters of national sovereignty.

*Question.* China is modernizing and expanding its nuclear forces. U.S. intelligence analysts estimate that China could double its nuclear warheads in the next decade.

- How is China modernizing and expanding its nuclear arsenal?

*Answer.* During this decade, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is likely to more than double the size of its nuclear stockpile. According to open-source reporting I have read, this rapid expansion includes new delivery systems as Beijing works to establish a nuclear triad, which will include a long-range stealth bomber, new road-mobile ICBMs, multiple-warhead silo-based ICBMs, and a growing fleet of ballistic missile submarines. The PRC also appears to be working on hypersonic-

glide vehicles, air-launched ballistic missiles, and low-yield nuclear weapons that will fit into this nuclear triad. The PRC is also making additional advances toward developing a launch-on-warning posture.

*Question.* What is the projected size and composition of China's strategic nuclear forces by 2026 when the New START would expire?

*Answer.* During this decade, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is likely to more than double the size of its nuclear stockpile. Precisely because Beijing is the least transparent member of the P5 nuclear weapon states, accurate assessments of its nuclear trajectory and intentions are difficult. I defer to the intelligence community for a specific assessment on the projected size and composition of China's nuclear forces in 2026.

*Question.* Secretary of State Blinken noted his intent to "pursue arms control to reduce the dangers from China's modern and growing nuclear arsenal." China has so far refused U.S. efforts to engage in arms control negotiations.

- What specific steps would you take to reduce the dangers posed by China's modern and growing nuclear arsenal?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work within the administration, in consultation with U.S. allies and partners, to pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's growing nuclear arsenal. It is to be hoped that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its security interest: not a trap designed to weaken China's defenses, but rather a mechanism to reduce risk and the chances of uncontrollable arms races. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress regarding the arms control approach the administration foresees pursuing with China.

*Question.* What specific leverage does the United States have to force China to participate in future arms control negotiations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work within the administration, in consultation with U.S. allies and partners, to pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's growing nuclear arsenal. It is to be hoped that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its security interest: not a trap designed to weaken China's defenses, but rather a mechanism to reduce risk and the chances of uncontrollable arms races, which is in the interest of both our countries. If confirmed, I will seek to work with U.S. allies and partners to urge Beijing to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control, as doing so is essential to reducing global nuclear risks.

*Question.* Has the United States ever effectively used the leverage you mentioned in question 8? Please provide details.

*Answer.* As I understand, the People's Republic of China has thus far resisted engaging with the United States in any meaningful nuclear arms control discussions. If confirmed, I will work with the administration, along with U.S. allies and partners to regularly urge Beijing to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control. Doing so is essential to reducing global nuclear risks.

*Question.* There is a very large disparity regarding non-strategic nuclear weapons, also known as tactical nuclear weapons. During the New START debate, there were a number of Senators including myself who were extremely concerned that the treaty did not include tactical nuclear weapons. The New START Resolution of Ratification specifically provided the President was to address the massive disparity in the tactical stockpiles prior to contemplating further reductions in the strategic arsenal.

- Can you assure the United States Senate that the next arms control agreement with Russia will focus on the massive numerical advantage Russia has over us and our allies in tactical nuclear weapons rather further reductions in the strategic arsenal?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we use the time provided by the five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons. Incorporating Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons into arms control is a longstanding and bipartisan U.S. objective.

*Question.* For more than six decades, the United States has employed an effective and credible nuclear deterrent. The U.S. nuclear triad is made up of the land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and nuclear-capable heavy bomber aircraft. All three legs of the triad work hand-in-hand

to deter our adversaries and reassure our allies and partners. It provides weapon systems that are survivable, stabilizing and flexible.

- Please describe how each leg of the U.S. nuclear triad contributes to the effective and credible nuclear deterrent?

Answer. SSBNs are the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad. Nuclear-capable bombers are the most flexible. ICBMs are the most responsive and contribute to deterrence by requiring an adversary to exhaust a large number of warheads to destroy a smaller portion of the U.S. deterrent.

*Question.* Based on your expertise, are ICBMs on “hair trigger” alert or are they safe and secure?

Answer. In overall terms, U.S. ICBMs are not on “hair trigger” alert. U.S. nuclear forces are safe and secure as the United States maintains multiple redundant technical and procedural measures in place to prevent the unauthorized or accidental launch of U.S. missiles. I defer to the Department of Defense to discuss the specifics.

*Question.* Do you believe the ground based strategic deterrent will start an arms race with Russia and China?

Answer. No, replacing elements of the U.S. nuclear triad will not cause an arms race. If confirmed, I will work with the administration to head off costly arms races and re-establish U.S. credibility as a leader in arms control. I will also work to pursue new arms control agreements and arrangements by engaging in meaningful dialogues with Russia and China on a range of emerging military technological developments that implicate strategic stability.

*Question.* All three legs of the U.S. nuclear triad are required to maintain a reliable, credible and effective deterrent. This is especially true as Russia continues to modernize its nuclear forces and China is increasing its nuclear forces in an attempt at nuclear parity.

- Have you ever expressed, implicitly or explicitly in writing or in speech, support for eliminating any leg of the nuclear triad? Please provide details.

Answer. To the best of my knowledge, I have not made any statement saying that any leg of the nuclear triad should be eliminated.

*Question.* Based on your knowledge and background, what is your position on the United States modernizing our ICBMs with the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, our submarines with the Columbia class, and our bombers with the B-21 Raider?

Answer. A credible, modern deterrent and arms control should work together to address nuclear threats and increase our security. If confirmed, I will review each element of the current modernization program during the course of the Nuclear Posture Review, and I will advise that the United States undertake the modernization necessary to sustain a credible strategic deterrent.

*Question.* Have you ever supported, implicitly or explicitly in writing or in speech, any delay or budget cuts related to or the elimination of any of the U.S. nuclear modernization programs? Please provide details.

Answer. To the best of my knowledge, I have not explicitly supported any delay or budget cuts to, or elimination of, the modernization program. I have asked questions about the total amount of funding that will be spent on the modernization program.

*Question.* What specific steps will you take to advocate for modernization of the U.S. nuclear program?

Answer. The United States will ensure its strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective. If confirmed, I will advise that the United States undertake the modernization necessary to sustain a credible strategic deterrent.

*Question.* On December 4, 2019, you retweeted a post from PSR Nuclear Weapons Abolition supporting the United States adopting a no first use of nuclear weapons policy.

- Please explain why you support the United States adopting a “no-first use” policy.

Answer. I understand that the administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. I have thought, as many do, that the United States might consider changes to U.S. declaratory policy that could increase stability. I understand that there are varying perspectives on the issue, but I believe most agree that we want to reduce nuclear risks to the United States and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the interagency and allies and Congress to find the best ways to do this.

*Question.* As our country continues to face threats from around the world, we should not take any action that will hinder our missile defense options. The United States must always remain in charge of our missile defense, not Russia or any other country. I have concerns about the efforts of Russia to limit our missile defense and actions the Obama administration took on this issue.

- Can you commit to me that, in any arms control discussions with Russia for which you are responsible, the United States will never agree to any limitation on our missile defense programs?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue U.S. support for effective missile defense programs and will only pursue arms control agreements that enhance U.S., allied, and partner security.

*Question.* President Putin announced Russia's development of new strategic nuclear weapons. The weapons include a nuclear powered cruise missile, a nuclear powered underwater drone that could be armed with a nuclear warhead, and a hypersonic missile. President Putin declared that these new additions to Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal would render U.S. missile defense "useless."

- How would you ensure the new weapons are covered under Russia's treaty and arms control obligations?

*Answer.* The New START Treaty limits Russia's Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle and will limit the Sarmat heavy ICBM at the appropriate point in its development cycle. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we use the time provided by the five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Does the United States have a current or prospective missile defense system to intercept these weapons? If not, what specific actions would you recommend the U.S. Government take to respond to and counter these new strategic nuclear weapons?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department of Defense to better understand their capabilities to deter, and if deterrence fails, defend against, attack from the novel strategic systems being developed by the Russian Federation. If confirmed, I anticipate working closely with the Department of Defense to review U.S. capabilities to ensure the United States has robust capabilities to deter, and if deterrence fails, defend against, attacks on the U.S. Homeland and to examine ways that our allies can contribute to enhancing U.S. national security.

*Question.* During your testimony, you discussed pursuing deeper cuts to our nuclear weapons systems.

- At a time when Russia and China are modernizing their nuclear weapons, would you advocate for the United States to make unilaterally cuts to our nuclear deterrent?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review all relevant information on specific programs during the course of the Nuclear Posture Review and report my conclusions back to the committee. Prior to the review, it would be premature to speak to the sizing, including possible reductions, of U.S. forces.

*Question.* The U.S. withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty (INF), the Open Skies Treaty and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. You opposed the United States withdrawing from each of these international agreements.

- Given your tweet confirming your statement that U.S. actions to withdraw from the INF treaty undermines global security, what is your view on whether the United States should rejoin the INF treaty?

*Answer.* As the INF Treaty terminated upon the U.S. withdrawal, it is not possible to re-enter it. I agree with NATO's August 2, 2019, statement that "Russia bears sole responsibility for the demise of the Treaty." Russia's material breach of the INF Treaty and refusal to return to compliance led to the U.S. withdrawal and thus to the Treaty's termination. The United States should work with its allies and partners to ensure Russia gains no advantage by possessing this class of missile.

*Question.* Based on your detailed knowledge on this treaty and strong statements opposing the United States leaving the treaty, do you believe the United States should rejoin the Open Skies Treaty?

*Answer.* I share President Biden's view that it was a mistake to withdraw from the treaty, notwithstanding Russian compliance issues. Many of our Allies pointed out that none of these compliance concerns impacted the overall operation of the

treaty. That said, leaving a treaty, and rejoining a treaty while Russia continues to violate it are two different things. I understand an interagency review of Open Skies is underway. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about internal discussions on the matter.

*Question.* Why do you support the United States rejoining the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be committed to ensuring that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon and to addressing the many other issues of concern related to Iran. The JCPOA was concluded to ensure Iran never acquires nuclear weapons, and it provides the most intrusive verification and monitoring procedures ever negotiated. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is engaging in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments as a first step, but the work will not end there. The administration intends to build on the JCPOA and use it as a platform to lengthen and strengthen the constraints on Iran's nuclear program and to address other critical issues.

*Question.* The United States has not ratified the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

- Do you support the United States ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty? If so, why?

Answer. Yes. The United States maintains the safety, security, and effectiveness of our nuclear arsenal without having to conduct nuclear explosive tests. It is in our national security interest to prevent a world in which states are completely unconstrained from conducting such tests. An in-force CTBT would aid in that effort.

*Question.* The United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons entered into force in January 2021. It is the first multilateral legal document to outlaw nuclear weapons.

- Based on your experience and background in arms control, what is your view of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons?

Answer. While I understand and share the desire to make progress toward a world without nuclear weapons, the TPNW is not the right way to achieve that goal. The TPNW risks undermining U.S. deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security and may reinforce divisions that hinder our ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. All NATO Allies remain opposed to the TPNW, as repeatedly stated by the North Atlantic Council, most recently in December of 2020. The best way to achieve a world without nuclear weapons is through a process that takes into account the international security environment and seeks effective, verifiable arms control and disarmament measures.

*Question.* On January 3, 2020, you tweeted, “What is the U.S. logic to the strike on Qasem Soleimani?”

- The United States took decisive action on January 3, 2020, to prevent an imminent attack by a ruthless terrorist on Americans and our allies in the region. As the head of the Quds Force, General Soleimani created, supported, and directed a network of terrorist organizations that launched attacks across the region. As a war criminal, Soleimani was responsible for wounding and killing hundreds of Americans and he would have killed many more if given the chance.
- Based on your tweet, why did you disagree with the top U.S. commander in the region that the Soleimani strike re-established a deterrent in the region?

Answer. The tweet you referenced above was a retweet, without commentary, of a CNN article titled, “What is the U.S. logic to the strike on Iran’s Qasem Soleimani?” The article was an analysis of the likely factors that went into the previous administration’s decision to strike Soleimani. I have not expressed disagreement on this issue with the “top U.S. commander in the region.”

*Question.* Why do you believe America is not safer today because Qasem Soleimani is gone?

Answer. Qasem Soleimani was a key architect of much of Iran’s malign behavior. He had blood on his hands, including American blood, and I do not regret the killing of such an enemy of the United States. The question is not whether Soleimani was good or bad; the question is whether this action made the American people safer, based on the likelihood of Iranian retaliation and the broader strategic context in which the strike took place. I did not comment that America is not safer today be-

cause Qasem Soleimani is gone, nor do I have access to strategic assessments that would enable that conclusion, but it is a question that I and others have raised.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* The Trump administration made great progress unwinding the United States from outdated Cold War-style arms control agreements with Russia. Many of those treaties—and the approach behind them—eroded American national security by constraining us, permitting Russian noncompliance, and of course not constraining the Chinese at all.

- One significant step was to end U.S. participation in the Open Skies Treaty (OST). The Russians had been in chronic noncompliance for a decade, and were declared noncompliant in 2017: certain overflights of the Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad, flights in the vicinity of the enclaves that they essentially invaded and carved off of the country of Georgia, not allowing some overflights of Russian military exercises, etc. It was long past time to withdraw.
- You've publicly indicated that the U.S. withdrawing from the OST was a mistake.
- Do you believe the U.S. should reenter OST or a similar agreement?

*Answer.* I share President Biden's view that it was a mistake to withdraw from the treaty, notwithstanding Russian compliance issues. That said, leaving a treaty, and rejoining a treaty while Russia continues to violate it are two different things. I believe we should carefully consider the costs and benefits of rejoining before making any decision. As part of this analysis, we should consult with Allies and partners who are States Parties to the treaty, including on any future steps.

*Question.* Do you believe that if the U.S. did reenter OST or a similar agreement, such a step would require the advice and consent of the Senate?

*Answer.* I believe that Congressional authorization would be required for the United States to rejoin the Treaty on Open Skies.

*Question.* If you believe that the U.S. should reenter OST or a similar agreement, please describe your strategy for ending chronic Russian noncompliance.

*Answer.* If the administration were to decide to take steps to rejoin OST, I would recommend working with the interagency on ways to expand and enhance our work on compliance as it relates to the agreement.

#### *Treaties/INF*

*Question.* Another Cold War-style treaty from which the Trump administration withdrew was the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. China had arguably been the biggest beneficiary of the INF Treaty. According to then-Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command Harry Harris (now U.S. ambassador to South Korea), roughly 95 percent of China's missile forces would fall within INF Treaty parameters. The Treaty held us back from developing the technologies we needed to counter the Chinese.

- Do you believe it was a mistake to exit the INF?

*Answer.* I agree with NATO's August 2, 2019, statement that "Russia bears sole responsibility for the demise of the Treaty." Russia's material breach of the INF Treaty and refusal to return to compliance led to the U.S. withdrawal and thus to the treaty's termination. The United States should work with its allies and partners to ensure Russia gains no advantage by possessing this class of missile.

*Question.* Do you believe the U.S. should reenter the INF or a similar agreement?

*Answer.* As the INF Treaty terminated upon the United States' withdrawal, it is not possible to re-enter it. I look forward to working with Congress and relevant agencies and departments on ways to create new arms control agreements that serve U.S. interests.

*Question.* How do you believe that the missile asymmetry created by INF compliance in the Pacific affects America's efforts to operate within the first and second island chains in a conflict over Taiwan or the South China Sea?

*Answer.* China's expansion of its nuclear and missile arsenal presages a more dangerous future, with a larger number of sophisticated intermediate-range delivery systems able to target U.S., allied, and partner forces in the Indo-Pacific. I defer

to the Department of Defense for a direct assessment of their effects on regional U.S. military operations and posture.

*Question.* How should the U.S. craft an arms control framework that secures its ability to operate within contested zones in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the administration's pursuit of arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's growing nuclear arsenal, coupled with efforts designed to bolster deterrence in the region. It is critical that the United States consult closely with Indo-Pacific allies and partners to ensure arms control efforts both reduce the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. security strategy and ensure U.S. extended deterrence commitments remain strong and credible.

#### *Treaties / CEF*

*Question.* The 1996 Flank Agreement to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) is one of the canonical examples where the United States negotiated arms control restrictions that the Russians serially violated, but nevertheless it took years for the U.S. or its allies to formally unwind from the Treaty. Under most interpretations, Russia was never in compliance with the 1996 limits, though it arguably complied with parts of the Adapted treaty. You participated in negotiations regarding the Flank agreement. Please describe—

- Your assessment about whether the Russians ever came into compliance with the Flank parameters.
- Your assessment of whether the Flank Agreement enhanced U.S. national security.
- Your role in formulating, reviewing, and approving the Flank Agreement, including—
  - Your overall role in formulating, reviewing, and approving the Agreement.
  - Your role in the delegation, including who you reported to.

*Answer.* My understanding is that Russia has not been in compliance with the May 1996 flank limits, but is within the overall treaty limits. If Russia remains within the overall conventional treaty limits, I believe such limits continue to promote both U.S. and U.S. allied national security interests as envisioned when the treaty was negotiated.

- As noted, the flank limits text was negotiated in 1996, at a time when I had already transitioned to working on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and was working on CTBT backstopping in Washington, DC. I was therefore not involved in the drafting of the final text of the agreement. I refer you to the Department as to its staffing of this issue at that time.

*Question.* Any role you had in reviewing the final text of the Agreement. If you did not have a role in reviewing the agreement, why not and who provided legal advice for reviewing?

*Answer.* I was not involved in the drafting of the final text of the agreement because I had moved on to working on the CTBT. I refer you to the Department as to its staffing of this issue at that time.

*Question.* Any role you had in approving the final text of the Agreement. If you did not have a role in approving the agreement, why not and who provided legal advice for approving?

*Answer.* I was not involved in the drafting of the final text of the agreement because I had moved on to working on the CTBT. I refer you to the Department as to its staffing of this issue at that time.

#### *China / NPT*

*Question.* The Chinese plan to triple their nuclear arsenal in the coming years.

- What leverage does the U.S. have to get China to the negotiating table?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work within the administration, in consultation with U.S. allies and partners, to pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's growing nuclear arsenal. It is to be hoped that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its security interest: not a trap designed to weaken China's defenses, but rather a mechanism to reduce risk and the chances of uncontrollable arms races. U.S. allies and partners will be key to success, and if confirmed I will seek to work with them to regularly urge the PRC to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control.



*Question.* What is your plan to realistically get China to the negotiating table for a credible arms control agreement?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the administration's pursuit of arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's growing nuclear arsenal. U.S. allies and partners will be key to success, and if confirmed I will seek to work with them to regularly urge the PRC to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control. I understand that the administration is in the process of crafting specific proposals, and, if confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress regarding the arms control approach the administration foresees pursuing with China.

*Question.* I introduced a bill last session that would impose sanctions on parts of the Chinese military sector unless they come into compliance with their already-existing NPT Article VI obligations for 'good faith' negotiations.

- Do you believe China is meeting its NPT Article VI obligations?

*Answer.* China's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament. If confirmed, I will consult with legal and policy experts at the Department of State on a variety of matters related to China's behavior in the nuclear weapon arena, including its compliance with Article VI.

#### *Iran/NPT*

*Question.* As traditionally understood, Article IV of the NPT entitles member states to the benefits of peaceful civil-nuclear technology to the extent that they are members in good standing with the NPT. In the last administration, Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed to the SFRC in writing that "Iran's standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as 'good.'"

- Do you consider Iran's past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and if confirmed, I will work with legal and policy experts to monitor and assess Iran's NPT compliance. Iran must cooperate fully with the IAEA to address the serious, outstanding issues related to potential undeclared nuclear material in Iran. As a non-nuclear-weapon state party to the NPT, Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons. Under the JCPOA, Iran reaffirmed this commitment, and if confirmed, I will work to ensure that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* All three legs of the U.S. nuclear triad are required to maintain a reliable, credible and effective deterrent. This is especially true as Russia continues to modernize its nuclear forces and China is increasing its nuclear forces in an attempt at nuclear parity.

- Do you consider Iran's past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT. If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* Iran's long history of denial and concealment regarding its past nuclear weapons program is of serious concern. The Biden-Harris administration has stated that it will not take Iran at its word regarding assertions about its nuclear program, and fully supports the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran. If confirmed, I am committed to working to ensure that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran a member in good standing of the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and if confirmed, I will work with legal and policy experts to monitor and assess Iran's NPT compliance. Given Iran's past noncompliance with both its safeguards agreement and its NPT obligations, its failure to fully and substantially address IAEA questions related to past activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device, its retention and concealment of documents, equipment, and personnel related to its past nuclear weapons program, and its failure to fully address current IAEA questions related to potential undeclared nuclear

materials and activities in Iran, Iran's nuclear activities are cause for serious concern.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligations under Article II of the NPT and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology for any reason? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

#### *Iran/UNSCR 2231 Snapback*

*Question.* UNSCR 2231 ended a long-standing international arms embargo against Iran, described across the previous six resolutions terminated by paragraph 7(a) of the resolution. After an effort to extend that embargo, the Trump administration took two measures. First, it invoked the "snapback mechanism" described in paragraphs 10-15 of UNSCR 2231, reversing the termination of those resolutions. You and others have publicly suggested that the U.S. was not entitled to invoke that mechanism. Second, the Trump administration implemented EO 13949, "Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Conventional Arms Activities of Iran," which authorizes sanctions for transfers to and from Iran of arms or related material or military equipment. As a result, the U.S. established a baseline deterrent against major arms sales to Iran. Multi-billion dollar arms agreements publicly described and anticipated by Russia, China, and Iran did not occur.

However, in February 2021, the Biden administration rescinded that decision.

- Do you agree with the decision to rescind invoking the snapback mechanism?

*Answer.* The snapback mechanism was designed to provide leverage to help ensure Iran performed its commitments under the JCPOA. The previous administration invoked snapback in a way that was never contemplated by the deal, namely after unilaterally exiting it. Virtually none of our allies or partners recognized this invocation of snapback. The Biden-Harris administration believes that the United States will be in a stronger position to counter the full range of threats posed by Iran, including its nuclear program, by working in close concert with our allies.

*Question.* Do you believe that Russia would be in violation of any UNSCR if Russia sold advanced weapons to Iran? If so, which ones?

*Answer.* The provisions in UNSCR 2231 prohibiting the sale, supply, or transfer to Iran of items on the U.N. Register of conventional arms expired in October 2020. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with our allies and partners to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region, including its acquisition of advanced weapons from Russia. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our partners on the Security Council to dissuade countries from providing advanced weapons to Iran and fueling Iran's efforts to undermine the stability of its neighbors in the region. The United States retains numerous unilateral authorities, including E.O. 13949 ("Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Conventional Arms Activities of Iran") to deter and sanction transfers to and from Iran of advanced weapons.

*Question.* Do you believe that Russia would be in violation of any UNSCR if Russia purchased advanced weapons from Iran? If so, which ones?

*Answer.* The provisions in UNSCR 2231 prohibiting the sale, supply, or transfer from Iran of arms and related materiel expired in October 2020. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with our allies and partners to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region, including its sales of weapons and arms. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our partners on the Security Council to dissuade countries from purchasing such equipment from Iran and fueling Iran's ef-

forts to undermine the stability of its neighbors in the region. The United States retains numerous unilateral authorities, including E.O. 13949 (“Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Conventional Arms Activities of Iran”) to deter and sanction transfers to and from Iran of advanced weapons.

*Question.* Do you believe that China would be in violation of any UNSCR if China sold advanced weapons to Iran? If so, which ones?

*Answer.* The provisions in UNSCR 2231 prohibiting the sale, supply, or transfer to Iran of items on the U.N. Register of conventional arms expired in October 2020. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with our allies and partners to counter Iran’s destabilizing activities in the region, including its acquisition of advanced weapons from China. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our partners on the Security Council to dissuade countries from providing advanced weapons to Iran and fueling Iran’s efforts to undermine the stability of its neighbors in the region. The United States retains numerous unilateral authorities, including E.O. 13949 (“Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Conventional Arms Activities of Iran”) to deter and sanction transfers to and from Iran of advanced weapons.

*Question.* Do you believe that China would be in violation of any UNSCR if China purchased advanced weapons from Iran? If so, which ones?

*Answer.* The provisions in UNSCR 2231 prohibiting the sale, supply, or transfer from Iran of arms and related materiel expired in October 2020. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with our allies and partners to counter Iran’s destabilizing activities in the region, including its sales of weapons and arms. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our partners on the Security Council to dissuade countries from purchasing such equipment from Iran and fueling Iran’s efforts to undermine the stability of its neighbors in the region. The United States retains numerous unilateral authorities, including E.O. 13949 (“Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Conventional Arms Activities of Iran”) to deter and sanction transfers to and from Iran of advanced weapons.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran would be in violation of any UNSCR if Iran conducted any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology?

*Answer.* United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2231 calls upon Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology. The United States uses a number of tools to prevent transfers of equipment and technology to Iran’s missile programs and call attention to Iran’s missile development efforts. This includes reporting to the Security Council launches by Iran that use technologies related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons and urging the Council to address such activities.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran would be in violation of any UNSCR if Iran conducted any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology?

*Answer.* United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2231 calls upon Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology. The United States uses a number of tools to prevent transfers of equipment and technology to Iran’s missile programs and call attention to Iran’s missile development efforts. This includes reporting to the Security Council launches by Iran that use technologies related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons and urging the Council to address such activities.

#### *JCPOA/Treaty*

*Question.* I believe that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and any similar arms control agreement with Iran should be brought to the U.S. Senate as a treaty for the Senate’s advice and consent. Officials from the Biden administration have indicated in public and private they disagree with that stance, because it is important in the context of such agreements to allow the U.S. to act “without the constraints of international treaty law.” I disagree with that analysis, which fails to account for the Senate’s prerogatives in general, and in the context of the JCPOA cannot be reconciled with the Obama-Biden administration’s move to lock in the JCPOA at through United Nations Security Council Resolution UNSCR 2231, which sought to constrain U.S. behavior at the level of international law.

- Do you believe that the JCPOA or a successor agreement should be brought to the U.S. Senate for advice and consent? If not, why not?

Answer. Secretary Blinken has committed to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program, as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was negotiated as a non-legally binding arrangement and transmitted to Congress under INARA in 2015, and it underwent close congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Secretary, Special Envoy Malley, and other members of the administration in consultations on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program, and to complying with the provisions of INARA.

*Question.* Do you believe that the JCPOA or a successor agreement should not be brought to the Senate for advice and consent specifically because it would constrain U.S. options? If so, please describe those constraints.

Answer. Secretary Blinken has committed to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was negotiated as a non-legally binding arrangement and transmitted to Congress under INARA in 2015, and it underwent close congressional and public scrutiny. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Secretary, Special Envoy Malley, and other members of the administration in consultations on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program, and to complying with the provisions of INARA.

*Question.* If a future agreement with Iran is not submitted to the U.S. Senate for its advice and consent, do you believe that a future administration would be within its legal prerogatives to dismantle it?

Answer. Secretary Blinken has committed to consulting fully with Congress on any agreement relating to Iran's nuclear program as called for under the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA). The JCPOA was negotiated as a non-legally binding arrangement and transmitted to Congress under INARA in 2015, and it underwent close congressional and public scrutiny. If there were to be a U.S. return to the JCPOA, the arrangement would impose no legal constraints on the United States' ability to protect its interests, including, for example, by ceasing participation in the deal if Iran were to fail to adhere to its JCPOA commitments.

#### *State Department*

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF.

- Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

*Question.* What are your goals for your bureau, if confirmed?

Answer. I have several priorities I would like to engage on if confirmed, the broadest and most important of which is to play a role in reducing the risk of nuclear war through effective arms control. I believe it is also critical that we make progress on limiting Russian and Chinese nuclear expansion, strengthening our efforts in biosecurity, pursuing accountability for the use of chemical weapons, and promoting a diverse workforce. If confirmed I hope to work to strengthen deterrence alliances in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific to better deter and defend against growing threats, and to help position the U.S. Government and State Department to grapple with advancements in emerging technologies that can threaten strategic stability. Finally, I intend if confirmed to strive to ensure that arms transfers and security assistance are focused on building values-based security partnerships.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* China voluntarily agreed, in 1997, to report its annual civil plutonium production figures and related activities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), along with the U.S., UK, France, Russia, Japan, Belgium, Switzerland, and Germany. The last Chinese report, which covered 2016, was submitted in 2017.

There is no public record of the U.S. taking them to task for no longer reporting this information, which is troubling due to their development of a fast-breeder reactor program.

Furthermore, the Commander of USSTRATCOM indicated, at an open Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on 14 April 2021, that “this will change the upper bounds of what China could choose to do, if they wanted to, in terms of further expansion of their nuclear capabilities.”

- Do you know if this has been discussed, with the Chinese, in diplomatic circles? Will you commit to meeting with me, if confirmed, to discuss this issue further?

Answer. I have not been privy to such conversations. However, if confirmed, I will call on China to submit its declaration report to the IAEA per Information Circular (INFCIRC)/549 concerning “Guidelines for the Management of Plutonium.” If confirmed, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this issue further.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
 TO HON. BONNIE R. JENKINS BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Nuclear Modernization*

*Question.* If you are confirmed, will you commit supporting the modernization of U.S. nuclear forces? Please begin your answer with yes or no.

Answer. Yes, the United States should have a modern, credible, and effective deterrent.

*Question.* In your view, why is the modernization of U.S. nuclear forces critical to protecting the security of the United States?

Answer. The United States must maintain a credible nuclear deterrent as long as nuclear weapons exist. Nuclear weapons will continue to exist beyond the planned service lives of existing U.S. nuclear forces and modernization is necessary to sustain a credible deterrent.

*Question.* In your view, do you agree that the role of nuclear weapons should be reduced in U.S. foreign policy, as stated by two Biden administration officials in an interview with the Asahi Shimbun? Please begin your answer with yes or no. In an interview with Asahi Shimbun, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance Alexandra Bell and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Missile Defense Policy Leonor Tomero publicly stated that “there is no doubt that President Biden’s goal is to reduce the role of nuclear weapons.”

Answer. Yes, as the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance states, “We will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.”

*No First Use Policy*

*Question.* If you are confirmed, will you commit to upholding the longstanding U.S. policy of not adopting a “no first use” policy? Please begin your answer with yes or no. Admiral Charles Richards, who heads the U.S. Strategic Command, said that his “best military advice would be not adopt a no-first-use policy.” During her nomination hearing, Deputy Secretary of Defense Kath Hicks said that a “no first use” policy is not in the interest of the United States.

Answer. The President of the United States determines U.S. declaratory policy. The Biden-Harris administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will participate in that process and will consult with Congress and our allies on any policies or actions in this area.

*Question.* In your view, what are the conditions in which the United States can actually use a nuclear weapon? On January 2021, you argued for declaring a “no first use” policy, stating that “the United States needs to define the conditions where we can actually use a nuclear weapon.”

Answer. The President of the United States determines the conditions under which the United States would consider the use of nuclear weapons. The Biden-Har-

ris administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. I have thought, as many do, that the United States might consider changes to U.S. declaratory policy that could increase stability. I understand that there are varying perspectives on the issue, but I believe most agree that we want to reduce nuclear risks to the United States and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the interagency and allies and Congress to find the best ways to do this.

*Question.* What risks might U.S. allies face if the United States were to adopt a “no first use” policy?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is undertaking a review of nuclear policy that will certainly include declaratory policy. If confirmed, I will participate in that process and will consult with Congress and U.S. allies on any policies or actions in this area. It would be premature to speculate about risks prior to the completion of this review.

#### *China & Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*

*Question.* In your view, if a country with nuclear weapons, which is a signatory of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, deliberately and repeatedly refuses to engage in good faith negotiations on the issue of arms control, would you agree that country is in violation of Article VI of the NPT? Please begin your answer with yes or no. Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons clearly stipulates that countries with nuclear weapons should “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race.” In recent years, the United States repeatedly attempted to engage China on the issue of arms control, but Beijing refused, asserting that “the time is not yet ripe” for such discussions.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with legal and policy experts at the Department of State on a variety of matters related to China’s behavior in the nuclear weapon arena, including its compliance with Article VI of the NPT. It is urgent for China to take on greater responsibility, transparency, and restraint with respect to its nuclear weapons arsenal.

#### *Security Assistance*

*Question.* If you are confirmed, what metrics would you rely upon to determine whether China is violating VI of the NTP Treaty?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with legal and policy experts at the Department of State on a variety of matters related to China’s behavior in the nuclear weapons arena, including considerations relevant to assessing compliance with Article VI of the NPT.

#### *On the Next Arms Control Treaty*

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit that the next arms control treaty should include China? Please begin your answer with yes or no.

*Answer.* No. While the United States will pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People’s Republic of China’s growing nuclear arsenal, arms control agreements and arrangements must be tailored to the security challenges they are intended to address. Although there may be opportunities for the United States and Russia to engage the PRC in a trilateral forum, I do not believe that all future arms control endeavors with Russia must include the PRC.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit that the next arms control treaty with Russia must address all nuclear warheads, to include Russia’s non-strategic nuclear weapons? Please begin your answer with yes or no.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we use the time provided by a five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons. Incorporating Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons into arms control is a longstanding and bipartisan U.S. objective.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit to regularly briefing Congress on the status of diplomatic engagements with China on the issue of arms control?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed I commit to regularly consulting Congress on the status of the Biden-Harris administration’s approach to China and arms control.

*Iran and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*

*Question.* In your view, is Iran in compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons? Please begin your answer with yes or no.

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the NPT, and if confirmed, I will work with legal and policy experts to monitor and assess Iran's NPT compliance. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and I share that commitment.

*Question.* If yes, how is Iran in compliance when it has not answered the IAEA's questions on undeclared nuclear material and activities?

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in light of the IAEA's ongoing safeguards investigations and Iran's failure to provide the IAEA with the cooperation necessary to resolve them. If confirmed, I will work with legal and policy experts to monitor and assess Iran's NPT compliance. Iran must engage and cooperate fully with the IAEA in a way that leads to credible, concrete progress and toward resolution of these issues. Like President Biden, I have full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any indications of undeclared or diverted nuclear material that could contribute to any renewed Iranian pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit to providing no sanctions relief to Iran until they comply with the IAEA's requests to resolve the outstanding issues on undeclared nuclear materials and activities? The 2021 Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments noted that during the 2020 reporting period, the IAEA Director General (DG) issued several reports on Iran that make clear that serious, outstanding concerns remain regarding possible undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran today.

*Answer.* Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. Iran's failure to provide substantive or technically credible responses to the IAEA's questions related to possible undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran is cause for serious concern. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors—without delay—as the IAEA works toward conclusions. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Open Skies Treaties*

*Question.* In your view, do you agree that Russia has violated, and continues to violate, the Treaty on Open Skies? Please begin your answer with yes or no. The 2021 Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments noted that in "2020, the United States continued to assess that Russia was in violation of the Treaty on Open Skies (OST)." In May 2020, the Director of the U.S. National Counterintelligence and Security Center said: "For years, Russia has used the Open Skies Treaty to collect intelligence on civilian infrastructure and other sensitive sites in America, posing an unacceptable risk to our national security."

*Answer.* Yes, Russia has violated, and continues to violate, the Treaty on Open Skies. I am not aware that Russia has taken any action to return to compliance. As stated in this year's compliance report, Russia has not rescinded its illegal 500-kilometer sublimit over Kaliningrad. Russia also remains in violation for refusing to allow observation flights to approach within 10 kilometers of its border with the Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. While not a violation of the treaty, Russia has also declared an airfield in Crimea as a Russian Open Skies refueling airfield, in an attempt to politicize the treaty.

*Question.* In your view, do you agree that Russia abuses the Treaty on Open Skies and its actions posed an unacceptable risk the security of the United States and our allies?

*Answer.* My view is that Russia's violations of the Treaty on Open Skies, while concerning, by themselves do not pose a direct and immediate threat to U.S. national security. Russia's use of the treaty to collect imagery of military and civilian infrastructure, while not prohibited by the treaty, could pose a risk, although I understand there are measures in place to mitigate that risk.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Rebuilding the Bureaus*

*Question.* Neglect of the Economic Growth, Environment, and Energy Bureaus has resulted in a serious brain drain from the bureaus and hurt morale among the dedicated workforce of these Bureaus. The previous administration's skepticism and outright hostility towards environmental stewardship, climate change, clean energy diplomacy and economic cooperation were not only tone deaf and out of touch with the interests of the rest of the world, but were demoralizing to the very thoughtful and engaged personnel within these bureaus.

- How will you restore morale among personnel, build back the ranks of the "E" bureaus and offices, and demonstrate leadership and interest in the E Bureaus' priorities?

*Answer.* Rebuilding the "E" family will require commitment and dedication, not only in recruiting but in training and retention efforts. We will also need to pay special attention to groups whose lack of representation at the State Department pre-dates the previous administration. If confirmed, with your support and the help of my colleagues at State, I intend to pay special attention to this effort.

*Question.* How will you continue and build on this tradition of leadership to advance the values of transparency and accountability that the U.S. Government has championed across MDBs?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will champion the values of transparency and accountability across all U.S. engagements with the multilateral development banks. In large part due to our significant shareholding size, the United States is in a position to continue to work with fellow shareholders to ensure the MDBs promote transparency and accountability in order to build more support among all stakeholders for the very important work they do to address systemic barriers to economic development.

*Question.* The U.S. National Contact Point (NCP) to the OECD is one of the only avenues for justice for harm caused by companies; however, reports have documented meaningful shortcomings in the NCP's ability for facilitating accountability and remedy. How will you ensure that the U.S. NCP is strong and effective to address business and human rights grievances?

*Answer.* The U.S. National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines for Multi-national Enterprises (Guidelines) serves an important role in promoting and implementing the Guidelines, and in facilitating the resolution of allegations brought against a company. The Guidelines provide important recommendations by governments to companies on responsible business practices, including with respect to human rights. If confirmed, I will review the current work of the U.S. NCP, consider feedback from concerned stakeholders, and take appropriate steps to ensure that the mechanism we have in place to address grievances is a meaningful one.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the push for an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) capital increase?

*Answer.* The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is a vital source of development finance for Latin America and the Caribbean and provides a high-quality alternative to unsustainable borrowing from China or other creditors. IDB lending and policy advice will be important for supporting the region in emerging from the multiple crises it faces. If confirmed, I intend look closely at the IDB's plans and current financing needs in collaboration with Treasury and other agencies.

*Question.* How can Congress best work with the administration to advance this goal (of an IDB capital increase)?

*Answer.* Discussions on the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) resources should occur from the bottom up, considering the views of all shareholders, including Congress and IDB management. Such discussions should include fulsome analyses of financial conditions, how its use of resources addresses the region's challenges, and the IDB's role within the larger financing and policy landscape for the region. If confirmed, I would look closely at the IDB's plans and current financing needs in collaboration with Congress, Treasury, and other agencies.

*Question.* How do you see the Under Secretary facilitating climate into the operations of State Department bureaus where the concept of "Climate Diplomacy" may still be new?

*Answer.* Among the many pressing international priorities on President Biden's agenda, reasserting American leadership in combating the global climate crisis is



among the most critical—having been identified by the President as one of the four “historic” crises confronting the United States. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with Secretary Kerry and his team to advance our climate diplomacy work. I understand that Secretary Kerry’s climate diplomacy work is closely coordinated with the Department’s. If confirmed, I am also committed to further integrating the climate agenda in the “E” family of bureaus and offices, and supporting the Biden-Harris administration’s broader diplomatic engagement.

*Question.* Can you describe how you see yourself, if confirmed, working in cooperation with the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate in realizing the full-scale integration and consideration of climate into our foreign policy apparatus?

*Answer.* If I am confirmed, while I will report to Secretary Blinken, I plan to work closely with Special Presidential Envoy Kerry and his team to advance our climate work. Addressing the climate crisis is going to take a whole-of-government and whole-of-Department of State approach. If confirmed, I will have the privilege of overseeing two of the bureaus most actively engaged in climate change diplomacy: the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, and the Bureau of Energy Resources. I anticipate a close working relationship with SPEC to ensure we are working together to advance this policy priority.

*Question.* Is it in the U.S. interest, or a sound reflection of U.S. values, to respond to BRI investments in fossil fuels by offering financing for comparable fossil fuel energy projects that have significant environmental impacts?

*Answer.* It is in the U.S. interest to work with countries to understand the full economic and environmental impact of energy investments and the availability of cost-effective, clean, and low-carbon alternatives to fossil fuels. This includes, but is not limited to, countries where the PRC is investing through its One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative. If confirmed, I commit to coordinating across U.S. Government agencies to work with international partners and expand competitive financing options for cost-effective, low carbon alternatives to PRC-backed, heavy-emitting infrastructure projects.

*Question.* Should the U.S. compete by providing better clean energy alternatives that provide wide ranging health, economic growth and social benefits to BRI energy projects that exacerbate the climate crisis and harm local health and the environment?

*Answer.* It is critical that countries’ energy needs be met in a safe, and fiscally and environmentally sustainable, manner. If confirmed, I commit to working with institutions like DFC and EXIM to advance U.S. clean energy financing options, with a focus on building partners’ capacities to assess and mitigate financial and environmental risks in the energy sector. I also commit to supporting international initiatives, such as the Blue Dot Network, to certify quality infrastructure projects that uphold global standards and are vital to strengthening shared climate, social, and environmental standards.

*Question.* Do you believe it is in the U.S. economic interest, and sound environmental policy, for the U.S. to pay foreign entities to take our plastic waste to create energy?

*Answer.* It is in the economic and environmental interest of the United States to support environmentally sound management of plastic waste and scrap. If confirmed, I will work with international partners to better understand international trade flows of plastic waste and scrap as the State Department and other Departments and agencies consider these important policy questions.

*Question.* Would you support a prohibition on export of U.S. plastic waste for foreign energy production?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support upholding and implementing U.S. export laws for waste and scrap, and supporting U.S. industry in understanding the policies of other countries related to trade in plastic waste and scrap. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is still reviewing its position on international waste and scrap issues, and if confirmed I look forward to participating in that review.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to increase U.S.-India cooperation on clean energy and address climate change?

*Answer.* I understand that U.S.-India cooperation on climate and clean energy is a core element of the bilateral relationship. President Biden and Prime Minister Modi launched the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership at the Leaders Summit on Climate on April 22, 2021. Advancing India’s ambitious 2030 climate and clean energy targets, such as reaching 450 GW of renewable en-

ergy, will be critical to confronting the climate crisis. If confirmed, I intend to ensure that the State Department plays a leading role in advancing U.S.-India collaboration, including by building on existing initiatives through the Bureau of Energy Resources to mobilize clean energy finance and integrate renewable energy into a flexible power system.

*Question.* What role would you anticipate having in the implementation of the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership?

*Answer.* President Biden and Prime Minister Modi launched the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership at the Leaders Summit on Climate on April 22, 2021, elevating climate and clean energy collaboration to the core of the bilateral relationship. The Partnership goals are to support India's deployment of 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030, scale up innovative technologies, and build capacity for climate adaptation. If confirmed, I intend to ensure the State Department plays a leading role in this Partnership—through promoting clean energy finance, technical assistance on regulatory reform, and support for innovation and technology scale-up—and provides the resourcing to achieve the ambitious 2030 agenda.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you support the establishment of a U.S.-Eastern Mediterranean Energy Center?

*Answer.* I am familiar with the goals of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act and, if confirmed, I will work with Congress and the Department of Energy to support the U.S.- Eastern Mediterranean Energy Center. I understand that the Department of Energy is working with counterparts from Israel, Greece, and the Republic of Cyprus, along with the State Department's Bureau of Energy Resources, to determine the Center's scope of activities, and expects to have a framework for establishment of the Center in the coming weeks.

*Question.* Will you commit to prioritizing labor rights and support for labor unions in relations with Bangladesh, if confirmed?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to prioritizing labor rights and support for labor unions in relations with Bangladesh. In 2013, President Obama suspended Bangladesh's trade benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) because the Government of Bangladesh had made insufficient progress in affording Bangladeshi workers internationally recognized worker rights. Since then, Bangladesh has made a few amendments to its labor law, but workers continue to face dismissals, blacklisting, and violence for attempting to join or form unions or demonstrate for their due wages and benefits. In response, the Department of State, USAID, and Department of Labor fund programs to improve workers' rights and safety in the garment, shrimp, and domestic work sectors, as well as for migrant workers. I understand that the State Department also coordinates with USAID, the International Labor Organization, and other partners to encourage Bangladesh to enact reforms to bring its labor legislation in line with international standards. If confirmed, I will ensure my team amplifies this work, and raises concerns about labor rights at the highest levels of the Government of Bangladesh.

*Question.* How specifically will you ensure that labor rights and labor unions are prioritized in initiatives such as High-Level Consultations on Economic Partnership with Bangladesh?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with leadership in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, and U.S. Trade Representative to ensure labor rights and labor unions are prioritized in initiatives with Bangladesh, including the High-Level Consultation on Economic Partnership. President Biden made clear in his address to a joint session of Congress on April 28: middle class workers grow the economy and unions build the middle class. Likewise, economic partnerships are only possible because of workers, so labor rights must be viewed as a priority across topics and sectors, rather than a standalone issue.

*Question.* Will you commit to working with international partners to combat plastic pollution and marine debris in the oceans?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with international partners to combat plastic pollution and marine debris in the ocean. I plan to work with colleagues at the Department and across the interagency, along with stakeholders, as the United States prepares for negotiations under the fifth United Nation Environment Assembly meeting, which is expected to deliberate on options for global action to address ocean plastic pollution in February 2022. If confirmed, I will also work with staff to implement the Department's activities under Save Our Seas 2.0, in-

cluding building international partnerships to build capacity to address marine debris.

*Question.* Will you help guide the State Department, working with other relevant federal agencies and multilateral institutions, to examine the environmental risks and social impact of foreign plastic waste processors that claim to recycle plastic waste?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will help guide the Department, including collaborating interagency partners and relevant multilateral institutions, to better understand the environmental and social impacts of foreign plastic waste processors that claim to recycle plastic waste.

*Question.* Will you make exploring the potential for new international agreements on land-based sources of marine debris and derelict fishing gear a priority for the Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Bureau?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to addressing ocean plastic pollution and working with countries and stakeholders to find innovative solutions to address land-based sources of marine debris as well as derelict fishing gear. The Biden-Harris administration has not taken a position on launching a new global instrument and is still developing its perspective on the best approaches to addressing marine litter and plastic pollution. If confirmed, I will work with interagency, stakeholders and international partners as we consider different approaches, including new global instruments.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Who is responsible for coordinating and effectively executing U.S. foreign policy, to include diplomatic engagement to advance U.S. global health security interests overseas—the Department of State, USAID, or CDC?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States takes a whole-of-government approach, under the President's leadership, and in coordination with the National Security Council, to advance U.S. foreign policy, including advancing U.S. global health security interests overseas. The President appointed a Coordinator for the Global COVID-19 Response and Health Security at the Department of State. This role leads diplomatic engagement on behalf of the U.S. Government on health security matters, coordinating closely with relevant departments and agencies. I understand that the Chief of Mission ultimately has authority and responsibility for U.S. activities in a respective country and is responsible for coordinating and effectively executing U.S. foreign policy. Staff across the U.S. interagency, including from the Department of State, USAID, and CDC, have critical roles to contribute to this effort.

*Question.* Who is responsible for coordinating and effectively executing U.S. foreign assistance overseas, to include diplomatic engagement to advance U.S. global health security interests in countries of all income categories—the Ambassador (Department of State), the Mission Director (USAID), or CDC country representatives?

*Answer.* I understand that under the direction of the President, the Secretary of State is responsible for the supervision and general direction of U.S. foreign assistance. I understand that the U.S. Ambassador, with Chief of Mission authority and responsibility for U.S. activities in a country, is responsible for ensuring adequate coordination among U.S. departments and agencies in country, as to best utilize the expertise of technical agencies such as USAID and CDC and ensure coordination across equities. The implementation of specific programs falls under USAID Mission Directors and CDC country representatives, who have important roles in directing country teams in the responsible and effective use of U.S. foreign assistance overseas.

*Question.* Who is best placed to coordinate the execution of a comprehensive U.S. global health security strategy overseas, including by resolving conflicts between implementing agencies and organizations—the Department of State, USAID, or CDC?

*Answer.* I understand that the Chief of Mission in a given country has ultimate responsibility for U.S. activities in the country, and the National Security Council coordinates implementation of U.S. foreign policy across agencies. I understand that the Department of State, USAID, CDC, DOD, and other agencies collaborate closely to coordinate and resolve conflicts in the execution of U.S. global health security strategy overseas.

*Question.* Given the leading role assigned to the Department of State by National Security Memorandum-1 (21 January 2021) and Executive Order 13747 (4 November 2016) in advancing U.S. global health security and diplomacy, the enormity of U.S. foreign assistance dedicated to advancing global health priorities overseas, and the fact that the major implementer of U.S. global health assistance overseas—USAID—falls under the foreign policy guidance of the Department of State, do you believe the Office of International Health and Biodefense, as currently structured, is fit for purpose?

*Answer.* The current pandemic highlights the importance of global health security. The Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs' Office of International Health and Biodefense (OES/IHB) advances these interests through diplomacy and foreign policy implementation bilaterally and multilaterally, in close coordination with the interagency. I understand that OES leadership will continue coordinating with relevant Department of State bureaus and offices and interagency partners to review global health security needs and assess the need for any additional resources, working with Congress.

*Question.* Do you agree that the PEPFAR model, to include the coordinating role played by the Department of State and the implementing roles played by USAID and the CDC, has been successful?

*Answer.* Yes. PEPFAR uses a whole-of-government model to harness the comparative advantages of seven U.S. Government implementing agencies, including USAID and CDC, with leadership and coordination through the U.S. Department of State, including at the country level through U.S. Chiefs of Mission worldwide. It may be the most rigorous global health program in terms of data collection. PEPFAR's interagency program implementation has been critical to PEPFAR's success in controlling the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As PEPFAR's work continues, it is seen as a model in global health, even in the context of COVID-19.

*Question.* As more and more countries approach epidemic control, do you believe this (PEPFAR) model could be adapted to advance broader global health security and diplomacy objectives, as the Obama administration envisioned under the GHI?

*Answer.* The current pandemic highlights the importance of strengthening global health security capacity and health systems. Various models for U.S. foreign assistance programs, including PEPFAR, have successfully bolstered health outcomes globally. Bureaus and offices at the Department of State—including the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Office of International Health and Biodefense, and Office of Foreign Assistance—continue efforts to leverage the successes of various aid models to effectively strengthen global health security capacity, and I will look forward to reviewing those efforts and models if confirmed.

*Question.* As the Department and U.S. interagency work to help developing nations build their infrastructure and provide their energy needs, will you commit to considering all energy sources and fuels types that make the most sense for each project, particularly with respect to the needs of developing countries? Will you commit not to make general prohibitions on coal, oil, or natural gas projects?

*Answer.* I am committed, if confirmed, to help developing countries address their energy needs and support the Biden-Harris administration's whole-of-government approach to ensure that climate considerations are fully integrated into our energy-related engagements. This includes supporting developing countries as they plan for a low-emissions future that decarbonizes key sectors, increases competitive energy and infrastructure development, and increases energy access to sustainably meet growing demand. If confirmed, I will work within the Department and interagency to coordinate support to countries to meet their climate, energy access, and energy security needs in ways that further our climate and energy goals.

*Question.* If a capital increase is authorized for the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) this Congress, if confirmed, will you commit to working to establishing appropriate safeguards, transparency and conditionality measures to protect debt-vulnerable IADB member countries of that borrow from the IADB to restructure Chinese bilateral debt held by such countries? Do you also commit to establishing measures to protect such countries from incurring subsequent Chinese bilateral debt?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with our allies and partners to distinguish our approach to development from China's by ensuring that economic viability and transparency are built into the projects we support at the Inter-American Development Bank. I will also work to confront China's economic abuses and advocate for the highest transparency and accountability standards to promote development investments that are both beneficial and sustainable over the long term.

*Question.* China, through its Belt and Road Initiative, is financing and constructing infrastructure projects around the globe. These projects build relationships that will last years if not decades between China and other countries. Depending on the terms of the financing and the quality of the construction, China may secure an unfair advantage in the relationship to the detriment of the interests of the host country as well as the United States. How do you propose the United States counter these practices and strengthen relationships with countries in need of infrastructure development?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States distinguishes itself from Beijing's state-led approach to development, including the "One Belt, One Road" initiative, by promoting private-sector driven alternatives. The United States' approach focuses on partnerships that strengthen local capacity and promote entrepreneurship, transparency, good governance, fair practices, and internationally recognized environmental, social, and labor standards. If confirmed, I will work with partners and allies, and through existing U.S. Government agencies such as the Development Finance Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, and others, to promote and support infrastructure investments with high standards that ensure such projects are beneficial and sustainable over the long term.

*Question.* People's Republic of China (PRC) companies are making significant headway an important but often overlooked technology area: undersea cables. The prior administration focused on this issue through its Clean Cable initiative, and by providing financing for specific cable projects in the Indo-Pacific. Please describe your understanding of PRC activities in the undersea cable market and the implications for United States interests. Do you commit to prioritizing this area of technology if you are confirmed?

*Answer.* I understand that the Biden-Harris administration views undersea cables as critical to America's national security and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will fully support Department efforts that prioritize protecting this critical infrastructure and work with allies and partners to prevent untrusted, high-risk, and unproven vendors, like those with ties to the PRC, from increasing their market share through unfair practices.

*Question.* After years of negotiations, on December 30th, 2020—nearly the final day of the German Council presidency—the European Union (EU) announced it had reached an agreement with China on an investment deal. What is your view of the EU's decision to conclude this agreement at this moment?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to early consultations with our EU and European partners on shared concerns about China, including through the recently relaunched U.S.-EU dialogue on China and on issues related to trade and investment. Ultimately, the onus will be on China to show that any new pledges in the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) on forced labor, state-owned enterprises, and subsidies are not just cheap talk, and the EU will need to hold the Chinese Government accountable. If confirmed, I will seek to engage with European counterparts on how to advance our shared economic interests and counter China's aggressive and coercive actions, as well as on China's failures to uphold its past international commitments.

*Question.* What are the economic and geopolitical implications of this agreement? Please be specific. Will it affect the EU's willingness to push back on China for its malign behavior, such as using the EU's new human rights sanctions regime? Do you believe that this agreement will affect, negatively or positively, U.S. attempts to hold China accountable for its malign trade and investment practices?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the administration's active engagement with EU and European counterparts on how to advance our shared economic interests and counter China's aggressive and coercive actions, including trade and investment practices. The economic and geopolitical implications of the deal will depend on whether it is ratified and, if so, whether the Chinese Government follows through on its commitments. The United States applauded the EU's imposition of sanctions in March under its global human rights sanctions regime against PRC individuals in connection with serious human rights abuses in Xinjiang, an action taken in unity with the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

*Question.* The prior administration stood up an initiative called the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network, designed to advance the development of sustainable, transparent, and high-quality infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region by strengthening capacity-building programs; providing transaction advisory services and project preparation assistance to support sustainable infrastructure; and coordi-

nating the provision of United States assistance for the development of infrastructure. If confirmed, do you commit to supporting and continuing this program?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continuing the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network (ITAN). Public financing alone cannot fulfill the \$15 trillion global infrastructure gap over the next twenty years—we must mobilize private financing of quality infrastructure, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. Participants in ITAN representing 14 U.S. agencies have collaborated to identify and provide support for dozens of projects with a market value of \$190 billion. I will work to continue helping foreign partners build better enabling environments to mobilize greater private sector financing in quality infrastructure investment through ITAN.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing advocacy, assistance, and other necessary initiatives to encourage, promote, and support greater investment in and economic and commercial engagement with Southeast Asia?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to supporting increased investment, economic, and commercial engagement in Southeast Asia. Transparent, inclusive, and resilient economic growth is key to ensuring that Southeast Asia remains free and open. Through our Indo-Pacific programs, if confirmed, I will work with U.S. Government economic agencies to help countries in the region attract quality investments, increase transparency, secure project financing for key transactions, and advocate for U.S. firms. I will also seek to work through multilateral organizations, such as APEC and ASEAN, to improve regional business environments, reduce trade barriers, and increase commercial ties between U.S. businesses and the region.

*Question.* How can the United States build more reliable trade and investment partnerships with African countries, particularly when the region faces severe economic impacts from the coronavirus pandemic, external debt, and inflationary pressures? What will it take to overcome these myriad challenges, and how do you believe the United States can assist?

Answer. I believe that fostering debt transparency is a key requirement for building back better in Africa. I understand that the United States supports the Paris Club-G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative and the Common Framework for Debt Treatments, both of which include debt transparency requirements. If confirmed, I will advance U.S. engagement in the multilateral debt initiatives, as well as ongoing World Bank and IMF support for economic recovery in Africa. The World Bank has provided \$50 billion for African countries, while a significant portion of the IMF's \$110 billion in COVID-related rapid financing has gone to Africa. If confirmed, I will also support development of a plan for a \$650 billion IMF special drawing rights allocation.

*Question.* Our strategy to counter malign foreign actors like the People's Republic of China (PRC) in African countries cannot be limited to still-nascent programs like Prosper Africa and aged initiatives like the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The United States' plan will also require strategic, targeted, and well-resourced "whole-of-country" initiatives that address not only the economic side of the issue, but the governance, cultural, and diplomatic sides as well. How can the United States better develop country- or city-level strategies (for Africa's ever-growing mega-cities) to properly incentivize U.S. private sector engagement in critical sectors to ensure they are well-positioned to compete?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that U.S. companies can compete on an even, transparent playing field. I will enhance our work to improve the investment climates on a country-by-country basis and inform U.S. firms of Africa's opportunities. U.S. businesses provide world-class products and services that Africans seek to grow their economies. If confirmed, I will examine how we can better coordinate our financing support across U.S. agencies. The Prosper Africa initiative has been working to coordinate many of these efforts, but we can do more. If confirmed, I will also support our soft power efforts, including engaging with youth and diaspora, and encouraging educational opportunities.

*Question.* Should the United States prioritize support of Africa's efforts to realize implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) or carve out strategic Free Trade Agreements with countries like Kenya? For regional economic blocs like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)?

Answer. I understand that the United States, while not a party to the AfCFTA, supports its goals of improved harmonization and coordination of trade in Africa. The agreement has the potential to foster a better business climate that would increase opportunities for U.S. businesses. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting USTR on any trade matters and strengthening alliances with our key partners, like

Kenya and the Regional Economic Communities across Africa. With respect to Kenya, I understand USTR is closely reviewing the negotiations that have taken place to date.

*Question.* The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 establishes an Office of Sanctions Coordination within the Department of State. If confirmed, do you commit to work with my office and this committee to ensure that this office succeeds and fulfills its statutory mandate?

*Answer.* Yes. I share the Department's appreciation for Congress's deep and continued involvement in sanctions issues. If confirmed, I will work to leverage available expertise and resources throughout the Government on sanctions issues, including as the Department works to stand up the Office of Sanctions Coordination established in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, and will work with your office and the committee.

*Question.* Do you anticipate that the Office of the Special Envoy for Climate will coordinate with the E bureau? If so, how? Do you have an understanding of what the reporting structure would look like? In the event of a disagreement between your office and the Special Envoy's office, to whom would the matter be elevated?

*Answer.* While the Under Secretary position I have been nominated to reports to Secretary Blinken, if confirmed, I plan to work closely with Special Envoy for Climate (SPEC) Kerry and his team to advance our climate work. I understand Special Envoy Kerry's climate diplomacy work is closely coordinated with the Department's. If confirmed, I am committed to further integrating the climate agenda in the "E" (Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment) family. If confirmed, I will have the privilege of overseeing the two bureaus most engaged in climate diplomacy: the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs and the Bureau of Energy Resources. I anticipate a positive working relationship with SPEC.

*Question.* One of the irritants in the United States' relationship with our closest allies is the question of taxation of digital companies. Understandingly, European countries would like to tax companies operating in their territories, but this would have a direct and targeted harm on U.S. companies, since the U.S. is home to most of the largest tech companies. Resolving this issue is of primary importance both for our relationship with Europe, for pushing back on the influence of Chinese tech companies, and for the health of the U.S. tech companies. In this role, you would have a large part to play in the negotiations to resolve this issue. How do you view the issue? What do you believe is the right compromise? What are the consequences for not resolving it?

*Answer.* I understand that the Biden-Harris administration is committed to finding a multilateral solution to the current set of international tax issues that require collective action. If confirmed, I would seek to work within my role to pursue a strong international minimum tax to end the race to the bottom in corporate taxation, ensuring multinational enterprises pay their fair share. This should also include an equitable way to address the allocation of profits generated through the deployment of intangible property, including to resolve the issues that have been used to justify Digital Services Taxes. If confirmed, I look forward to working alongside colleagues throughout the U.S. Government to advance these efforts.

*Question.* Do you commit to continuing the previous administration's support for the Three Seas Initiative as a way to assist the infrastructure development of Eastern Europe in a sustainable way and to counter China's Belt and Road and 17 + 1 Initiative?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to continuing strong U.S. Government support for the Three Seas Initiative (3SI), a commitment already voiced by Secretary Blinken on several occasions. 3SI meets multiple strategic objectives of the Biden-Harris administration, including promoting the economic development and critical infrastructure resilience of some close U.S. Allies. 3SI contributes to closing development deficits left by communism; fostering the overall integration of Europe; strengthening Central and Eastern European resilience against, and Western alternatives to, Russian malign influence and the PRC's Belt and Road and 17+1 initiatives; and advancing multilateral partnership and transatlantic ties.

*Question.* What do you view as the DFC's role in this (3 Seas) Initiative? What additional steps can, and should, the U.S. Government take to incentivize the private sector to take the risks necessary to invest in the region?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Development Finance Corporation to maximize U.S. investment in Three Seas Initiative (3SI)

projects and in finding other ways, in coordination with members, international financial institutions, and private capital markets to support 3SI goals in the energy, digital, and transport sectors. The needs in the 3SI region cannot be addressed solely by the public sector; the United States must incentivize private capital and U.S. business to invest in this stable region whose economic indicators have long been strong and positive. The U.S. Government should also promote U.S. business investment in 3SI projects.

*Question.* Do you view the sanctions in the Protecting European Energy Security Act (PEESA), as amended, as a statutory requirement or an optional authority??

Answer. PEESA is U.S. law, and if confirmed, I will uphold the law. PEESA, as amended, is an important tool to stop the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances rather than undermines its collective security. I understand that the Department continues to assess all potential targets involved in the construction of Nord Stream 2, to identify persons that engaged in conduct that meets the specific terms of the statute.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is possible to prevent the completion of NordStream 2, or is it inevitable?

Answer. Nord Stream 2 is a threat not only to Europe's energy security, but also to strategic stability on the continent. The administration will continue to work with allies and partners, using the tools at its disposal, to prevent the completion of the pipeline and to ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances, rather than undermines, its collective security. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to work to bring an end to the project.

*Question.* Are U.S. sanctions on entities involved in NordStream 2 extraterritorial, as some have claimed?

Answer. The administration has made clear that any entity involved in the Nord Stream 2 pipeline risks U.S. sanctions and should immediately abandon work on the pipeline. I understand the administration continues to engage European allies and partners to make our opposition to the pipeline and the potential sanctions risk clear and will continue to underscore strong, bipartisan U.S. opposition to this Russian malign influence project.

*Question.* Do you believe it would be appropriate for the administration to negotiate a deal with Germany (or any foreign power) involving the waiving of mandatory sanctions absent prior consultations with Congress?

Answer. To the best of my knowledge, there is no such deal. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on this matter and others.

*Question.* Do you commit to upholding U.S. law and sanctioning entities that are building or supporting the building of the NordStream 2 pipeline?

Answer. PEESA is U.S. law, and if confirmed, I will uphold the law. I understand the Department continues to work to bring an end to the pipeline, which it views as a threat to European energy security and as a tool of Russian coercion. If confirmed, I will work with the Department to continue to assess and evaluate evidence available to determine the applicability of PEESA, as amended.

*Question.* How will you use your position as Under Secretary of Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment to use U.S. economic power to partner with, rather than coerce, European allies and partners to strengthen their mechanisms to push back on China, including strengthening and diversifying their economies, incentivizing western investment into eastern and southern Europe, building strong export control regimes, and reinforcing their investment screening mechanisms?

Answer. As Secretary Blinken said, the People's Republic of China is the only country with the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to seriously challenge the stable and open international system. To address this challenge, the United States must engage from a position of strength, which requires working with allies and partners since this combined weight is much harder for Beijing to ignore. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with European partners who share our concerns to build resilience and reduce reliance on the PRC, and look forward to making progress on the issues you raise in upcoming G7 meetings, the U.S.-EU Summit and U.S.-EU China Dialogue, and in other venues.

*Question.* What are the most immediate and critical areas for State to prioritize in this effort? Will you have the capacity to prioritize both the removal of irritants in our relationship AND work to weaken China's economic power over Europe?

Answer. Our European partners share many of our concerns regarding the PRC's efforts to challenge the current economic order, but we will not always see eye to



eye, even with our closest allies. We must work together to build resilience by both protecting and promoting our technological advantages. We must work together to ensure global norms and standards reflect our values. We must work together to secure our global supply chains and promote fair trade. Managing our differences is essential to achieving our shared objectives and, if confirmed, I will ensure we find the common ground that will allow us to do so.

*Question.* The EU struck an investment deal with China last December, and yet, the U.S.-EU talks on trade and investment, through Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) negotiations, have crumbled. While the U.S. Trade Representative has primacy over trade talks, in this role, how will you push for enhanced trade and investment between the United States and the EU? What do you see as areas ripe for immediate cooperation in trade and investment? Do you believe there is room, despite protectionist instincts on both sides of the Atlantic, to complete any trade and investment agreements during the Biden administration? Will you push both sides to compromise for the sake of economic growth and unity against malign economic actors?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the administration's active engagement with EU and European counterparts on how to advance our shared economic interests. Failed FTA negotiations and tariff wars have badly damaged the U.S.-EU trade relationship over the past seven years. Resolving the trade disputes including Airbus-Boeing, Section 232 steel and aluminium, and Section 301 determinations in response to digital services taxes, in a manner that supports domestic jobs and growth in the United States, would remove key irritants in the relationship and allow us to focus on future challenges.

*Question.* Will you support a trade agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom? Do you believe that a US-UK free trade agreement would be a benefit to the United States as well as the UK? How will you work with the UK and EU to ensure that both sides of the Brexit deal uphold their commitments, which is to the benefit of the U.S., EU, and UK?

*Answer.* President Biden has been clear that he will make significant new investments in the United States for American workers before he signs any new trade deals. Now that a U.S. Trade Representative has been confirmed, I understand that the administration is reviewing the status of the negotiations and the text of the U.S.-UK FTA to determine the best way forward. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Department colleagues and USTR to engage with the UK Government on strengthening our ties across a wide range of economic issues. Further, President Biden has warned that any trade deal is contingent upon respect for the Good Friday Agreement.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* While chairing the American Bar Association's Interamerican Law Committee at the height of the internal wars in Central America, I organized a network of lawyers from the hemisphere who sought to promote human rights and help mediate labor law conflicts in the region. Together with bar associations from Central America, from 1986 to 1989 we organized conferences in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica that focused on the use of arbitration. The conferences received much attention in these jurisdictions, and at least in one country resulted in draft labor law legislation that incorporated arbitration procedures. While the results were modest and violence against labor unionists continues to this day, our efforts served to highlight alternative dispute resolution methods to adjudicate often-bloody conflicts.

In 1999 journalist Horacio Verbitsky filed a complaint with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights against the Republic of Argentina over his conviction for publishing criticisms of Argentine Government officials, including then-President Menem. At the request of a Columbia Law School professor, my team and I researched the applicable law and prepared a first draft of Mr. Verbitsky's legal brief. The case was ultimately decided in favor of Mr. Verbitsky.

In 2013, the Rana Plaza building in Dhaka, Bangladesh collapsed, killing more than 1,100 garment workers and injuring an additional 2,500-plus. The disaster followed several accidents in garment factories in the country. Shortly afterwards, as

Assistant Secretary of State for Economics, Energy and Business, I led a U.S. Government visit to Bangladesh, where we informed Bangladeshi officials that the United States would revoke GSP privileges over worker conditions. I followed up with several meetings in Washington DC with two industry groups that had been created by European and U.S. clothing retailers to improve worker conditions in Bangladesh. My main concern was that, although both groups had similar objectives, they were often in competition and were dissipating efforts that could not be wasted. Our meetings led the groups to agree on common standards and greater coordination. I understand that, largely through the efforts of both industry groups, safety has improved at the larger factories in Bangladesh, although more work remains to be done in smaller enterprises.

*Question.* Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

*Answer.* Successful international economic policy is predicated on having a diverse and representative staff. President Biden has made diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility a national security imperative. Secretary Blinken has committed to recruit and retain a workforce that truly reflects the American people. Diversity and inclusion make our diplomatic team stronger, smarter, more creative, and more innovative. If confirmed, I commit to working with the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, the Bureau of Global Talent Management, the Secretary's Office of Civil Rights, and other Department leadership to foster an inclusive workplace in the E "family," promoting, mentoring, and supporting the advancement of diverse staff.

*Question.* Fighting corruption is one of the most important ways that we can promote democracy and human rights worldwide. What steps would you take to address global corruption within the role for which you are nominated?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to work with experts across the Department and interagency to promote and defend democracy. Through the targeted deployment of accountability tools, foreign assistance, and diplomatic engagement, we can address endemic corruption and human rights abuse. I will prioritize working with allies, seeking opportunities to promote our shared ideals together. I will work to expand opportunities for U.S. companies to compete for and win business globally by advancing the fight against foreign bribery and corruption, strengthening transparency and good governance, and promoting responsible business conduct.

*Question.* Do you commit to work with Congress to strengthen U.S. policies to combat global corruption?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress to strengthen U.S. policies to combat global corruption, including efforts to bolster enforcement of foreign bribery laws and improve global standards of transparency, accountability, and good governance. These efforts directly support the American middle class through job creation by helping to level the playing field for U.S. business.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In 2015, you wrote an article stating that the loosening of restrictions on telecommunications investments in Cuba "had the greatest potential to accelerate the growth of civil society in Cuba." Although I believe that increasing connectivity and allowing the free flow of information to the Cuban people will help increase the communication among the Cuban people, ETECSA, Cuba's only telecommunication company sets high prices, and shuts down the access to those who voice opposition against the regime. Just recently the regime shut down internet access in response to the San Isidro protests. Can you describe your views towards Cuba today?

*Answer.* As a refugee from Castro's Cuba, I have no illusions about the Cuban Government. Many human rights activists from across the island rely on expanded internet access to communicate with each other and strengthen networks with other groups in Cuba and abroad, but the Cuban Government has restricted the country's internet access to keep independent media and journalists from reporting on government repression. If confirmed, I will seek to engage directly with Cuban civil society, and will work to design policies to empower Cuban civil society and recognize their

leadership on these issues. Further, I will directly engage the Cuban Government on human rights issues, including freedom of expression.

*Question.* As you know, the Cuban military plays a large role in controlling the flow of money in the Cuban economy. They use this control to support the Cuban regime. Do you support restricting financial transactions with the Cuban military as a way to promote freedom in Cuba?

*Answer.* The Cuban people face great hardship as they deal with the pandemic and decades of an oppressive government's economic mismanagement. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration has committed to reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, including the U.S. posture regarding economic sanctions, to ensure they help empower the Cuban people to determine their future. If confirmed, I will support the Department's review, and I look forward to consulting with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* As you know, Taiwan has long pursued a bilateral trade agreement with the United States. Late last year, the Taiwanese Government expended tremendous political capital to lift a ban on the import of American pork, which was the last major stumbling block to an agreement with Washington. If confirmed, will you urge the U.S. trade Representative to prioritize free trade agreement negotiations with Taiwan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to deepening trade, investment, and other economic ties with Taiwan, which is a critical economic partner. Trade with Taiwan advances U.S. interests and helps create economic opportunity and prosperity in the United States. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Trade Representative to strengthen U.S. economic ties with Taiwan as an important priority.

*Question.* China engages in economic predatory behavior through initiatives like Belt and Road, conducts malign influence operations around the world, steals IP, and is working to reshape the international rules-based system to its benefit. If confirmed, how will you use your role to counter China's malign activities?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to work with partners and allies to promote democratic governance and transparency. In contrast to the PRC's approach to development, I will work to ensure that we continue to focus on strong fiscal, social, and environmental safeguards in the projects we support. This includes building partnerships and local capacity, and promoting U.S. leadership in science, technology, and innovation. Further, if confirmed, I will work to promote the highest standards in development investments that are both beneficial and sustainable over the long term, and advocate for these standards in international standard-setting bodies. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* Do you think that the Belt and Road Initiative challenges U.S. strategic and economic interests? If so, could you expand on that?

*Answer.* The PRC's opaque and unilateral approach to its overseas lending and investments creates unknown financial risks and undermines the efforts of the international community to advance development in a transparent, accountable, and sustainable manner that includes appropriate social and environmental safeguards. If confirmed, I will actively contribute to the Biden-Harris administration's efforts to counter this malign PRC influence, including by working with partners and allies to offer sustainable, market-based alternatives and help countries increase transparency and accountability of existing PRC lending.

*Question.* How do you think the U.S. should work with our allies to make them aware of the repercussions of tightening economic engagement with China?

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken said, the PRC is the only country with the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to seriously challenge the stable and open international system. The United States must address this challenge from a position of strength, which requires working with allies and partners. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our partners and allies are aware of the risks posed by Beijing's economic statecraft. These risks include vulnerability to predatory and unsustainable lending, malign investment, economic coercion, ICT networks with equipment that can be manipulated or controlled by the PRC, pressure to prioritize the PRC's interests in international organizations, and unfair competition from the PRC's state-owned enterprises.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* If confirmed, you will serve as the Alternate Governor at the World Bank, the EBRD and the IDB. All three of these banks are involved and have influence in countries where sexual minorities are discriminated against and where there is violence and persecution based on sexual identity and gender preference. Will you commit for the United States to use its vote and voice to improve the situation in these countries and ensure that all citizens can benefit from development programs supported by these multilateral banks?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to ensuring that programs financed by the multilateral development banks are inclusive and reach the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in society, including those who may be victims of persecution based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics. If confirmed as Alternate Governor, I will work with the U.S. Governor to promote inclusivity in the development programs we support.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

*Question.* As the senior economic officer of the State Department, your responsibilities often overlap with those of the Department of Commerce, the Treasury Department, the United States Trade Representative (USTR), among other agencies. I am interested in hearing what you see as your role in this effort and how you will work with other agencies to advance our goals?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with the U.S. Trade Representative, the Department of Commerce, the Department of the Treasury, and others in the administration to ensure that all U.S. trading partners live up to their commitments in trade agreements, and I will encourage a whole-of-government approach to addressing these challenges. If confirmed as the State Department's senior economic officer, I will work to ensure the interagency considers the foreign policy implications of all decisions while taking into account the economic impacts on U.S. businesses, as well as those of our allies and partners.

*Question.* You have spoken in the past about how our trading partners must live up to their commitments, especially as it pertains to workers' rights. Currently, in the Xinjiang region of China, Uyghurs are currently being forced to produce products in atrocious conditions. How do you recommend we deal with this situation and how should we hold China accountable?

*Answer.* The PRC is engaged in human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang, including forced labor, that shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences. The United States has used several tools to confront the PRC's use of forced labor, including sanctions and Withhold Release Orders to prevent products made with forced labor from entering the United States. If confirmed, I will work with our interagency partners to use all appropriate levers available to us as we seek to eliminate all forms of human trafficking. In addition, I will work with allies and partners to promote accountability and call on Beijing to respect the human rights of Uyghurs and all other religious and ethnic minorities across China.

*Question.* The State Department, in concert with the Treasury Department and USAID, works to negotiate and executive conservation agreements under the Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA) program. If you are confirmed to be Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, will you commit to prioritizing additional TFCA deals using the funding that Congress has provided?

*Answer.* If confirmed I would welcome new TFCA deals and would actively seek such, including for coral reefs.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR JOHN BARRASSO

*Question.* If confirmed, what role would you have in formulating U.S. policy at the multilateral development banks?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead three bureaus at the Department of State that play an important role in formulating the agency's views on projects and policies

at the multilateral development banks, including the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, which coordinates that process. In support of the Department of Treasury's role as the U.S. Government lead on multilateral development banks issues, the Department of State provides advice, expertise, insights, and recommendations that contribute to our Government's oversight of those institutions.

*Question.* How are the authorities divided up between the State Department and the U.S. Department of Treasury when it comes to international financial institutions?

*Answer.* The Department of the Treasury is the lead agency for U.S. engagement with the international financial institutions. The Department of State provides advice, expertise, insights, and recommendations in support of the Department of the Treasury's role.

*Question.* How does ending financing of fossil fuel projects at multilateral development banks help alleviate poverty and promote development?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support multilateral development banks' (MDBs) continued focus on energy policies that increase energy access, accelerate development, and reduce poverty. I will encourage MDBs to recognize and address the linkages between climate change and poverty, food insecurity and migration. The lack of recurring fuel costs for many clean energy systems allows countries to spend funds on development priorities rather than on the unpredictable costs of fuel.

*Question.* What role will you play in the administration's U.S. international climate finance plan?

*Answer.* The U.S. International Climate Finance Plan ("Plan") outlines how U.S. agencies will work with each other, the private sector, and other partners to most strategically mobilize investment for energy transformation and climate adaptation. The Plan recognizes the importance of suitable investment climates, leveraging private capital, and positioning the United States to seize the economic opportunity of a low-emissions future by promoting U.S. exports and private investment into low-carbon and climate-resilient technologies and services, which can be a catalyst for job growth here at home. If confirmed, I would leverage the resources of the Department to advance these objectives.

*Question.* What specific steps will you take to help U.S. businesses increase exports of American energy resources, including coal, oil, and natural gas?

*Answer.* America's energy resource abundance and exports have helped stabilize global markets, increased energy access and, in some cases, reduced energy costs, spurring economic growth and prosperity. If confirmed, I will work within my role at the State Department to help ensure that U.S. energy exporters are treated fairly in foreign markets. I also look forward, if confirmed, to further expanding the scope of U.S. solutions and U.S. businesses that can be supported through our diplomatic efforts as we embrace a diverse array of energy technologies, such as carbon capture, that can assist countries with their decarbonization goals, energy security, and development priorities.

*Question.* How will you ensure the State Department is helping developing countries with all types of energy projects, including oil, gas, and coal?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with developing countries to optimize technologies according to nationally integrated resource plans, which will cost-effectively meet clean energy deployment and energy access goals, while also driving economic growth. As developing countries navigate the transition to a clean energy economy and build a climate-resilient future, finance will play a crucial role. If confirmed, I will support the administration's climate finance plan to promote the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments and to assist developing countries' implementation of emissions reduction measures.

*Question.* With billions of people without power, do you believe the United States should be promoting fossil fuels that are affordable and reliable, such as coal and natural gas, while supporting new technologies that reduce their carbon output?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support a foreign energy policy that advances energy access and energy security alongside decarbonization goals. While renewable energy and energy storage are increasingly the cheapest, most effective way of promoting energy access, carbon capture and storage technologies, if commercialized, could abate or decarbonize power generated by existing fossil-fuel infrastructure. If confirmed, I will work within the Department and with other agencies to coordinate efforts to support countries to meet their climate, energy access, and energy security needs in ways that further our climate and energy goals.

*Question.* Instead of regulating and placing impossible restrictions on the undeveloped energy sectors of the developing nations, we should be encouraging growth so that these countries can compete in the international marketplace, create jobs, and alleviate poverty. Do you agree?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to encouraging growth in developing nations and creating jobs and alleviating poverty. I understand that the Biden-Harris administration seeks to support developing nations' energy sectors to achieve this goal, while also comprehensively addressing multiple diplomatic goals, including climate change. Often, energy resources with the lowest costs—which can also offer health and environmental benefits—cannot compete due to barriers in existing regulatory and market structures, as well as country risk factors. If confirmed, I hope we can work together to ensure multilateral development banks support investments to increase access to affordable and reliable energy for development and support cleaner energy to support our climate change efforts.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*State Department*

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF.

Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily co-mingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

*Question.* What are your goals for your bureau, if confirmed?

*Answer.* During my confirmation hearings I listed five priorities for the “E” family, which I would like to summarize here:

- Support the administration's efforts to end COVID-19 globally, in a manner that reinforces America's global leadership, strengthens our alliances, and counteracts Russian and Chinese “vaccine diplomacy.”
- Promote environmental and energy policies that tackle climate change, and ensure that our companies and workers lead the world in the clean energy revolution.
- Insist on free, fair and reciprocal trade rules that our trade partners—both allies and adversaries—must adhere to, and that enable U.S. companies and workers to compete on a level playing field. Based on my experiences in the private sector, I am convinced that U.S. businesses and workers can thrive in the global marketplace if given fair shot.
- Help create alliances to maintain U.S. leadership in the technologies of the future. This includes confronting efforts to undermine American innovation, impose biased norms and standards and appropriate our intellectual property.
- Expand the international footprint of our workers and companies by providing information about opportunities abroad and facilitating U.S. participation in international projects. In particular, meeting the developing world's infrastructure needs should be a strategic imperative for the United States and a business opportunity for our companies.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which China uses child labor for producing critical minerals, and manufacturing products that include critical minerals.

*Answer.* I understand that the U. S. Government is conducting a review of the critical minerals supply chain in accordance with Executive Order 14017 (America's Supply Chains). I understand that the State Department has found that PRC au-

thorities are increasingly placing the young children of interned Muslims in Xinjiang in state-run boarding schools, orphanages, and “child welfare guidance centers.” Reportedly, older children among these groups are placed in vocational schools, where some may be victims of forced labor. If confirmed, I am committed to helping end the forced labor of children in all sectors, including those involving critical minerals.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which China uses slave labor for producing critical minerals, and manufacturing products that include critical minerals.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to do everything in my authority to help end State-sponsored forced labor, which is increasingly prevalent in China. In 2013, the National People’s Congress ratified a decision to abolish “re-education through labor” (RTL), a punitive system that subjected individuals to extra-judicial detention involving forced labor, from which the Government reportedly profited. I understand that the Government closed most RTL facilities by October 2015; however, the Government reportedly converted some RTL facilities into state-sponsored drug rehabilitation facilities or administrative detention centers where, according to civil society and media reports, forced labor continues.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which supply chains for critical minerals, and products made with critical minerals, run through the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

*Answer.* State-sponsored forced labor is intensifying under the PRC Government’s mass detention and political indoctrination campaign against predominantly Muslim minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang). Authorities have detained more than one million members of ethnic and religious minority groups, including Uyghurs, Hui, ethnic Kazakhs, and ethnic Kyrgyz, in as many as 1,200 “vocational training centers.” If confirmed, I am committed to eliminating forced labor from critical mineral supply chains, including any that run through Xinjiang.

*Question.* Over the last several years, the United States has taken a bipartisan, bicameral, whole-of-government approach to stopping the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Production halted for a year after President Trump signed into law the Protecting Europe’s Energy Security Act (PEESA) and remained halted until after now-President Biden was elected. According to public reports, the Germans and Russians believe that the Biden administration will not impose crippling sanctions mandated by PEESA, as amended—and unfortunately, thus far, they have proven correct. Can you commit to using your role, if confirmed, to ensure the imposition of sanctions pursuant to PEESA, as mandated by Congress?

*Answer.* PEESA is U.S. law, and if confirmed, I will uphold the law. Congress has provided tools that ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances rather than undermines its collective security. The Department of State continues to work to bring an end to the pipeline, which is a threat to European energy security and a tool of Russian coercion. If confirmed, I will work with the Department to continue to assess and evaluate evidence available to determine the applicability of PEESA, as amended.

*Question.* Please assess the effect that allowing Nord Stream 2 to come online would have on American national security and European energy security.

*Answer.* The administration has made clear its belief that Nord Stream 2 is a geopolitical, Kremlin malign influence project that threatens European energy security, including that of Ukraine and eastern flank NATO Allies and partners, while dividing the continent. The administration will continue to work with allies and partners, using the tools at its disposal, to ensure that Europe has a reliable, diversified energy supply that enhances, rather than undermines, its collective security.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSE W. FERNANDEZ BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* What is your understanding of the current status of the Blue Dot Network under the Biden administration’s State Department?

*Answer.* The Blue Dot Network seeks to promote the development of quality, sustainable infrastructure around the world by certifying projects that uphold global infrastructure principles. I understand the State Department and the interagency continue to work with our Australian and Japanese partners to develop the technical

details of the initiative, including a methodology and metrics for certifying quality infrastructure projects in the developing world.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to advancing and fully implementing the Blue Dot Network?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I fully intend to advance and implement the Blue Dot Network initiative to certify quality infrastructure projects in the developing world. As the global economy recovers from the pandemic, infrastructure financing will play a central role in creating an economic recovery that is sustainable and long-lasting. Rigorous standards will ensure that infrastructure investment in developing countries serves the best interests of their citizens and are consistent with their economic, climate, environmental, and social goals.

*Question.* Do you plan to replicate the model created by the Clean Network Initiative across other tech sectors, infrastructure, and energy?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration views emerging technologies, infrastructure, and energy as critical to America's future national security and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will support Department efforts to work with allies and partners to create an international environment that is competitive and open to innovation by American technology, infrastructure, and energy providers.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the Indo-Pacific Business Forum and what it accomplished when it was held in November 2019?

*Answer.* The 2019 Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF) underscored the U.S. commitment to broad-based economic and commercial engagement in the Indo-Pacific. The IPBF is the premier conference where business leaders and government policy makers meet to discuss economic issues in the Indo-Pacific region. At the 2019 Forum, over 1,000 U.S. and Indo-Pacific business and government leaders discussed investment opportunities and new policy initiatives in infrastructure, energy, digital, and healthcare. Building on this success, in 2020 the United States organized an IPBF which attracted record attendance with 2,900 participants—including three U.S. cabinet secretaries—and over \$10 billion in deal signings and announcements.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you plan to continue and improve the Indo-Pacific Business Forum that the Biden administration inherited?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work with U.S. Government economic agencies to continue and improve upon the Indo-Pacific Business Forum (IPBF). The event draws together business leaders, policymakers, and media from across the Indo-Pacific and serves as a venue to highlight U.S. economic policy developments, sign commitments for new investments, and build relationships between the private sector and governments. As with the 2020 forum, I understand that the 2021 forum will likely be a hybrid in-person and online event for maximum flexibility and engagement, and to help American businesses bring key commercial transactions to closure.

*Question.* If you are confirmed, do you commit to consulting with Congress on ways to make progress in the Indo-Pacific with respect to sectors such as energy, tech, and infrastructure?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be committed to open and robust communication with Congress, including through consultations on energy, technology, and infrastructure issues in the Indo-Pacific. Central to our efforts, the United States will promote private-sector alternatives in these areas. I intend to focus on partnerships that strengthen local capacity and promote entrepreneurship, transparency, good governance, fair practices, and internationally recognized environmental, social, and labor standards.



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Young, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

Also present: Senator Whitehouse

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Ambassador Nichols, Ambassador Sison, congratulations on your nominations, and thank you for your willingness to continue serving our country, as well as your families.

We understand that that is a sacrifice of all of those who are part of the family and in terms of this continuing service, so we appreciate that as well.

At this pivotal moment for our foreign policy in the State Department, I am heartened that President Biden has nominated individuals to two critical positions.

I believe that your experience and commitment will be assets to the department and critical to the defense of our interests and values.

I understand that the Senator from Rhode Island will be introducing Ambassador Nichols this morning, and that the Senator from Maryland, a member of this committee, will be introducing Ambassador Sison.

I do not see Ambassador Whitehouse yet. I know he is very busy in Judiciary affairs. So he is probably is on his way here.

So let us recognize the Senator Van Hollen first for an introduction.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to both the nominees.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, colleagues, thank you for the opportunity to introduce to you the president's nominee to

serve as our next Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, Ambassador Michele Sison.

And in this nomination, President Biden has not only selected a nominee with impeccable credentials, unimpeachable character, and a deep knowledge of foreign policy, he has also wisely selected a longtime Marylander.

I had met Ambassador Sison before, but my conversation with her yesterday makes me even more confident that she has the knowledge and experience we need at this critical moment in our history.

President Biden is determined to renew American engagement around the world and leadership in international organizations and, if confirmed, I am confident Ambassador Sison will faithfully help achieve this goal.

Ambassador Sison has had a distinguished career at the highest levels of the United States Foreign Service. Her experience spans nearly four decades and six presidents.

She has served as our ambassador four times to different places: first, to the UAE, then to Lebanon, then to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and most recently, to Haiti, a post she was appointed to in 2018 and a post which brought her full circle from her first diplomatic position as the human rights officer at Embassy Port-au-Prince in 1982.

Throughout her 39 years at the forefront of U.S. diplomacy, she has served in a variety of roles that have taken her across the world, representing our nation's interests in West Africa, South Asia, and elsewhere.

She also spent four years as the United States deputy representative to the United Nations from 2014 to 2018, a position that makes her ideally prepared for this new post.

She also has a long track record of collaborating with U.N. peacekeepers and has gained a firsthand knowledge of the U.N. entities responsible for development, humanitarian relief, and human rights in the field.

Her superb talents have been recognized by our country many times. She is decorated with numerous awards for her service, including Superior Honor awards, the ambassadorial level awards for her contributions to counter proliferation and combating trafficking in persons, and she has received both a Distinguished Service Award and the Presidential Rank Award of meritorious service.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I could go on, but it would consume the entire hearing. So let me end with this. I grew up in a Foreign Service family and lived in some of the countries where Ambassador Sison has served.

I know a good diplomat when I see one, and Ambassador Sison fits the bill. She exemplifies the very best of what it means to serve our country as a career Foreign Service officer.

I urge the committee to support her nomination.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Van Hollen.

And after that sterling recommendation, Ambassador, maybe you should just rest your case. But we are not going to let you off that easy.

In any event, thank you, Senator Van Hollen. I understand that Senator Whitehouse is with us virtually.

Senator WHITEHOUSE. I am, Chairman.  
The CHAIRMAN. Please proceed. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SHELDON WHITEHOUSE,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE ISLAND**

Senator WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, and thank you, Ranking Member Risch, for welcoming me to your committee today.

Like Senator Van Hollen, I come from a Foreign Service family. I am the black sheep in a family of—my grandfather, father, uncle, and cousin who were all Foreign Service officers.

So it gives me particular pleasure to be here to recommend a career Foreign Service officer and a native Rhode Islander, Brian Nichols, as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs.

My father served for decades, not exactly on the champagne circuit but in countries embroiled in conflict and upheaval, where the comforts and security of America often felt very far away. But he always felt he was doing rewarding and deeply important work.

Brian Nichols has had a similar career serving in challenging State Department roles in South and Central America, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

He has won department honors for his contributions to State's trade development mission and helped lead the department's international narcotics and law enforcement work.

He has been our United States ambassador to both Peru and Zimbabwe, a country emerging from decades of dictatorial rule and dire economic hardship. So he knows the ropes and he has skills developed in our small, tight knit, and diverse state.

Rhode Islanders have, I think, an unusual ability to reach beyond seeming difference and even simmering enmity to find shared values and common humanity, and Ambassador Nichols is a shining example of that skill.

Building consensus is as simple, he says, as understanding people, a very Rhode Island quality, a very diplomatic quality, and one which Ambassador Nichols has demonstrated throughout his distinguished career.

I am confident that if we confirm his nomination, he will serve all Americans well and make us proud.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Whitehouse, for your introduction of Ambassador Nichols.

Ambassador Nichols, your nomination comes at a time when the Western Hemisphere is reeling under a cascade of challenges: the devastation wrought by COVID-19, the fraying of democratic consensus, major migration crises, and a void a four years of American absence that China is seeking to fill. The task at hand is immense.

With death rates among the highest in the world, COVID-19 is inflicting a terrible toll on the hemisphere, and the United States has to step up. As we accumulate surplus vaccines, we must prioritize vaccine access for countries in the hemisphere as part of our global efforts to ensure that the most vulnerable are vaccinated.

And as the region's economic health has a direct impact on the United States, we have to take bold steps to facilitate its recovery. That is why this committee voted to authorize a capital increase for the Inter-American Development Bank last month.

Additionally, Latin America is facing the recurrence of flawed elections, deterioration of the separation of powers, attacks on journalists and freedom of the press, and entrenched autocrats in Havana, Caracas, and Managua.

Indeed, we know where democratic decay can lead. After two decades, Venezuela is now a land of unbridled criminality and kleptocracy, where a humanitarian crisis has forced more than 5 million people to flee their homeland.

While the scale is distinct, we also know that irregular migration from Central America is rooted in decades of low levels of democratic governance.

Deficit, or I should say, deficient institutions are unable to meet the needs of the people and too many leaders have exploited weak rule of law to place their personal interests over those of their citizens.

Given the scale of the challenge, I am pleased to see that Vice President Harris is heading the administration's diplomatic efforts in Central America.

Under her leadership, we are already seeing an increased humanitarian response and a strong reaction to leaders that seek to undermine democracy.

So, Ambassador Nichols, I look forward to discussing with you. I appreciate our visit yesterday. We had a whole tour de force of the Western Hemisphere, and we look forward to discussing with you how we will address some of these challenges and best to collaborate to ensure your success.

Ambassador Sison—I am sorry, Sison. I do not know why I am—it is in my mind. But, Ambassador Sison, I apologize.

Welcome to your sixth Senate confirmation hearing. It is deeply reassuring that President Biden nominated you, a diplomat with extensive experience, immense skill, and a demonstrated management record to be the next Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

Over the course of the Trump administration, we witnessed a dramatic and troubling erosion of U.S. government leadership at the U.N. We tried to pull out of the World Health Organization in the middle of a pandemic.

We undermined international protections for women, girls, and LGBTI individuals, and we defunded or reduced funding to key agencies. We refused to pay our dues in full to U.N. peacekeeping operations and, as a result, the United States has accrued \$1.1 billion in arrears.

When we shun our responsibilities and fail to lead, other countries take note and seek to take advantage, to the detriment of our interests and security.

China and Russia have sought to fill the vacuum left by our absence. It is time for renewal and engagement with the United Nations and its agencies, like the World Food Programme and UNFPA.

In the wake of the devastating COVID–19 pandemic, we must redouble the Biden administration’s effort at restoring U.S. leadership at the WHO and other international health and humanitarian organizations.

The world will be closely watching how we more effectively engage within and work to strengthen international organizations.

So I look forward to hearing your views and working with you to ensure we restore our critical leadership role.

In closing, at a time of unprecedented challenges around the world, America needs outstanding leadership at the State Department. We look forward to your testimony.

And now I am going to return to the distinguished ranking member for his remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to both of you for your willingness to serve. Certainly, outstanding credentials. It is not often we see a panel like this with the depth of experience that the two of you have.

I want to start at where the chairman started and that is on the issues in the Western Hemisphere. I am increasingly concerned that while a majority of nations in our hemisphere are considered democracies, authoritarian regimes in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba have systematically dismantled democratic institutions and have committed some of the world’s worst human rights abuses.

These bad actors undermine their own countries, but they also undermine their neighbors. Transnational criminal organizations and malign state actors benefit from and contribute to these authoritarian regimes and pose a significant threat to the peace and stability of our hemisphere.

More broadly, I remain exceedingly concerned about the malign influence of China and Russia throughout our hemisphere and the apparent increase of that.

China’s predatory lending practices and spread of corruption threaten the sovereignty and the privacy of our southern neighbors.

At the same time, Russia has exported repressive tactics to allow authoritarian regimes to maintain control and crackdown on dissent.

Beyond external malign influence, poor governance, violence, and lack of economic opportunity in countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have prompted waves of illegal migrants to show up at our southern door.

The previous administration negotiated a number of agreements with these countries, and the current administration’s failure to capitalize on those agreements has only fueled a surge of migrants over the past few months, along with other precipitating factors, and demonstrates a significant challenge to our government’s ability to protect our homeland.

Lastly, as you know, Ambassador Nichols, the Columbia River Treaty between the United States and Canada is a great example of two nations managing a shared resource. I want to impress upon you the importance of a successful and timely conclusion to these negotiations for the entire North West congressional delegation.

As you know, a number of us on a bipartisan basis have been working diligently with the department to move the negotiations forward. We stand ready to continue to assist the administration however we can in this effort.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on all of these important matters. Next, we have the nomination for Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs. This position oversees a wide range of multilateral organizations, the largest being the United Nations. The United States remains the biggest donor to the U.N. in both assessed and voluntary funds.

While the Chinese Communist Party has increased its assessed dues, it is still severely lags behind the United States and our allies in voluntary contributions.

The Chinese Communist Party uses its minimal donations to leverage a large-scale malign influence campaign to reform global governance, as they call it, such that the international system is more conducive to its own interests.

As detailed in my report last fall on transatlantic cooperation on China, the Chinese Communist Party does so in part by inserting favorable language into U.N. resolutions, orchestrating the election of its top diplomats at U.N. agencies, and using its veto power as a member of the U.N. Security Council to block efforts to expose human rights violations.

This fall, the United States will have an opportunity to negotiate the scales of assessment of U.N. peacekeeping to be consistent with U.S. law. Currently, the United Nations assesses the United States at 27.9 percent.

As you know, this is not congruent with U.S. law. No country should pay more than 25 percent, and in 1994, the Congress of the United States enacted a bill that imposed 25 percent on U.S. contributions for this program. That law remains in effect today.

This mandate should be upheld during the upcoming negotiations. I will remind the administration that this is U.S. law and it must be used in the negotiating position.

I also remain concerned, really concerned, by the administration's recent decision to resume funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East, also known as UNRWA.

This was done without securing, without insisting on, without even asking for any reforms. Over the years, the agency has employed individuals affiliated with Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist organization.

UNRWA schools have been used to store Hamas weapons and there have been numerous cases of UNRWA textbooks containing material that is anti-Semitic. U.S. government assistance to UNRWA should cease unless true reform, as described above, is secured.

Finally, I am also concerned about the administration's decision to seek a seat at the U.N. Human Rights Council, again, without seeking any reforms.

The Council is a broken body that focuses the majority of its time on bullying our ally, Israel, and allows some of the greatest human rights abusers like China, Cuba, Russia, Iran, and Venezuela a seat at the table.

I know it is a bumper sticker to say, oh, we are always better off with a seat at the table when issues are being discussed than not being there. That is not always true, particularly in this instance, when you are sitting there rubbing elbows with the worst human rights abusers on the planet.

Only true reform will bring legitimacy back to that Council and the administration should work to secure substantial changes.

With that, I thank both of you for being here today, your willingness to serve, and recognize the sacrifices of both you and your families in this effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

We will now turn to the two nominees. We ask you to summarize your testimony in about five minutes. Your full statements will be included in the record.

And we will start off with Ambassador Nichols.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS OF RHODE ISLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS)**

Mr. NICHOLS. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the next Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for the confidence that they have placed in me at this crucial moment in our hemisphere.

The opportunity to appear before this committee for the third time as a nominee to serve the American people steels my resolve to fight for the values that our nation holds dear—democracy, the rule of law, and the innate dignity of every individual.

With over 32 years serving our nation at some of our most challenging missions around the world, if confirmed, I look forward to bringing all my skills and experience to bear in that fight.

President Biden has said that democracy holds the key to freedom, prosperity, peace, and dignity, and if we work together with our democratic partners with strength and confidence, we will meet every challenge and outpace every challenger.

My experience serving in our embassies in North, Central, and South America, as well as directing our policy towards the Caribbean, convinces me of the vital urgency of the President's words.

Our home, the Western Hemisphere, remains central to America's welfare, our prosperity, and our future. America's fortunes cannot be separated from those of our closest neighbors.

If confirmed, I look forward to drawing on the enormous talent and dedication of the community of professionals within the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, as well as civil society throughout the Americas, our own private sector, and, of course, our Congress to advance America and the region's progress toward a more democratic, secure, and prosperous region.

I have spent most of my career within the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. If confirmed, I will strive to build an inclusive,

compassionate, and diverse team that reflects our nation's prowess and professionalism.

We will work to expand our engagement and partnerships throughout the Western Hemisphere, especially with our closest neighbors, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

The situation in Central America demands our urgent attention and unflagging efforts to promote democracy, prosperity, and security, addressing the root causes of irregular migration.

The disastrous effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and a recession in many countries have opened the door to malign influences from outside our region.

We will build upon the shared values, family ties, economic opportunities, and commitment to fundamental freedoms to counter those malign actors and deliver a better future for the people of our region.

My professional achievements owe to the women who surround me: my wonderful wife, Geri, a retired senior Foreign Service officer, my talented daughters, Alex and Sophie, and my brilliant mother, Mildred.

They have pushed me to be a better person, sacrifice for my career, and nurtured me with their love and support.

In 1959, my late father began our family's adventure in diplomacy and foreign affairs, serving as a Fulbright Scholar and then partnering with the U.S. Information Agency on various projects in Europe, and helping to start the American Studies Program at the Free University of Berlin.

My own past assignments provide rich experience, should the Senate confirm me, to serve as Assistant Secretary. During my tenure as ambassador to Zimbabwe, I have fought tenaciously for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. I have led my team in responding to the multi-dimensional humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe.

As ambassador to Peru, I led a large mission that focused on improving the rule of law, fighting transnational crime and corruption, and promoting respect for human rights, particularly of women, girls, and disadvantaged groups.

I also led a unified mission initiative to promote American businesses and grow American jobs, earning the department's Charles Cobb Award for those efforts.

Prior to that, as the principal deputy assistant secretary for international narcotics and law enforcement, I helped direct a team of nearly 7,000 professionals who worked to expand access to justice, protect civilians, and combat crime around the world.

I have hands-on experience shaping our rule of law programs in Mexico and Central America, as well as crafting innovative justice sector outreach to Afro descendant and indigenous populations in the Americas.

Should the Senate confirm me, I will aim to exemplify the highest standards of our great nation and strengthen our diplomacy. I look forward to partnering with you to advance America's interests in the Western Hemisphere.

I stand ready to answer any questions you might have now and in the future. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nichols follows:]



## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the next Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me at this crucial moment in our Hemisphere.

The opportunity to appear before this committee for the third time as a nominee to serve the American people steels my resolve to fight for the values that our nation holds dear: democracy, the rule of law, and the innate dignity of every individual. With over 32 years serving our nation at some of our most challenging missions around the world, if confirmed I look forward to bringing all my skills and experience to bear in that fight. President Biden has said that "democracy holds the key to freedom, prosperity, peace, and dignity. . . . And, if we work together with our democratic partners, with strength and confidence, we will meet every challenge and outpace every challenger." My experience serving in our embassies in North, Central, and South America as well as directing our policy towards the Caribbean convinces me of the vital urgency of the President's words.

Our home, the Western Hemisphere, remains central to America's welfare, our prosperity, and our future. America's fortunes cannot be separated from those of our closest neighbors. If confirmed, I look forward to drawing on the enormous talent and dedication of the community of professionals within the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, as well as civil society throughout the Americas, our own private sector, and, of course, our Congress to advance America and the region's progress toward a more democratic, secure, and prosperous region.

I have spent most of my career within the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. If confirmed, I will strive to build an inclusive, compassionate, and diverse team that reflects our nation's prowess and professionalism. We will work to expand our engagement and partnerships throughout the Western Hemisphere—and especially with our closest neighbors Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean. The situation in Central America demands our urgent attention and unflagging efforts to promote democracy, prosperity, and security—addressing the root causes of irregular migration. The disastrous effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and a recession in many countries have opened the door to malign influences from outside our region. We will build on the shared values, family ties, economic opportunities, and commitment to fundamental freedoms to counter those malign actors and deliver a better future for the people of our region.

My professional achievements owe to the women who surround me: my wonderful wife Geri, a retired Senior Foreign Service Officer, my talented daughters Alex and Sophie, and my brilliant mother Mildred. They have pushed me to be a better person, sacrificed for my career, and nurtured me with their love and support. In 1959, my late father began our family's adventure in diplomacy and foreign affairs, serving as a Fulbright Scholar, then partnering with the U.S. Information Agency on various projects in Europe, and helping to start the American studies program at the Free University of Berlin.

My own past assignments provide rich experience, should the Senate confirm me to serve as Assistant Secretary. During my tenure as Ambassador to Zimbabwe, I have fought tenaciously for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. I have led my team in responding to the multi-dimensional humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe. As Ambassador to Peru, I led a large mission that focused on improving the rule of law, fighting transnational crime and corruption, and promoting respect for human rights, particularly of women, girls, and disadvantaged groups. I also led a unified mission initiative to promote American businesses and grow American jobs, earning the Department's Charles Cobb Award for those efforts.

Prior to that, as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, I helped direct a team of nearly 7,000 professionals who work to expand access to justice, protect civilians, and combat crime around the world. I have hands-on experience shaping our rule of law programs in Mexico and Central America, as well as crafting innovative justice sector outreach to Afro-descendant and Indigenous populations in the Americas.

Should the Senate confirm me, I will aim to exemplify the highest standards of our great nation and strengthen our diplomacy. I look forward to partnering with you to advance America's interests in the Western Hemisphere.

I stand ready to answer any questions you might have now and in the future.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador Sison?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER AMBASSADOR, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS)**

Ms. SISON. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee.

I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, IO. I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for this opportunity.

I want to recognize my daughters, Alexandra and Jessica, who are watching virtually today. Their love has supported me as I represented our country around the world and at the United Nations.

Over the past 39 years, I have been privileged to serve under six U.S. administrations and as ambassador four times overseas to the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and Maldives, and Haiti.

Given that experience, as well as service in Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, India, Pakistan, Iraq, and at the U.S. mission to the United Nations, I know that the United States cannot address today's global challenges alone.

From climate change to the COVID-19 pandemic, we must work in partnership with other nations. President Biden has made it clear that we will put our core U.S. values at the center of our foreign policy.

As U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.N. in New York, I saw that our nation is stronger when we lead the way in crafting strategic cross-regional partnerships. These alliances are key in safeguarding multilateral institutions from those such as the People's Republic of China that seek to bend the U.N. system to their authoritarian agendas.

We must actively out compete efforts by nations that stand in opposition to our U.S. values on human rights, democracy, labor rights, and transparent economic practices.

If confirmed, this will be at the top of my agenda. It is important that we uphold the rules-based order that upholds and promotes our values, advances sustainable development, and protects human rights.

The United States has a strong stake in leading efforts to preserve a free and open market, a free and open internet, and in advancing global governance in areas such as technology, trade, and climate change.

These rules and values benefit American interests and the American people. From the World Food Programme to UNICEF to the International Telecommunication Union, we have a deep stake in leading the international system, driving forward reforms with our partners.

We must also ensure that the voices of civil society, women, ethnic and religious minorities, and other marginalized communities are heard.

I have seen firsthand how U.N. peacekeepers and humanitarian workers protect civilians and save lives in places critical to U.S. national interests.

I have witnessed the positive impact of U.S. leadership when we insist on results and when we press for accountability, including accountability related to sexual exploitation and abuse.

We are the largest contributor to the U.N. system. It is in our interest to lead in promoting genuine reform. Thus, ensuring the transparency and integrity of multilateral bodies is a key priority.

We must promote qualified independent candidates to lead multilateral institutions and we must leverage the commitments of other countries to ensure that financial burdens are shared.

We must also fight bias against Israel across the U.N. system. The IO bureau support strong U.S. leadership at the U.N. and multilateral venues to advance our U.S. national interests, protect the American people, promote U.S. prosperity, and drive the reforms needed to ensure the effectiveness of international organizations.

As a Foreign Service practitioner, I know that our skilled diplomats at our missions abroad, our talented negotiators, and our amazing civil service subject matter experts are our force multipliers in the multilateral arena and in mobilizing global action.

If confirmed, prioritizing diversity and inclusion and building strong morale within the IO bureau will be at the top of my list, and if confirmed, I also pledge, number one, to look hard at U.N. and international organization management and budgeting practices and at how agencies implement ethics rules, including whistleblower protection; number two, to insist on effective peacekeeping operations that advance political solutions, have realistic and achievable mandates, and include women's participation; number three, to consult with you as we work together to meet the challenges of today's strategic competition and as we prove that respect for human rights, transparency, and democratic norms can and will prevail.

If confirmed, I know that you will be counting on me to make sure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are well spent and that our multilateral policies and programs improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable citizens, contribute to international peace and security, and serve the American people.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Sison follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MICHELE J. SISON

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee.

I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, IO. I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for this opportunity.

I want to recognize my daughters, Alexandra and Jessica, who are watching virtually today. Their love has supported me as I represented our country around the world and at the United Nations.

Over the past 39 years, I've been privileged to serve under six U.S. administrations and as U.S. Ambassador four times overseas: to the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and Maldives, and Haiti.

Given this experience—as well as service in Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, India, Pakistan, Iraq and at the U.S. Mission to the U.N.—I know that the United States cannot address today's global challenges alone.

From climate change to the COVID 19 pandemic, we must work in partnership with other nations. President Biden has made clear that we will put our core U.S. values at the center of our foreign policy.

As U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative at the U.N. in New York, I saw that our nation is stronger when we lead the way in crafting strategic, cross-regional partnerships. These alliances are key in safeguarding multilateral institutions from those, such as the People's Republic of China, that seek to bend the U.N. system to their authoritarian agendas.

We must actively out-compete efforts by nations that stand in opposition to U.S. values on human rights, democracy, labor rights, and transparent economic practices. If confirmed, this will be at the top of my agenda. It's important that we uphold the rules-based order that upholds and promotes our values, advances sustainable development, and protects human rights.

The United States has a strong stake in leading efforts to preserve a free and open internet, and in advancing global governance in areas such as technology, trade, and climate change.

These rules and values benefit American interests and the American people. From the World Food Program, to UNICEF, to the International Telecommunication Union, we have a deep stake in leading the international system—driving forward reforms with our partners.

We must also ensure that the voices of civil society, women, ethnic and religious minorities, and other marginalized communities are heard. I've seen firsthand how U.N. peacekeepers and humanitarian workers protect civilians and save lives in places critical to U.S. national interests.

I've witnessed the positive impact of U.S. leadership when we insist on results, and when we press for accountability—including accountability related to sexual exploitation and abuse. We are the largest contributor to the U.N. system; it is in our interest to lead in promoting genuine reform.

Thus, ensuring the transparency and integrity of multilateral bodies is a key priority. We must promote qualified, independent candidates to lead multilateral institutions, and we must leverage the commitments of other countries to ensure that financial burdens are shared.

We must also fight bias against Israel across the U.N. system.

The IO Bureau supports strong U.S. leadership at the U.N. and multilateral venues to advance our U.S. national interests, protect the American people, promote U.S. prosperity, and drive the reforms needed to ensure the effectiveness of international organizations.

As a Foreign Service practitioner, I know that our skilled diplomats at our missions abroad, our talented negotiators, and our amazing Civil Service subject matter experts are our force multipliers in the multilateral arena and in mobilizing global action.

If confirmed, prioritizing diversity and inclusion and building strong morale within the IO Bureau, will be at the top of my list. And, if confirmed, I also pledge:

- to look hard at U.N. and international organization management and budgeting practices, and at how agencies implement their ethics rules, including whistleblower protections;
- to insist on effective peacekeeping operations that advance political solutions, have realistic and achievable mandates, and include women's participation; and,
- to consult with you as we work to meet the challenges of today's strategic competition—and as we prove that respect for human rights, transparency, and democratic norms can and will prevail.

If confirmed, I know you will be counting on me to make sure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are well-spent, and that our multilateral policies and programs improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable citizens, contribute to international peace and security, and serve the American people.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you, and I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.

We will start a series of five-minute rounds and I will start.

Ambassador Nichols, we had a good tour of the hemisphere yesterday so I am not going to revisit all of those. But there is one or two I do want to drill down on.

As Miguel Diaz-Canel assumed the leadership of Cuba's Communist Party and completed his transition to what I believe is dictator and chief, the Cuban regime repeatedly has used the mantra of "somos continuidad," which means "we are the continuation," to make it clear that they need to maintain a single-party authoritarian state.

Nevertheless, in a renewed wave of civic activism, including protest by artists, singers, and others in the San Isidro movement, a, largely, Afro-Cuban movement, there is a demanding greater respect for democratic values and an end to human rights abuses.

So what our policy is, moving forward, is going to be incredibly important. Let me ask you a couple of questions. Do you believe that the attacks on our diplomatic personnel, known as the Havana syndrome, either were conducted by the Cubans or are known in terms of who conducted them by the Cubans?

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would just note, by way of entry, that I know that our Cuba policy is under review within the administration. But let me offer a few thoughts, and if confirmed, I look forward to contributing to that process.

Our priority in Cuba, as the rest of the hemisphere, needs to be democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Countries should not be grandfathered because they have failed to respect those tenets.

The new First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba does not appear to me to be significantly different from his predecessors. But time will tell on that point.

With regard to the Havana syndrome—my knowledge of the process of looking into that is limited, but I certainly believe that, given the amount of control that the Communist Party has in Cuba, there are more things that they can tell us about what was going on at that time.

And I think that the process that the Secretary has designated, led by Ambassador Pamela Spratlen and the Health Incident Response Team, working with our interagency partners, is an important opportunity to get to the bottom of these incidents, and if confirmed, I commit to contributing to that process.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate that.

It is impossible, if you understand Cuba's state-controlled system and its security apparatus to believe that anything can happen in the island without some knowledge of the Cuban regime, which they, certainly, have not shared with us, and now we find these attacks proliferating in other parts of the world.

Do you believe that the practice of the Cuban regime of taking 20 percent of remittances to Cuban families, then converting the balance of the remittance to Cuban pesos that are worth a fraction of what Americans send to their families, that can only be used at state-owned stores is an acceptable practice?

Mr. NICHOLS. Again, the Cuba policy is under review. But I do believe that those who are most responsible for abuses of human rights and democracy in Cuba should not benefit from remittances going to the Cuban people.

Our priority needs to be what is best for the Cuban people and focus our efforts on supporting them, and I believe that the best

ambassadors for doing that are the American people and, particularly, the Diaspora here.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, let me hone in on my question because I have a limited time.

I appreciate all of that but here is the point. If we want to help the Cuban people, taking 20 percent off of the \$100 I send to my aunt, converting the other \$80 of U.S. dollars into pesos, which is worth a fraction, and then being able, largely, to only buy at a government store, which is jacked up in prices, is not helping the Cuban people.

It is, certainly, helping the regime. So I am for sending my remittances to my aunt, but I want her to get the remittances I send.

Let me ask you this. Do you believe that sending, as the regime does, Cuban doctors abroad, then taking away their passports and getting paid for their services without fully paying the doctors is human trafficking?

Mr. NICHOLS. I believe that their labor rights are being violated in large measure, and I think it has many characteristics of human trafficking, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you believe that the militarization of the Cuban economy, whereas Raul Castro's son and son-in-law, high-ranking officers of the Cuban military, is an acceptable practice for U.S. businesses to engage with?

Mr. NICHOLS. I think that we should be working to promote diversity in the economy in Cuba and focusing our efforts on what is best for the Cuban people.

The roles of senior officials and family members in the economy goes in the opposite direction and, if confirmed, I look forward to contributing to the department's review of our policies within the interagency.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Well, let me just say that, and I will end on this note, so an American business wants to do business in Cuba or they want to do, you know, tourism or they want to sell agricultural products.

They either have to go to Raul's son or son-in-law, both high-ranking officials of the Cuban military who control the two, quote/unquote, "companies" that are run by the regime.

You become a partner with the state, in essence, a partner with those who oppress its people, and your partner is high-ranking officials of the Cuban military.

I do not know if we, for example, would accept that in China. I do not know if we would accept it elsewhere. And it is, certainly, not a help to the Cuban people.

So I look forward to continuing that conversation.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Nichols, I want to talk about a parochial issue. That is the Columbia River Treaty. How engaged have you been on that issue or have you been, prior to coming on board here?

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you. I have received a briefing on the treaty from our negotiators and legal team. I have not participated in the deliberations with regard to the negotiation.

Senator RISCH. Okay, thank you.

I hope you will familiarize yourself with this. I can tell you, this is not a partisan issue. Indeed, we have been—we—when I say we I am talking about the Senators, particularly from the Northwest, have been working with the negotiating team from the State Department, and we found them really good to work with.

They are working on an issue that is incredibly complex and incredibly difficult with a friend and neighbor but with whom we have, obviously, competing interests as we try to complete the negotiations.

I have trouble with some of my colleagues here whose last brush with the Columbia River was when they took geography in either grammar school or high school.

So they are learning how important the Columbia River is to those of us that have water that flows into the Columbia and the effects that it has upstream on us.

So, first of all, I do want to tell you, you have got a good team in place. We intend to continue to work with them, and it is bipartisan and I hope that we will continue down that road, and I look forward to your help in that regard.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator, and I look forward to working with you on that, if confirmed.

The Columbia River and its basin have important implications for hydroelectric power, green energy, the environment and, obviously, flood control and the economy of the western part of our nation.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Sison, I want to underscore to you the disappointment a lot of us had when the administration jumped right back into UNRWA.

What UNRWA has done over the years is very disheartening and it is impossible to explain to the United States taxpayers, particularly my constituents, how the funds that—U.S. taxpayer dollars that flowed into UNRWA could be used to print textbooks that I have no doubt you have seen that have anti-Semitic materials in them—and this is paid for by U.S. dollars—and also the other things that UNRWA has done, allowing their facilities to be used for military facilities and that sort of thing.

Again, we want to participate always in these things. But when they are doing stuff like that, it becomes very difficult, and particularly when the funds have now been freed up for UNRWA to get those funds again, and we are a huge contributor to that operation.

What are your thoughts on that?

Ms. SISON. Good morning, Senator, and thank you for that question.

The issue of transparency, accountability, and oversight with regard to the U.N. Relief Works Agency, UNRWA, and across the U.N. system would be a key priority, if confirmed.

On UNRWA specifically, it is absolutely critical that we insist on neutrality, and that goes for the staff of UNRWA, the policies, the programs, the educational materials, that you have mentioned.

If confirmed, I will be insisting on these red lines of complete neutrality, no educational materials, whether it is textbook or online educational resources that contain references to anti-Semitism, incitement.

These are important issues and, if confirmed, I would be working with U.N. counterparts and others in the IO bureau and across our State Department to insist that these red lines are not crossed and that internal controls are maintained.

Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Well, I appreciate that, and I appreciate your commitment and your thoughts in that regard. It always amazes me when something like this happens where the funds were freed up without a commitment.

I mean, if they will not make the commitment before they get the money, how in the world can you possibly think they will make the commitment after they get the money?

So it amazes me how we transfer funds like this without getting anything back for it.

And my time is up and I thank you for that commitment.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

I understand Senator Cardin is with us virtually.

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank both of our distinguished nominees for their service to our country.

Ambassador Sison, I am proud that you are a Marylander. I heard Senator Van Hollen's introductions. We are very proud of your career service, diplomatic service, to our country.

It is, clearly, going to be challenged as we reassert America's diplomacy globally in the work that we do with our international organizations.

So I look forward to working with you.

Ambassador Nichols, I, again, thank you for your career of public service. Both of you have served our nation with distinction and honor, and I join the chairman in thanking you and your families for your willingness to continue in public service.

Ambassador Nichols, you and I had a chance to talk. I just want to underscore a few of the points.

One area that affects both of the individuals that are before us is the U.S. role in the OAS. I mention that because Senator Wicker and I had introduced legislation that became law for a parliamentary dimension within the Organization of American States.

And I point that out, the more that we can get legislators working with our diplomats, particularly in international organizations or regional organizations, I think the more effective it will be.

So I look forward to a stronger parliamentary arm within the OAS. We have a very strong parliamentary arm within OSCE. I think we could improve our representation at the United Nations.

We have two of our members who are designated to represent the Senate. I think working with each other we can strengthen unity in U.S. foreign policy goals.

Ambassador Nichols, I want to ask you about a subject that we talked about at some length and that is making anti-corruption a key part of our policy in our hemisphere. We have seen an erosion of good governance.

We knew that in Northern and Central America. We see significant challenges as countries have gone back on their commitment for their anti-corruption institutions.



We see this in so many countries, of course, and Cuba is a country that the chairman has mentioned frequently is a corrupt country, Venezuela, et cetera.

We have legislation that you and I have talked about that passed our Senate last Congress that we are going to try to get to the finish line this time that will fine tune the missions—each of our missions in each of our countries on anti-corruption.

I want to just get your comments as to how high a priority this will be when you are confirmed.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you very much, Senator.

Fighting corruption is vital to our efforts to strengthen democracy in our hemisphere and around the world. I want to thank you and the other members of this body for the tools that you have given us.

I believe that we should robustly use our Treasury OFAC sanctions, our 7031(c) sanctions, and the full range of tools available to deal with those who would steal from the public purse, deprive the peoples of the region of their resources and their wealth.

And given my experience in my current assignment and previously in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, I look forward to deploying those tools robustly in support of democracy around the region.

I would also like to note that I fully concur that the Article One branch of government and its engagement around the hemisphere with other legislatures will be an important tool in supporting democracy.

Senator CARDIN. Let me raise one more issue with you, if I might, and that is the Caribbean states. For too long we have not given them the attention that they need. We have not done well with their voting at the United Nations or at OAS, for that matter, and there are many Caribbean states. It does not take too much attention or resources to strengthen our ties.

What strategy do you have in order to increase our partnership with the Caribbean states?

Mr. NICHOLS. If confirmed, I look forward to building on our shared values with the Caribbean and their commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

I believe that our engagement with the Caribbean region needs to include a robust presence and, if confirmed, I look forward to advocating for that.

We need to leverage our development tools around the region, work with our multilateral partners, and international financial institutions to get them the resources that they need, and to make sure that we are attending to those issues that hold them back in their development.

Senator CARDIN. Dr. Sison, I would just underscore the point that we could do much better in getting support at the United Nations if our missions recognized how important those votes are to United States foreign policy.

We have got to connect the dots in more capitals around the world so that we have stronger support at the United Nations, and letting us know in Congress where we can be helpful and getting those types of relationships that can help us advance our foreign policy.

I hope you have a strategy to help us do that.

Ms. SISON. Good morning, Senator, and, indeed, the necessity of building broad cross-regional alliances and partnerships is critical across the U.N. and multilateral venues, whether we are talking about New York or Geneva, really, across the multilateral space.

And I do appreciate the offer that I just heard for the IO Bureau and, if confirmed, I will take you up on this. I think that so many of the members of this committee have built deep relationships with leaders across the world and, if confirmed, I would hope that I would be able to turn to you and ask for some help but with enough advance notice and placing a call or two when and if needed.

Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I look forward to working with you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young, I understand, is with us virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Chairman. I am not sure my picture is appearing. Can I be heard?

The CHAIRMAN. You are certainly heard but not seen.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. Well, I will just go ahead and dive in.

So building on Senator Cardin's questions pertaining to the Caribbean Basin, as you know, Mr. Nichols, the Senate is considering a far-reaching China package, which includes American policies towards the Western Hemisphere, which, if confirmed, you will be tasked with overseeing.

One of your first responsibilities would be managing the creation of a strategy to strengthen economic competitiveness, good governance, human rights, and the rule of law in Latin America and the Caribbean.

I want to know what policies you believe have worked in the past in these areas and how we might better work to improve some of these policies across the region to reduce our neighbors' vulnerability to Chinese influence.

And, you know, you might include specifically how the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative could be utilized to push back on Chinese infrastructure developments.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator.

I think that we have a robust menu of policies and options that I would seek to leverage, if confirmed. We need to work across the board in institution strengthening, using our Agency for International Development for political party strengthening, for grass roots policy support at the human level.

I think we've got to take advantage of our international financial institution partners and make sure that they are helping to advance democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in the region, particularly the Inter-American Development Bank as a tool within our own region.

The Organization of American States is similarly an important tool that, within its Charter, it is committed to those tenets of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law that we hold dear.

Working throughout the region, as I have, justice sector support has been crucial and, I think, very successful in many countries

around the region, and providing units and organizations that respect human rights and the rule of law that support democracy and the extent to which we can build upon those resources will be important.

I think CBSI has been an important tool throughout the region. In terms of the future and the way forward, we need to look to leverage that asset in building institutions, making trade, communication, service sector improvements.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. All right.

I am sorry to interject. Our time is just somewhat limited, understandably, in this format. So, my apologies, sir, I am going to move on because I have some other things I would like to turn to.

I just returned from our southern border with Mexico. I spent all day Friday down there in the Yuma, Arizona, area, where I actually spent some time years ago as a United States Marine, participating in counter trafficking operations and monitoring some of the activities there, working with other agencies.

The challenges continue. In fact, I think it is fair to say we are hearing this, Republicans and Democrats alike, that we have an ongoing crisis at the southern border, and that crisis has underscored the importance of identifying the root cause of unchecked immigration from the Northern Triangle region.

Despite \$3.6 billion in U.S. aid over the 2016 to 2021 fiscal years, immigration policy from the new administration has still resulted in a staggering number of migrants fleeing these countries.

And I suppose we do not need to really fixate on the massive uptick we have seen in the last couple of months. Everyone is aware of it.

Despite billions of dollars in U.S. aid to these economically distressed countries, why have we seen a recent surge in immigration when it was, largely, controlled for the past several years?

Mr. Nichols?

Mr. NICHOLS. I think there are a variety of reasons but I point to a couple that are driving the uptick. One is a loss of economic opportunities driven by climate disasters and climate change in the region, corruption, violence, rule of law, a lack of hope, and we need to work to address the root causes of those challenges urgently.

I will keep my answer brief, but happy to go into it further, if you would like, sir.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you for your time. I would also add the message from the White House has not been particularly helpful. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you both for your past service to this country and for your willingness to be considered for these important posts at this critical time.

Ambassador Nichols, I want to begin with you. As we heard from Senator Young, so much of the focus on America's borders has been on the southern border between the United States and Mexico.

But I want to ask about our northern border with Canada, because for states like New Hampshire that border Canada, the border closures have been very disruptive both for businesses that go

back and forth across the border to do business, but also for many of our residents who have relatives in Canada and have been limited in their travel.

Now, I understand that these were done because of the pandemic. But we are coming up on an end to the most recent extension of that border closure in May, and I wondered if you have any sense of what will happen on May 21st when the current restrictions expire and whether we need to keep this border closed or how soon we might be able to safely reopen it.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator.

I am not yet confirmed. I have not been privy to the deliberations on that topic. I know that the HHS and Homeland Security are looking at this issue carefully.

I believe that the decision will be driven by the best science available. We are making important progress in our own country against the pandemic, and I hope that we'll be able to see progress with regard to the border soon.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. Do I have your commitment that, once confirmed, that you will look at this issue closely and urge an examination that recognizes the challenges that are faced by that border closure?

Mr. NICHOLS. Yes, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Sison, I still have fond memories of my visit to Lebanon during your tenure there as ambassador. Sadly, things have significantly declined in Lebanon since that time, and I know that you are very familiar with UNIFIL's mission in Lebanon, how important it has been to the country and to its relations with its neighbors.

If confirmed, how will you approach the mandate renewal in August and how can the U.S. be a moderator between the Lebanese Armed Forces, UNIFIL, and Lebanon's neighbors?

Ms. SISON. Good to see you again, Senator, and good morning.

As with all peacekeeping missions, we want to make sure that at the time of mandate renewal and discussion at the U.N. Security Council that we are looking at realistic and achievable mandates, that we are looking at mandates that include women in peacekeeping as both military and police peacekeepers, that when possible that this mandate promotes the political solution, and that we look at the reforms in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, to deliver on that mandate, and, of course, the mandates need to be well resourced as well to be effective.

UNIFIL has played a stabilizing role in southern Lebanon, and we are seeing this at the present time as well. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to consult with you, Senator, and other members of this committee on how we can make peacekeeping the most effective and efficient investment and that the peacekeepers are resourced to perform their mandates effectively.

Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. One of the most pressing issues facing the Security Council at the U.N. is the need to maintain humanitarian aid in Syria.

How can you and the State Department and those of us in Congress support Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield's efforts to push

back against Russia's obstructionism in allowing that humanitarian aid to those who need it?

Ms. SISON. Senator, I absolutely agree with you on the urgency of keeping humanitarian delivery, these corridors open.

The reauthorization of Bab al-Hawa for another 12 months is completely a priority and, if confirmed, would be looking to push on the other two cross-border points that are not currently authorized to be used.

The suffering that we see, particularly in northeast and northwestern Syria, is alarming: food insecurity, the inability to deliver badly-needed medical and other items, particularly in this period of the COVID pandemic.

So, if confirmed, I do look forward to consulting closely with you and with working with Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield and her team on this critical issue of the reauthorization of the cross-border delivery.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I am out of time. But I just want to weigh in support of your point about the Havana syndrome and our efforts that we should be making with the Cuban regime to press them more on what they know.

And, Ambassador Nichols, I would also just like to weigh in. I appreciate the administration's appointment of Ambassador Spratlen.

But the fact is, in Congress, we are still not getting the information we need on what is actually happening with so-called Havana syndrome government wide, nor are we seeing the coordination that I think we would all hope to see and the assurance that those people who are affected are getting absolutely the best health care that they need.

So I hope you will share that with the State Department.

Mr. NICHOLS. I will, Senator, and those who were injured in those attacks and the health of our people throughout our service and throughout our government are my highest priority.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Rounds?

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to both of you for your service to our country. You, clearly, are both very well qualified and we appreciate your offer of continued service.

Ambassador Nichols, I am concerned about, I guess, the ongoing and, in some cases, increasing Chinese and Russian engagement in the Western Hemisphere.

One example is China's launching of a vaccine diplomacy strategy into Latin America, while Russia is launching countless disinformation campaigns in Latin America to discredit the West, specifically, the United States.

What do you think should be done to address this and what resources are available to you for that purpose? I know that you have indicated that there are some organizations and so forth.

But when it comes to their very aggressive approach to provide misinformation about our country but also to gather additional leverage within the Western Hemisphere, share with me your thoughts and what tools you would see available to you.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator, and I fully share your concerns.

We have a number of tools available to us. We have the Global Engagement Center pushing back on disinformation. We are bolstering our public diplomacy at the embassy level throughout the hemisphere, and I think that is a very important tool.

We have shared values, and we need to point out to the peoples of the region the shared values that we have, and the difference between what we consider important and what the real costs of the engagement that the malign actors from outside our hemisphere, like China and Russia, are engaging in.

The Chinese offer all sorts of things. They don't come for free. The Chinese are getting something out of it, and we need to push back aggressively with a variety of tools.

They also offer in their economic engagement unfair competition practices and corruption, and when we see that we need to call it out.

Senator ROUNDS. I think sometimes their offer of assistance to a contrary is seen as a first step in where, later on, they will start asking for small favors and then move into more demands.

In our case, I would suspect that there are times in which we are seen as looking at some of our neighbors and saying, we expect you to behave in a particular way, and rather than talking about our shared values we try to impose values upon them.

Share with me your thoughts about the differentiation between our shared values and times in which we might be seen as placing our values upon them. I think it is a critical difference.

Mr. NICHOLS. I think that there are advantages in our hemisphere and that our founding documents in this hemisphere lay out what the nations of this region believe in and what they have committed to.

The OAS is the world's oldest regional multilateral organization, and its Charter lays out values very clearly that all of the nations in this hemisphere have signed onto, and I think we can point to those.

We can point to polling of the publics in this hemisphere and their value for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and I think when we talk about what the Chinese and the Russians are really offering, what they are really asking of governments, there is a big difference between what one individual official in a government might want and what, I think, the people of that nation might want.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Ambassador Sison, the COVID-19 pandemic, certainly, put a spotlight on the World Health Organization. Concerns have been expressed that the WHO lacks sufficient resources to manage a global pandemic as well as maintain its integrity.

Do you think that the WHO is resourced to handle a global pandemic, and do you believe that it is still an unbiased organization, despite Chinese influence?

And, finally, how do you think the Department of State can help to strengthen the organization?

Ms. SISON. Good morning, Senator.

Indeed, the issue of the World Health Organization—WHO's need to be fit for purpose and modernized is an important one, and there is an issue, of course, of the need for sustained financing.

We do not want to start down a road and only to find that we are not able to continue down the road as we work to strengthen WHO's ability in surveillance detection, in infectious disease prevention, the ability to respond, to insist that all member states report transparently.

But, of course, that sustained financing needs to be matched with a strong focus and, if confirmed, this would be a top priority on transparency, accountability, and oversight of the WHO's operations.

You mentioned the word integrity and, absolutely, we need to make sure that the WHO's assessments, findings, reports, are science based, expert led, free from outside influence.

And, again, we need to insist that all member states comply with the international norms on infectious disease reporting, international health regulations. We need full transparency on this. Could not agree more, Senator.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, my time has expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you both for your willingness to continue to serve, especially in these very important roles.

Ambassador Nichols, I wanted to turn to the topic of Venezuela. You know, by no metric can anyone suggest that President Trump's policy in Venezuela was a success. Maduro was more cemented in power at the end of his four years.

But there has been some interesting developments over the past few months. We have seen some compromises by the Maduro government on humanitarian access, the creation of a new electoral council, willingness to join the Norway-hosted talks.

And so I am interested to learn from you your early thoughts about how the United States can help push this momentum along, capitalize it, and then, specifically, whether this is the time to talk about restoring diesel swaps.

I have believed for a while that the United States should be engaged in this policy as a way to relieve humanitarian suffering inside the country.

But I wonder if this policy now makes even more sense, because not only does it provide an avenue to try to get much-needed economic relief to people who are suffering, but it also may be a way to show that the United States is open to helping to be a part of these sort of grass shoots of negotiating room.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator.

There needs to be a key focus in our policy, in my view, which I should caveat that I understand is under review within the administration. So this will be my personal views.

But I believe that we have a major advantage in dealing with Venezuela, that there is a broad multilateral coalition working to promote democracy in Venezuela, and that is something that we

need to leverage aggressively to push the Maduro regime towards free and fair elections.

We need to support the Venezuelan people, both at the political level in the form of opposition leaders and interim President Guaidó, as well as pushing for humanitarian assistance and ensuring that the people of Venezuela do have access to the help that they need.

With regard to diesel swaps right now, as I understand it, there is enough diesel capacity within Venezuela, at least for the next six months or so.

I think that is something that needs to be watched, and if we see that there is a problem there for the Venezuelan people I think that is something to be looked at.

But I think maintaining economic pressure to negotiate on a government that has shown that it will use dilatory tactics to prevent progress toward free and fair elections in addition to things like releasing political prisoners and allowing a free press, we have to be very cautious on.

Senator MURPHY. Yeah, no doubt, as Senator Menendez regularly reminds us, this is Maduro's game is to sort of entertain hopes of reform, stringing the international community and the United States along with, you know, nothing to be found at the end of the rainbow.

And so I think we go into this with eyes wide open. But it is also interesting that Guaidó himself has proposed the incremental lifting of U.S. sanctions as an incentive to try to continue along this path.

But I look forward to working with you on this as the review continues.

Ambassador Sison, I wanted to talk to you about a topic that regularly comes up in this committee, and that is Yemen. We have a U.N. and WFP appeal that is right now about one-third funded.

Now, it is never 100 percent funded, but in prior years we have been able to stave off famine by making sure that we are at least 80, 90 percent funded on that appeal. There are some pretty important countries like Qatar that have made sort of no contribution.

There is talk of a second donors conference to try to make sure that we put our foot onto the pedal, because we are looking at a 2021 famine, a new outbreak of cholera, if we do not rally the world community through the U.N., through WFP, to make sure that the money is there.

And by the way, the United States put in less money this year than we did last year, which is not exactly helping the situation.

Just your thoughts on how we can make sure we get the humanitarian dollars we need in Yemen.

Ms. SISON. Good morning, Senator, and share your concern about the food insecurity and the need for humanitarian access to the vulnerable populations in Yemen and, in fact, just flew up for the hearing from Haiti.

But we did have WFP Executive Director David Beasley with us a couple of weeks ago, and we actually discussed Yemen and the alarming situation there with the mounting food insecurity.

So, if confirmed, you have my absolute commitment that I would be working both with stakeholders to create these broad partner-



ships with other donors and like-minded countries, also to support Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield and her team up in New York because, of course, the U.N. Security Council has put an enormous amount of effort and work into maintain Security Council voice—united Security Council voice on Yemen.

If confirmed, I look forward to consulting and talking with you more on this important topic.

Senator MURPHY. Great. Thank you very much to you both.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, thank you. And, Ambassadors, thank you for your service. Greatly appreciated.

I would like to, first, talk about the Western Hemisphere. I am from Tennessee. Since the border collapsed in late January, we have experienced a dramatic increase in drug trafficking, in overdoses, in human trafficking.

We have now got unaccompanied minors coming into Tennessee. Our schools and hospitals are asking whether we have the capacity to deal with this.

This has become the most urgent crisis in America from a national security standpoint, from an economic security standpoint, from a humanitarian standpoint.

So earlier this month, I traveled to Guatemala and to Mexico to meet with leaders there to try to get at the bottom of what the problem is, what is driving this.

I did not hear much talk about climate change. What I heard was that we are sending messages from here, whether it is talk, election talk, about how people will be treated if a certain outcome occurs, whether it is talk about the potential for a \$15 minimum wage, whether it is talk about checks for illegal immigrants, or the fact that we have extended unemployment—plussed-up unemployment benefits all the way to September, which is creating a giant job opening here in America.

Coyotes are taking these messages and marketing them to very vulnerable people. They are encouraging these vulnerable people to put their life savings on the line and to risk their lives, to make a very dangerous journey, a journey in which more than half of them are involved in some—in some way in crime, whether they become part of the drug trafficking, part of the sex trafficking, or in some other way violated horribly.

This is a very dangerous humanitarian crisis that is occurring at our border. The leaders of these countries are not happy about this at all. They blame us, in large part, but they also see opportunity.

That is what I was trying to get at and I want to share these with you, Ambassador Nichols, these observations, that when I met with the president of Guatemala, he said, look, I am not asking for you to send money or fund NGOs, but help us technically—night vision goggles, technical training, so we can manage our own border. Our own national sovereignty is being violated, he told me. We want to cooperate. We think we can cooperate, and if we can get our border under control and bring the rule of law more in line, we

will see more infrastructure investment, which is what they desperately need.

We have tools here. This committee has jurisdiction over some of the tools that we can help them with infrastructure investment, but we need to get the rule of law and public safety in order there.

I think there are great opportunities to cooperate with them, and I would look forward to working with you toward those ends.

They also want to see us stop the national security problem that they have got too because they do not know who is entering their country. It is a real issue.

It sounded even more so when I talked with the Mexican Foreign Minister and the Minister of Economy of Mexico. They have a grave concern about who is coming across their southern border and, again, they highlighted that opportunity for us to cooperate on a security basis, again, with training, with technology, with equipment. These are ways to help them address the problem.

But the most clear and urgent problem is dealing with our own border, to stop sending the wrong messages that are encouraging this sort of behavior. And what is happening, particularly in Mexico, is that with the movement of coyotes, the overwhelming force that is occurring at our southern border, that it is creating an opening for the cartels to move even more drugs, more sex trafficking, more contraband across our borders.

The cartels are getting larger and more powerful by the day and it is making it that much more difficult to manage the situation in Mexico, in Guatemala, and other countries in that region.

So I would look forward to working with you on this grave national security crisis, and I hope that you will commit to do that with me.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator. I look forward to working with you and the other members of this body, if confirmed, on these issues.

I know that colleagues within the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement and Population, Refugees and Migration, under the leadership of Vice President Harris and with the participation of Special Envoy Zúniga are working hard on the issues that you have discussed.

Senator HAGERTY. We need to do more, but thank you for that commitment.

Ambassador Sison, again, thank you for your service.

Still related to this area, what was very clear to me is that China is increasing the movement of fentanyl and fentanyl precursors into Mexico. These are getting manufactured and then trafficked across our border. It appears that all the cooperation between Mexico and the United States to interdict this has collapsed.

I would be very interested in your thoughts on how, in the position that you are, hopefully, going to go to how you can increase our cooperation with Mexico to push back against China and their importation of this illegal drug that is killing our children.

Ms. SISON. Good morning, Senator, and I share your concerns about these illegal drugs coming into our country, as both a mother and a grandmother.

There is, definitely, an important role within the U.N. and multi-lateral space to push this U.S. priority forward and, if confirmed,

I look forward to consulting with you, working with you and with stakeholders, in organizations such as the Universal Postal Union because there is a postal piece of this.

And the work that we have done on some of the standards has actually made a difference in the multilateral sphere in enforcing and moving these norms into the international space as well as in the U.N. body that deals with drugs and crime.

Senator HAGERTY. I look forward to working with you, and I will just add this. The Mexican authorities made clear to me that they do not have the technology to examine the cargo that is coming in from China. They felt like we could help them significantly there.

You think about x-ray technology, heat-sensing technology, the types of things that they could use to deal with the fact that China has become very clever at hiding fentanyl and the precursors that are being shipped in to their country and then being remanufactured.

So I appreciate that commitment and look forward to working with you.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kaine is recognized and he has graciously agreed to preside while I go to the Finance Committee. After Senator Kaine, at this point, no Republican colleagues who have sought recognition virtually are present.

So it would be Senator Booker, who is with us virtually, and then Senator Van Hollen.

Senator Kaine [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations to the witnesses for your service and for your nominations.

I want to ask three Western Hemisphere questions to—Ambassador Nichols, to you about the Northern Triangle, and then I cannot resist taking advantage of having the Haitian ambassador with us today to ask a question about Haiti, Ambassador Sison.

So, Ambassador Nichols, the Northern Triangle. We have seen real backsliding in the Northern Triangle on governments' transparency, corruption, violence, economic opportunity issues.

Recently, in both Guatemala and El Salvador, there have been a sacking of judges and prosecutors who have been known for trying to prosecute corruption. Even more troubling, in Honduras the Honduran election of 2016 was a sham and the OAS called for it to be rerun.

Instead of supporting the OAS, the U.S. recognized the government of Honduras, and what did we get for it? What we got for it was the government canceling transparency initiatives, canceling anti-corruption initiatives, and now the president of Honduras is implicated in a couple of high-profile drug smuggling prosecutions in the United States.

Obviously, if we are going to try to deal with this migration problem, one of the key pillars to it is strengthening governance, security, transparency in the Northern Triangle.

I suspect that there will be a request that we invest funds to do that, and I want to be supportive. But how can we invest funds to promote those ends when the governments in the Northern Triangle are often the causes or at least, in some cases, the causes of the problems rather than the solutions?

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator.

It is not enough to win office democratically. People have to govern democratically, and central to that is the importance of the separation of powers and a strong independent judiciary, and that is something, if confirmed, that I will argue for vociferously with our partners throughout the hemisphere and, particularly, in the Northern Triangle.

We have programming that has been successful around the world in strengthening the justice sector, and we need to press forward with those efforts, particularly in the Northern Triangle countries.

Corruption is a noxious influence in that region, in that part of our hemisphere, and we need to leverage the tools that you have given us to call out those corrupt actors who are preventing the course of justice from flowing properly.

We also need to leverage our development assistance and our multilateral partners to ensure that the institutions are built and people get the support that they need so they are not attracted to populist and easy solutions that quickly turn to ashes in their mouths.

Senator KAINE. Mr. Ambassador, I think all those are the right answers and I also think they are the things that we have tried to do for years with very little effect. So I hope we will not be in a Groundhog Day of repeatedly doing something and seeing it not work.

Let me make one point on economic opportunity in the region. Again, we would want there to be stronger economic opportunities so people can stay. But how do we invest in stronger economies with governments that have not proven to be reliable partners?

I have an idea. U.S. employers employ a lot of people in the Northern Triangle in the retail sector, in the textile sector.

Rather, if we are going to try to increase economic opportunities, I would hope State and Commerce and others, the vice president's office, would pull together American employers who employ folks in the region and say, for example, what could we do as policy that would make you hire and invest more in the Northern Triangle.

I will give you an example. There is probably a couple hundred thousand textile workers in the Northern Triangle who are employed by American firms.

This is just a brainstorm, but if we were to say, for example, the purchase of PPE during the pandemic was revealed to be a critical national security issue, we should only buy PPE that is American made or that is made with American product in nations with whom we have free trade agreements.

That would pull a huge part of the PPE supply chain out of China and it would give a strong preference for the production of PPE in the Northern Triangle, which is produced with American cotton in factories in that region. Something like that would lead to significant economic expansion or opportunities there.

So I hope, as we focus on economic opportunities, get the advice of the American companies that are already there.

Ambassador Sison, there is this, you know, obviously, huge challenge in Haiti, deep unrest over the term of the president, and a five-year term, but there is huge unrest over when did it start.

What is the U.S. doing to try to help solve this dilemma and pave a way for a less corrupt Haiti, going forward?

Ms. SISON. Good morning, Senator, and good to see you again.

The U.S. and, I will say as the sitting ambassador, U.S. ambassador to Haiti, we have been really urging all stakeholders, so the political actors, the economic leaders, civil society leaders, to come together and work in an inclusive manner to reach an accord that will serve the Haitian people.

And I say this because the political impasse has had an impact over the last two years on the security situation. We see increased gang violence has had a negative effect on the economic side, including economic development side.

The focus has got to be, I believe, on rule of law, combating corruption, promoting justice sector reform, and moving ahead on insisting that these overdue legislative elections, which should have been held in late 2019, do move ahead.

The president has been ruling by decree because there is no legislature. So to get a president out of ruling by presidential decree, there need to be free, fair, and credible legislative elections later this year, as announced by the government of Haiti, followed by a presidential election, so that at the end of the sitting president's term there is an elected president to take his place. The—

Senator KAINE. And thank you, Ambassador. I am over my time and I need to gavel myself out of order and—but thank you for that answer.

I believe Senator Cruz is on his way, but I believe Senator Markey, we are going in seniority and you are up next.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much.

Ambassador Nichols, thank you for your service over the years. I want to talk a little bit about climate change and the United States government and its ability to use Global Magnitsky to strike back at those who are committing crimes against environmental defenders.

I know that you have experience in working on these issues. So could you please tell us what you believe we can do as a country to counter environmental human rights violations in the Western Hemisphere?

Because, clearly, we are at a tipping point and we have to make sure that we are using all of the influence of our government.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you very much, Senator.

It is a complex question. I will touch on a few examples.

For example, if you are dealing with a company that is illegally dumping mining tailings in a river, suborning local officials, and improperly taking resources out of a nation, that seems to me like an example where you could leverage the full range of anti-corruption tools in response to illegal mining practices.

In Peru, artisanal and illegal gold mining was a huge problem and linked to narcotics trafficking, and when I was ambassador there, we worked intensively on leveraging law enforcement tools against those responsible, especially in that nexus of narcotics and illegal mining.

Senator MARKEY. Yeah, gold mining, logging, wildlife trafficking, environmental degradation, all of that. I have introduced legislation, the Targeting Environmental and Climate Recklessness Act,

and it is just to reinforce the reality that all across these countries, brave climate defenders in Central and South America are risking their lives peacefully in order to ensure that these carbon-intensive industries and unsustainable business practices are wreaking havoc on local communities.

And what my legislation would do is it would give the United States, give you, the ability to target foreign individuals and companies engaged in destructive climate actions to ensure that existing human rights and corruption sanctions under Global Magnitsky are used to strike back at those committing crimes against environmental defenders.

Can I just follow up? Just looking at the Amazon, if I may, and the degradation of that forest, which are, as we know, the lungs of the planet, how can we better work to prioritize its protection with the countries that it spans across in South America, in your opinion, Mr. Ambassador?

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you very much, Senator.

I think engaging with the key Amazon nations, starting with Brazil but also Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia that is crucial. Our diplomacy can have an important effect on their policies.

I know Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry is deeply engaged in that exercise. Programmatically, we can leverage our development assistance on the issue of climate, particularly on the protection of forests and rain forests in the region.

We also need to think about how do we leverage our trade agreements, which include environmental provisions, to protect the environment and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, sir. And just moving to Colombia, quickly, if I could, I am very concerned about the escalation of violence in Colombia.

My question to you is what do you believe we should be doing? What steps should the United States government be doing in order to use our political influence to decrease the—that violence and the suppression of ordinary citizens in that country?

Mr. NICHOLS. The situation in Colombia is a complicated one. Colombia is a long-term ally of the United States and we need to be engaging with President Duque, as I know, our ambassador and key leaders in the administration are, one, to work to deescalate the challenges, two, to address the economic crisis caused by the pandemic, which sort of was one of the reasons why the fiscal package that President Duque introduced was introduced, and three, to prioritize getting back on track to implementation of the 2016 peace agreement in Colombia.

And if confirmed, I look forward to working towards those goals.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, sir. Thank you both for your service.

The CHAIRMAN. [presiding]. Thank you.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, and again, congratulations to both of you on your nominations.

Ambassador Sison, in my introduction this morning, I mentioned your experience in the area of international humanitarian relief,

and in your new position and confirmed you will be a key player in that arena.

Now, I support an immediate ceasefire in the fighting between Israel and Hamas. But whenever the rockets and the bombs stop falling, we will have a humanitarian disaster in Gaza.

As you well know, there was a humanitarian crisis in Gaza before the fighting started and now it is much worse. We all know that Hamas is a terrorist organization that controls Gaza.

We also know that Israel has the right to self-defense, and I am glad that the United States and this committee have assisted Israel in the development and the deployment of the Iron Dome, which has intercepted thousands of Hamas rockets.

But I also think that the United States and the international community needs to do everything we can when the fighting stops to assist the millions of innocent Gazans who are trapped there and have nothing to do with Hamas.

So my first question is a simple one. Do you agree?

Ms. SISON. Yes, Senator, I certainly share your concern about the human suffering associated with this outbreak in violence, and I do believe that providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian population with, again, all the transparency, accountability, and oversight built into that, while maintaining our long-standing security relationship with Israel is in the U.S. interest.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Madam Ambassador.

Just to give an extent of the challenge we are going to face with the international community, this is—I am just quoting here from the New York Times' report today in terms of the humanitarian crisis:

“The fighting has destroyed 17 hospitals and clinics in Gaza, wrecked its only coronavirus test laboratory, sent fetid wastewater into its streets, and broke water pipes serving at least 800,000 people.

Sewage systems inside Gaza have been destroyed. A desalinization plant that helped provide fresh water to 250,000 people in the territory is offline. Dozens of schools have been damaged or closed, forcing some 600,000 students to miss class and some 72,000 Gazans have been forced to flee their homes.”

Now, as your answer did and my question did, I am focused now on post-conflict humanitarian relief to millions of people who have nothing to do with the conflict in Gaza.

So do you agree that the United States and international relief agencies should insist that all parties involved give access consistent with security requirements, but access to provide humanitarian relief in Gaza?

Ms. SISON. Senator, yes, the issue of humanitarian access to provide needed food, medical items, particularly in this time of the COVID pandemic, is absolutely critical.

If confirmed, I would be working with the IO team and other stakeholders across our government and with U.N. partners not only to emphasize the urgency of working towards sustainable calm, but to ensuring that needed humanitarian relief with the built-in safeguards on transparency, accountability, oversight is delivered to the most vulnerable populations.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Madam Ambassador.

Now, we also have an ongoing humanitarian disaster in Ethiopia. President Biden has called for a ceasefire in that conflict and we, the United States, are working with international relief agencies to try to get humanitarian relief to those there.

This committee two days ago had a briefing with Ambassador Feltman and I had a follow-up conversation with Ambassador Feldman, the Special Envoy, yesterday. Can you just talk briefly about what we need to be doing and demanding in terms of providing humanitarian assistance in that conflict?

Ms. SISON. Indeed, Senator, I share your concern about the increasing food insecurity that we see. The U.N. and the International Organizations Bureau have an important role to play and, if confirmed, I would be working with a number of these U.N. agencies, including World Food Programme and others.

There are other associated human rights issues that I also believe the IO Bureau would be working on and, if confirmed, calling out those who are perpetrating these human rights abuses, these armed actors, widespread reports of sex- and gender-based violence and other atrocities.

We would want to continue to speak with one voice at the U.N. Security Council on these issues, and I look forward, if confirmed, to working with Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield up there in New York as well as the U.N. agencies providing this humanitarian relief and using the appropriate space to call out those armed actors and others perpetrating these atrocities and abuses.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you.

Senator Coons and I were in Sudan just a short time ago and visited one of the refugee camps that have been set up by UNHCR, and I think it is important the United States continues to support that effort as well as the World Food Programme. They are doing essential humanitarian work.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you both for your service. Congratulations on your nominations.

Ambassador Sison, let me start with you. You have emphasized repeatedly that you intend to work to ensure that American taxpayer dollars are well spent at the U.N. and other organizations.

But Americans are deeply concerned about the structure and leadership of those organizations. Organizations like the Human Rights Council are hopelessly biased, especially against the nation of Israel, and they are mendaciously sympathetic to countries like Iran that commit atrocious human rights abuses.

It is no surprise why that is the case, given that those are the sorts of countries that make up a majority of the members of the Human Rights Council.

To take another example, the U.N.'s Commission on the Status of Women, the body's top legislative body on women's rights, recently elected Iran as a member. The Iranian regime, of course, enforces a broad array of gender apartheid policies and, concerning, when asked, the Biden administration declined to condemn that farce.



I worry that no amount of financial accountability can reform these deeply problematic organizations as long as we allow them to be led by countries that are antithetical to their purpose.

I would like your opinion on that. How can financial oversight, which you have discussed, fix these deep problems, especially if the Biden administration is unwilling to speak out clearly against them?

Ms. SISON. Senator, the issue of U.S. leadership is critical, I believe, to addressing the need for reform, and I agree with you there is a need for reform in many of these institutions.

We need the U.S. back at the table pushing for these reforms. There is the issue, yes, of financial accountability, transparency, oversight, but there is also the issue of U.S. leadership building strong cross-regional partnerships and alliances so that our U.S. core values—protection of human rights, labor rights, and economic transparency—are at the forefront.

We need to remind some of our like-minded of what we all signed on to in the Charter of the United Nations because its foundational document is strong on the human rights.

On the Human Rights Council, Senator, I do believe that when we are at the table and as we are coming back to the—to the HRC, we have the ability to better defend Israel from de-legitimization, from unfair targeting, from discriminatory efforts because we are there and we are present.

We have seen when we are there that the number of items brought up under this article, Agenda Item 7, the only single country targeting of Israel in that space, that we are able to push back by coming back also and, of course, with our candidacy better able to create these cross-regional alliances to encourage more human rights right-minded countries to firm up its members.

Senator CRUZ. But does the hypocrisy of some of the worst human rights abusers being themselves members, does that concern you?

Ms. SISON. Indeed, it does. But we have also seen, Senator, the Human Rights Council has put the spotlight on Venezuela. The Human Rights Council has put the spotlight on China and the treatment of Uighurs, has put the spotlight on Hong Kong.

So the issue of our people-to-people diplomacy creating these strong cross-regional alliances of like-minded countries to make sure that our core U.S. values are at the forefront. This is why we need to be at the table and back.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

Ambassador Nichols, I would also like to ask you, briefly, about Mexico, and our relationship with Mexico is complicated. They are a neighbor. We share a land border.

But they are also a country with its own interests, and when it comes to foreign policy we need to use all the foreign policy tools we have.

Recently, the Mexican Government has taken a range of steps to downgrade counternarcotics cooperation with the United States, and in one incident, Mexico even released sensitive information that we provided to them in violation of the U.S.-Mexico Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

I have introduced legislation to try to address some of these concerns. But, of course, there is an enormous role for the State Department to play in conveying American concerns and priorities.

Do you also share these concerns with Mexico's behavior in connection with, cooperation with, the United States in counter-narcotics and treaty violations, and how should we address those issues?

Mr. NICHOLS. Our cooperation with Mexico on rule of law, counter-narcotics, justice issues, is vital. It is long standing. I had the pleasure of working on those issues when I was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement.

If confirmed, I look forward to engaging proactively with the government of Mexico on our security cooperation. It is vital for both of our nations. Mexican cooperation is something that we need and they need.

The challenges as was discussed in terms of things like fentanyl and precursors, other opiate trafficking into the United States, illegal activities on the border—we need each other to resolve those, and I look forward to working with our law enforcement colleagues on the U.S. side, with our embassy Law Enforcement Working Group in Mexico City, and with Mexican officials, if confirmed, to press forward to ensure the highest level of cooperation, Senator.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We normally do not have second rounds. But as I understand it, Senator Hagerty has—I am going to extend the courtesy to you.

Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate it, Mr. Chairman, and Senator Kaine, I am actually following up on a point that you raised. If I could borrow you for two minutes. But I just wanted to add a comment that Senator Kaine inspired.

In my recent visit to Guatemala and to Mexico, one thing that was clear to me that they were very interested in cooperating on was the fact that we are working very aggressively to reshore businesses from China.

We are all very concerned about security of our supply chain. Those companies that are coming back to the United States, I want to get every job I can. Let me be clear. I want every one of those jobs in America that I can get.

But to the extent that they are not coming back to America, rather than have them go to some other Southeast Asian country, why not find a way to work together to bring them into our hemisphere and to bring them to our friends there who need the economic opportunity, which this may help stem some of the root cause?

I do not want to overlook the immediate concern. We have to fix the border crisis now. But mid- and long-term, there is a real opportunity here.

Leaders cited CAFTA as a way to address this. You wisely brought this up, Senator, and I think taking a look at CAFTA, which actually presents now some restrictions and some constraints on what they can do, all of those constraints are being actually picked up by China right now because they are not part of that free trade agreement.

We need to look very aggressively at what we can do with the FTAs that are in place, what we can do with economic development on a joint basis.

I think that the United States can do a great deal to help these countries improve the rule of law and create the proper constructs.

Again, we have the mechanisms to help them with infrastructure because of the various funding mechanisms that exist here in Washington and elsewhere.

But creating that economic opportunity and seizing this trend right now coming from China is something that I encourage you very much to focus on.

Thank you.

Mr. NICHOLS. Thank you, Senator. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on that.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. One or two final questions.

Venezuela, despite the recent charm offensive, and that is what I consider it, the fact remains that Nicolas Maduro is a brutal dictator whose regime has committed, from my perspective, crimes against humanity, perpetrated fraud in the country's presidential and legislative elections, responsible for Venezuela's massive humanitarian crisis.

So I, first of all, want to commend the president, President Biden, for providing TPS for Venezuelans. But with Venezuela descending into a failed state status, I know that interim President Guaidó and a coalition of democratic actors are pushing for comprehensive negotiations, both presidential and legislative ones, as well as a return to democratic governance and increase aid to address the humanitarian crisis.

So, Ambassador Nichols, is not that something that we should be able to get our arms around and supportive of and seek an international mobilization for a simple proposition, internationally supervise the fair and free presidential and legislative elections?

Mr. NICHOLS. Mr. Chairman, I agree that is something that the international coalition should be focused on. Our multilateral partners play an important role.

As you wisely state, the Maduro regime's goal is to delay, to deflect, to distract, and I think, cognizant of that, we need to take an approach that limits the regime's ability to do those things.

As I said earlier, our multilateral partners are a vital tool in that regard. But the protagonists of this need to be the Venezuelan people and the Venezuelan opposition, led by interim President Guaidó.

The CHAIRMAN. Mm-hmm. You are familiar, or maybe I should add, are you familiar with the roles that, for example, Russia, China, and Turkey are playing in Venezuela? Russia, not only through its entity there that they use for what I call mercenary soldiers, but also I hope you are familiar with reports of Russia taking out gold bars out of Venezuela and part of the national patrimony going to Russia, the realities of Turkey's banks being used to flush the cash out of Venezuela and try to evade our sanctions. Are you familiar with those elements?

Mr. NICHOLS. Yes, Mr. Chairman, and the broad efforts by China, Russia, Iran, Turkey, others, to work around the sanctions

regime that exists is deeply worrisome, and I think that the—those of us who wish to see democracy in Venezuela need to aggressively challenge those actions and work to ensure that the profits of their criminal activities are not returned to the regime.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

One last question for you. President Bukele in El Salvador—we had President Bukele here. We met with him before after he was elected but before he took office. He said all the right things then. He has done all the wrong things since then.

His firing of the attorney general, his elimination of the—all of the judges of the Constitutional Court, have all of the elements of a massive power grab consolidation in an autocratic way.

You know, he probably thinks that if we do not just go along with him he will turn to China. How should we face the challenges there?

Because I think beyond El Salvador it is going to send a hemispheric message that is very bad if we do not, you know, stand up for the principles of observance of the Constitution, rule of law, and other elements.

Mr. NICHOLS. As I said, Mr. Chairman, it is not enough to win office democratically or win elections democratically. Our friends and our rivals need to respect the rule of law and govern democratically and we need to hold them to account when they fail to do so.

El Salvador is a country that has been a long-time ally. I served there from 1991 to 1993. We, as a nation, have sacrificed much and provided a great deal of assistance to El Salvador to try and put it on a path towards success, and we need to use all of the tools that we can to ensure that El Salvador remains on a forward path and that the challenges that it faces can be overcome.

And I look forward to working on those issues, if confirmed.

The CHAIRMAN. Mm-hmm.

And finally, Ambassador Sison, I do not want you to feel that I have no affection for your position. So our legislation that Senator Risch and I put together on a bipartisan basis here passed the committee 21 to 1.

The Strategic Competition Act creates a special representative for advancing U.S. leadership in the United Nations.

That person would be responsible for, among other things, promoting U.S. leadership and participation in the U.N. system with a particular focus on issue areas in which authoritarian countries are increasing their influence and steering the U.N. agenda.

We are alarmed, as you have heard here from several members, about the increasing influence and role of authoritarian countries in U.N. bodies. What is your assessment as to how we can best counter those efforts?

And I know that there has been within your department to be a section that has been created. How do you see the role of this Special Representative playing within it?

Ms. SISON. Thank you, Chairman, for this question and also thank you to the members of this committee for the bipartisan focus on this need for the U.S. to engage vigorously in this strategic competition, and if confirmed, this is at the top of my agenda.

Indeed, the International Organizations Bureau is in the process of establishing and launching a new Multilateral Strategy and Personnel office. You mentioned the Special Representative position, and I look forward, if confirmed, to working with all stakeholders in this space.

The Special Representative, the IO Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel, what are we going to focus on? A, making sure that we get independent qualified U.S. candidates or like-minded candidates if there is no U.S. appropriate individual into these top U.N. leadership positions.

This is critical running the State Department and the Secretary of State, have put their weight behind, for example, an excellent U.S. candidate at the International Telecommunication Union, focused on that issue of candidates' long game, looking ahead at investing in the U.N.'s Junior Professional Officer program one to two years, having young Americans gain this experience and then be set up for mid-level and beyond positions to bring in our core U.S. values—adherence to democratic norms, protection of human rights.

China uses this program extensively. We need to be in there. Work with our embassies abroad, our ambassadors and chargés, our USAID missions, to make sure we are looking into the weeds as well.

We do not want to see U.N. agency documents coming out of these field offices that have Belt and Road Initiative or Communist Party of China language in their strategic program strategy documents out in the field. We need to be alert to this.

And I would add to this list of priorities preserving this space for Taiwan's participation at the expert technical level in the World Health Assembly, which is coming up next week up at ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and at Interpol.

These are transnational threats: global health security, civil aviation safety and security, transnational crime. Taiwan's experts' input should be heard.

Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, and I strongly support your views on Taiwan being included at those levels internationally.

Finally, for you, it was reassuring to hear Ambassador Greenfield reiterate her commitment to countering anti-Israel bias and unilateral Palestinian actions in international fora and multilateral organizations like the U.N. and U.N. agencies.

I think such a commitment is more pressing than ever as we search for ways to deescalate the current conflict and return to a two-state solution process.

If confirmed, will you work to counter anti-Israel bias at the U.N. and other multilateral organizations?

Ms. SISON. Yes, Senator, I will. I will push back, if confirmed, as I have done in the past in many different tours of duty against the de-legitimization of Israel, unfair bias, discrimination against Israel, anti-Semitism.

Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Well, Senator Risch?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. With that, we appreciate your testimony. This record will remain open two business days. So right at—close of business Thursday.

Okay, I have to check with my ever-ready staff.

This record will remain open until the close of business on Thursday. There may be questions for the record that are submitted by members.

I urge both of you to answer them fully and expeditiously as soon as possible so that your nominations may be considered at a business meeting.

And with the thanks of the committee for your presence, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:57 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Canada is a NATO ally, a NORAD partner, a member of the Five Eyes, and a top trade partner to the United States, and our two countries have worked in close strategic partnership around the world in recent decades. However, the Trump administration introduced unnecessary friction into this important relationship, including imposing Section 232 tariffs on Canada. What is your assessment of the U.S.-Canada relationship and what steps will you take to repair this important bilateral partnership?

*Answer.* Our relationship with Canada is very strong. Relations with the United States remain the centerpiece of Canada's foreign policy. President Biden and PM Trudeau issued the "Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership" at their February virtual meeting. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the roadmap priorities, which include combatting the pandemic and cooperating on economic recovery, accelerating climate ambitions, advancing diversity and inclusion, bolstering security and defense, and building global alliances.

Our two governments coordinate daily at multiple levels and across multiple agencies on matters ranging from major global issues to our shared border, rivers, and lakes, our trade relationship, and joint security through NORAD and NATO. If confirmed, I look forward to furthering that cooperation.

The United States and Canada enjoy the most extensive and integrated economic partnership of any two nations in the world. While the Section 232 actions were deeply unpopular in Canada, the almost 400,000 people in pre-pandemic times and the nearly \$1.7 billion worth of goods and services that crossed our border daily are a testament to the importance and scale of our economic relationship. Canada is the primary foreign market for more than 30 U.S. states. Millions of U.S. and Canadian middle-class jobs—including well-paying jobs in the manufacturing sector—depend on our partnership. Given the thousands of businesses and the various, complex sectors operating across our borders, disagreements arise from time to time. That is understandable and expected. If confirmed, I would commit to working with our U.S. interagency colleagues to resolve these issues with Canada in a fair and transparent manner and ensure we put the interests of U.S. workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses at the forefront of our foreign policy so that they are treated fairly under the terms of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

*Question.* The Government of China arbitrarily detained two Canadian citizens—Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor—in retaliation for Canada's decision to detain Meng Wanzhou at the request of U.S. prosecutors. For two years, Mr. Kovrig and Mr. Spavor have been held in substandard conditions and routinely denied consular access by the Canadian Government. What is your assessment of the detention of Mr. Kovrig and Mr. Spavor and how will you work with the Trudeau Government to help secure their release?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would make clear that the United States stands with Canada in calling on Beijing to immediately release Mr. Kovrig and Mr. Spavor. I will work closely with my counterparts in the Canadian Government to help secure their

release. The United States rejects the PRC's use of arbitrary detention as a political tool. Human beings are not bargaining chips.

The United States has endorsed the Canada-led multilateral Declaration Against Arbitrary Detention in State-to-State Relations, together with over 60 countries. We are in discussions with Canada and other likeminded partners through the Partnership Action Plan to coordinate collective action against the practice of politically motivated, arbitrary detentions of foreign nationals to exert pressure on their governments.

*Question.* Mexico was the deadliest country in the world for journalists in 2020, accounting for almost a third of journalists killed this year, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. Despite President Lopez-Obrador's pledge to tackle violence against journalists in 2018, his government continues to underfund the Federal Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists. How will you engage on the issue of press freedoms in Mexico and advocate for increased protections for journalists?

*Answer.* Respect for human rights is fundamental, and a free and active press is an integral part of a healthy democracy. The killing of journalists and human rights activists undermines freedoms of expression and association, as well as regional security.

The Department is committed to supporting efforts to increase respect for human rights and press freedom. Through USAID, the Department supports Mexico's National Protection Mechanism for Journalists and Human Rights Defenders and works with state-level counterparts to expand the protection measures available for these groups. USAID also supports the Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Crimes Against Freedom of Expression to investigate and sanction aggressions against journalists and defenders.

If confirmed, I will strongly promote respect for human rights and the rule of law and end impunity. We will continue to urge Mexican authorities to investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes against journalists and human rights activists wherever they occur.

*Question.* Arms trafficked from the United States into Mexico have reached disturbing levels and, in some cases, transnational criminal organizations operating in Mexico possess more sophisticated weapons than those of Mexican law enforcement, all of which is enabling dangerous groups to expand their influence and activities in the country. If confirmed, what steps would you take to address international arms trafficking from the U.S. into Mexico?

*Answer.* U.S.-Mexico security cooperation remains a top national security priority. It is critical that the United States and Mexico work together to dismantle transnational criminal organizations and their operations, reduce impunity and corruption, and strengthen the rule of law in Mexico. I recognize that illegal weapons trafficking from the United States constitutes a major source of the arms used by criminal organizations in Mexico. If confirmed, I commit to working with you and other members of the U.S. Congress, my U.S. interagency colleagues, and Mexican Government officials to address border security and arms trafficking.

*Question.* Central America's Northern Triangle struggles with widespread insecurity, weak rule of law and extreme levels of poverty. These challenges are the main causes pushing people to leave their countries. If confirmed, what priorities will you establish to address citizens security, strengthen democratic governance, and facilitate conditions for equitable economic growth in the Northern Triangle?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize programs that directly impact everyday Central Americans to improve citizen security, strengthen democratic governance, and create the conditions for equitable economic growth, especially in areas prone to high emigration. To build political will, I will work across the U.S. Government to utilize a broad range of tools of diplomacy, public diplomacy, sanctions and visa revocations, and targeted foreign assistance programs to combat corruption, strengthen judiciaries, and promote transparency.

Our citizen security programs seek to transform the relationship between police and the communities they serve. We will work with civil society and partner governments to address community needs, including health and education, promote transparency, and hold government institutions accountable. Finally, if confirmed, I will work with our interagency partners to help create conditions for equitable economic growth, including by supporting businesses owned by women and disadvantaged groups.

*Question.* Across Central America, citizens have fled their homes and migrated from their countries in search of safety and opportunity. Additionally certain un-

democratic leaders have facilitated the criminality that leaves many Central Americans unable to see a future in their country. If confirmed, how will you prioritize the use of foreign assistance to support democratic civil society and struggling citizens, while also holding accountable certain leaders that have facilitated criminality and placed their own interests above their citizens?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support assistance programs to strengthen civil society and their efforts to denounce corruption, promote justice, protect human rights, and advocate for the needs of vulnerable populations. I will seek to build on administration efforts to consult with civil society representatives, both throughout the region and in the United States, to ensure their perspectives and input inform our policies and program design. It is critical that we work to guard civic space that allows for the free exercise of rights, and use all available tools to promote accountability for corrupt actors in the region.

*Question.* In November 2020, more than 7 million people were affected and hundreds of thousands were forced into shelters after two devastating hurricanes struck Central America, positioning already vulnerable individuals at greater risk. If confirmed, how will you prioritize support for recovery and relief efforts from these hurricanes and how will this align with a broader, longer-term effort to aid Central America in mitigating the impacts of climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely within the Department and the interagency, including by supporting international engagement efforts led by Vice President Harris to internationalize the effort and secure more donor commitments for responding to the immense humanitarian needs in Central America. The Department, together with USAID and others, provided immediate humanitarian relief in the aftermath of the hurricanes and continues to remain actively engaged in rebuilding efforts. In April, the U.S. Government announced an additional \$310 million in humanitarian support to the region and is working to secure increased donor commitments to address acute needs. We will continue to work to address the immediate needs while strengthening the capacity of Central American Governments for disaster risk mitigation and preparedness.

*Question.* Since taking office in 2007, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega has conducted widespread, systematic attacks against civilians, including murder, torture, and arbitrary detentions. Moreover, in recent weeks and months, the Ortega Government has taken a number of steps to undermine the possibility of free, fair and transparent elections in November 2021. If confirmed, how will you prioritize support for Nicaraguan civil society in light of the enactment of these troubling laws and how will you work with international partners to promote a free, fair and transparent electoral process in Nicaragua?

Answer. The United States is deeply concerned by a series of repressive laws that have been passed since October 2020 which aim to suffocate civil society in Nicaragua and quash freedom of expression. The regime has taken repressive action against several media outlets, and the administration has publicly denounced these actions. President Ortega's actions against civil society, the media, and the democratic opposition will only further distance him from the global community. If confirmed, I will actively work to defend Nicaragua's civil society groups, and will continue to work through diplomatic efforts, coordinated multilateral pressure, support for pro-democracy actors, and targeted economic measures, as appropriate, to advocate for free and fair presidential and legislative elections in Nicaragua. The administration will continue to work closely with partners in the OAS, EU, and elsewhere to urge the Nicaraguan Government to implement free and fair elections.

*Question.* During his campaign, President-elect Biden characterized Colombia as a "keystone" of U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America, pledging that restoring the partnership our countries would be a priority. If confirmed, what would be your priorities for and approach to strengthening the U.S.-Colombia relationship?

Answer. I agree with President Biden that Colombia is a vital strategic partner. If confirmed, I will support efforts to advance the many priorities we share with Colombia, including promoting sustainable peace and reconciliation; combatting narcotics trafficking and the transnational criminal groups that threaten hemispheric security; coordinating an effective diplomatic and humanitarian response to the crisis in Venezuela; protecting human rights; addressing the climate crisis; assisting Colombia to strengthen its health system; expanding economic ties, and promoting inclusive economic growth that will benefit the citizens of both countries.

*Question.* Five years ago, Colombia signed a historic peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). However, there have been delays in implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Venezuela crisis, and the eco-



conomic impacts of both, as well as continued security challenges. How will you support Colombia as it implements the accord amidst these many growing challenges?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the efforts of the Colombian Government and people as they continue to work towards a just and lasting peace and a more prosperous future. I believe that successful implementation of the 2016 peace accord is vital to sustainable progress on a broad range of priorities, including security, stability, counternarcotics, human rights, justice, and economic development. I will ensure that the United States continues to support the implementation of the accord through diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance programming. Our priorities include assisting Colombia to extend the benefits of the accord to vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas.

*Question.* In recent weeks, Colombia has confronted nationwide protests. While the majority of the protests have been peaceful, there have been incidents of violent protests, vandalism, and blockades—which have had a negative impact on the broader population. There also have been acts of violence and excessive use of force committed by Colombian security forces. Additionally, there have been incidents of citizens taking up arms and firing on protesters. What is your assessment of the protests, the acts of excessive force committed by security forces, and the attacks by armed citizens? How can the United States best support Colombia during this difficult period?

*Answer.* Colombia is a long-time and close partner. I am saddened by the loss of life during protests in Colombia this May. Citizens in democratic countries have the unquestionable right to protest peacefully. Violence and vandalism is not acceptable; nor are acts of vigilantism. If confirmed, I will encourage the Colombian Government to continue investigating all allegations of police misconduct and address any violations of human rights. I will also support the efforts of the Colombian Government and people as they continue to engage in dialogue to resolve the current situation and work together toward a more prosperous and peaceful future, particularly through continued implementation of the 2016 peace accord.

*Question.* Over the past four years, the U.S.-Ecuador relationship has improved significantly. After a decade of tensions, both countries have advanced multiple security, development, and economic agreements. What is your assessment of the U.S.-Ecuador relationship and if confirmed, what steps will you take to support the U.S.-Ecuador partnership?

*Answer.* Over the last few years, the United States and Ecuador have improved relations and built a cooperative bilateral relationship based on shared values related to democracy, sustainable development and prosperity, transparency, security, and the fight against drug trafficking, organized crime, and corruption. Ecuador is a steadfast regional partner. The United States seized this opening to increase bilateral cooperation across the board.

If confirmed, I will continue to pursue increased cooperation with the Ecuadorian Government in areas of mutual benefit for both our countries. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. interagency to ensure we are exploring all areas of cooperation with Ecuador and seeing where the U.S. can strategically provide assistance. The United States will continue supporting Ecuador's efforts to implement much-needed economic reforms to strengthen the economy, balance public finances, and revive growth in Ecuador, which is imperative given the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States is proud to stand with the Ecuadorian people as they continue on the path to sustainable prosperity.

*Question.* The Bolsonaro Government in Brazil has been highly criticized for its role in deforestation and forest destruction. While annual deforestation has increased over the past 11 years, the spike seen in 2019 is, according to many experts, was a direct result of the Government's actions. President-elect Biden has been outspoken about the need for a better approach to deforestation in the Amazon. If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing environmental issues as a core agenda item for our bilateral relationship with Brazil and how will you approach the issue of Amazon deforestation?

*Answer.* Addressing deforestation is key to achieving Brazil's climate and development goals. If confirmed, I look forward to prioritizing efforts to combat the climate crisis and other environmental issues. We want to work with the Brazilian Government, Indigenous and Quilombo communities, and civil society to build economic value for Brazilians through forest management and protection rather than deforestation and to explore ways to increase investment into forests, combat conservation crimes, improve land titling, and create sustainable value chains to conserve biodiversity.

*Question.* As the crisis in Venezuela poses continued risks for U.S. national security and regional stability, what priority will you place on strengthening coordination with our closest partners to improve the effectiveness of our sanctions, humanitarian aid, and diplomacy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that the State Department continues to prioritize strengthening coordination with our closest partners to improve the effectiveness of our sanctions, humanitarian aid, and diplomacy. The United States needs to work with partners and allies to build multilateral pressure on the illegitimate Maduro regime, promote accountability for regime officials' and their enablers' criminal activities, implement appropriate sanctions against those who undermine democracy or abuse human rights, and provide humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people.

*Question.* Given the Maduro regime's fraudulent legislative elections in December 2020 and the seating of a new, illegitimate National Assembly, what diplomatic efforts will you pursue to support Interim President Juan Guaidó and Venezuela's democratic opposition, as well as their ability to address the suffering of the Venezuelan people and counter Maduro's dictatorship?

*Question.* If confirmed, I will remain committed to working with our Venezuelan and international partners to foster an environment where all Venezuelans can chart a peaceful course out of the current crisis, with full respect for the freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, and an end to attacks against human rights defenders, journalists, and political opposition actors.

I will work with partners and allies to increase multilateral pressure on the illegitimate Maduro regime, promote accountability, including through the use of appropriate sanctions, of regime officials and their enablers for their criminal activities, undermining democracy, or abuse of human rights. If confirmed, I will also prioritize providing humanitarian aid to ease the suffering of people affected by the Venezuelan regional crisis.

*Question.* What is your assessment of efforts by our geopolitical competitors and adversaries—Russia, China, and Cuba—to prop up the Maduro regime in Venezuela?

*Answer.* I understand Russian support for the Maduro regime includes military advisors and proxies, disinformation mechanisms, political influence on the world stage, and financial backing. PRC companies such as ZTE support the Maduro regime by providing technology to surveil Venezuelans and reward regime supporters while punishing critics. Cuban military and intelligence advisors actively support Maduro through the provision of security forces, intelligence officers, and providing direction to regime actors. Collectively, these efforts provide substantial and worrisome support to the Maduro regime, which I will work to counter, if confirmed.

*Question.* China's presence in Latin America has grown over the past four years amidst a combination of U.S. neglect and aggression towards the region, as well as increased Chinese economic, diplomatic, and military engagement. How will you improve cooperation with our hemispheric partners, so as to reassert our leadership, deepen our ties with partner governments, and improve our competitiveness in the region?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) represents a serious challenge to U.S. interests in the region, with its growing security ties and infrastructure investments. If confirmed, I will lead our team to meet this challenge by advancing our positive agenda for the hemisphere. We will build on our shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We will welcome our allies and partners' expertise and resources to support the region's COVID-19 response, entrepreneurship, and sustainable infrastructure. We will support high-standard investment in infrastructure and transparent economic development that creates jobs essential for regional pandemic recovery. If confirmed, I will work to broaden our diplomatic presence, promote increased educational and cultural exchanges, and help our partners face rule of law challenges.

*Question.* As the Government of China has expanded its presence in Latin America, aspects of its engagement have been characterized by predatory foreign investment, unsustainable loans to the region, or even through aggressive violations of international boundaries as we saw in the case of large Chinese illegal fishing off of the coast of the Galapagos Islands. What is your assessment of these aspects of China's engagement in Latin America and as Assistant Secretary of State what tools will you utilize to strengthen U.S. engagement and competitiveness in the region?

Answer. The hemisphere faces longstanding challenges of economic inequality, corruption, and weak democratic institutions, all of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic and make the region more vulnerable to aggressive and coercive practices, including by the People's Republic of China (PRC).

If confirmed, I will continue U.S. efforts to work with partners and share resources and expertise to support COVID-19 response, entrepreneurship, and economic development that creates jobs essential for regional pandemic recovery. With likeminded partners and allies, I will continue efforts to offer higher-standard, transparently governed infrastructure alternatives and push back on PRC economic pressure. I will also continue to raise concerns and distinguish ourselves from PRC infrastructure projects to advocate for the highest environmental, social, and labor standards to ensure investments are beneficial, sustainable in the long term, transparent and respect the rule of law. If confirmed, I will support the continued engagement of constructive actors who share our values, such as Taiwan.

I will also continue to work with the interagency and partners in our region to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which impacts local fisheries and national economies, including through developing a coordinated regional response to increase regional capacity to counter IUU fishing activities by PRC fleet and those of other flag states.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Has the Biden administration determined a specific timeline to complete its ongoing review of U.S. policy in Venezuela?

Answer. I understand the interagency is working diligently on the Venezuela policy review, which remains ongoing. There is widespread agreement on the need to restore democracy through free and fair elections, and to adopt a multilateral approach toward a negotiated solution to the crisis caused by the illegitimate Maduro regime. If confirmed, I will continue our work to encourage free and fair elections, urge the release of political prisoners, confront the escalating humanitarian crisis, and bring relief to the Venezuelan people, including the millions who have fled Venezuela.

*Question.* Do you commit to thoroughly and promptly brief the committee on the outcome of this policy review as soon as it is complete?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress as we seek to address the Venezuela crisis.

*Question.* In your view, how would you describe the nature of the Maduro regime?

Answer. The United States does not recognize Maduro's dictatorial regime as the Government of Venezuela. His repression, corruption, and mismanagement have created one of the worst humanitarian crises this hemisphere has seen. The Maduro regime enables criminal and terrorist networks and openly cooperates with many malign actors, which poses a serious threat to U.S. national security.

*Question.* What would you say are the pitfalls and potential incentives that could persuade such a regime to peacefully give up control of Venezuela?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support a negotiated solution to the Venezuelan crisis that leads to free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections and a return of the rule of law and democracy in Venezuela. The United States stands ready to support such a negotiation, led by the Venezuelans themselves. I am committed to work with our partners inside Venezuela and in the international community to pressure Maduro to commit to a serious process. Recognizing the difficulties of engaging with such a regime, a potential incentive would be the lifting of economic sanctions and acknowledgement of the legitimacy of a Government in Venezuela—which, as the administration has noted previously, can and will only occur if democracy is restored.

A pitfall of engaging with the Maduro regime is that the regime continues to buy time while dividing the opposition and the international community, seeking only minimum concessions to obtain some domestic and international legitimacy without addressing the main issues that will lead to the restoration of democracy in Venezuela. I commit to remaining clear-eyed about these risks, if confirmed. I will seek to engage with Interim President Guaidó and other Venezuelans who wish to promote democracy and the international community to promote positive change and mitigate the risks laid out above.

*Question.* To what extent is the Maduro regime providing safe haven to transnational criminal organizations, including U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organizations?

*Answer.* The illegitimate Maduro regime allows and tolerates the use of its territory by terrorist organizations and non-state armed groups, including the National Liberation Army (ELN) and dissident members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, among others. The regime's practically nonexistent international drug control cooperation, usurpation of the judicial system and military and security services for its own illicit ends, public corruption, and cooperation with criminal elements have provided ideal conditions for transnational criminal organizations to thrive.

*Question.* To what extent do senior members of the Maduro regime support and protect various transnational criminal groups operating within the borders of Venezuela?

*Answer.* I understand that, at times, regime officials have openly welcomed transnational criminal groups' presence in Venezuela. During the closing remarks of the 2019 Sao Paulo Forum in Caracas, Maduro stated that Iván Murquez and Jesús Santrich (former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) leaders who were at that time missing and widely presumed to have left the peace process and returned to terrorist activities) were both welcome in Venezuela. The regime leverages drug trafficking, illegal and illicit gold mining, and a variety of black-market financial transactions to enrich its leaders and evade sanctions, necessarily working with transnational criminal organizations. These operations could not take place without acquiescence or approval at the highest levels.

*Question.* In your view, what is the nature of the relationships between senior members of the Maduro regime and transnational criminal organizations?

*Answer.* I understand the regime is complicit with transnational criminal organizations, including dissidents of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Colombian-origin National Liberation Army (ELN), and Hezbollah sympathizers. Maduro and his associates use criminal activities to help maintain their illegitimate hold on power. Profit-seeking networks between FARC dissidents, ELN, and other Venezuelan non-state armed groups facilitate the regime's public corruption and graft schemes, to include those involving senior members of the Maduro regime.

*Question.* In your view, what is the nature of the relationships between Venezuelan security forces and transnational criminal organizations?

*Answer.* Profit-seeking ties between dissident members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Colombian-origin National Liberation Army (ELN), and Venezuelan paramilitary groups facilitate the public corruption and graft schemes of the regime to include other members of the armed forces. According to the Department of Justice indictments of Maduro and 14 other regime officials unsealed in March 2020, some senior Venezuelan political, intelligence, and military officials have facilitated drug trafficking through the country since at least 1999. Venezuelan security services have also clashed with transnational criminal organizations, such as FARC dissident groups and the ELN. While Venezuelan security services do occasionally confront and even kill non-state armed group members, it is difficult to know if that reflects national strategy or local conflicts of interest on the part of regime commanders.

*Question.* Do actions by the Maduro regime related to transnational criminal activities undermine U.S. counter-narcotics cooperation with Colombia? Do actions related to transnational criminal activities undertaken by the Maduro regime undermine the 2016 Colombian agreement with the FARC?

*Answer.* The historically weak government presence at the border between Colombia and Venezuela has allowed terrorist groups to operate, particularly Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) dissidents, the National Liberation Army (ELN), and other criminal networks involved in trafficking and smuggling. A number of FARC dissidents engage in terrorist and other criminal activities, particularly in border regions and areas previously controlled by the FARC. Colombian drug-trafficking organizations—including various dissident FARC factions, the ELN, and other criminal groups—orchestrate the shipment of illicit drugs through Venezuela.

*Question.* Is the National Electoral Council named on May 5, 2021, a credible step to advance a negotiated and peaceful solution to Venezuela's political, economic, and humanitarian crises?

**Answer.** The goal of the United States is a peaceful, stable, and democratic Venezuela. While the National Electoral Council (CNE) that was named was slightly less imbalanced than others in recent memory, it is no substitute for a comprehensive process leading to free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections and other guarantees, which are long overdue.

The CNE in question was composed by an illegitimate body—a national assembly Maduro installed based on fraudulent elections on December 6, 2020. The real test is whether the CNE guarantees the right of Venezuelans to freely choose their representatives, not merely its composition.

Given Maduro's track record, if confirmed, I will work assiduously with our international partners to continue to press for the fundamental changes needed, including lifting bans on political parties, the unconditional release of political prisoners, invitations to credible international electoral observers, a public electoral calendar, and the unhindered access and distribution of humanitarian aid.

*Question.* Can the humanitarian crisis affecting Venezuela be resolved under Maduro's watch?

**Answer.** Venezuelans are suffering from one of the worst economic and humanitarian crises outside of a war in modern history. Since 2017, more than 5.6 million Venezuelans have been forced to flee their country.

The illegitimate Maduro regime mismanages the economy, plunders public coffers, and impedes access to critical humanitarian assistance, including lifesaving food and nutrition aid. If confirmed, I will work to open more possibilities for humanitarian workers, organizations, and assistance to reach the Venezuelan people in Venezuela and beyond.

Since 2017, the United States has provided more than \$1.2 billion in humanitarian, economic, development, and health assistance to help Venezuelans, including more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance, both inside Venezuela and throughout the region.

*Question.* Has the Biden administration determined a specific timeline for completion of its ongoing review of U.S. policy in Cuba?

**Answer.** I understand the administration has committed to carefully reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, to ensure it advances the goals the administration is trying to achieve in empowering the Cuban people to determine their future. I understand there is no set timeline for the review, and the administration is eager to consider views from a variety of stakeholders from various sectors and viewpoints. If confirmed, I will support the Department's review with an eye toward assessing its impact on the political and economic wellbeing of the Cuban people as well as the promotion of democracy and human rights, and I look forward to consulting with Congress regularly on this issue.

*Question.* Should Cuba be removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism (SST) while they continue to provide safe harbor to violent U.S. fugitives?

**Answer.** I understand the administration has committed to carefully reviewing decisions made in the prior administration, including the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the administration's review of Cuba policy and consulting regularly with Congress. Our priority in Cuba, as the rest of the Hemisphere, needs to be democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Countries should not be grandfathered because they have failed to respect those tenets.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support Cuba's removal from the SST list without verifiable assurances that it would cease to foster a permissive environment for international terrorists?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will carefully and thoroughly review all material related to the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, including the underlying rationale. I look forward to supporting the administration's review of Cuba policy, if confirmed.

*Question.* The United States has extradition treaties with Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. These treaties cover crimes that are often committed in relation to human trafficking activities feeding the illegal migration crisis at our southern border. If confirmed, do you commit to consider and report to the committee ways in which the U.S. could better leverage existing bilateral extradition treaties with the countries in Northern Central America to combat illegal migration from the region?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I plan to evaluate our extradition treaties with Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. These treaties can be powerful tools for combatting

crime, including human trafficking and migrant smuggling. I will consider all available tools at the Department's disposal to help address the root causes of irregular migration in and from Central America, including corruption and impunity, and I will continue to consult closely with Congress on these issues.

*Question.* The United States has leveraged sanctions and diplomatic efforts, but what other actions do you think are needed to significantly ramp up pressure ahead of the November general elections in Nicaragua?

*Answer.* I believe we need to continue to work through diplomatic efforts, coordinated multilateral pressure, support for democratic actors, and targeted economic measures, as appropriate, to advocate for free and fair presidential and legislative elections in Nicaragua. The United States will continue working closely with our partners in the OAS, EU, and others to urge the Nicaraguan Government to implement free and fair elections. If the Ortega regime fails to take meaningful reforms by the May OAS deadline, if confirmed, I will work with our partners to use the diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal, and will continue to coordinate on targeted measures with Canada, the EU, and the United Kingdom. The United States will keep using our voice, vote, and influence so that international financial institution lending does not support non-democratic actors in Nicaragua. It is important that the United States and our allies clearly state that we will give credibility to and work with the winner of a free and fair election, but it will be extremely difficult to work constructively with a government emerging from a fraudulent election.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you recommend reviewing Nicaragua's continued participation in—and access to—the full benefits afforded under the Dominican Republic-Central America FTA (CAFTA-DR) should the November elections fail to meet international standards?

*Answer.* CAFTA-DR has improved the lives of the people of Nicaragua and the United States. In order to continue to build on that partnership and expand our economic partnership, the U.S. should make clear that Nicaraguans would benefit from good governance, transparency, and the rule of law. Given the deterioration of those democratic principles in Nicaragua, we are already ensuring that trade capacity building and technical assistance, including joint efforts on customs and border management, labor, environment, and agriculture, are not directed toward the Nicaraguan Government. If the November elections are not free and fair, the U.S. would continue to review the Nicaraguan Government's participation in these trade-related activities, with a view toward promoting good governance and transparency in the region.

*Question.* According to the 2019 State Department Report on Human Rights in Nicaragua, "there were numerous reports that the Government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings" in response to the April 2018 pro-democracy protests, where the Government's violent crackdown left at least 325 people dead; over 2,000 injured; hundreds illegally detained; tortured, and disappeared; and more than 80,000 exiled in neighboring countries. An Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) team concluded in July 2018 that the Nicaraguan security forces' actions could be considered crimes against humanity. The Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights also describes Nicaragua as suffering from a "climate of widespread terror." If confirmed, what specific actions would you support to hold members of the Ortega-Murillo regime accountable for serious human rights abuses and crimes against humanity?

*Answer.* The administration is committed to promoting accountability for Ortega and his collaborators who undermine democracy or violate human rights, and will continue to call out abuses when they occur. The United States was a co-sponsor, along with 51 countries, of the March 2021 U.N. Human Rights Council resolution which called for justice and accountability in Nicaragua. If confirmed, I will intensify our efforts to promote and protect freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, and I will urge the Ortega regime to fully and unconditionally release all arbitrarily detained persons. The United States will continue to use the economic and diplomatic tools at our disposal, including targeted sanctions and bilateral and multilateral engagement, to support Nicaraguans' calls for human rights, democracy, and justice.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with my office to clear the backlog of extraditions from Mexico to the United States?

*Answer.* U.S.-Mexico security cooperation remains a top national security priority. It is critical that the United States and Mexico work together to dismantle transnational criminal organizations and their operations, reduce impunity and cor-

ruption, and strengthen the rule of law in Mexico. If confirmed, I commit to working with you and other members of the U.S. Congress, my U.S. interagency colleagues, and Mexican Government officials to ensure we are working closely together to move extradition requests as quickly and effectively as possible.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*Question.* How can the State Department and interagency partners encourage Northern Triangle governments to promote a culture of tax compliance among their citizens and businesses? Will you commit to ensure that the State Department works with these governments to fulfill the legal and financial obligations necessary to foster an attractive investment environment and stimulate economic growth, including the timely refund of excess taxes paid by U.S. companies?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners to provide technical assistance to host governments as they pursue more efficient, transparent, fair governance, including support for e-government solutions. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring the Department works with governments to foster a more attractive business environment as an important component of our efforts to address the root causes of migration.

*Question.* How can we work with Central American governments to improve the operating environment for business, including U.S. companies? What steps will you take to promote the speedy and fair resolution of commercial disputes, especially in Honduras?

*Answer.* I share your commitment to support U.S. investor and property interests in Central America. The Department urges foreign governments, including at the highest levels when appropriate, to resolve outstanding commercial disputes. The Department generally takes no position on the merits of any specific claim or dispute but advocates for a fair, transparent, and expeditious resolution. The Department will continue to assist in resolution of outstanding U.S. citizen claims as appropriate.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* What is your view of the state of democracy in Latin America?

*Answer.* Our hemisphere is overwhelmingly committed to democracy, but there are troubling signs of backsliding in the region that require sustained and serious attention. September 11 will mark the 20th anniversary of the 2001 Inter-American Democratic Charter, which reflects the commitment of OAS member states to promote and defend democracy in the region. Through public diplomacy, increased engagement by civil society, and coordination with like-minded partners, the United States is promoting accountability for the actions of the Maduro regime and Cuba that undermine democracy and human rights; using diplomatic and economic measures and working multilaterally with partners to urge Nicaragua to hold free and fair presidential and legislative elections in November; and holding the government of Haiti to its commitment to hold free and fair legislative and presidential elections in 2021 to put an end to Haiti's prolonged rule by decree and facilitate a peaceful transfer of power to a newly elected president in February 2022.

The weakening of democratic institutions in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, is troubling. If confirmed, I will join the administration's commitment to supporting the rule of law and democracy in these countries, including through the use of Congressionally mandated corrupt actors lists to designate and sanction those responsible for the degrading of democracy in Central America. If confirmed, I will intensify efforts to work with allies and partners to further strengthen democratic institutions and support democracy throughout the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to bolster our democratic partners in the region?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work toward our strategic goal of a more inclusive, secure, prosperous, and democratic hemisphere aligned with U.S. values and interests. I will lead our team to support independent civil society throughout the region, and will encourage governments to support and promote press freedom and the safe-

ty of journalists and to counter those who may seek to undermine democracy and security. We will seek to work with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions to promote a shared vision to respect human rights and fight corruption and impunity, such as we do with our support of the Citizen Corruption Observatory. This initiative stemmed from the 2018 Summit of the Americas and builds the capacity of civil society to monitor governments' implementation of anticorruption efforts. In addition, we will work with USAID to enhance the region's anti-corruption efforts by bolstering the capacity of stakeholders to engage in advocacy, oversight, and monitoring.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to supporting ongoing U.S. programs which promote democracy and human rights in Cuba, such as through funding the office of Cuba Broadcasting?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to ensuring that support for democracy and human rights is at the core of our efforts to empower the Cuban people to determine their own future. I will also ensure the U.S. continues its steadfast support and engagement with Cuban human rights defenders, activists, and civil society members to bolster their important work; promote human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democracy; and facilitate the Cuban people's uncensored access to information.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensure that the U.S. does not lift restrictions or sanctions on Cuba until conditions are met pursuant to U.S. law?

*Answer.* The administration has committed to carefully reviewing U.S.-Cuba policy, including how it implements relevant legislation and our posture regarding economic sanctions on Cuba, to ensure they advance the goals the administration is trying to achieve in empowering the Cuban people to determine their future. We will do so in adherence to U.S. law. If confirmed, I will support the Department's review of the policy with an eye toward assessing its impact on the political and economic wellbeing of the Cuban people and the promotion of democracy. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting regularly with Congress on this issue. Throughout my career, I have worked diligently to promote respect for the rule of law, human rights and democracy. Democracy and support for human rights will be at the core of our policy toward Cuba.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to prioritize Venezuela, and continue to work with regional allies, to hold the Maduro regime and his cronies accountable?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work tirelessly with international partners and regional allies to promote accountability for the Maduro regime by building multilateral pressure and implementing appropriate and coordinated sanctions against regime officials and their enablers who undermine democracy, abuse human rights, or engage in other corrupt or criminal activity. A secure, democratic, and prosperous Venezuela would mean a more secure, democratic, and prosperous region. In this fundamental aspect, Venezuela is a top priority for the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to supporting the legitimate government of Venezuela under President Juan Guaido and working to unify the opposition to the Maduro regime?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my team and I will continue to support the efforts of the interim government led by Juan Guaidó to peacefully restore democracy and rule of law in Venezuela via free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections. We are encouraged by and will continue to support unity on the fundamental goal of free and fair elections, and the pursuit of the guarantees required to restore democracy and rule of law to the country.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you propose the United States do to support a free and fair elections?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would seek to work through diplomatic efforts, coordinated multilateral pressure, support for pro-democracy actors, and targeted economic measures, as appropriate, to advocate for free and fair presidential and legislative elections in Nicaragua. The United States will continue to work closely with partners in the OAS, EU, and others to urge the Nicaraguan government to implement free and fair elections. If the Ortega regime fails to take meaningful reforms by the May OAS deadline, we will work with our partners to use the diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal. We will continue efforts to coordinate on targeted measures with Canada, the EU, and the United Kingdom. We will continue to use our voice, vote, and influence so that international financial institution lending does not support non-democratic actors in Nicaragua. It is important that the United States and our allies clearly state that we will give credibility to and work with the winner



of a free and fair election, but it will be extremely difficult to work constructively with a government emerging from a fraudulent election.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing efforts to counter vaccine diplomacy by China in the region?

*Answer.* COVID-19 is the most pressing challenge to our collective health, well-being, and economic security in a century. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. commitment to collaborate with partners across the globe, including Taiwan, to end the pandemic and mitigate its severe public health and economic impacts. The Biden administration has already loaned AstraZeneca vaccines to Mexico and Canada. If confirmed, I will work to support a science-based approach that prioritizes an equitable distribution of vaccines to countries in our region.

President Biden announced the United States will donate at least 80 million vaccine doses to meet global needs by the end of June, far more than any other nation has donated, including the People's Republic of China or Russia. Importantly, our shots do not come with strings attached; the United States views vaccines as a tool to end the pandemic, not a means to achieve political outcomes.

The United States is also the largest donor to Gavi for the COVAX Facility, having contributed \$2 billion with plans to donate an additional \$2 billion by 2022. I understand all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have received one or more COVAX shipments, except for Cuba and Haiti who do not participate in COVAX. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure our close coordination with COVAX and other partners to ensure safe and effective vaccines are delivered in a way that is equitable and follows the science and public health data.

*Question.* What are your views on the need to prioritize the region for distribution of excess and surplus vaccines?

*Answer.* Vaccine distribution is a priority in the region. If confirmed, I will work within the administration to coordinate with our partners in the region to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the distribution of vaccines. The United States has loaned Canada and Mexico 1.5 million and 2.7 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines, respectively, and the administration is currently considering the best manner in which to implement President Biden's further commitment to donate at least 80 million surplus vaccines. If confirmed, I will work to prioritize the region and advocate that it has the tools necessary, including via both bilateral and multilateral mechanisms, to bring a quick end to the current pandemic and prepare for, detect, and respond to the next pandemic.

*Question.* How might the United States support Ecuador's efforts to diversify its economy and decouple from China?

*Answer.* The United States remains Ecuador's largest trading partner, with \$10.2 billion in total two-way trade in goods in 2020. In December of 2020, the United States and Ecuador finalized the negotiation of a Protocol on Trade Rules and Transparency, an agreement that is a positive step forward in our trade relationship.

The United States is committed to increasing investment in Ecuador through projects that support long-term sustainable growth and prosperity. This includes enabling private sector investment in climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, as well as investments in clean energy. The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) will also look to support investments in gender equality, financial inclusion, and recovery from COVID-19. The United States has provided funding and training to help the energy ministry and electric utility adopt new regulations to attract private investment in the electricity sector, as well as design and conduct Ecuador's first-ever competitive and transparent tenders for power sector projects, resulting in awards to qualified companies. The United States also is helping women with small businesses, through programs such as the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs and providing lines of credit to Ecuadoran banks to secure loans for small and medium enterprises. USAID in Ecuador is also working to pursue the most impactful projects investing in the most underserved communities. If confirmed, I will work with Ecuador to expand our partnership.

*Question.* What steps can the administration take to support other countries that would like to develop 5G networks without Huawei or other Chinese tech support?

*Answer.* The Biden administration is working throughout the region to communicate the risks associated with telecommunications equipment from untrusted, high-risk vendors and to support the growing number of governments and businesses concerned with safely capturing the benefits of 5G without jeopardizing national and economic security or personal privacy.

If confirmed, I would connect countries interested in developing secure 5G networks with trusted equipment and service providers, highlight available U.S. government financing tools, and underscore the potential for emerging technologies like open radio access networks (open RAN) to increase diversity, innovation, and transparency in 5G supply chains.

*Question.* As Colombia is facing many challenges, including the influx of almost 2 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants, in addition to violence presented in the country. What U.S. assistance to Colombia do you think would be most effective to ensure Colombia can face these challenges while also respecting the civil rights of protesters?

*Answer.* Colombia is a vital strategic partner that shares our democratic values. I recognize the devastating impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the Colombian people and economy, as well as the fiscal challenges associated with its generous reception of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues to leverage diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance to help Colombia address urgent needs, including strengthening its health system, promoting inclusive economic growth to recover from the pandemic, facilitating an effective humanitarian response to the Venezuela crisis, and expanding security, state presence, and access to justice throughout the country, including continuing human rights training for security personnel.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to encourage the government of Haiti conducts upcoming presidential elections in a manner that is free and fair?

*Answer.* I believe the Haitian people deserve the opportunity to elect their leaders and restore Haiti's democratic institutions. If confirmed, I will prioritize efforts to hold the government of Haiti to its commitment to hold free and fair legislative and presidential elections in 2021, and to work with Haitian political, economic, and civil society stakeholders across the spectrum, as well as international partners, in support of elections this year.

I recognize that the legitimacy of Haiti's 2021 elections and the government's credibility with the Haitian population will depend on factors such as whether there is consensus on a political accord, the participation of credible political actors, widespread voter registration, and security and voter turnout on election day. The U.S. government is providing more than \$3 million to the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening, which includes the National Democratic Institute, International Republican Institute, and International Foundation for Electoral Systems. The Consortium's pre-elections activities include focusing on improving electoral administration, strengthening the competitiveness of political parties, educating voters on electoral processes, promoting transparent electoral processes, and ensuring inclusive voter participation in Haiti. The United States also provides advice, training, and equipment to build the Haitian National Police's capacity to provide security. U.S.-supported training and equipment for the police's public order unit will help them prevent and respond to potential violence at voting centers.

Observers from organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) provide a regional voice and can help ensure free and fair elections. If confirmed, I will seek support from multilateral organizations, such as the OAS, and would welcome other international observers.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* What are the Biden administration's plans to address increasing COVID-19 concerns in Central and South America considering the growing number of illegal migrants who are currently crossing the border?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to rebuilding a safe, orderly, and humane immigration system while ensuring public safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the weeks ahead, working with the world's democracies, if confirmed I will help coordinate a multilateral effort to end the pandemic. The United States will continue to review non-essential travel restrictions at land borders to help protect against cross-border transmission of COVID-19 and will consider easing restrictions when it is safe to do so. The administration is considering the best manner in which to implement President Biden's further commitment to donate at least 80 million surplus vaccines. The United States is also the largest donor to Gavi for the U.N. COVAX Facility, having already contributed \$2 billion with plans to donate an additional \$2 billion by 2022.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Biden administration should prioritize providing COVID-19 vaccines to countries in Central and South America given the proximity to the United States and the growing number of illegal migrants who are currently crossing the border?

*Answer.* Vaccine distribution is a priority in the region, and if confirmed, I will work with the interagency, COVAX, and other partners to prioritize the equitable delivery of COVID-19 vaccines in a way that follows the science and public health data. The administration has loaned Canada and Mexico 1.5 million and 2.7 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines, respectively, and is currently considering the best manner in which to implement President Biden's further commitment to donate at least 80 million surplus vaccines. If confirmed, I will work to prioritize the region and advocate that it has the tools necessary, especially vaccines, including via both bilateral and multilateral mechanisms, to bring a quick end to the current pandemic and prepare for, detect, and respond to the next pandemic.

*Question.* What is the United States currently doing to counter China's growing influence in Central and South America and what can the United States do more?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) represents a serious challenge to U.S. interests in the region, with its growing security ties and infrastructure investments. If confirmed, I will lead our team to meet this challenge by advancing our positive agenda for the hemisphere. We will build on our shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We will welcome our allies and partners' expertise and resources to support the region's COVID-19 response, entrepreneurship, and sustainable infrastructure. We will support high-standard investment in infrastructure and transparent economic development that creates jobs essential for regional pandemic recovery.

If confirmed, I will continue to work with our allies and partners in Central and South America to help the region address the pandemic and recover from the related economic crisis. We will work to ensure competitive and transparent investment environments that help level the playing field for U.S. and other trusted businesses, strengthen our security and law enforcement cooperation, and promote secure telecommunications networks. We will draw attention to and counter illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. We will support and expand Taiwan's bilateral relationships in Central and South America.

*Question.* Do you believe that Taiwan's ability to maintain formal diplomatic relations with countries in the Western hemisphere benefits U.S. strategic interests? Nine out of fifteen countries with formal diplomatic relations are in the Western hemisphere. As part of China's push to de-legitimize Taiwan, Beijing has used various tactics, including COVID-19 vaccine diplomacy, infrastructure assistance, elite capture, corrupt practices, to compel countries in the Western hemisphere to break diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

*Answer.* As a strong democracy, Taiwan is an essential partner in a region overwhelmingly committed to democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. efforts to support Taiwan's diplomatic and unofficial relationships across the Western Hemisphere region. Together with like-minded countries we can support good governance, transparent investments, and economic growth.

*Question.* What is the Biden's administration's plans to address the increasing COVID-19 concerns in Central and South America considering the high number of migrants that are crossing the border each day?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration remains committed to rebuilding a safe, orderly, and humane immigration system while ensuring public safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the world's democracies to coordinate a multilateral effort to end the pandemic. The United States will continue to review non-essential travel restrictions at land borders to help protect against cross-border transmission of COVID-19 and will consider easing restrictions when it is safe to do so. The administration is considering the best manner in which to implement President Biden's further commitment to donate at least 80 million surplus vaccines. The United States is also the largest donor to Gavi for the U.N. COVAX Facility, having already contributed \$2 billion with plans to donate an additional \$2 billion by 2022.

*Question.* Do you agree that the Biden administration should prioritize COVID-19 vaccines to countries in Central and South America considering the proximity to the United States and the high number of migrants that are crossing the border?

*Answer.* I agree that the United States should continue to do more to help the world by taking a leading role in ending the pandemic globally and building a co-

ordinated, multilateral effort around the world aimed at ending the pandemic. Our overarching aim is to get as many safe and effective vaccines to as many people as fast as possible. If confirmed, I will work with COVAX and other partners to prioritize the equitable delivery of COVID-19 vaccines that follows the science and public health data.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BRIAN A. NICHOLS BY SENATOR BRIAN SCHATZ

*Question.* The Caribbean region has abundant solar and wind resources, yet its electricity is overwhelmingly generated by fossil fuels. In 2012, Aruba set a target of 100 percent renewable energy by 2020. In 2019, 81 percent of its electricity still came from fossil fuels. Likewise, in 2011, Grenada established a goal of 100 percent renewable energy by 2030. With diesel currently providing 98.5 percent of the island's electricity, it is not on track to meet its goal.

*Question.* The United States works with Caribbean partners to promote energy supply diversification, to develop cost-effective and resilient power systems, and to help create investment opportunities for U.S. and Caribbean firms.

The Department has identified diversification of energy supplies away from a single source of fuel and promotion of U.S. exports, particularly renewable energy, as two primary objectives in promoting Caribbean energy security.

If confirmed, I will redouble our commitment to these efforts. The Caribbean's high dependency on imported diesel for power generation and low reliability of electric service and frequent power outages have led to the highest average electricity prices in the Western Hemisphere.

*Question.* What are the barriers to renewable energy development in the Caribbean, and how will you work to address these barriers and expedite renewable energy development as Assistant Secretary of State of Western Hemisphere Affairs?

Answer. Barriers to renewable energy development in the Caribbean include limited economies of scale, inadequate policy and regulatory frameworks, and antiquated transmission and distribution infrastructure. Integrating clean power generation also requires significant investments in transmission infrastructure and technologies such as battery storage to accommodate variable generation.

Caribbean nations have nevertheless made progress in energy diversification and U.S. cooperation has worked to advance stronger, more resilient, and more efficient power systems.

*Question.* Would it make sense to help an initial island or two decarbonize as models for the region?

Answer. Several Caribbean islands, including Jamaica and Nevis, have engaged with the United States to develop renewable energy sources. These are indeed model projects.

Our whole of government effort promotes energy diversification and resilient energy systems through improved governance, increased access to financing, and donor coordination. If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners, multilateral organizations, and Caribbean nations to advance those efforts.

We address the barrier of high-cost financing for energy project development through a \$25 million guarantee agreement with National Commercial Bank of Jamaica to help provide loans for clean energy projects across the Caribbean and a \$10 million credit guaranty to catalyze \$20 million in loans for clean energy borrowers, focused on off-grid solar projects.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* President Biden's recent Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Persons Around the World calls on the State Department to build coalitions of like-minded nations in international organizations to fight against LGBTQI+ discrimination. What more could the International Organization Bureau do to advance that mandate?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to utilizing the diversity and talent within the IO Bureau to play a leadership role in promoting the human rights and social

inclusion of LGBTQI+ persons abroad. IO leads an Interagency Working Group on leveraging multilateral tools to address LGBTQI+ issues and, if confirmed, I will ensure this group works to advance these issues across various multilateral fora, to include the United Nations, regional organizations, international development banks, and multi-stakeholder coalitions, such as the Equal Rights Coalition as well as the U.N. LGBTI Core Group. If confirmed, I will also work to strengthen existing multilateral mandates like the U.N. Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and advance efforts to increase Global South support for the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons. If confirmed, I will also work to increase civil society engagement in the IO Bureau's efforts to advance the human rights of LGBTQI+ individuals.

*Question.* Debates at the U.N., and the programmatic activities of U.N. agencies, often revolve around government repression that leads to refugee flows, terrorism, and civil conflict.? Some of the populations most directly impacted by that repression are minority populations—whether sexual, ethnic, gender or racial in character. How can the U.N. be more active and impactful in heading off the causes of this repression, and in condemning it when it occurs?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage U.N. leadership to enhance its advocacy as well as U.N. monitoring and implementation efforts to address such repression. I will work closely with our U.N. partners to condemn violations of international law and continue the United States' strong support for the promotion and protection of human rights, including through access to justice, and humanitarian response and durable solutions for displaced persons. I will maintain strong U.S. engagement with and support for key U.N. mechanisms and bodies such as the Human Rights Council. I will encourage U.N. partners to take concrete measures to protect minority rights and deepen partnerships with stakeholders to address the root causes of repression.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* The upcoming U.N. Security Council (UNSC) Syria Cross Border mandate renewal is of grave concern to me and my colleagues in Congress. Not only should this administration work to renew the one remaining crossing, Bab Al-Hawa, but it should actively work to build consensus in the Security Council to re-open two previously closed crossings, Bab Al-Salam and Yarubiyah.

- If confirmed, how would you engage with partners in the UNSC to ensure this mandate renewal passes?

*Answer.* Unhindered access to humanitarian assistance in Syria is an urgent priority for the United States, as it should be for all nations. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues its sustained high-level engagement with Security Council members and regional stakeholders, as well as with U.N. leadership, to include Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, to underscore the importance of the reauthorization and expansion of the U.N. cross-border humanitarian assistance mechanism.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you recommend that Secretary Blinken and even President Biden engage at the highest possible levels on this important issue?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will recommend that senior Department and White House officials continue to engage with key stakeholders on this issue, as that engagement is already underway. President Biden encouraged Security Council action on Syria when he hosted Permanent Representatives from the U.N. Security Council in March during the U.S. presidency of the Security Council. Also in March, Secretary Blinken represented the United States in the Syria humanitarian briefing to the Security Council and made clear the importance of this issue to help relieve the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

*Question.* How will you, if confirmed, work to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars that fund U.N. humanitarian assistance are not being used to effectively subsidize the Assad regime, which blockades assistance to innocent Syrians through seizure of cross-line assistance attempts?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work closely with Department of State and USAID colleagues, U.N. stakeholders, and NGOs to ensure that aid intended for Syrians in need reaches its intended recipients and does not benefit the Assad regime. The United States remains the single largest humanitarian donor to the Syr-

ian people. The United States further supports all methods of delivering humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people throughout the country, including both cross-border and cross-line deliveries; however, cross-line deliveries from Damascus alone, even if executed properly and unhindered, do not have the capacity to fully address the needs of the Syrian people.

*Question.* The recent establishment of the office of “Multilateral Personnel and Strategy” within the bureau of International Organizations structure presents new avenues to address the growing malign influence across the U.N. system.

- How will you empower this office to address the systematic Chinese and/or Russia malign influence within the U.N.?

*Answer.* I believe the establishment of the new office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs will enable the United States to more strategically engage across the multilateral system to counter authoritarian countries’ efforts to undermine its institutions, values, and principles. The U.S. approach toward China and Russia at the U.N. will derive from a clear and compelling affirmative U.S. policy agenda centered on human rights, individual freedoms, transparency, and good governance. When China and Russia seek to undermine the international rules-based order, the United States will take decisive action to oppose those efforts. If confirmed, I will work to empower the new office and look forward to working with Congress to ensure it is well-equipped to lead this work.

*Question.* What is your strategy for increasing American representation in the U.N. system including through the Junior Professional Officer program, appointments, and elections?

*Answer.* Successfully increasing the number of U.S. citizens employed at all levels of the U.N. system requires a multifaceted approach that will involve identifying and recruiting qualified candidates, providing information on the application or election process, and advocating for their selection where appropriate. If confirmed, I will institutionalize efforts to establish and expand these capabilities on behalf of qualified U.S. candidates, and to consult closely with Congress to ensure that these efforts are sufficiently resourced. I will also work with the interagency and our allies and partners to support the election of qualified, independent U.S. citizens and other likeminded candidates for key leadership roles in the U.N. system.

*Question.* Do you believe that a designated U.N. Integrity Coordinator should be appointment and empowered to work across the Department to lead this effort?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize ensuring that the IO Bureau has the resources and staffing it needs to coordinate across the Department and with our partners and allies to advance an affirmative agenda and counter efforts by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and other countries to undermine the values at the foundation of the U.N. and multilateral system. That includes working with all relevant players, and in consultation with Congress. Addressing the challenges posed by these countries requires strong U.S. leadership to defend the foundational principles, values, and rules of the international system, and to support qualified and independent candidates for key leadership roles. I understand that IO appreciates the support that Congress has provided to date on strengthening these efforts, and has already begun to adapt its structure to prioritize this work.

*Question.* Please detail your strategy for engaging with the International Criminal Court, including with relevant bureaus like Global Criminal Justice, regarding their ongoing investigations into U.S. forces in Afghanistan and Israel.

*Answer.* I strongly agree with the administration’s objection to attempts by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to assert jurisdiction over U.S. and Israeli personnel. President Biden and Secretary Blinken have been clear that the United States will continue to oppose attempts by the ICC to assert such jurisdiction. The United States and Israel are not States Parties to the Rome Statute, and the Palestinians do not qualify as a State.

*Question.* U.S. Taxpayers have sent billions to U.N. Relief and Works Agency since the 1950s when it was originally established. Given the administrations resumption of funds without securing much needed reform, please detail your engagement plans to ensure no more taxpayer dollars are sent to a bloated organization straying from its mandate.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will insist that UNRWA adhere to the U.N. principles of neutrality, tolerance, anti-discrimination, and protection of human rights, as well as insist on strict UNRWA internal controls. The best way for the United States to influence UNRWA’s operations and ensure its provision of quality education, health

services, and emergency humanitarian relief consistent with U.N. principles is to maintain our close working relationship with and assistance to UNRWA. This allows the United States to direct funding to priority areas of focus, especially ensuring neutrality in teaching materials, staff activities, and operations, while strengthening transparency, accountability, and internal oversight. If confirmed, I commit to working with you to ensure the Agency has the capacity to fulfill its service delivery mandate from the U.N. General Assembly in line with U.N. principles, and to achieving meaningful and sustainable reforms to UNRWA's operations.

*Question.* Preparations for the next scales of assessment negotiation are underway. The Biden administration should make this a top priority by negotiating a 25% cap on peacekeeping assessments without compromising the existing fixed rate of 22% for the regular budget. No one nation should pay over 25% for either budget. What strategies will you use, if confirmed, to negotiate our assessed peacekeeping dues to 25%?

*Answer.* The next negotiations among member states on U.N. assessment rates will take place later in 2021, and I understand the administration is strategizing for engagement on this issue. If confirmed, I will work with Ambassador Thomas Greenfield and her team to advance U.S. interests in reaching agreement in the U.N. General Assembly to lower the U.S. assessment rates and to make sure other countries pay their fair share.

*Question.* Do you believe this administration should pay back arrears accrued before 2017?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to determine how best to meet our financial obligations, including addressing the substantial level of arrears that have accumulated over the past four years and the 25-percent cap on peacekeeping funding.

*Question.* U.S.-assessed and voluntary contributions to the U.N., as appropriated under the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO), Contributions for International Peacekeeping Operations (CIPA), and International Organizations and Program (IO&P) accounts, represent only a small fraction of total U.S. contributions to the U.N. system.

- If confirmed, will you assist in compiling and sharing with Congress a comprehensive report on total U.S. contributions, from all sources, to the U.N. and its specialized agencies and programs?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead the efforts of the State Department's Bureau of International Organization Affairs to meet its statutory responsibility to publish annual reports to Congress on all U.S. Government contributions to international organizations.

*Question.* Will you ensure that other donors remain apprised of the full depth and breadth of U.S. contributions from all sources?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that the annual reports on contributions created by the Bureau of International Organization Affairs are published on the Department of State's public website, thereby ensuring that they are available to other donors and the public generally.

*Question.* Whereas assessed contributions are determined on a scale and provide no discretion to nations, voluntary contributions are provided to advance specific U.S. goals and objectives. Moreover, voluntarily funded agencies, including the World Food Programme (WFP) and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), must compete for resources and are subject to rigorous transparency and accountability measures. If confirmed, will you seek to ensure that the Secretary General adopts a rigorous performance matrix, transparency requirements, and accountability measures that apply across the U.N. system, including to agencies and programs funded through assessed contributions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to achieve a coordinated, government-wide effort to assess the performance of, and promote transparency and accountability at, international organizations in the U.N. system, including those funded through assessed contributions.

*Question.* Last Congress, I introduced the Multilateral Aid Review Act to assess the value of U.S. taxpayer investments in multilateral entities, including the U.N. and its affiliated agencies. If confirmed, would you support a comprehensive review of U.S. investments in multilateral organizations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this issue closely and working with Congress to ensure effective oversight of the U.N. and its affiliated agencies.

I am committed to ensuring prudent management of U.S. taxpayer investments in multilateral entities, including a constant focus on results, accountability, and the elimination of waste, fraud, and mismanagement.

*Question.* What is your view of the relationship between the United States and the United Nations (U.N.)?

*Answer.* I agree with the view of President Biden and Secretary Blinken that many of the biggest threats we face are transnational in nature and must be addressed collectively, including through international organizations. Since the U.N.'s founding 75 years ago, the United States has been critical to the U.N.'s success, and the United Nations, in turn, has been central to U.S. efforts to secure international peace and security. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with Congress to ensure the U.S. relationship with the United Nations remains constructive, continues to serve America's national security interests, and promotes our core U.S. values.

*Question.* What are your thoughts regarding the U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC)?

*Answer.* The U.N. Human Rights Council plays an important role in promoting and protecting human rights, humanitarian access, and fundamental freedoms globally, but has serious flaws as well. I am committed to seeking HRC reforms, particularly regarding the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel, and to its membership. When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we can better advocate to protect Israel from unfair bias on the Council. Recently, our engagement has helped lead to a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. Our engagement also helps us in our efforts to keep some of the countries with the worst human rights records off the Council, and to encourage countries with better records to run.

- If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues to prioritize needed reforms as part of our re-engagement with the Council.

*Question.* Now that the Biden administration has stated its intent to run for reelection to the HRC, what reforms will the Biden administration seek?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and its problematic membership. When we have had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and we have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. We have also seen that when the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep off some of the countries with the worst human rights records and to encourage countries with better records to run for seats. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States prioritizes these specific reforms.

*Question.* Does the Biden administration believe the HRC devotes a disproportionate amount of attention to criticizing Israel while ignoring more pressing human rights crises?

*Answer.* Yes. The United States remains concerned about the disproportionate focus by the U.N. Human Rights Council on Israel, including Agenda Item 7. If confirmed, I will oppose efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including at the Human Rights Council. It is critical that the U.S. show up and engage with the Council directly. U.S. engagement at the Council can be a force for positive change and for holding countries with the worst human rights records to account.

*Question.* Understanding that the HRC has been "broken," in large part, by allowing human rights abusers to obtain seats on the Council, do you believe that conditioning U.S. participation on reform is beneficial?

*Answer.* I am committed to seeking reforms of the Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's membership and its disproportionate focus on Israel. We have seen that when the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we can engage with our allies and partners to keep some of the countries with the worst human rights records off the Council and to encourage countries with better records to run for seats. We can also advocate on Israel's behalf. With U.S. engagement, we have seen changes such as a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues to prioritize needed reforms as part of our re-engagement with the Human Rights Council.



*Question.* There have been efforts to have the United States rejoin the World Tourism Organization. If confirmed, would you support the re-entry of the United States to the World Tourism Organization? What benefits would the United States receive by re-joining this organization?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure careful consideration and review before any efforts are made to rejoin the World Tourism Organization.

*Question.* What are your views on the need for management reform at the U.N.?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I pledge to look hard at U.N. and international organization management and budgeting practices, and at how agencies implement their ethics rules, including whistleblower protections.

*Question.* How will you work to address barriers to advancing U.N. management reforms, especially those created by the different priorities among member states?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to harness allies and likeminded member states who strongly support U.N. management reform to overcome any barriers that stand in the way of advancing reforms. It must be in the interests of all members to make implementation of reforms an urgent priority to make the United Nations the effective, efficient, and responsive organization it needs to be in the 21st century.

*Question.* How will you measure success in implementing management reforms at the U.N.?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my metric of success will be to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are well-spent, and that our multilateral policies and programs improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable citizens, contribute to international peace and security, and serve the American people.

*Question.* What policies does the U.N. need to implement to maintain fiscal responsibility and accountability within the U.N. system?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that international organizations within the U.N. system are accountable and responsible for the U.S. taxpayer resources they receive. This includes continuing the longstanding U.S. policy of promoting budget discipline, as well as continuing efforts to ensure that other countries pay their fair share.

*Question.* While the U.N. has taken steps to improve its efficiency, operational effectiveness, and accountability, the continuing need for reform is obvious to most observers, including strong supporters of the institution. The U.N. Secretary-General has committed to an agenda of reform. The push for reform by the United States is one of the main drivers behind the reform movement's progress to date.

- In your opinion, what are the top three reforms that the U.N. could undertake over the next two years that will have the greatest impact?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure international organizations in the U.N. system adhere to the best management and oversight practices, including in the areas of protecting whistleblowers, addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, promoting zero tolerance for corruption, and ensuring financial and managerial transparency. This means greater transparency not only in budgeting practices, but also in U.N. procurement practices.

The United States expects to see tangible results from management reforms, including improved program delivery and greater accountability. Delegating more authority to U.N. teams in the field, closer to the point of mandate implementation, is also a key and necessary reform.

*Question.* The United States is the largest donor to the World Food Programme, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, and other U.N. agencies. Will you continue this pattern of voluntary donations to address some of the world's most pressing issues?

*Answer.* I am fully committed to upholding the Biden-Harris administration's promise to restore U.S. leadership and support for U.N. agencies, and to advance U.S. priorities in multilateral fora and at the United Nations. Voluntary contributions are an effective tool of U.S. leadership that allow us to ensure organizations are accountable, transparent, and responsive to humanitarian needs. The United States has long been the largest global contributor of humanitarian assistance and has increased its contributions due to the devastating impacts of COVID-19. Of course, we owe it to U.S. taxpayers and to the beneficiaries whose lives depend on U.N. programs to insist on continued reforms aimed at greater U.N. effectiveness and efficiency.

*Question.* How do you plan to monitor the activities of the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) and ensure that it is not complicit in China's campaign of coercive abortion and sterilization of Uyghur women?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue our government's due diligence through our membership on the U.N. Population Fund's (UNFPA) Executive Board, including through the Board's country program document review mechanism. UNFPA does not condone China's coercive population policies nor does it operate in Xinjiang.

*Question.* There have been credible allegations that the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights shared the names of Chinese dissidents who were attending U.N. Human Rights Council sessions with the Chinese Government.

- If confirmed, how will you investigate these allegations?

*Answer.* President Biden has said he would defend the rights of activists, political dissidents, and journalists around the world to speak their minds freely without fear of persecution and violence. If confirmed, I will ask relevant Department officials for a detailed understanding of this issue and will ensure that U.S. Government personnel prioritize this matter in engagements with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

*Question.* What reforms will you seek to ensure that this practice is never again used?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ask relevant Department officials for a detailed understanding of this issue and will ensure that U.S. Government personnel prioritize this matter in engagements with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

*Question.* The United States is the single largest financial contributor to U.N. peacekeeping activities. Congress authorizes and appropriates U.S. contributions, and it has an ongoing interest in ensuring such funding is used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

- Do you believe that any nation, including the United States, should pay more than 25 percent of the U.N. peacekeeping budget?

*Answer.* The next negotiations among member states on U.N. assessment rates will take place later in 2021, and I understand that the administration is currently strategizing on how to engage on this issue. If confirmed, my team and I will do everything we can to make sure that other countries pay their fair share. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with you and your staff on this important matter.

*Question.* What is your position on U.S. repayment of U.N. peacekeeping arrears? As memorialized in the 1999 Helms-Biden agreement, the Late Ambassador Holbrooke, then-President Clinton, then-Secretary General Kofi Anan, and then-Senator Biden all believed that the United States has no obligation to pay, and thus should not pay, the roughly \$500 million in "contested arrears" that were explicitly excluded from the \$1.6 billion Helms-Biden agreement. However, since then, the U.N. has insisted upon keeping on its books, and the Obama administration sought to pay over Congressional objections. Do you commit not to pay these "contested arrears" per Congressional intent as outlined in the Helms-Biden agreement?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to allow the United States to meet our financial obligations, including addressing the substantial level of arrears that have accumulated over the past four years and the 25-percent cap on peacekeeping funding.

*Question.* Are there any specific steps you believe the U.N. should take to reduce the overall size of the U.N. peacekeeping budget? If so, what are they?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing and assessing all existing peacekeeping missions to ensure they are still necessary for the promotion of international peace and security. I will also work to ensure they are as effective and efficient as possible, while providing they have the necessary resources to fully implement their mandates, including well-trained and well-equipped troops and police. I would press for structural changes, including aligning U.N. procurement with industry best practices, right-sizing mission support components, and reforming human resources to reduce staff costs. I would also press for the U.N. to implement financial reimbursement penalties for troop- and police-contributing countries for poor or under-performance, in line with the U.N. Security Council resolution 2436.

*Question.* Are there any specific U.N. peacekeeping missions you would support reducing or terminating in order to reduce U.N. peacekeeping costs? If so, what active and ongoing missions do you believe should be reduced or terminated?

Answer. U.N. peacekeeping operations are among the most effective mechanisms of burden-sharing in addressing the global challenges to international peace and security. We must ensure peacekeeping operations are using their resources as effectively and efficiently as possible to promote sustainable political solutions to conflict. Toward that end, I will, if confirmed, closely scrutinize missions, especially when their mandates come up for renewal by the U.N. Security Council.

*Question.* There have been numerous proposals to expand U.N. support for regional peacekeeping operations-particularly those deployed under the auspices of the African Union-ranging from providing limited logistical support to fully financing training, equipment, deployment, and sustainment costs through the use of assessed U.N. peacekeeping contributions. Whether regional missions would initially be subject to approval by the U.N. Security Council (like the AMISOM mission in Somalia was) is a topic of debate. However, using the U.N. as a financing mechanism for peacekeeping operations that do not fall under the command and control of the U.N.; lack adequate accountability measures; and place long-term political and financial obligations upon Member states absent Security Council oversight is a matter of serious concern. If confirmed, will you pledge to ensure that any peacekeeping mission funded by U.N. peacekeeping dollars is mandated and overseen by the Security Council?

Answer. The United States has long supported strengthening strategic AU-U.N. partnerships to better address collective peace and security threats on the continent. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure that any AU peace operation that receives U.N. financial support is mandated by and preserves the primacy of the U.N. Security Council and complies with applicable international human rights law and U.N. conduct and discipline standards.

*Question.* The United Nations maintains several particular bodies and departments that focus on the Palestinians. These include the Division on Palestinian Rights (DPR), the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP), and the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL).

- Will you work to challenge the existence and funding of these departments?

Answer. If confirmed, I will oppose efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations.

*Question.* The United States lacks a veto over membership decisions in U.N.-specialized agencies that the Palestinians could target for membership. When the Palestinians obtain membership, the United States must cut funding to that organization as required under two laws enacted by a Democratic-led Congress in the early 1990's. U.S. Code Title 22, Section 287e note, states:

No funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or any other Act shall be available for the United Nations or any specialized agency thereof which accords the Palestine Liberation Organization the same standing as member states." (Adopted as Public Law 101-246 in 1990.)

The United States shall not make any voluntary or assessed contribution: (1) to any affiliated organization of the United Nations which grants full membership as a state to any organization or group that does not have the internationally recognized attributes of statehood, or (2) to the United Nations, if the United Nations grants full membership as a state in the United Nations to any organization or group that does not have the internationally recognized attributes of statehood, during any period in which such membership is effective." (Adopted as Public Law 103-236 in 1994.)

The language in these provisions is clear and provides no discretion or waiver authority. Will you support their enforcement as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support compliance with U.S. laws.

*Question.* Over the past several years, the Palestinian Authority has received votes in various U.N. bodies to upgrade its status. Such attempts undermine the long-held belief that peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority can only come about as a direct result of direct negotiations.

- What is your plan to stop initiatives like this from even coming before U.N. entities, or the General Assembly, for a vote?

Answer. I believe that efforts by the Palestinians to join international entities are premature and counterproductive. There are no shortcuts to Palestinian statehood outside direct negotiations between the parties. If confirmed, I will continue to make

clear, both with the parties and with international partners, that the only realistic path forward to end this conflict is through direct negotiations aimed at achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace.

*Question.* How will you address future attempts by the Palestinian Authority to achieve statehood through the United Nations?

*Answer.* I believe that efforts by the Palestinians to join international entities are premature and counterproductive. There are no shortcuts to Palestinian statehood outside direct negotiations between the parties. If confirmed, I will continue to make clear, both with the parties and with international partners, that the only realistic path forward to end this conflict is through direct negotiations aimed at achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace.

*Question.* The United States has long maintained a policy of opposing many one-sided Security Council resolutions that, more often than not, criticize Israel but fail to address other issues such as Palestinian terrorism.

- Do you support the use of an American veto to block one-sided anti-Israel resolutions in the Security Council?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to uphold President Biden's strong commitment to Israel and its security. This includes opposing efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies.

Each decision to employ the veto is considered on the basis of U.S. policy interests and how they relate to the issue under consideration.

*Question.* What do you believe should be the standard employed in deciding whether to veto or not?

*Answer.* Each decision to employ the veto is considered on the basis of U.S. policy interests and how they relate to the issue under consideration.

*Question.* Do you believe that there is a disproportionate focus on Israel at the U.N.? How would you counter this at the U.N.?

*Answer.* Yes, and if confirmed I will continue the United States' opposition to efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with our Israeli diplomatic colleagues to promote the election of Israel to U.N. leadership posts, inclusion in U.N. working groups, and support for qualified Israeli candidates for U.N. positions.

*Question.* In a report requested by the U.N. Human Rights Council, the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi said in September 2020 that there had been "little" in the way of "positive changes" since President Evariste Ndayishimiye "assumed office" in June 2020, and concerns remain about human rights abuses committed both domestically against Burundian citizens and through Burundi's engagements in the region.

- What are your views on the human rights situation in Burundi? Do you believe the United States is in a position to reset its relationship with Ndayishimiye's Government, given the seeming continuity in human rights abuses from the former Nkurunziza Government?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by ongoing serious human rights violations in Burundi, while recognizing some recent positive signs. The Government has committed to releasing over 4,000 prisoners and released some journalists jailed during the 2020 elections, convicted perpetrators of elections related crimes, started dialogue with previously banned local media, and engaged the international community. If confirmed, I will carefully assess the human rights situation in Burundi and seek to build on that progress.

*Question.* How would you evaluate the performance of Burundian troops in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)? How can the U.S. better monitor their human rights record in Somalia? Are there opportunities to build in stronger human rights reporting for AMISOM, including to better monitor the human rights record of Burundian troops in Somalia? How can the U.S. push for greater capabilities of AMISOM to monitor the human rights performance of Burundi and other peacekeeper contributing countries under mission? What can the U.N. do regarding the AMISOM Mission to decrease dependency on Burundian troops in Somalia?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about AMISOM's abilities to monitor the performance and conduct of contingents assigned to it. Somalia is a very challenging oper-

ating environment. The United States attempts to mitigate these challenges by drawing on multiple sources, including NGOs, media, U.N. agencies, intelligence reporting, and diplomatic contacts. We also regularly urge the AU to monitor contingents' performance and conduct and investigate and respond to reported abuse. If confirmed, I will work with the U.N., the Bureau of African Affairs, and AMISOM to continue to improve these efforts.

*Question.* The Anglophone conflict in Cameroon is one of the world's most neglected yet intensely brutal conflicts.

- How can the U.S. better push for the U.N. Security Council to hold regular formal briefings and discussions on the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, adding it formally to its agenda? If so, how do you propose the U.S. engage member states that have worked to block previous efforts to prioritize and regularize the Anglophone crisis within the U.N. Security Council?

*Answer.* The United States engages U.N. Security Council member states regarding the need to resolve the Anglophone crisis and the severity of the humanitarian crisis in Cameroon. For example, we raise the Anglophone crisis during briefings by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and Head of the U.N. Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) Francois Fall. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage UNOCA to engage the Government of Cameroon and ask other U.N. member states to play a constructive role to resolve the Anglophone crisis.

*Question.* Do you agree that the U.N. has a vital role in supporting inclusive internationally-mediated dialogue among the many actors in the Anglophone Crisis to find a lasting and sustainable solution to the crisis, addressing root causes and underlying grievances? If yes, what precisely should that role be, and how will you push for that within the U.N.?

*Answer.* Yes. The United States fully supports the U.N. Office in Central Africa (UNOCA)'s role in promoting inclusive political dialogue in Cameroon, which includes the resolution of the Anglophone crisis. The importance of this work was reinforced in the strategic review of UNOCA conducted in 2020. If confirmed, I will support UNOCA's role and priorities when its mandate expires on August 31, 2021. The United States also fully supports the Swiss-led mediation of the Anglophone crisis, which the U.N. also supports.

*Question.* The Cameroonian Government has consistently failed to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of atrocities committed against its civilians. It has proven itself unable to hold high-ranking government and military officials responsible for these crimes. How can the U.S. engage other like-minded countries in the U.N. to pursue accountability for atrocities committed in Cameroon, both by government and armed group actors?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review the tools we have at the United Nations to press for a resolution to this conflict and to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations and abuses. I will also seek opportunities to engage with like-minded countries that share a desire to bring this conflict to an end. If confirmed, I will also engage other U.N. member states on the importance of the rule of law and ending impunity in Cameroon and explore ways we can work together to move toward a resolution.

*Question.* How can the United States more effectively encourage France to use its significant leverage in Cameroon to encourage the government to engage in meaningful dialogue and end the Anglophone conflict?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review the different tools we have to press for a resolution of this conflict, including through discussions with counterparts from France and the UK. The United States routinely raises the situation in Cameroon with French officials and will continue to pursue a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Anglophone regions.

*Question.* Russia's dominant presence in CAR is alarming on several fronts, not just as it relates to the Central African country's internal and regional security, but also vital U.S. national security interests. Will you commit to closely monitoring Russia's presence in CAR and corresponding activity at the U.N., particularly as it relates to internal and regional security arrangements and the arms embargo?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will closely monitor Russia's presence in CAR and corresponding activity at the U.N., with a particular focus on internal and regional security arrangements and the arms embargo. Russia's close ties to the Touadera Government, involvement in CAR's security sector, and stake in its natural resources are extremely concerning. If confirmed, I will carefully review all the diplomatic tools available to respond appropriately to Russia's activities in CAR.

*Question.* How can the United States best protect its interests in CAR and the broader region while also ensuring that other members of the U.N. Security Council are prioritizing the MINUSCA mission over their own foreign military operations in the country?

*Answer.* The humanitarian situation and ongoing conflict in CAR is deeply concerning. So, too, are reports of anti-MINUSCA propaganda and allegations that foreign security actors are failing to deconflict their activities with MINUSCA, committing human rights abuses, and impeding humanitarian access. MINUSCA continues to provide crucial stabilization support, human rights monitoring, assistance to CAR's justice sector, and support for elections. If confirmed, I will engage with our partners in the region and in Europe, as well as in the U.N., to ensure that MINUSCA remains well-resourced and can fully carry out its mandate, especially the protection of civilians.

*Question.* How does the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) contribute to the peace and security of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)? How effective is MONUSCO's current mandate and what changes might you propose should you be confirmed? What should the U.S., our European allies, and the U.N. peacekeeping mission (MONUSCO) be doing to support a peace process and end of the conflict in Eastern Congo?

*Answer.* MONUSCO serves U.S. national security interests by assisting the DRC Government in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts and supporting DRC's security forces to combat threats posed by armed groups and transnational criminal networks. The mission also uses its good offices to assist President Tshisekedi's efforts to end impunity for certain human rights violations and to advance security sector reform. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. engagement through our ambassador, the U.N., and regional and international partners to support efforts to stabilize the region. I will also press for the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to implement reforms to improve performance and for MONUSCO's responsible and sustainable transition and drawdown.

*Question.* How can the U.S. better push for the U.N. Security Council to hold regular formal briefings and make statements about the ongoing conflicts and humanitarian crises in Ethiopia, including but not limited to the conflict in the Tigray region? How should the U.S. engage member states that have worked to block previous efforts to prioritize and regularize discussion of Ethiopia by the U.N. Security Council?

*Answer.* Opposition from Russia, China, and other member states to formal meetings and public statements on the deeply troubling humanitarian and security situation in Ethiopia impedes the Security Council from speaking with one voice. If confirmed, I am committed to calling out those member states for their unwillingness to uphold the fundamental responsibility of the Security Council to address threats to international peace and security like the crisis in Ethiopia. I will also work closely with likeminded partners to raise the profile of Ethiopia in other fora and press for other U.N. bodies like the Human Rights Council to take up this important issue.

*Question.* There has been considerable discussion about modifying the mandate of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) and AMISOM to better address the challenges faced in Somalia.

- In your view, how can the U.S. engage in future mandate renewal processes, including with the penholder (U.K.), to have frank discussions about what we hope to achieve through UNSOS/AMISOM and how to push the government of Somalia to make progress?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing AMISOM's mandate closely with the UK, the AU, and other key stakeholders to ensure that it advances an approach that is sustainable, holistic, and appropriately geared toward supporting stabilization, counterterrorism, and transitioning security responsibilities to more capable, professional, and accountable Somali security forces. While military operations remain critical, addressing the drivers of Somalia's persistent instability, and the evolving hybrid threat posed by al-Shabaab, will require the Somalis and the international community, including AMISOM and the U.N., to utilize a broader range of tools.

*Question.* U.N. Special Representative James Swan commented in November 2020, following Somalia's decision to forgo direct universal suffrage elections for a selection process similar to that of 2016, that "we urge Somali leaders to prepare consensually a roadmap with clear timelines and benchmarks to ensure one-person-

one-vote elections take place in 2024/25.” To what extent do you feel, in reviewing the mandate for AMISOM, that consideration should be given as to how the U.N. could play a bigger role in supporting and making preparations for universal suffrage elections in the future?

*Answer.* The U.N. plays a critical role in assisting Somalia with stabilization and democratic development reforms. Among the U.N. elements operating in Somalia, the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) is mandated with advising and assisting Somalia on political reforms, and is best suited to lead U.N. efforts in preparing the country for universal suffrage in the future. If confirmed, when UNSOM’s mandate comes up for renewal in August 2021, I will work to ensure that support for democratic and electoral reforms, including supporting preparations for universal suffrage elections, remain at the core of UNSOM’s responsibilities.

*Question.* The United States voted with other members of the Security Council in December to end the mandate of the United Nations—African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), despite warnings that Sudan’s Government had not yet demonstrated its ability to protect civilians in Darfur. The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights notes “severe gaps in protection by State authorities, as well as a lack of accountability for violations.”

- What, in your view, should UNITAMS’ role be in helping to address these issues?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to supporting Sudanese efforts to address civilian protection concerns in Darfur and throughout the country. I believe UNITAMS can play an important role in supporting Sudan’s civilian-led transitional government as it works to address protection concerns, strengthen rule of law institutions, and build trust among the Sudanese people. If confirmed, I will push the Security Council to provide UNITAMS the resources and tools to support these important initiatives.

*Question.* What is your view of the request by Sudan’s transitional government to lift the U.N. arms embargo on Darfur? What changes if any should be made to the U.N. sanctions regime established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005)?

*Answer.* U.N. sanctions remain an important tool in the international community’s response to the situation in Darfur. With the adoption of resolution 2562, the U.N. Security Council has requested the Secretary-General to conduct a review of the situation in Darfur and to provide by July 31, 2021 a report containing recommendations for clear and well identified benchmarks that could serve in guiding the Security Council to review the measures on Darfur under the 1591 regime. If confirmed, I will carefully assess the appropriateness of adjustments to the U.N. Sudan sanctions regime.

*Question.* How does the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) contribute to the peace and security of Sudan and South Sudan? How effective is UNISFA’s current mandate and what changes might you propose should you be confirmed?

*Answer.* UNISFA has effectively prevented tensions over the status of Abyei or other border areas from escalating into conflict between Sudan and South Sudan. It has also played an important role in preventing and responding to conflict between local communities in the absence of local administration. However, both Sudan and South Sudan need to renew efforts to establish interim administrative and security bodies and restart talks on resolving Abyei’s political status. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues to ensure that UNISFA’s mandate remains appropriately focused, particularly with regard to the protection of civilians.

*Question.* One of the key lessons from the Brahimi Report was that if a peace operation is to be part of implementing a peace agreement, it should have a role in the process and a seat at the table—in South Sudan, though the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) does not. Should UNMISS’s political strategy be reexamined, and if so how, and how would you go about building support within the Council for a more robust role for the mission? Should UNMISS have a greater role in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and/or security sector reform (SSR)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will monitor closely the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) with a view to making it as efficient and effective as possible to fulfill its mandate of protecting civilians, facilitating humanitarian assistance, supporting implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement and supporting respect for human rights. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector

reform are essential building blocks for the peace process in South Sudan. If confirmed, I will evaluate the role of UNMISS in these areas.

*Question.* The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response recently released its final report, in which the authors evaluated the WHO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and made recommendations to prevent future pandemics from occurring. Included were recommendations to reduce the WHO Director General's term to a single seven-year term and adopt merit-based recruitment standards for other leadership staff; refocus the WHO on its core capabilities (upholding norms, providing policy and technical guidance, collecting and sharing critical global health data, and coordinating—rather than implementing—emergency responses); strengthen the International Health Regulations, including by giving WHO the right to conduct assessments without advance approval by Member States; create a Heads of State-level Global Health Threats Council; and create a multilateral incentive fund to sustainably finance pandemic preparedness and response. Do you agree that the World Health Organization is in need of reform and, if so, what specific reforms should the United States seek to advance at the upcoming World Health Assembly?

*Answer.* Yes, the World Health Organization is in need of reform, and if confirmed I will support our efforts to make the WHO stronger, more independent and efficient. Proposed reforms will be informed by assessments of the COVID-19 response and past outbreaks, including the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response and the other two independent reviews of WHO and Member State performance. The United States is working with partners in bilateral and multilateral fora to improve WHO's functioning, transparency, and accountability. This includes a focus on core areas such as science, data collection, and evaluation and promotion of evidence-based approaches. Reform requires improved human resources and financial management practices. Reform proposals should also incorporate policies throughout the organization that are gender-sensitive and respect human rights as well as the social determinants of health. Member states also need to live up to their commitments as expressed within the International Health Regulations.

*Question.* Do you agree with the recommendations of the IPPPR? Which ones?

*Answer.* I understand that the State Department and other agencies are reviewing the IPPPR recommendations alongside those of other assessments. After so many lives lost, the global community and each country must take immediate, tangible actions to both end this pandemic and to prepare for the next by taking steps to improve preparedness and response capabilities, including by increasing sustainable financing, enhancing biosurveillance with clear "triggers" for action, and expanding pandemic-related manufacturing with rapid surge capacity. If confirmed, I will seek to strengthen the global health architecture to promote preparedness, transparency, accountability, innovation, and impact, so that the global community will be better prepared to successfully prevent the next outbreak from becoming a pandemic.

*Question.* If the U.S. is unwilling to leverage contributions, how will you ensure that far-reaching reforms are enacted?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will advance reforms at the WHO through advocacy, diplomacy, and dialogue, and will work with a broad coalition of like-minded member states to ensure that WHO reforms advance and apply lessons learned from the pandemic response. I would also seek to implement innovative approaches such as the non-binding U.S.-WHO Partnership Arrangement, a model pioneered by the United Kingdom, to include defined metrics and timelines for improvement. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you and your staff on this important matter.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you advise the Biden administration do regarding UNRWA?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will advise that the administration continue to make clear to UNRWA that adhering to the U.N. principles of strict neutrality, tolerance, anti-discrimination and protection of human rights is non-negotiable. UNRWA's mandate is set by the U.N. General Assembly and is to provide essential services directly to Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. U.S.



resumption of aid allows the Department to ensure UNRWA provides cost-efficient and effective services to its beneficiaries and that UNRWA upholds the highest level of transparency, accountability, tolerance, and neutrality. If confirmed, I would work with others in the Department to advise the administration on meaningful and sustainable reforms to UNRWA's operations, including strengthening UNRWA internal controls and the Advisory Committee's oversight of UNRWA management.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you continue U.S. efforts to push back against international organizations, like the U.N., as they single out and attack Israel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the United States' work in opposing efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with our Israeli diplomatic colleagues, to promote the election of Israel to U.N. leadership posts, inclusion in U.N. working groups, and support for qualified Israeli candidates for U.N. positions.

*Question.* Iran was recently elected to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. Given Iran's treatment of women, this election damages the credibility of this institution. If confirmed, will you actively work to oppose Iranian membership in such international bodies?

*Answer.* I deeply share the concern that is the premise of your question, which is that some U.N. bodies include countries that do not live up to the objectives of the organization. In some cases, this is because the objectionable country runs on a clean regional slate which the majority of U.N. member states are unwilling to oppose.

For the CSW, the United States wants to see member state candidates who champion gender equality, oppose discrimination against women, promote women's empowerment, and further their well-being. In the case of this election, the U.S. called for a vote despite a clean regional slate due to the presence of countries on the slate that do not uphold these values. If confirmed, for each particular election, I will ensure we examine the entire list of candidates and determine who we should support and who we should oppose.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to direct U.S. representatives at international organizations to oppose growing Russian and Chinese influence at these institutions?

*Answer.* At the U.N., the People's Republic of China drives an authoritarian agenda that stands in opposition to the values of the United States and is inconsistent with the founding documents and principles of the U.N. itself, including on human rights, labor rights, transparency, and coercive economic practices. The PRC's efforts harm international organizations and their transparency, efficiency, values, and influence. If confirmed, I commit to work with U.S. representatives to international organizations to oppose the influence of the People's Republic of China, Russia, and others and to work with our partners and allies to lead on an affirmative agenda that strengthens the international rules-based order and its foundational values and principles.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Do you agree that international organizations and multinational forums have become a key battleground in the strategic competition between the United States and China?

*Answer.* Yes, and strategic competition with the People's Republic of China is one of the central challenges of the 21st century. The United States is able to respond to this challenge from a position of strength when we are engaged and leading international organizations, not pulling back and ceding the terrain to China to write the rules and norms that animate international institutions. If confirmed, I will use our engagement in the U.N. system to push back against the influence of China, and any country that seeks to undermine the rules-based order. I will steadfastly oppose activities that undermine the values, principles, and rules of the U.N. and other international organizations, and I will promote U.S. values and interests alongside our allies and partners.

*Question.* The United States has repeatedly been boxed out by China's comprehensive strategy of whipping votes for leadership positions of specialized agencies: how

would you lead the IO Bureau to ensure that the United States is laying the groundwork years in advance of vacancies to increase American or allied representation of these agencies?

*Answer.* The integrity of the U.N. and other international organizations is vital to U.S. multilateral interests. If confirmed, I will ensure that the IO Bureau, including the new Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel, prioritize and implement a robust and timely strategy to identify opportunities across the U.N. system to increase the representation of qualified and independent American and likeminded candidates at all levels. I will also coordinate closely with our allies and partners to plan for and support the election of qualified, independent candidates who will uphold the U.N.'s foundational principles, values, and norms, including a focus on human rights and economic transparency.

*Question.* What lessons can be learned by the 2020 election for the Director General role at the World I.P. Organization—or, WIPO—and how the United States proactively helped win support for the Singaporean candidate, beating out a Chinese official?

*Answer.* The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) 2020 election was a powerful example of the strength of U.S. diplomacy and the importance of ensuring strong leadership in standard-setting bodies. Coordinating with partners and allies to rally support for qualified and independent candidates who promote transparency, accountability, and the rule of law is and will continue to be a recipe for success in future leadership elections within U.N./international bodies. We also need to emphasize that the PRC is driving an authoritarian agenda that stands in opposition to the values of the United States and the U.N.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MICHELE JEANNE SISON BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* What more should the United States do to ensure China does not achieve its objective of reshaping and dominating international institutions? PRC nationals now lead four of the United Nations' 15 specialized agencies and groups, and have added many Chinese nationals to the staff of these organizations. Some 30 United Nations agencies and institutions have signed memorandums in support of China's Belt and Road project.

*Answer.* I believe the United States must engage strategically to defend, strengthen, and revitalize the international order and its foundational values, rules, and principles, including through rebuilding and strengthening our alliances and partnerships. If confirmed, I will seek to improve the U.N.'s effectiveness and transparency, support qualified and independent candidates for key positions in U.N. agencies, advance strong reforms including whistleblower protections, and take targeted actions to oppose efforts by the PRC that undermine a rules-based international order. If confirmed, I commit to combatting PRC attempts to insert its domestic ideology and policy language into U.N. and multilateral policy documents. We must also work with the boards of U.N. organizations to increase oversight of the U.N.'s work in order to uphold the U.N.'s values rather than the promotion of a single country's flagship program.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you support standing up an office within the Bureau of International Organization to specifically address the threat of growing Chinese influence in global institutions?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe the establishment of the new office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs will enable the United States to more strategically engage across the multilateral system and uphold its foundational principles, values, and norms. Our approach toward the People's Republic of China (PRC) at the U.N. and other international organizations will derive from a clear and compelling affirmative U.S. policy agenda, and when the PRC seeks to undermine the international rules-based order, we will take action to oppose those efforts. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to consider other ways to effectively outcompete the PRC and advance U.S. multilateral priorities.

*Question.* Do you agree that China under the Chinese Communist Party is pursuing a systematic, decades-long campaign to achieve global preeminence and reshape the international order to the CCP's benefit?

Answer. The People's Republic of China (PRC) engages in conduct around the world that undermines the international system that has supported global peace and security, stability, prosperity, and human rights for more than 75 years. The PRC drives an authoritarian agenda that stands in opposition to the foundational values and principles of the U.N. and other international organizations. If confirmed, pushing back against the PRC's attempts to reshape the international system will be a top priority of mine. I will rally support with allies, partners, and other countries to oppose the PRC's efforts to undercut international institutions, values, and rules, and will ensure that the United States advances an affirmative agenda centered on human rights, individual freedoms, transparency, and good governance.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to pushing the World Health Organization to conduct a transparent and thorough investigation regarding the origin of COVID-19 as a critical step to preventing the next pandemic?

Answer. Yes. If I am confirmed, I will press the WHO to conduct a thorough second phase of the COVID-19 study in China. The world needs to understand how this pandemic originated so that we can better prepare our governments, our people and our public health institutions for future health crises. That is why we are continuing to work with the WHO and with other Member States to support a science-based and expert-driven study of the pandemic's origins that is free from interference or politicization.

*Question.* Do you believe it is prudent for the United States to support gain-of-function research in China?

Answer. As underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic, all nations, including China, must commit to cooperation that is rooted in openness, transparency, and scientific independence. As a general matter, I believe scientific cooperation between nations is crucial to addressing transnational threats to global health.

On the particular matter of research funding, I would defer to the relevant authorities, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m. via Video-conference, Hon. Chris Van Hollen, presiding.

Present: Senators Van Hollen [presiding], Kaine, Booker, Young, and Rounds.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator VAN HOLLEN. The nominations hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Welcome, everybody, to the committee, and I do want to begin by giving a special salute and shout out to my colleague, Senator Mike Rounds, who is the ranking member of the Global Health and Africa Subcommittee, and look forward to working with him and all our colleagues on the subcommittee and the full committee on the large range of pressing issues that are before the subcommittee and the full committee.

I see we have also been joined by my colleague, Senator Kaine from Virginia, and I am sure others will be joining us as we go.

Let me acknowledge our nominees and congratulations to all of you on your nominations to be ambassadors to these countries, and thank you for your service.

We have with us today Ambassador Larry Edward André, Jr., to be the United States Ambassador to Somalia, Ambassador Maria E. Brewer to be the United States Ambassador to Lesotho, Ambassador Tulinabo Mushingi to be U.S. Ambassador to Angola and São Tome and Principe, and Ms. Elizabeth Moore Aubin to be the U.S. Ambassador to Algeria, and Mr. Eugene S. Young to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Congo, and finally, last but not least, Mr. Christopher John Lamora to be the United States Ambassador to Cameroon.

Again, welcome everybody, and I am going to give some brief opening remarks, turn it over to my colleague, Senator Rounds, and then we will hear from each of you.

Today's hearing is first and foremost a nominations hearing. But in the broader sense, it is an opportunity for us to reexamine our nation's diplomatic relationships with countries across Africa.

President Biden has made clear his mission to restore America's role on the world stage as a force for democracy, for diplomacy, for human rights, and for international cooperation.

Those principles must be front and center in our ongoing engagement with African countries and with their citizens. The best way to advance that cause is by focusing on the opportunities for action, opportunities to invest in and engage with some of the fastest growing countries and economies in the world.

By 2050, the population of Africa is expected to double and will account for one quarter of the world's population. Africa is also the youngest continent in the world, and 60 percent of Africans are under the age of 25.

These young people will be at the vanguard of the next global generation, helping to lead the charge in innovation, technology, business, and economic growth. Our investment in their futures will help ensure greater prosperity, opportunity, peace, and security, both abroad but also here at home.

That cause holds an added measure of urgency as we confront the reality that many of our biggest threats are interconnected and global.

As we have seen throughout the past year, viruses know no borders and our ability to defeat COVID-19 and tackle future outbreaks as well as outbreaks of other diseases requires our participation and our leadership in a global and coordinated response.

The same is true for taking on the climate crisis, which, obviously, has impact here at home and everywhere in the world. It is a key driver of the plight of displacement in many countries like Somalia.

It also represents a real opportunity at home and around the world for the production of new sources of clean energy, both for Africa and for the global economy.

We are engaging in projects that advance these goals and others through ventures like the Power Africa initiative and President Biden's pledge on the coronavirus fight front to donate now hundreds of millions of doses worldwide and our contribution to COVAX.

So the United States has now pledged \$4 billion to fight COVID-19 through COVAX. Prior to today, the president has announced 80 million doses that we would contribute to countries around the world, and just this afternoon it was indicated that tomorrow the president will announce the United States intends to purchase another 500 million doses to help defeat COVID-19 around the world.

Of the 25 million original doses, the first tranche of doses that the United States will distribute 5 million will be devoted to Africa. So this is an important moment for the United States to take a leadership role in that area, and so many others.

My colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats, have been right to also recognize that China is using its mercantilist and debt trap strategies to gain more influence in countries around the world, including Africa, and if we keep up business as usual we will give China a free pass to use that leverage to export its model of authoritarianism to governments in developing countries.

I think we are all pleased that just yesterday the United States Senate passed on a bipartisan basis legislation to significantly in-

crease our competitiveness here at home but also to reassert U.S. leadership in many of these areas overseas.

So, for example, a part of that bill that emerged from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee included an increase of \$100 billion authorization for the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, which we hope will be investing in Africa.

Africa, of course, is not a monolith. All of you know that better than anybody. You are all going to countries that have their own unique histories and own complex issues and challenges.

And so today gives us an opportunity both to address those individual issues as well as a take a look at the broader situation.

So let me now turn it over to Senator Rounds for any opening statement he wishes to give, and then I will introduce our nominees and then turn it over to them for questioning.

Senator Rounds?

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROUNDS,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I most certainly appreciate your opening comments, and I think that this is one of those committees where bipartisan agreement can be found and I think we begin today in a very good way.

I am very pleased to see such a qualified panel of nominees before us today, with three previously confirmed by the committee to serve in ambassadorial posts as well as experienced State Department personnel with great records of service.

I want to thank you and your families for your service to our country.

Ambassador André, your deep background with Africa will serve you well if you are confirmed to be our next ambassador to Somalia. I look forward to hearing your views on Somalia, a country struggling to overcome 30 years of instability in order to achieve democratic development and viable national institutions.

Somalia's successful revolution, socially, politically and economically, is vital for our interests in the region to include significant counterterrorism efforts against the violent extremist group al-Shabaab.

If confirmed, it will be critical that you maintain a close relationship with Congress to help assure a prudent way forward.

Ambassador Brewer, if confirmed, your experience as ambassador to Sierra Leone, a small nation where the U.S. relationship focuses on foreign assistance, particularly in the health sector, would make you well placed to serve as our ambassador to Lesotho, and I commend you for your desire to lead a U.S. embassy and a USAID team, a small mission to help mentor the next generation of the Foreign Service.

Given the challenges in fully staffing posts in Africa, seasoned diplomats willing to serve in such a mentorship role are definitely needed. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how USAID programs and trade relations with Lesotho can help that nation advance politically and economically.

Ambassador Mushingi, if you are confirmed, I will be glad that we will be sending such an experienced diplomat with experience

in five African countries to be our next ambassador to Angola and the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe.

Seems to me that Angola's reformist President Lourenço continues to provide an opportunity to deepen our relationship with that nation. I look forward to hearing how you, if confirmed, would support those reform efforts.

Ms. Aubin, your experience in Algeria would well qualify you, if confirmed, to be our next ambassador to that nation. I look forward to hearing from you about how you would lead our embassy in Algiers, in context of the problem sets facing the North African region, and Algeria's ongoing political challenges.

Also of particular interest to me are your views on how we can best meet the challenges of Morocco's unfortunate annexation with U.S. approval, I might add, of Western Sahara, an action which I find deeply troubling.

Mr. Young, your experience in sub-Saharan Africa and as an economic and commercial officer at numerous posts will prepare you well, if confirmed, to be our next ambassador to the Republic of Congo. I look forward to hearing from you about Congo and particularly how you would advance our relationship with that nation in the face of tremendous corruption and increased Chinese influence.

Mr. Lamora, your Africa experience makes you well prepared for the difficult post for which you have been nominated.

I am interested in your views on how the U.S. can work with the Cameroonian institutions as well as with other nations to address violent extremism, as well as the Anglophone crisis affecting the northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon.

I would also like to hear from you on the tremendous challenges to democratic development posed by the Government's crackdown on political opposition and press, the president's reelection to a seventh term in 2018 election marred by violence and absence of a clear successor with concerns for further instability should he die or become incapacitated.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Senator, and thank you for providing some background on each of these nominees.

I am going to provide a little more background on each of them because I think it is important that people who are tuning in to the committee recognize the breadth and depth of experience that these diplomats have, and I think we can take great pride in the fact that the president has nominated this distinguished group of individuals.

So Ambassador André, Jr., is currently the chargé d'affaires ad interim at the U.S. Embassy in Juba, South Sudan. He is a former ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and to the Republic of Djibouti, which has a majority ethnic Somali population and a peacekeeping contingent in Somalia.

Ambassador André's earlier assignments also include service as the political counselor in Nairobi, Kenya, at which time his section oversaw Somali affairs.

He is the recipient of more than a dozen notable senior State Department awards, including the Director General Award for reporting. So thank you for joining us.



Ambassador Brewer recently served as the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone. Prior to that role, Ambassador Brewer was the Deputy Director of Career Development and Assignments at the State Department's Bureau of Human Resources, and she also served as the deputy chief of mission and charge ad interim at the U.S. Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria.

In Nigeria, she oversaw a \$500 million annual PEPFAR program as part of a global campaign to fight HIV/AIDS. She earned the State Department's Distinguished Honor Award.

Ambassador Mushingi is currently the U.S. ambassador to Senegal and the Republic of Guinea Bissau. Earlier in his career, Ambassador Mushingi served as the United States Ambassador to Burkina Faso and as the deputy chief of mission to the United States Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

In Washington, Ambassador Mushingi served as executive director at the Executive Office of the Secretary of State, and in 2017 he received the prestigious Palmer Award for the Advancement of Democracy.

Ms. Aubin is currently the acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. Throughout her three decades of service she has held the posts as executive director of the Joint Executive Office of the Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs, deputy chief of mission of the United States Embassy in Ottawa, Canada, executive director of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, and deputy chief of mission at the United States Embassy in Algiers, Algeria.

Ms. Aubin has received numerous State Department awards, including multiple performance awards for her work in the senior Foreign Service.

Mr. Young is the economic counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, Israel. Previously, Mr. Young was the charge d'affaires and ad interim and deputy chief of mission at the United States Embassy in Vienna, Austria, and counsel and senior civilian representative at the U.S. consulate in Herat, Afghanistan, and deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

He has also served as the economic counselor at the United States Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, and U.S. Consul General in Durban, South Africa. His service has been honored with several State Department awards, and I welcome him as well.

Mr. Lamora is currently the deputy chief of mission at the United States Embassy in Accra, Ghana, which is the fifth largest U.S. embassy in sub-Saharan Africa. Previously, he was Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Africa and African Security Affairs.

Mr. Lamora has nearly 30 years of Foreign Service experience, 12 of which has been spent focused on African policy security, economic development, and partnerships, and he has served in three African countries including Cameroon. He is the recipient of numerous State Department awards as well.

So thank you all very much, again, for your prior service. We look forward to the discussion today.

And with that, I call upon Ambassador André to deliver an opening statement.

Ambassador André?

**STATEMENT THE HONORABLE LARRY EDWARD ANDRÉ, JR.,  
OF TEXAS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN  
SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO  
BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL RE-  
PUBLIC OF SOMALIA**

Mr. ANDRÉ. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, greetings from South Sudan. I am honored to come before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Somalia.

I am grateful to the president and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. My wife, Ouroukou André, and my children, Suhiyyih and Isidore André, are watching online.

I thank all my family, friends, and colleagues for their support.

Mr. Chairman, I first came to Africa in 1983 as a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal. I then worked in Chad on post-war reconstruction. I joined the State Department in 1990, intending to continue my focus on Africa. I am now serving my tenth tour on the continent.

My three domestic assignments were also Africa related. I have served at our embassies in each of the countries that border Somalia.

If confirmed, I will draw on these experiences to lead our U.S. Embassy Mogadishu team in advancing our partnership with Somalia's people and their federal and state governments for greater peace and prosperity.

I commit to keep you and your staff informed of our progress.

Mr. Chairman, having spent much of my career serving in dangerous places, I feel deeply the responsibility of an ambassador toward all resident Americans and toward all U.S. Government employees in country.

If confirmed, I will promote the safety of American citizens and of my embassy colleagues.

Mr. Chairman, the United States needs a stable Somalia as do the Somali people, East Africa, and the international community. If confirmed, I will work with Somalia's federal and state governments, Somali civil society, regional organizations and like-minded international partners to promote stability through credible elections and governance reforms that advance peace and prosperity.

Mr. Chairman, among other needed reforms, Somalia would benefit from a compromise leading to national consensus on the relationship between the federal government and state governments. The nature of Somali federalism has remained an open question for too long.

Mr. Chairman, the people of Somalia and their neighbors are attacked regularly by al-Qaeda's East Africa branch al-Shabaab. There is a smaller ISIS Somalia presence in the north. Both international terrorist networks threaten our interests in the region and aspire to attack Americans.

If confirmed, I will continue the work of Ambassador Yamamoto, applying the full range of tools to help Somalis defend themselves and rid their country of terrorism.

I will also coordinate with the African Union's peacekeeping operation in Somalia. I will be guided by our shared goal of more operationally capable and professional Somali security forces that respect human rights, protect civilians, and hold accountable those responsible for abuses.

In recent years, Somali security forces have made progress in this direction. The U.S. military, the European Union, and the United Nations has contributed to that progress.

Mr. Chairman, aside from political and security challenges, Somalis also confront a variety of natural calamities, economic dysfunction, and deficient educational and other public services. These difficulties contribute to poverty, hunger, and displacement.

If confirmed, I would support the work of our development, humanitarian, and economic professionals in coordination with Somali authorities and international organizations to provide aid from the American people to Somalis in need and to promote inclusive economic growth.

Ethnic Somali communities around the world are known for their resourcefulness, dynamism, and entrepreneurial spirit. Under the right conditions, Somalia will thrive due to the qualities of the Somali people.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I am eager to respond to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Larry Edward André follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LARRY EDWARD ANDRÉ, JR.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, greetings from Juba, South Sudan. I am honored to come before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Somalia. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

My wife, Ouroukou André, and my children, Ruhiiyyih André and Isidore André, are watching online. I thank all my family, friends, and colleagues for their support.

Mr. Chairman, I first came to Africa in 1983 as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Senegal, and then in Chad working on post-war reconstruction. I joined the State Department in 1990. I am now serving my tenth tour in Africa. With an additional three domestic Africa-related assignments, my over 31-year diplomatic career has focused almost exclusively on the continent. I have served at our embassies in each of the countries that border Somalia. If confirmed, I will draw on these experiences to advance our partnership with Somalia's people and their federal and state-level governments toward greater peace and prosperity.

The United States needs a stable Somalia, as do the Somali people, East Africa and the international community. If confirmed, I will work with the Somali federal government, Somalia's state governments, regional organizations, and like-minded international partners to promote stability through credible elections that advance peace and prosperity. Mr. Chairman, Somalia's political stability also requires compromise leading to national consensus on the relationship between the federal government and state governments. The nature of Somali federalism has remained an open question for too long.

Mr. Chairman, the people of Somalia and their neighbors are attacked regularly by al-Qaeda's East Africa branch, al-Shabaab. There is a smaller ISIS-Somalia presence in the north. Both international terrorist networks threaten our interests in the region and aspire to attack our country. If confirmed, I will continue the work of Ambassador Yamamoto to bring to bear the full range of tools to help Somalis defend themselves and rid their country of terrorism. I will also coordinate with AMISOM, the African Union's peacekeeping operation. I will be guided by our shared goal of more operationally capable and professional Somali security forces that respect human rights, protect civilians, and hold accountable those responsible for abuses. In recent years, the Somali National Army has made progress in this

direction. The U.S. military, the European Union, and the United Nations have contributed to that progress.

Mr. Chairman, having spent much of my career serving at U.S. embassies in dangerous places, I feel deeply the responsibility of an Ambassador toward all resident Americans and to all U.S. Government employees and contractors. If confirmed, I will lead our team in Somalia to take all necessary measures to promote the security of American citizens and of U.S. Government colleagues while we work with the Somali people, their government, and our international partners to advance shared objectives.

Aside from political and security challenges, Somalis also confront a variety of natural calamities, economic dysfunction, and deficient educational and other public services that contribute to poverty, hunger, and displacement. If confirmed, I would support the work of our development, humanitarian, and economic professionals, in coordination with Somali authorities and international organizations, to provide aid from the American people to Somalis in need and to promote inclusive economic growth.

If confirmed, I will lead our U.S. Embassy Mogadishu team to advance peace and prosperity through diplomacy, defense, and development efforts in partnership with the Somali people and their federal and state governments. I commit to keep you and your staff informed.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I am eager to respond to your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

And next, we will hear from Ambassador Brewer.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. MARIA E. BREWER OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

Ms. BREWER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you as you consider my nomination as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho.

I thank President Biden for this opportunity and for the trust that he and Secretary Blinken have shown in my ability to serve our country again as U.S. Ambassador.

If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with this committee as we advance U.S. objectives in Lesotho. I would like to thank my husband, Mark, and our 12-year-old daughter, Arina, for their love and support, along with my parents, William and Maria Pallick, who are watching from their home in Texas. Also, today is my father's 77th birthday. So I would like to say happy birthday, Dad.

Having served nearly 25 years with the U.S. Department of State, I have substantial experience working on African affairs, most recently as the U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone.

My experience has taught me the need to develop diverse teams that reflect the countries we serve and to foster high morale in challenging environments.

If confirmed, I will draw on this experience to pursue U.S. goals and protect U.S. interests in Lesotho. Promoting democratic governance is at the core of U.S. values and of what we wish to accomplish in Lesotho.

Lesotho seeks to implement reforms to reduce political instability, strengthen its institutions, and professionalize its military. These goals align with our own.

Our embassy has made great strides in promoting the rule of law, civilian control of the Lesotho's military, and government accountability.

If confirmed, I will collaborate with this committee, the inter-agency, and the Government of Lesotho to strengthen Lesotho's institutions, reinforce its ability to meet the needs of its people, and build capacity to be a better partner to us.

Last year taught every country that promoting the health of its people is a core imperative. In Lesotho, health system strengthening is at the center of our assistance.

With one in four adults afflicted by HIV/AIDS, and many children orphaned by it, shoring up the Lesotho's capacity to fight HIV/AIDS will remain a critical component of U.S. engagement.

The President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, generously funded by Congress, has transformed the Lesotho. Lesotho is one of the first countries to reach epidemic control, surpassing U.N. AIDS targets and cutting new infections by half. Our health partnerships have also bolstered Lesotho's capacity to confront COVID-19.

Curbing the spread of these pandemics contributes to global health security, which benefits Americans here at home. To increase internal stability and its ability to be an effective partner, Lesotho needs economic development.

AGOA, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, revolutionized Lesotho's economy, creating more than 45,000 private sector jobs. More progress is needed improving work conditions and preparing Lesotho for its post-AGOA future.

I will support economic diversification, continued progress on AGOA eligibility criteria, and overall improvement of the business climate, if confirmed. Doing so not only improves the lives of Basotho, but also improves conditions for U.S. companies seeking to do business with Lesotho.

The Department of State in 2020 ranked Lesotho among the countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. The State Department has worked with the Government of Lesotho to urge it to devote resources to combating trafficking in persons. Lesotho and its people are receptive to this message and we are seeing real progress.

If confirmed, I commit to pressing Lesotho for increased prevention and prosecution of these crimes and increased protection for victims. I will paramount the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Lesotho and the entire U.S. Embassy team, including U.S. citizen employees, their families, and our Lesotho colleagues.

If confirmed, I would do all within my power to ensure the security of our mission and oversee its operation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you. If confirmed, I welcome the challenge and privilege of protecting and advancing U.S. interests in Maseru as the U.S. ambassador. I look forward to any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Maria E. Brewer follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARIA E. BREWER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, It is an honor to appear before you as you consider my nomination as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho. I want to thank President Biden for this opportunity and for the trust that he and Secretary Blinken have in my ability to serve our country again as U.S. ambassador. If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with this committee as we advance U.S. foreign policy objectives in Lesotho. I am honored and fortunate to have my husband, Mark, and our twelve-year-old daughter, Arina, here with me today. I thank them for their constant love and support, along with my parents, William and Maria Pallick, who are watching from their home in Texas.

Having served nearly 25 years with the U.S. Department of State, I have substantial experience working on African affairs, most recently as U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone. My experience has taught me the need to develop diverse teams that reflect the country we serve and to foster high morale in challenging environments. If confirmed, I will draw upon this wealth of knowledge and management experience to pursue U.S. goals and to protect U.S. interests in Lesotho.

Promoting democratic governance is at the core of U.S. values and of what we seek to accomplish in Lesotho. As Secretary Blinken noted, “strong democracies are more stable, better partners to us, more committed to human rights, less prone to conflict, and more dependable markets for our goods and services.” Along with its Southern African Development Community partners, Lesotho seeks to implement reforms to reduce political instability, strengthen its institutions, and professionalize its military. Our embassy has already made great strides in promoting the rule of law, civilian control of Lesotho’s military, and government accountability. If confirmed, I will collaborate with this committee, the interagency, and the Government of Lesotho to strengthen Lesotho’s institutions, to reinforce its ability to meet the needs of its people, and to build its capacity to be a better partner to us.

The last year taught every country that promoting the health of its people is a core imperative. In Lesotho, health system strengthening is at the center of our assistance efforts. With one in four adults living with HIV/AIDS and many more children orphaned by it, shoring up Lesotho’s capacity to confront HIV/AIDS will remain a critical component to U.S. engagement. PEPFAR, which Congress generously funds, has transformed Lesotho, which was one of the first countries to reach epidemic control, surpassing UNAIDS targets and cutting new infections by half. Our health partnerships have also bolstered Lesotho’s capacity to confront COVID-19. Curbing the spread of these pandemics in Lesotho contributes to global health security which benefits Americans at home. If confirmed, I will seek to sustain momentum in these areas.

To increase internal stability and its ability to be an effective partner, Lesotho needs economic development. AGOA—the African Growth and Opportunity Act—revolutionized Lesotho’s economy, creating over 45,000 private sector jobs in Lesotho, making it the second largest sub-Saharan supplier of textiles and apparel to the United States. Nevertheless, there is still important progress to be made, particularly improving work conditions and preparing Lesotho for its post-AGOA future once the Act expires in 2025. I will work diligently to support economic diversification, continued progress on AGOA eligibility criteria, and overall improvement of the business climate, if confirmed. Doing so not only improves the lives of Basotho, but also improves conditions for U.S. companies seeking to do business with Lesotho.

The Department of State in 2020 ranked Lesotho among the countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and which are not making significant efforts to comply. The Department has worked assiduously with the Government of Lesotho to urge it to devote resources to combatting trafficking in persons. Lesotho and its people are receptive to this message and making real progress. If confirmed, I will commit to pushing Lesotho for increased prevention and prosecution of these crimes and increased protection for victims.

In addition to these policy aims, I hold paramount the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Lesotho, and the entire U.S. Embassy team, including U.S. citizen employees, their families, and our Basotho colleagues. If confirmed, I would do all within my power to ensure the security of our Mission and oversee its operations.

In closing, I would like to thank you all again for the opportunity to appear before you today. If confirmed, I would welcome the challenge and privilege of protecting and advancing U.S. interests in Maseru as the U.S. Ambassador. I look forward to any questions you may have.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Madam Ambassador. I think the full committee would like to extend a happy birthday to your father.

And now we will turn to Ambassador Mushingi. The floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. TULINABO S. MUSHINGI OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SÃO TOME AND PRINCIPE SÃO**

Mr. MUSHINGI. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege, indeed, to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Angola and to the Democratic Republic of São Tome and Principe.

I thank the president and the secretary of state for their confidence in me. I am equally grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration.

I appear today with unfailing support of my wife of 40 years, Rebecca, who has also served our country, working for 13 years with the U.S. Peace Corps, and of our beloved daughter, Furaha.

My work across Africa, from Mozambique to Morocco, from Ethiopia to Senegal, as well as through various assignments in Washington, D.C., have prepared me to deliver meaningful results for the American people in the role for which I have been nominated.

If confirmed, I will work to foster stronger ties between the United States and Angola and São Tome and Principe.

President Lourenço's economic and political reform agenda aligns with U.S. interests and presents us a unique opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial partnership with this fast-emerging economy and rising African nation.

As the Government of Angola fosters a better business climate, U.S. companies seek tremendous trade and investment opportunities, and recently, U.S. companies have achieved major successes in the energy and IT sectors.

Angola's legacy of land mines continues to impede economic development and conservation efforts. Since 1995, U.S.A. has been the largest donor to demining efforts in Angola, investing more than \$145 million dollars to clear land mines.

The 2018 Defending Economic Livelihoods and Threatened Animals Act helps to combat wildlife trafficking and to protect land and water resources.

If confirmed, I will reinforce our commitment to help Angola eliminate the threat of land mines and protect its natural resources.

Deep ties bind the United States and Angola. An estimated one-quarter of all African Americans have Angolan roots. In fact, the

first enslaved Africans to arrive in what is now the United States in 1619 were from what is now Angola.

If confirmed, I will look to be honest about this history while sharing the experience of the United States of America as we continue to seek to improve our nation.

Turning to São Tome, São Tome and Principe has a small land footprint but a large and strategically important maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea shipping lanes.

Enhancing the country's ability to monitor its waters and share information on maritime activity and piracy is a key component to improve regional security. São Tome and Principe also has a long tradition of democracy and peaceful transfers of power.

I will focus on these priorities, if confirmed. As the world hopefully emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, we expect to see more Americans coming to Angola and São Tome and Principe. The safety of our staff and U.S. citizens is always paramount.

Finally, American diplomacy works best when our diplomats best exemplify our nation. If confirmed, I will promote an interagency embassy team that reflects the values of our country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Tulinabo S. Mushingi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. TULINABO S. MUSHINGI

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Angola and to the Democratic Republic of São Tome & Principe. I thank the President and the Secretary of State for their confidence in me. I am equally grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration.

I appear today with the unfailing support of my wife Rebecca, who has also served our country working for 13 years with the U.S. Peace Corps, and our beloved daughter Furaha.

My work across Africa, from Mozambique to Morocco, Ethiopia to Senegal, as well as through assignments in Washington, DC, has prepared me to deliver meaningful results for the American people in the role I have been nominated for. If confirmed, I will work hard to foster stronger ties between the United States and Angola and São Tome & Principe.

Bilateral relations between the United States and Angola have markedly improved in recent years. President Lourenço's economic and political reform agenda aligns with U.S. interests and presents a unique opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial partnership with this fast-emerging economy and rising African nation.

Angola plays an influential role in Africa and is looking to diversify its ties away from historic alliances. As such, it has attracted high-level U.S. visits and interaction since 2019, and if confirmed, with your help, I will work to deepen the U.S.-Angola partnership.

Angola has made tangible progress towards transparency and good governance, while initiating the fight against corruption and promoting accountability for human rights violations. Angola still faces many challenges as it addresses a stagnant economy, exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID pandemic. If confirmed, I will continue to press for political and economic reforms, support the fight against corruption, and buttress Angola's development efforts.

As the Government of Angola fosters a better business climate, U.S. companies see tremendous trade and investment opportunities. Recently, U.S. companies have achieved major successes in the energy and IT sectors. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. interagency team to advocate for U.S. businesses while supporting Angolan efforts to comply with international standards and improve regulatory adherence.

Angola's legacy of land mines continues to impede economic development and environmental conservation. Since 1995, the United States has been the largest donor to demining efforts in Angola, investing more than \$145 million to clear landmines



and other dangerous explosive hazards so the people of Angola can advance a wide range of social and economic development efforts safe from buried bombs. The 2018 Defending Economic Livelihoods and Threatened Animals (DELTA) Act helps to combat wildlife trafficking and coordinate with transboundary land and water resource governance authorities. If confirmed, I will reinforce our commitment to help Angola eliminate the threat of landmines and protect its natural resources.

Deep ties bind the United States and Angola: an estimated one-quarter of African-Americans have Angolan roots. The first enslaved Africans to arrive in what is now the United States in 1619 were from what is now Angola. If confirmed, I will look to be honest about this history, while sharing the experience of the United States as we continue to seek improve our nation. I will seek to expand our growing people-to-people ties and promote programs focusing on talented Angolan youth.

São Tome and Principe (STP) has a small land footprint but a large and strategically important maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea shipping lanes. Enhancing the country's ability to monitor its waters and share information on maritime activity and piracy is a key component to improve regional security. STP successfully completed a Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Threshold Program in 2011, and further MCC engagement is a priority for the future. STP also has a long tradition of democracy and peaceful transfers of power. I will focus on these priorities if confirmed.

As the world hopefully emerges from the COVID pandemic, we expect to see a resurgence in the number of Americans coming to Angola. The safety of our staff and U.S. citizens is always paramount.

Finally, American diplomacy works best when American diplomats best exemplify our nation. If confirmed, I will promote an interagency Embassy team that reflects the values of the United States.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Next, we will turn to Ms. Aubin for her testimony.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. ELIZABETH MOORE AUBIN OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**

Ms. AUBIN. Thank you, Chairman Van Hollen, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today.

As the Texas-born child of a U.S. Air Force officer, I feel an immeasurable debt of gratitude to my parents, Tom and Virginia Moore, who raised me to put country over self, and I owe them everything for preparing me to take on my chosen vocation 31 years ago as a Foreign Service officer, and to my husband, Daniel Aubin, for his incredible love and support.

It is a huge honor to be nominated by President Biden to serve as the U.S. ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria, and I appreciate deeply the confidence he and Secretary Blinken have shown.

I served in Algeria from 2011 to 2014 as the Deputy Chief of Mission, so I was there for the 2013 terrorist attack at the Amenas gas production facility, and I, along with every member of the embassy, did not stop working until American hostages were released and three deceased Americans brought back to their families.

It was a formative experience. If confirmed, my highest priority will be to keep all Americans in Algeria safe.

If confirmed, I hope to advance three critical priorities: first, strengthening our security cooperation to fight terrorism and pro-

mote regional stability; second, expanding investment opportunities for U.S. companies to deliver economic benefits to the American people; third, advocating for necessary political and economic reforms to foster stability as Algeria navigates a post-COVID economy.

Although it rarely makes the front page, we have an important relationship with Algeria, and I will work to increase the impact of U.S. activities there. I also believe in the enduring value of deepening people-to-people ties. Embassy Algiers supports an ever-growing spectrum of programs that strengthen our security, economic governance, educational, and cultural ties.

Algeria's large youth population is curious about America and wants to learn English. That is an opportunity I hope to make the most of.

If confirmed, I will return to a country that has changed in important ways since I last lived there. Last year, the Algerian Government adopted a package of constitutional reforms to strengthen Algeria's political system. Legislative elections will occur in three days. The Algerian public continues to demonstrate peacefully for core civil rights and liberties.

I will continue to press for expanding observance of human rights, including freedoms of expression and association and space for civil society.

Algeria fought against violent extremism in the 1990s and it has maintained its stability through rigorous counterterrorism efforts, national reconciliation programs, and de-radicalization initiatives.

Algeria has found ways to export this peace dividend in a difficult neighborhood. It played a critical role in brokering reconciliation in Mali with the 2015 Algiers Accord.

Algeria provides security assistance to Tunisia and Niger. It actively participates in the African Union, the Arab League, the OIC, and it hosts AFRIPOL and the African Union Center for Study and Research on Terrorism.

While new investments are essential, Algeria also remains one of the key regional producers of oil and gas, ranking ninth in the world in gas reserves and sixteenth in oil reserves, and has vast promise for renewables.

If confirmed, I will promote U.S. companies as they seek to partner with Algerian firms to advance development of this vital energy sector for our mutual benefit.

The United States and Algeria have a rich history on which to continue to build. From the Treaty of Peace and Amity with the U.S. signed in Algiers in 1795 to American troops liberating Algeria in World War II, to the United States being the first country to recognize Algerian independence on July 3rd, 1962 to Algeria playing a role of creative and active mediation to help release the 52 American diplomat hostages from Iran, we have an enduring partnership that can face the opportunities and the challenges of the 21st century together.

Thank you, Chairman Van Hollen, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee for this opportunity to address you. If confirmed, it will be the honor of my life to represent America to the Algerian people and to lead our tremendous and talented mission there.

I look forward to your questions.  
 [The prepared statement of Hon. Elizabeth Moore Aubin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ELIZABETH MOORE AUBIN

Thank you, Chairman Van Hollen and Ranking Member Rounds, and members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. As the Texas-born child of a U.S. Air Force officer, I feel an immeasurable debt of gratitude to my parents, Tom and Virginia Moore, who raised me to put country over self, and I owe them everything for preparing me to take on my chosen vocation 31 years ago as a Foreign Service Officer; and to my husband, Daniel Aubin, for his incredible love and support.

It is a huge honor to be nominated by President Biden to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Algeria, and I deeply appreciate the confidence he and Secretary Blinken have shown in me.

I served in Algeria from 2011–2014 as the Deputy Chief of Mission, so I was there for the 2013 terrorist attack at the In Amenas gas production facility. I, along with every member of the Embassy, did not stop working until American hostages were released, and three deceased Americans brought back to their families. It was a formative experience. If confirmed, my highest priority will be to keep every American safe in Algeria.

If confirmed, I hope to advance three critical priorities. First, strengthening our security cooperation to fight terrorism and promote regional stability. Second, expanding investment opportunities for U.S. companies to deliver economic benefits to the American people. Third, advocating for necessary political and economic reforms to foster stability as Algeria navigates a post-COVID economy.

Although it rarely makes the front page, we have an important relationship with Algeria, and I will work to increase the impact of U.S. activities there.

I also believe in the enduring value of deepening people-to-people ties. Embassy Algiers supports an ever-growing spectrum of programs that strengthen our security, economic, governance, educational and cultural ties. Algeria's large youth population is curious about America and wants to learn English. That's an opportunity I hope to make the most of.

If confirmed, I will return to a country that is changed in important ways since I last lived there. Last year, the Algerian Government adopted a package of constitutional reforms to strengthen Algeria's political system. Legislative elections will occur in three days. The Algerian public continues to demonstrate peacefully for core civil rights and liberties. I will continue to press for expanding observance of human rights, including freedoms of expression and association, and space for civil society.

Algeria fought against violent extremism in the 1990s. It has maintained its stability through rigorous counterterrorism efforts, national reconciliation programs, and de-radicalization initiatives. Algeria has found ways to export this peace dividend in a difficult neighborhood: it played a critical role in brokering reconciliation in Mali with the 2015 Algiers Accord; it provides security assistance to Tunisia and Niger; it actively participates in the African Union, the Arab League, and the OIC; and it hosts AFRIPOL and the African Union Center for Study and Research on Terrorism.

While new investments are essential, Algeria also remains one of the key regional producers of oil and gas ranking ninth in the world in gas reserves and 16th in oil reserves, and has vast promise for renewables. If confirmed, I will promote U.S. companies as they seek to partner with Algerian firms to advance development of this vital energy sector for our mutual benefit.

The United States and Algeria have a rich history on which to continue to build. From the Treaty of Peace and Amity with the U.S. signed in Algiers in September of 1795, to American troops liberating Algeria in World War II; from the United States being the first country to recognize Algerian independence on July 3, 1962, to Algeria playing a role of creative and active mediation to help release the 52 American diplomat hostages from Iran. We have an enduring partnership that can face the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century together.

Thank you, Chairman Van Hollen and Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee for this opportunity to address you. If confirmed, it will be the honor of my life to represent America to the Algerian people and to lead our tremendous and talented mission there.

I look forward to your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you very much for your testimony.

Next, we are going to hear from Mr. Young.

**STATEMENT OF EUGENE S. YOUNG OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it really is an honor to appear before you today as the president's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo.

I am very grateful for the trust and confidence that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me. I want to acknowledge my remarkable wife, Zoe, and our two boys today. I know they are watching and I thank them for their enduring support and love.

I believe my mother, Margaret, is also watching from home and I am so grateful to her and my late father, Sanford, for their encouragement, their care, and their rock-solid upbringing. I think my brother, Roland, is out there too, and I am grateful to him as well with his family. So thanks for this chance.

Thanks to the hard work of our diplomats on the ground in Brazzaville and the local staff at the embassy, the United States has built a strong relationship with the Republic of the Congo. We have been able to deepen the ties between our governments, engage in regular and serious dialogue, and work on issues of mutual concern.

Our countries are working together to effectively fight COVID, to protect our shared environmental heritage, and to combat trafficking in persons. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain this improved U.S.-Congo partnership.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, as you well know, the Republic of the Congo occupies a vital but tenuous position in Central Africa. Congo itself is stable, but it lies in a region beset with challenges.

In the past year, Congo has dealt with a suspected Ebola outbreak from across the Congo River and accommodated refugees fleeing the Central African Republic.

Congo is also home to the Great Congo Rain Forest, an invaluable ecological treasure known as the second lung of the world, but one—I am sorry, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. It is okay. Take your time.

Mr. YOUNG. Congo is also home to the Great Congo Rain Forest, an invaluable ecological treasure known as the second lung of the world, but one that is in danger of imprudent exploitation.

Congo's significant oil reserves, which have boosted its economy but also fueled corruption, will still be crucial to the country's immediate future.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will work tirelessly to address these challenges and to ensure the safety and security of American citizens in Congo as well as for our American and Congolese staff at the embassy.

Working with this committee, the various agencies of the U.S. Government active in Congo, other donor nations, and multilateral organizations, I will continue the good work our mission is supporting across key economic and social sectors in Congo.

If confirmed, I will focus on encouraging democratic progress, supporting efforts to protect the Congo Basin, working with Congo to protect against this, our current pandemic and future pandemics, as well as encouraging the diversification of the Congolese economy.

And for U.S. business, I will continue the efforts of our embassy team in seeking a level playing field and a more transparent and inviting business environment.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you once again for the opportunity to appear before you today.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and other interested members of Congress to advance U.S. interests in Congo, and I am very happy to respond to any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Young follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EUGENE S. YOUNG

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo. I am grateful for the trust and confidence that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me.

I would like to acknowledge my wife, Zoë, and our two sons today and thank them for their enduring support and love. I believe my mother Margaret is also watching from home and I am so grateful to her and my late father, Sanford, for their encouragement, care and rock solid upbringing.

Thanks to the hard work of our diplomats on the ground in Brazzaville and the local staff at the Embassy, the United States has built a strong relationship with the Republic of the Congo. We've been able to deepen the ties between our governments, engage in regular and serious dialogue, and work on issues of mutual concern. Our countries are working together to effectively fight COVID, to protect our shared environmental heritage, and to combat trafficking in persons. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain this improved U.S.-Congo partnership.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, as you well know, the Republic of the Congo occupies a vital but tenuous position in Central Africa. Congo itself is stable, but it lies in a region beset with challenges. In the past year, Congo has dealt with a suspected Ebola outbreak from across the Congo river and accommodated refugees fleeing the Central African Republic. Congo is also home to the great Congo rainforest, an invaluable ecological treasure, known as the second lung of the world, but one that is in danger of imprudent exploitation. Congo's significant oil reserves, which have boosted its economy, but also fueled corruption, will still be crucial to the country's immediate future.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will work tirelessly to address these challenges and to ensure the safety and security of American citizens in Congo as well as for our American and Congolese staff at the Embassy. Working with this committee, the various agencies of the U.S. Government active in Congo, other donor nations and multilateral organizations, I will continue the good work our mission is supporting across key economic and social sectors in Congo. If confirmed, I will focus on encouraging democratic progress, supporting efforts to protect the Congo Basin, working with Congo to protect against this and future pandemics, as well as encouraging the diversification of the Congolese economy. And for U.S. business, I will continue the efforts of our Embassy team in seeking a level playing field and a more transparent and inviting business environment.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you once again for the opportunity to appear before you today. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and other interested members of Congress to advance U.S. interests in Congo and I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you for your testimony. And now we will turn to Mr. Lamora. The floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA OF RHODE ISLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON**

Mr. LAMORA. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon.

I thank the president and the secretary of state for their confidence in me, and I am equally grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration.

While the virtual nature of this hearing precludes my family from joining us in person, I nonetheless want to recognize my husband, Eric, my sister, Michelle, and my nephews, Jack and Patrick, who have all supported and encouraged me over many years and who are watching today from home.

I also want to pay homage to my late parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Lamora, without whose love and support I would not be here today.

The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Cameroon in 1960. Since then, nearly 4,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in Cameroon. It is a country with great cultural and geographic diversity, a capsule of the entire continent: active volcanoes, rain forest jungles teeming with wildlife, broad savannas, and a beautiful coastline.

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience much of this personally when I served in Cameroon previously. Unfortunately, this beautiful, warm, and welcoming country that launched my love of Africa nearly 30 years ago also faces significant challenges, as you well know.

The United States is deeply concerned by the continued violence in Cameroon's Anglophone regions. What began as peaceful protests in late 2016 have tragically escalated into a protracted violent crisis with more than 3,000 persons killed and more than 1 million internally displaced.

Children have been threatened and in some places killed for attending school. Schools, hospitals, and religious sites have been attacked. Humanitarian actors continue to face numerous obstacles in carrying out their work.

We condemn violence in all its forms regardless of who is perpetrating it, and call for an end to the suffering of the civilian population, regardless of their location or affiliation.

No one undermining peace in Cameroon has our support or our tolerance, whether members of the security forces or of armed separatists groups. We are acting vigorously to help resolve the crisis and, if confirmed, I commit that that will be my highest priority.

This week, secretary of state established a policy imposing visa restrictions on those undermining efforts to peacefully resolve the situation.

We continue to have discussions about Cameroon with the Cameroonian Government and to other Cameroonians, as well as with key international partners to foster greater, stronger, and more unified engagement. This will remain our highest priority in our Cameroon policy.

Cameroon also faces a number of other challenges that are all too common in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, including health, security, and governance.

The Cameroonian people have enormous potential. I have seen it firsthand. If I am confirmed, our embassy team and I will do everything we can to help the people and Government of Cameroon make that potential a reality.

The coronavirus pandemic has added a layer of difficulty to reaching that day. As a global health security agenda Phase 1 country, Cameroon partners with the United States to strengthen its ability to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases with pandemic potential.

Cameroon also benefits from U.S. assistance through PEPFAR and the president's Malaria Initiative, such that it has reduced its HIV prevalence and is working to achieve epidemic control within the next two years.

On security, the United States continues to support Cameroon and its Lake Chad Basin neighbors in their joint effort to defeat Boko Haram and its offshoot, ISIS West Africa.

This is a key element of the fight against global terrorism. Our support, however, is neither limitless nor without conditions. Cameroonian security forces must abide by accepted human rights norms and those who violate those norms must be held appropriately accountable.

In the same vein, there is still substantial work to be done to promote democracy, human rights, combat corruption, and ensure accountability of those who violate Cameroonian laws or the citizens' trust.

We must continue to press on all these important issues while helping the Cameroonian Government and people, including civil society, to find a path to peace.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee, I thank you once again for this opportunity to appear before you, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and others in Congress to advance U.S. interests in Cameroon.

I would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Christopher John Lamora follows:]

#### STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege and an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon. I thank the President and the Secretary of State for their confidence in me. I am equally grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration.

While the virtual nature of this hearing precludes my family from joining us in person, I nonetheless want to recognize my husband Eric, my sister Michelle, and my nephews Jack and Patrick, who have all supported and encouraged me over many years and who are watching today from home. I also want to pay homage to my late parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Lamora, without whose love and support I would not be here today.

I'm grateful as well to my Africa Bureau family, whose collegiality, confidence, friendship, and mentoring have sustained me and fostered my personal and professional growth for nearly three decades -- from my first assignment at the U.S. Consulate in Douala, Cameroon from 1992-1993 to my past three years as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana.

The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Cameroon in 1960. Since then, nearly 4,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in Cameroon. It is a country with great cultural and geographic diversity, a capsule of the entire continent: active volcanoes, rainforest jungles teeming with wildlife, broad savannahs, and a beautiful coastline. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience much of this personally when I served in Cameroon previously.

Unfortunately, this beautiful, warm, and welcoming country that launched my love of Africa nearly 30 years ago also faces significant challenges, as you well know.

The United States is deeply concerned by the continued violence in Cameroon's Anglophone regions. What began as peaceful protests in late 2016 has tragically escalated into a protracted violent crisis with more than 3,000 persons killed and more than one million internally displaced. Children have been threatened, and in some cases killed, for attending school. Schools, hospitals, and religious sites have been attacked. Humanitarian actors continue to face numerous obstacles in carrying out their work.

We condemn violence in all its forms, regardless of who is perpetrating it, and call for an end to the suffering of the civilian population regardless of their location or affiliation. No one undermining peace in Cameroon has our support or tolerance, whether members of the security forces or of armed separatist groups.

We are acting vigorously to help resolve the crisis. This week, the Secretary of State established a policy imposing visa restrictions on those undermining efforts to peacefully resolve the crisis. We continue to have discussions about Cameroon with the Cameroonian Government and other Cameroonians, as well as with key international partners to foster greater, stronger, and more unified engagement. Working to resolve this crisis is, and will continue to be, the single highest priority in our Cameroon policy.

Cameroon also faces a number of other challenges that are all too common in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, including health, security, and governance. The Cameroonian people have enormous potential; I've seen it first-hand. If I am confirmed, our Embassy team and I will do everything we can to help the people and Government of Cameroon to make that potential a reality.

The coronavirus pandemic has added a layer of difficulty to reaching that day. As a Global Health Security Agenda Phase I country, Cameroon partners with the United States to strengthen its ability to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases with pandemic potential. Cameroon also benefits from U.S. assistance through PEPFAR and the Presidential Malaria Initiative, such that it has reduced its HIV prevalence and is working to achieve epidemic control within the next two years.

On security, the United States continues to support Cameroon and its Lake Chad Basin neighbors in their joint effort to defeat Boko Haram and its offshoot, ISIS-West Africa. This is a key element of the fight against global terrorism. Our support, however, is neither limitless nor without conditions. Cameroonian security forces must abide by accepted human rights norms, and those who violate these norms must be held appropriately accountable.

In that same vein, there is still substantial work to be done to promote democracy, and human rights, combat corruption, and ensure accountability of those who violate Cameroonian laws or the citizens' trust. We must continue to press on all these important issues while helping the Cameroonian Government and people, including civil society find a path to peace.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I thank you once again for this opportunity to appear before you. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and others in Congress to advance U.S. interests in Cameroon. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Lamora, and thank you all very much for your testimony. And as somebody who grew up in a Foreign Service family, I understand and grateful you acknowledged that representing United States is a family affair and a team effort.



With that, given my colleague's, Senator Rounds, time constraints, I think I will just turn it over to you, Mike, if you want to begin the questioning. I understood you said you had to leave shortly. So I do not know how much time you have got.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You were cutting out a little bit there. But if you would allow me, I would make quick work of my time and ask a few questions if that is okay with you, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Absolutely. No, I want to make sure you have a chance to ask whatever you want. So why do you not lead off?

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the courtesy.

Ambassador André, as you know, Somalia is wracked by a political crisis over the September 17th agreement to forego a "one person one vote" election in favor of an indirect selection process similar to that of 2016 and 2017.

However, I am particularly curious about how you see Somalia as a longer-term political situation. Looking past the current political crisis, what are the reasonable benchmarks the United States should expect with regard to Somalia's democratic development?

Mr. ANDRÉ. Thank you, Senator, for that question. Looking forward to the immediate situation, as you said, we need to assist the Somalis to develop a permanent constitution.

They are using a provisional one right now. The Somali political class recognizes that the indirect method that they have used in the past and that they are intending to use this time is a stop-gap measure until they are able to have the "one person one vote" direct elections, which all seem to agree is their ending point.

They do not control all of their territory at this point and they do not want to disadvantage Somalis who, having nothing to do with their own will, are trapped behind the lines and territory controlled by terrorist networks.

So the constitution and getting to that direct election that you refer to.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir.

Ms. Aubin, I am very concerned about the recent U.S. policy change to recognize Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara.

I have been to the Sahrawi people's refugee camps twice. I was impressed by their strong desire for independence and frustration with the long delay of the time period for a referendum to determine whether Western Sahara should become a part of Morocco or be an independent nation.

Please tell me how you think this change in U.S. policy has impacted U.S.-Algeria relations, and also under what conditions, if any, might Algeria increase military assistance to the Polisario to support it against Morocco?

Ms. AUBIN. Thank you for the question, Senator Rounds.

Algeria has supported the political process led by the U.N. and by the U.N. Secretary General's personal envoy for Western Sahara.

So I think Algeria welcomes the fact that we are resuming active diplomacy and supported of the U.N., and together with our inter-

national partners want to bring a halt to the violence and restart a credible U.N. process.

We are working privately with all the parties involved and discussing the path forward. To your question about military assistance, I do not believe Algeria is providing military assistance. It is not something they highlight.

But, most definitively, they have called for a de-escalation of violence and for the political process to continue.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

And, Mr. Chairman, I have a couple questions that I will offer for the record. But I appreciate your courtesy in allowing me to move forward first and I thank you, and at this point I will have to step out of the meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all the nominees before us. I most certainly have appreciated your comments today.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Senator, and thank you for your questions, and look forward to working with you. So I am going to also start with Ambassador André.

And, you know, as was referenced earlier in this hearing, we have a continued al-Shabaab presence in Somalia. We also have the withdrawal of U.S. military personnel from Somalia, a decision made by the previous president.

How has that decision to withdraw U.S. forces impacted the situation in Somalia, in your opinion?

Mr. ANDRÉ. Well, Senator, in my capacity as ambassador in Djibouti, I was present in January when AFRICOM took on that instruction. It was a repositioning of U.S. forces from Somalia to elsewhere in the region, which has slowed the tempo of our efforts to assist the Somali people with their security but it has not stopped it.

We continue to build the capacity of Somalia security forces, support AMISOM, African Union's peacekeeping force, and to keep the U.S. embassy open and operational.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, I appreciate that. In fact, I was just speaking the other day with the mayor of the city of Salisbury, Maryland, who happens to be a member of the Maryland National Guard and was recently deployed to Djibouti as well, and we talked a little bit about that sort of redeployment, as you said.

I have also heard concerns from others in the region that there has been some vacuum created, although there is, obviously, an attempt to compensate for that.

You referenced in your testimony Somali federalism. So how does the—and we are heading into elections here. Can you just talk a little bit about how the situation in Somalia compares with the regional situation in Somaliland and then Puntland? And I know that Somaliland and Puntland have different relationships than with the national sort of government, at least as seen by Puntland.

So could you just describe that and what the challenges are and what role, if any, the United States should play in mediating this effort, especially in the context of elections?

Mr. ANDRÉ. Yes, Senator.

I want to emphasize, as I said in the testimony, the importance of establishing, through consensus and compromise, a consistent

pattern, a framework, for the relations between the central government and the states.

Twenty years ago, I spent some time in Puntland. I was there looking mostly at fisheries issues, and they have been able to govern themselves well.

They see themselves very much as a part of Somalia. But they are also very interested in having significant control over their own governance.

There are other federal states of Somalia that have different understandings and different relationships. Somaliland, as you know, does not consider itself part of Somalia.

The United States recognizes a single Somalia, which includes Somaliland. So the picture here is a bit confused because there is not a consistent relationship between the center and the states.

That is something for Somalis to work out. They have many international examples to choose from, to consider, as the Somali people build that compromised national consensus on what the nature of Somali federalism should be.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Turning to Ambassador Brewer and Lesotho, you referenced in your testimony the AGOA agreement, which has helped the Lesotho economy. But at the same time, I think Lesotho would like to see greater diversification in its economy outside the textile sector.

Are there things that the United States can do to be helpful to that effort by the Government of Lesotho?

Ms. BREWER. Thank you, sir, for that question. Thank you, Senator.

We do see that AGOA has been a massive help to that country. About 12 percent of the GDP in 2019 came from AGOA from the export of mainly textiles, as you note, sir.

But there are many opportunities for U.S. companies, and one of the challenges of serving in Africa, particularly in smaller countries such as Sierra Leone and Lesotho, is how to attract those U.S. companies, how to encourage them that they will have their goods and services treated fairly and they will have a level playing field when they get there.

So one of the issues that, if confirmed, I will be carrying forward with the host nation will be the need to have a welcoming climate, a business climate that encourages international companies, including those from the U.S., to come. That means anti-corruption. That means a rule of law. That means political stability.

All of these are ingredients that lead to, you know, diversification. So, certainly, we see potential in the energy sector through Power Africa, through a whole of U.S. Government engagement.

We understand that the Government of Lesotho would like to increase their agricultural output.

I am originally from Indiana, a state with a proud agricultural tradition, and I think there is a lot that America can do, certainly, through the commercial sector to be able to help them with goods, services, and equipment.

So I think there is great potential and I believe that the U.S. is there ready to help. We are the partner of choice, we have a great

reputation, and I think we can assist them through a commercial context, not just through foreign assistance.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

And you mentioned also the success of our efforts on HIV/AIDS in Lesotho and we look forward to keeping in touch with you on that, especially the extent to which Lesotho has been able to take ownership of that.

I am told that there are no other committee members on right now. And if that is the case, I will continue asking questions of our nominees.

Ambassador Mushingi, the United States has signed a number of cooperative agreements with Angola in recent years, including engagements with Prosper Africa, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative, Young African Leaders Initiative.

Could you talk about the areas that you think create the most, you know, fruitful opportunities of engagement with Angola and also what you see is our biggest challenges? And I should say a lot of you covered a lot of our questions in your opening statements.

That will cut down on the questions. But I do want to talk to you about some of the issues that do remain.

Mr. MUSHINGI. Thank you, Senator. Clearly, we see an opportunity here to engage now with Angola, especially since the new regime took over about three years ago.

Where we have a big opening here is really on promoting economic recovery, promoting a two-way trade between our two countries, and opening these opportunities to U.S. companies in Angola, a country of more than 30 million people, and we see this desire of the Angolans to move away from their traditional historic alliances and that is where we come in as the U.S.

The majority of the Angolans, as you described in your opening remarks about the youth born in Angola or in many of the other African countries, know what is going on outside of Angola, know what the U.S. can bring to the table.

And each American company, what I call the U.S. model, has these three ingredients that so far have been missing in Angola and that really—Angolans want to take advantage of.

One of them is the transparency, the second one is the transfer of technology, and the third one is creation of jobs. So those are the opportunities that I see for American companies in Angola.

But moving forward as far as extending the cooperative agreement you were talking about, on the security cooperation we see also an opportunity here to get into the door because the history of Angola has been—their security cooperation with Russia has been there for a long time, and now the signing of our cooperative agreement a few years ago between the ministry of defense and our DOD we see an opening where the security forces are eager to be trained by us, are eager to be equipped by us, are eager to see the intelligence technologies and how they can use that for their own security in the region.

Finally is, of course, the security of the region and to everyone that Angola can help us in the region, whether we are talking about southern Africa region but also Central Africa and what is in that, in the Central African Republic, in the DRC—Democratic Republic of the Congo—in Uganda and Rwanda as well.

Over to you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I think you have covered some of this. You mentioned Russia. But I think of all the countries that we are talking about at this hearing, China probably has established the greatest amount of influence and footprint in Angola.

To what extent does China's economic and diplomatic and military influence in Angola impact our interests there?

Mr. MUSHINGI. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

Yes, China and Russia have these traditional relations with Angola. It is no secret to anybody that, indeed, when we look at the major infrastructure projects many of them have been developed by China. But also, when we look at the debt issue, again, China is at the top of the list for that country.

Now, where we come in is, again, as I said, for our U.S. companies, and we saw a few successes that I referred to earlier in my testimony, in the last few months three American companies that have been able to penetrate the market and win over the competition in various sectors.

We have looked at telecommunication, IT, solar energy, but also energy, and both were U.S. companies, the latest three successes we have seen. And I think, for me, the way I see this is for us to talk about what we, the U.S.A, are bringing to the table and let the Angolans decide themselves.

At the end of the day, I am confident that we can compete in this market and, indeed, not only compete, but we can win in this market. Over to you, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Ambassador.

Just one question on São Tome and Principe, which is you mentioned their sort of government structure and process, which has been, I think, one that we have encouraged and supported.

With respect to their economy, my understanding is they would also like to diversify their economy a little bit more. What role can the United States play with respect to that objective?

Mr. MUSHINGI. Thank you, Senator.

One role that we can play is, really, to build on what we already have. As I said, it is a small land footprint but the long maritime borders and for us talking about maritime security, that is one thing where, really, we can play the biggest role.

But I was really happy to see that when I looked at the American companies that are on the ground—Kosmos Energy, Caterpillar, Dell—so that gives me an idea of the openness that São Tome has to American businesses with American models and, if confirmed, that is what I will be pushing, and especially many of those companies or agencies that work in the security area when we are talking about maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Over.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Ms. Aubin, the United States, as you know, has praised Algeria for its cooperation on counterterrorism issues and regional matters, and you referenced in your testimony its role as a mediator, notably, in Mali in 2015.

At the same time, its close ties to and its arms deals with Russia, especially in the aftermath of the CAATSA legislation passed here in Congress, have been concerning.

So what do you see as the main areas of agreement between the United States and Algeria and some of the areas of friction?

Ms. AUBIN. Thank you for the question, Senator Van Hollen.

I see the U.S. and Algeria having a lot of areas of agreement: regional stability in the Maghreb, the desire to have a more inclusive economic environment, and, certainly, they are very interested in the Human Rights Report—Trafficking in Persons Report and other reports that we do, and they are working to make gains in those areas.

You are right about Russia and Algeria's military relationship. Algeria procured two-thirds of its arms from Russia between 2015 and 2019. So that is an issue, and the sale of C-130s were part of the United States' larger policy goal of deterring Algeria from engaging in sanctionable activity.

And if confirmed, I will prioritize that in my conversations with Algerian officials.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. No, I appreciate that, because there were the arms sales, as you say, dating back to 2015 and before. But I think more concerning have been some of the arms sales since the CAATSA legislation passed.

What impact, if any, have you seen has that had on the calculations of the Algerian Government in terms of purchases?

Ms. AUBIN. So thank you for allowing me to clarify that I think the C-130 sales helped deter that, and I think the United States needs to continue conversations with Algeria to explain what Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act really means and how that will impact our relationship, moving forward.

And so that is something that I will prioritize in my conversations when I get there. Algeria has had a policy of sovereignty and noninterference in domestic affairs and that is how they have moved forward in their bilateral relationships.

But I think this is a really important point and if confirmed, I will continue to raise that with Algerian colleagues.

Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. No, I appreciate that, and Senator Rounds mentioned his opposition to the former administration's policy change with respect to recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara.

You already answered that question. I do want to go on record in agreement with my colleague, Senator Rounds, on that matter.

So let me turn now to Mr. Young, if I may, and a couple questions, because you covered a lot of it in your testimony with respect to the Republic of Congo.

One of the concerns I am sure you have seen expressed here on the Hill, in the United States, and elsewhere, has been the regional impact of weak control over the security sector and abuses committed by Congolese peacekeepers and park rangers.

Can you speak a little bit to that issue and, you know, what role you can play in expressing our concerns and what kind of changes that we can expect?

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Senator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think it is really important that we continue to direct dialogue with the Government on issues like these that my predecessor and our embassy is still having at this point, to have that regular dialogue, to have an open discussion.

In terms of the peacekeepers that you mentioned, sir, my understanding, and this is one of the positive signs that we have seen, and that is that those peacekeepers that I think you are referring to were, in fact, held accountable for the crimes that they committed.

So that was one plus that we have seen recently. But it is important that we—across this and across all of these issues around democratic progress that we have a dialogue with the Government, we have dialogue with civil society, with youth, with the security and maintain some of the training programs we have had with security forces and with law enforcement. I think those can help address the issues that you are referring to, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, right. No, I am referring to the situation in Central African Republic, their troops there, and we do look forward to working with you to make sure that everyone is held accountable in what happened there.

Let me turn to Mr. Lamora. And as you referenced in your testimony, Cameroon has seen significant violence in recent years owing to the Anglophone Conflict as well as the Boko Haram insurgency in the far north.

I represent a very active and engaged and terrific Cameroonian-American constituency in the state of Maryland and I have been engaged with them in conversations about their concerns about what is happening.

Can you talk a little more about what the United States can do to support a peaceful resolution of Cameroon's Anglophone Conflict?

Mr. LAMORA. Thank you, Senator.

Yes. One of the things that we have been trying to do and will try to do with Cameroon is to bring the parties together to get them to talk. There has not been complete willingness on any side thus far to come to the table.

As you are aware I know, sir, the Swiss have led a process of trying to do that and we have supported and aligned ourselves with that. I think an important thing that we have been doing increasingly in recent weeks is to engage the French at higher levels.

France has a long-standing close relationship with the Government in Yaounde. Secretary Blinken recently raised his concerns, our concerns, about Cameroon with his French counterpart. I think greater French engagement certainly would help. We are hopeful that we can move that forward.

As I mentioned in my testimony also, following on the resolution that the Senate passed, S.R. 684, that talked about the possibility of sanctions, Secretary Blinken announced these visa sanctions, visa restrictions, earlier this week on those who are impeding peace in the Anglophone regions, in particular.

So I think there is a variety of things that we can do and that our international partners can do. But, ultimately, we can help move them all in the best direction we can.

But it will have to be the Cameroonian Government, the parties to the violence, and the Cameroonian people who really commit themselves to finding a peaceful way forward.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Thank you all. I am getting word that another committee I serve on with the attorney general may be wrapping up and I hope to get over there and have a chance to ask him some questions.

So let me thank all of you, again, for your previous service to our country. I look forward to supporting your nominations and, again, thank you for what you do and to your families.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:46 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LARRY EDWARD ANDRÉ BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *Gulf Influence in Somalia*

*Question.* Countries such as the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey are playing an increasing role in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Somalia, though much of their efforts remain bilateral and somewhat opaque. What seems certain, however, is that despite all four of these countries being allies and friends of the United States, their agendas and efforts often do not align with our own.

- What is your assessment of the influence of these actors in the Horn of Africa?

*Answer.* The Gulf states, particularly the UAE and Qatar, have significant influence in Somalia by virtue of their political, economic, and security engagement.

Our NATO ally Turkey's relationship with Somalia is strong. Turkey has built schools, hospitals, and infrastructure in Somalia. It also provides extensive security assistance focused on the recruitment, training, and equipping of both police and Somali National Army forces.

*Question.* Are their collective efforts contributing to or taking away from peace and stability in the region?

*Answer.* The Gulf rift has had a destabilizing impact on Somalia, as Gulf states vied for influence with the Federal Government (FGS) in Mogadishu and Federal Member States (FMS). The dispute distracted the FGS and its FMS from implementing security sector, political, and economic reforms critical to stabilizing the country, including countering the influence of al-Shabaab and ISIS.

Meanwhile, in recent months Turkey joined other countries when the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) issued a joint statement welcoming the May 20 Summit. It did not join statements of concern about President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo's term extension or subsequent violence in Mogadishu, which were issued immediately prior.

*Question.* If the latter, what is the United States doing to try and bring their efforts more in line with our own?

*Answer.* The United States repeatedly has urged external actors, including the Gulf states, not to use Somalia as a proxy battleground for bilateral disputes. We hold regular consultations with these governments and demarche them to join us and likeminded partners in seeking political progress and stability in Somalia.

#### *Vision for Somalia*

*Question.* Infighting between Somalia's Federal Member States and the central member states continues to threaten the stability of the country; the United States conducted airstrikes in Somalia against Al Shabab and Al Qaeda for over a decade while Al Shabab continues to carry out major attacks in cities and in the countryside; and Gulf actors compete for influence. Tensions between Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Kenya, and Somalia threaten the stability of the entire Horn of Africa.

- What are the United States' goals in Somalia in the short, medium, and long term?



- With the grave potential for instability in yet another country in the Horn of Africa, what will be your priorities if confirmed?
- How do you plan to work with Special Envoy Feltman and other Ambassadors in the region to develop a coherent and integrated approach to U.S. policy in the Horn?

Answer. The United States' near- and medium-term objectives in Somalia are to degrade terrorist groups that pose a threat to U.S. persons and interests; strengthen Somalia's security forces so that they can assume greater responsibility from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM); advance political reconciliation and governance reforms necessary for lasting stability; and promote economic growth and opportunity that will reduce Somalia's dependence on U.S. and international assistance, while delivering humanitarian aid to people in need. It is our hope that, over time, these efforts will lead to a peaceful, stable, democratic Somalia that respects human rights and fundamental freedoms and that can provide security and services for its citizens.

If confirmed, I will build on the work of Ambassador Yamamoto to bring to bear the full range of tools to help Somalis defend themselves and rid their country of terrorism. I will support Somalia's completion of a peaceful, inclusive, transparent, and timely electoral process and strengthened cooperation among Somalia's national and federal member state governments. And I will support the work of our development, humanitarian, and economic professionals to provide aid to Somalis in need and to promote inclusive economic growth.

The stabilization of Somalia is an international challenge that requires close coordination with its neighbors and other international stakeholders. I am committed to working closely with our Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Envoy Jeffrey Feltman and our ambassadors in East Africa and in other critical partner capitals to ensure a cohesive and coordinated approach.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LARRY EDWARD ANDRÉ, JR. BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, Somalia was identified as a special case due to ongoing conflict, insecurity, and protracted humanitarian crises. Given the complicated security situation and sustained insurgency by Al-Shabaab across the country, how will you work with the host government and U.S. Government interagency to help Somalia improve efforts of protection, prosecution, and prevention?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Government's interagency commitment to working with the Somali federal and member state governments to help build the capacity of Somali institutions to prevent trafficking, prosecute those engaged in the illicit activity, and protect victims.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, the Somali Government is listed as continuing to discriminate against non-Islamic religions, including Christianity. In addition, Al-Shabaab has committed egregious crimes against those who practice religions other than Islam. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Al-Shabaab's brutal treatment of those whose beliefs differ from their own is appalling. If confirmed, I would condemn Al-Shabaab's ruthless acts and urge that Somalia's laws allow all people to worship in a manner of their choosing. If confirmed, I would engage senior officials in the Federal Government of Somalia, as well as its Federal Member States, to advocate for religious freedom and express concern over actions by authorities against individuals and groups attempting to practice their faith freely. If confirmed, my team will continue to work closely with the Office of International Religious Freedom.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Somalia was identified as having committed or baring witness to severe human rights abuses specifically committed by Al-Shabaab.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?
- How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

Answer. Al-Shabaab is the leading perpetrator of human rights violations in Somalia. Working with the Somali Government, AMISOM, and like-minded partners to degrade al-Shabaab militarily and economically while bolstering Somali governance and institutions should reduce their operational space to commit abuses against Somali and foreign nationals.

If confirmed, I would continue to engage with the highest levels of the Somali Government, sub-national authorities, and local communities, members of the diplomatic corps, the U.N., and NGOs to promote respect for human rights for all Somalis.

#### AMISOM

*Question.* There is much discussion about AMISOM's mandate in Somalia and potential realignments. If your opinion, what adjustments to AMISOM's mandate are needed to improve its effectiveness?

Answer. AMISOM remains critical to Somalia's stabilization, and its continued presence is necessary to provide time and space to build effective Somali security institutions. The United States supports a smart and deliberate conditions-based transition from AMISOM to Somali security forces. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the African Union, AMISOM troop contributors, the U.N., EU, and other international stakeholders to support revisions to AMISOM's mandate to enable it to conduct more effective operations against al-Shabaab, while supporting the development of Somali security forces that can ultimately take over the country's security.

#### Somaliland

*Question.* What is your perspective on U.S. policy toward Somaliland? Do you think the U.S. has missed an important opportunity over the last several years to support and engage more fully with a more stable and democratic entity at the best of Mogadishu?

Answer. The United States recognizes a single Somalia, which includes Somaliland. Given Somalia's federal system, I believe it is in the U.S. interest to maintain positive engagement with Somalia's national and regional government authorities, while also encouraging those authorities to strengthen cooperation with one another. In June 2020, in my capacity as U.S. Ambassador to Djibouti, I attended Djibouti-hosted talks between senior representatives of Somaliland and Somalia. This experience provided insights into the points of view of both sides and where their interests overlap. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to engage with regional administrations like Somaliland to promote good governance, stability, and economic development, and to explore opportunities to strengthen cooperation.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. LARRY EDWARD ANDRÉ BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

##### *Violence and Instability in Cameroon and Beyond*

*Question.* U.S. relations with Cameroon have been mostly positive, although they have been adversely affected by concerns over human rights abuses, in particular in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions, and the pace of political and economic liberalization. Cameroon plays a key role in regional stability and remains a regional partner in countering terrorism in the Lake Chad Region.

- Last year, I joined with 19 of my Senate colleagues to sign a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Cameroon, and remain deeply concerned by the ongoing violence there. I am curious as to what you think it will take to conclude and uphold a ceasefire, guaranteed humanitarian access, and establish a process of political dialogue?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make resolving the Anglophone crisis my top policy priority. Our position remains that all sides must end violence and engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. The Government is focused on countering armed separatists in the field and maintains that its convening of a Grand National Dialogue in 2019 and decentralization efforts thus far, including regional elections in late 2020 and the establishment of a special status for the two Anglophone regions, address the root causes of the crisis. I believe the Government must do more to resolve the crisis. Specifically, it must be willing to engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. The armed separatist groups, as well, must be willing to engage peacefully in such a dialogue and cease human rights abuses, as called for in the Senate resolution.

If confirmed, I will consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions. We will engage in discussions with other partners on the ground and look for tangible ways to advance peace in Cameroon.

*Question.* In 2019, the United States took the relatively rare step of terminating Cameroon's AGOA eligibility due to persistent gross violations of human rights. Unfortunately, this does not appear to have impacted the Government's behavior in the ongoing conflict. If confirmed, what other measures do you plan to take to hold state and non-state actors in Cameroon accountable for human rights abuses?

*Answer.* On June 7, 2021, Secretary Blinken announced that the United States was taking steps to impose visa restrictions on individuals who are believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. This decision reflects the continuing U.S. commitment to advance dialogue and promote respect for human rights. This decision followed cuts in security assistance in recent years, and, as you noted, the determination that Cameroon was ineligible for AGOA starting on January 1, 2020. These actions demonstrate the U.S. Government's resolve to back up words with actions.

If confirmed, I will consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions. We will engage in discussions with other partners on the ground, as well as the Cameroonian Government and people, to identify tangible ways to advance peace in Cameroon.

*Question.* In addition to the internal violence related to the Anglophone Crisis, Cameroon is also facing threats from Boko Haram and ISIS West Africa. How do we square our support for Cameroon's efforts against Boko Haram and ISIS West Africa with our concerns about human rights abuses and political abuses inside Cameroon? In other words, how can the State Department ensure that President Biya does not use foreign counterterrorism assistance to fund its efforts against Anglophone separatists in the Southwest and Northwest part of the country?

*Answer.* Cameroon has long played a crucial role in regional stability. With the protracted crisis in the Central African Republic, instability in Nigeria, the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, and increasing incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon's role as a partner in securing and maintaining stability in the region is even more important. Since early 2019, we have significantly reduced security assistance because the Government of Cameroon had not taken sufficient action to investigate credible accusations of gross violations of human rights by its security forces or hold the perpetrators accountable. The United States continues to review security assistance on a case-by-case basis so that assistance we provide aligns with U.S. interests, including promotion of respect for human rights. We vet potential recipients of security assistance, consistent with the Leahy laws, and do not provide assistance to Cameroonian security force units where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. U.S.-granted assistance is explicitly prohibited from being used in the Anglophone regions. We have made this prohibition clear at all levels of the Cameroonian Government and we carefully monitor the use of U.S. assistance to ensure this commitment is followed. Risk of misuse or potential diversion to the Anglophone regions are key criteria in our security assistance decision-making.

Since our cuts, the Cameroonian Government has taken some limited steps towards holding security forces accountable, including the conviction of four soldiers for murder in August 2020 and the arrest of soldiers believed to be responsible for one case of extrajudicial killings and one case of alleged torture of a detainee. While we hope these steps indicate a willingness to address the problem, abuses by government forces continue.

Between FY 2019 (the last year for which there is full obligation data) and FY 2020 funding, the State Department has obligated approximately \$8.3 million in assistance to support the Cameroonian military. This funding supported professional military education; technical support for unarmed intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms; small boat training; communications training; and air-to-ground integration training. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that U.S.-provided equipment is not misused by Cameroonian security forces, and would actively and fully address verified reports of such misuse.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LARRY EDWARD ANDRÉ BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* Ambassador Andre, The U.S. maintains a very modest embassy on the compound of the Mogadishu International Airport, and our diplomats are extremely limited in their ability to leave the airport complex.

What is your perspective on this posture, and what do you believe is its impact on U.S. diplomatic relations with Somalia and our allies?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the safety of U.S. citizens in Somalia and of U.S. Embassy personnel will be my highest priority. I will work with the Diplomatic Security Service to maximize the ability of our diplomats to advance our goals and interests through engagements throughout Somalia whenever possible through effective risk mitigation and management decisions. I am doing that now in my role as Chargé d'affaires in South Sudan, which can be a dangerous place. I will consider both the security environment in Somalia and specific opportunities to advance the goals assigned to us through an interagency process. I will ensure we remain able to engage effectively with all levels of the Somali Government as well as with our international partners, many of whom are also located on the Mogadishu International Airport compound.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARIA E. BREWER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Ambassador Brewer, as you know, Lesotho has been plagued with political instability since independence in 1966, and no prime minister has served a full term for the past decade.

- In light of Lesotho's recurrent political instability, what are some opportunities that you see for the U.S. to support the development of Lesotho's democratic institutions?

*Answer.* Promoting democratic governance is at the core of U.S. values and of what we seek to accomplish in Lesotho. Lesotho has a complicated history with several instances of political and armed instability, driven in part by politicians pulling the security services into political disputes and the security sector's inability to remain neutral. In recent years, Embassy Maseru has worked to improve civilian-military relationships, encourage the neutrality of security and law enforcement bodies, and support Lesotho's ongoing efforts to depoliticize its security forces. The mission also collaborates with like-minded partners (including the UK) to advance these goals. Building on existing U.S. Embassy efforts to promote civilian control of Lesotho's military and government accountability, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, the interagency, and the Government of Lesotho to strengthen Lesotho's institutions, to further promote the professionalization of Lesotho's security forces and to foster improved civilian oversight of the military and law enforcement. I will also continue to work with the interagency to identify ways to reinforce Lesotho's ability to meet the needs of its people and build its capacity to be a better partner to us.

*Question.* Ambassador Brewer, support to the health sector, mainly through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, is a significant element of the U.S./Lesotho bilateral relationship.

- What is your assessment of the importance and effectiveness of U.S. support to combatting HIV/AIDS and other public health emergencies in Lesotho, including the COVID pandemic?

*Answer.* America's interests at home are strengthened by improving lives globally. Investments in preventing disease and improving public health and nutrition are among our best means to articulate and embody our values, while simultaneously pursuing our national security interests. U.S. support to combat HIV/AIDS and other public health emergencies in Lesotho is important because it is both the right and the smart thing to do. In Lesotho, our PEPFAR investment has seen a remarkable return in terms of lives saved and increased social stability.

Largely because of U.S. support, Lesotho is one of the first PEPFAR countries to achieve the UNAIDS targets for epidemic control; moreover, it has cut its rate of new HIV infections in half since 2016. These historic achievements lay the groundwork for an HIV/AIDS-free generation and are landmarks in PEPFAR's 18-year history.

U.S. health and development investments in Lesotho, including but not limited to PEPFAR, are important and effective, certainly in terms of controlling the HIV/AIDS pandemic, but also in terms of combatting COVID-19, TB and other communicable diseases; confronting health-related issues such as immunizations, clean water, and sanitation; and enhancing health security by preventing, detecting, and responding to infectious disease threats.

If confirmed, I will ensure good stewardship of U.S. taxpayers' investment in health and development in Lesotho. Building on the outstanding success achieved through our previous and existing partnerships with the Government and people of Lesotho, I will also work to secure sustainability and help Lesotho move towards self-reliance in meeting the future needs of its population.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARIA E. BREWER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP), Lesotho was identified as Tier 3 due to lack of significant efforts by the Government to increase prosecution, protection, and prevention. How will you work with the Lesotho Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* I understand Lesotho was placed on Tier 3 due to chronic poor progress towards addressing our recommendations and credible allegations of official complicity. The Government of Lesotho has taken many steps to combat trafficking in persons since the release of the 2020 TIP Report. The Government convicted and sentenced the first trafficker in four years; closed key legislative gaps in anti-trafficking laws; criminalized all forms of sex trafficking and outlined stringent penalties; increased its investigations into official complicity; and launched a five-year anti-trafficking national action plan. The Secretary will release the 2021 TIP Report with updated tier rankings and updated prioritized recommendations this summer. If confirmed, I will continue to press for progress on recommendations in the TIP Report.

*Question.* Given Lesotho's enclosure by South Africa, a Tier 2 country, are there connections to be made with South Africa and the U.S. Embassy there to improve trafficking regionally?

*Answer.* Trafficking is indeed a regional problem that demands a regional response. If confirmed, I will not only lead our bilateral engagement urging the Government of Lesotho to pursue and punish traffickers and better protect victims, but will also work with the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria to encourage regional solutions and inter-governmental cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Lesotho was identified as partially tolerant of religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country and expand on the work the U.S. Embassy is currently undertaking to prevent further discrimination of religious minorities?

*Answer.* As noted in the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, the constitution of Lesotho prohibits religious discrimination and provides for freedom of conscience, thought, and religion, including the freedom to change religion or belief and to manifest and propagate one's religion. Religious leaders of all faiths have told the U.S. Embassy that there is broad religious tolerance among the people of Lesotho.

Some business and government leaders occasionally express distrust of entrepreneurs of South Asian origin, many of whom are Muslim. Nonetheless, the U.S. Embassy is unaware of any act of discrimination targeting Lesotho's Muslims, whether those who have recently immigrated to Lesotho or the longstanding Muslim communities in the north of the country.

If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Embassy's regular contact with religious, government, business, and civil society leaders to discuss religious freedom and tolerance and the need to be proactive in preventing discrimination against adherents of the country's growing minority religions, particularly Islam.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Lesotho was identified as having committed human rights abuses, including using the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown as a façade to stifle freedom of assembly and movement.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. Many observers argued that Lesotho's previous administration used the COVID-19 pandemic as a pretext to stifle freedoms of peaceful assembly and movement. That was a clear human rights concern, as are ongoing problems such as trafficking in persons, police brutality, and child labor. The United States is also concerned about prolonged pretrial detentions and prison conditions. Some other concerns detailed in the 2020 Human Rights Report include reports of unlawful or arbitrary killings by security forces, arbitrary arrest and detention, and mistreatment while in custody. There are also issues with official corruption, a lack of judicial independence, violence against women, and continued criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults.

The mission pushes for greater accountability in cases of police abuse and encourages the Lesotho Mounted Police Service to strengthen its police complaints board, with some success. The mission also works to promote better understanding of community-based policing via training programs at the International Law Enforcement Academy in Botswana. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts as I engage the Government of Lesotho to address concerns detailed in the 2020 Human Rights Report.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy maintains excellent relationships with all of Lesotho's major civil society organizations, who rely on us to act as a voice of conscience both in the public sphere and in our private consultations with the Government. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with Lesotho's community of civil society organizations. I will also encourage them to focus their attentions on the most pressing human rights concerns and will look for synergistic opportunities to cooperate with these groups to advocate for reform, accountability, and protection of human rights.

*Question.* In your opinion, is Lesotho a potential target for improved U.S. trade and investment? What tools should the U.S. apply in Lesotho to encourage export diversification and investment by American firms?

Answer. Yes. Several economic sectors in Lesotho have growth potential, including water (hydropower and pipeline infrastructure), diamonds, tourism, agriculture, and power generation. The Government has also noted that it seeks to improve transportation and its information technology infrastructure. In 2019, the United States exported about \$1 million in goods to Lesotho, mostly machinery, medical instruments, and aircraft. In the same year, the United States imported around \$325 million in goods, mostly apparel, precious stones, and some machinery.

Lesotho is a long-time beneficiary of trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which has helped create over 45,000 jobs in the textile industry. According to 2019 numbers, AGOA exports accounted for approximately 12% of Lesotho's GDP (\$325 million out of \$2.7 billion). One of the AGOA eligibility requirements is that a country must have established, or make progress towards establishing, a market-based economy. This creates a more-level playing field for U.S. companies and serves as a useful counterweight to actors seeking to influence Lesotho to adopt policies that would be counter to U.S. interests. By creating a more-level playing field for U.S. companies overseas, we contribute to economic prosperity at home, too. Several U.S. brands already manufacture products in Lesotho. If confirmed, I will utilize initiatives such as Prosper Africa to actively seek opportunities to increase reciprocal trade and investment.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARIA E. BREWER BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* Ambassador Brewer, As you know, Lesotho has been plagued with political instability since independence in 1966, and no prime minister has served a full term for the past decade.

- In light of Lesotho's recurrent political instability, what are some opportunities that you see for the U.S. to support the development of Lesotho's democratic institutions?

Answer. Promoting democratic governance is at the core of U.S. values and of what we seek to accomplish in Lesotho. Lesotho has a complicated history with several instances of political and armed instability, driven in part by politicians pulling

the security services into political disputes and the security sector's inability to remain neutral. In recent years, Embassy Maseru has worked to improve civilian-military relationships, encourage the neutrality of security and law enforcement bodies, and support Lesotho's ongoing efforts to depoliticize its security forces. The mission also collaborates with like-minded partners (including the UK) to advance these goals. Building on existing U.S. Embassy efforts to promote civilian control of Lesotho's military and government accountability, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee, the interagency, and the Government of Lesotho to strengthen Lesotho's institutions, to further promote the professionalization of Lesotho's security forces and to foster improved civilian oversight of the military and law enforcement. I will also continue to work with the interagency to identify ways to reinforce Lesotho's ability to meet the needs of its people and build its capacity to be a better partner to us.

*Question.* Ambassador Brewer, Support to the health sector, mainly through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, is a significant element of the U.S./Lesotho bilateral relationship.

What is your assessment of the importance and effectiveness of U.S. support to combatting HIV/AIDS and other public health emergencies in Lesotho, including the COVID pandemic?

*Answer.* America's interests at home are strengthened by improving lives globally. Investments in preventing disease and improving public health and nutrition are among our best means to articulate and embody our values, while simultaneously pursuing our national security interests. U.S. support to combat HIV/AIDS and other public health emergencies in Lesotho is important because it is both the right and the smart thing to do. In Lesotho, our PEPFAR investment has seen a remarkable return in terms of lives saved and increased social stability.

Largely because of U.S. support, Lesotho is one of the first PEPFAR countries to achieve the UNAIDS targets for epidemic control; moreover, it has cut its rate of new HIV infections in half since 2016. These historic achievements lay the groundwork for an HIV/AIDS-free generation and are landmarks in PEPFAR's 18-year history.

U.S. health and development investments in Lesotho, including but not limited to PEPFAR, are important and effective, certainly in terms of controlling the HIV/AIDS pandemic, but also in terms of combatting COVID-19, TB and other communicable diseases; confronting health-related issues such as immunizations, clean water, and sanitation; and enhancing health security by preventing, detecting, and responding to infectious disease threats.

If confirmed, I will ensure good stewardship of U.S. taxpayers' investment in health and development in Lesotho. Building on the outstanding success achieved through our previous and existing partnerships with the Government and people of Lesotho, I will also work to secure sustainability and help Lesotho move towards self-reliance in meeting the future needs of its population.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TULINABO S. MUSHINGI BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* What role can the United States play in efforts of the Lourenco administration to root out corruption and repatriate stolen assets?

*Answer.* The Government of Angola needs to continue to improve its public financial management capacity as well as to strengthen accounting, oversight, and auditing capabilities. It should also increase law enforcement and judicial capacity to investigate and prosecute corruption and financial crimes and better coordinate the efforts of public institutions working on the investigations. The Government should also ensure that private sector financial institutions are regularly reporting suspicious transactions to the appropriate authorities for action.

U.S. engagement includes technical assistance for Angola's Financial Intelligence Unit and Ministry of Finance. If confirmed, I would seek to expand cooperation on potential corruption investigations, capacity building in the justice system in constructing corruption cases, and capacity building in the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) reporting mechanisms.

*Question.* In advance of elections in 2022, what can the U.S. Embassy do to ensure free political expression and the conduct of fair elections?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government has encouraged the Government of Angola to follow through on its commitment to hold local government elections, which would be

a positive step in the democratization process of Angola, giving people direct representation at the local level of government. If confirmed, I will continue to communicate this message.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you ensure that Embassy Luanda exercises proper management and oversight of the U.S. presence in São Tome and Principe?

*Answer.* If confirmed, with your help, I will work to deepen the U.S. partnership with both Angola and São Tome and Principe. I have experience being accredited as ambassador to two countries concurrently, and will draw on that experience to ensure proper management and oversight of the U.S. presence in São Tome and Principe.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Promoting democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights has been a central theme throughout my 30-year career at the Department of State. From my early postings to the current one, I have endeavored to share with host country counterparts the U.S. position on human rights and democracy. My strategy has always been to honestly explain our position showing the benefits of respecting human rights and promoting democratic principles, a winning proposition for the host country as well.

I have supported the conduct of peaceful elections, passing laws on inclusive participation in elections, and raising disability awareness. I have advocated against restrictive LGBTQI+ laws, empowered women's participation in elections, given a voice to civil society, and emphasized the importance of a free press.

As Ambassador to Guinea-Bissau, our promotion of free and fair elections with credible and appropriately transparent processes led to the first ever peaceful transition of power between two civilian presidents in the history of the country.

During my tenure as Ambassador in Burkina Faso, I advised against a proposed constitutional amendment to presidential term limits, designed to extend the time in office of an already long-term sitting president. Additionally, I pushed the Government of Transition of Burkina Faso for timely elections during a sensitive time when some voices were considering a delay. Finally, following the free and fair presidential election, Burkina Faso and its people witnessed the first ever peaceful transition of power from one civilian government to another. Previously, in Mozambique I participated as an international observer in the country's first-ever democratic elections and worked closely with the rest of the Embassy team to empower the Mozambican people as they freely elected their leaders.

As the Deputy Chief of Mission in Ethiopia from 2009-2011, I encouraged the Ethiopian Government to allow civil society and opposition political parties to operate freely. Our Embassy efforts helped provide a path for opposition parties in Ethiopia to publicize their platforms, thus allowing a broader range of Ethiopian citizens to have a voice in their government, resulting in an increase in voter registration and participation.

Based on my dedication to promote and support respect for human rights and democracy during my career, I am honored to have been selected for the AFSA's Mark Palmer Award for the Advancement of Democracy in 2017. This award is given to members of the Foreign Service, by their peers, for the promotion of U.S. policies focused on advancing democracy, freedom and governance through bold, exemplary, imaginative and effective efforts during one or more assignments.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Angola and São Tome and Principe? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Angola has made tangible progress towards transparency and good governance, while initiating the fight against corruption and promoting accountability for human rights violations and abuses. However, the legacy of corruption, lack of capacity and weak institutions are the biggest challenges, along with the need for increased professionalism in law enforcement. Civil society, press freedoms and political competition exist in Angola, but would benefit from further strengthening.

São Tome and Principe (STP) has a small land footprint but a large and strategically important maritime domain in the Gulf of Guinea shipping lanes. Enhancing the country's ability to monitor its waters and share information on maritime activity and piracy is a key component to improve regional security. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage São Tome's support for democracy, human rights, and rule of law and to support its development efforts.



*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Angola and in São Tome and Principe? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* The Government of Angola has made significant improvements on human rights-related issues over the last few years, and if confirmed, I will continue to engage with Angolan Government officials to support progress in this area. I will work to ensure the United States and Angola hold a human rights dialogue in 2021, which will give the United States an opportunity to assess progress and press on remaining human rights and democracy issues. Finally, the United States has encouraged the Government of Angola to follow through on its commitment to hold local government elections in 2022, which would be a positive step in the democratization process of Angola, giving people direct representation at the local level of government and if confirmed, I will continue to encourage the Government to prioritize forward progress in this area.

São Tome and Principe has a long record of good governance and support for democracy and human rights, and if confirmed, I will work with its government to encourage and support these priorities.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* U.S. Government assistance to Angola currently advances democracy and governance through several avenues, including by providing assistance to advance electoral reforms, enhance fiscal transparency and accountability, and promote increased participation by women in the political process. Additionally, the United States supports the introduction and expansion of good governance within financial administration and service delivery systems, which bolsters transparency, citizen participation, and accountability within planning and financial management processes. If confirmed, I will continue to engage within the Department and with inter-agency partners to support the establishment and continuation of complementary and expanded programs that advance U.S. interests in Angola and São Tome and Principe. I also will emphasize the importance of making continual progress on democracy and governance as an element of both countries' AGOA eligibility.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Angola and in São Tome and Principe? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* Human rights NGOs—local, regional, and international—are active in both Angola and São Tome and Principe. Civil society organizations, regardless of where they are registered or where they operate, can be critical allies in advancing democratic governance, expanding respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and assisting the United States to strengthen its bilateral and multilateral relationships. If confirmed, I am committed to engaging broadly to help advance these objectives. I will leverage our strong relationships in Angola and in São Tome and Principe to communicate privately or publicly (as the situation dictates) to proactively address efforts to restrict or penalize civil society through legal or regulatory measures.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties, and I will advocate openly in support of access and inclusivity for all individuals in Angola and in São Tome and Principe, including women, minorities, and youth. If confirmed, I will work with the host governments, civil society, and like-minded missions to encourage genuine political competition. I will emphasize the importance of promoting diverse viewpoints and supporting an open arena for peaceful, good faith discussions of political differences.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Angola and São Tome and Principe on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in both Angola and São Tome and Principe?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with media practitioners, like-minded missions, civil society, government, and international partners to underscore the importance of an independent, professional, and open media to a free and democratic society. I will seek resources to continue support to Angola and São Tome and Principe's media, including professional exchanges, targeted training programs, and seminars to educate journalists and media stakeholders about their rights. Angolan and São Tomean journalists have participated in U.S. Government-sponsored professional exchange programs on investigative reporting, safeguarding freedom of expression, and the media's role in strengthening democratic institutions.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and government actors on countering disinformation and malign propaganda by foreign state and non-state actors. I also will commit to working with like-minded partners in Angola and in São Tome and Principe to counter disinformation and malign propaganda campaigns.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Angola and São Tome and Principe on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* The United States has a long and proud tradition of supporting the rights of workers, including to form labor organizations, internationally. If confirmed, I will commit to engage with unions, relevant government offices, and the private sector to support labor rights.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Angola and São Tome and Principe, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will strive to defend the human rights and dignity of all individuals in Angola and São Tome and Principe, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Angola and in São Tome and Principe?

*Answer.* President Lourenço has expanded legal protections for LGTBQI+ persons since he was elected, including decriminalization of homosexuality. However, LGTBQI+ persons in Angola tell us culturally they face resistance in being accepted, even at the family level. While not criminalized, homosexuality is stigmatized in São Tome and Principe. Members of the LGTBQI+ community can face ostracism and violence.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Angola and São Tome and Principe?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to defend the human rights and dignity of all individuals in Angola, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. I will seek ways to expand Embassy support for the efforts of LGTBQI+ NGOs in Angola, including through advocacy, leadership development opportunities, and programmatic support. Similarly, I will reach out to the LGTBQI+ community in São Tome and Principe to respond to its concerns.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Angola and São Tome and Principe?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit, in coordination with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs, to appropriately respond to requests for briefings and information by this committee.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TULINABO S. MUSHINGI BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Strengthening Angola and the Region*

*Question.* After decades of corrupt and authoritarian rule under former President dos Santos, Angola has undergone a remarkable transition since President Lourenço came to power in 2017. Under Lourenço, Angola has undertaken an economic and political reform agenda that aligns with U.S. interests and presents a unique opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial partnership.

- Four years into President Lourenço's term, Angola appears headed in the right direction with a growing economy, tangible efforts at political reform, and a focus on combatting corruption. What can the United States do to help Angola as it seeks to diversify its economy, improve governance, and continue combatting corruption?

Answer. Angola still faces many challenges in the form of high debt, a legacy of corruption, lack of capacity, and weak institutions, along with the need for increased professionalism in law enforcement. Civil society, press freedoms and political competition exist in Angola, but would benefit from further strengthening. If confirmed, I will continue to press for political and economic reforms, support the fight against corruption, and buttress Angola's development efforts. Opportunities exist for the U.S. Government to continue providing technical assistance and to cooperate further on potential corruption investigations, and on capacity building in the justice system in constructing corruption cases. As Angola explores options to diversify its economy and to create an environment more welcoming to investors, I will seek to foster continued U.S. investment if confirmed.

*Question.* Angola has a reasonably strong military, and recently played a helpful role in mediating conflict between Uganda and Rwanda. Is Angola prepared to take more of a leadership role in the region? Do you see potential for Angola increasing its participation in peacekeeping or other stability operations on the continent?

Answer. I understand that under President Lourenço, Angola has systematically raised its level of active participation in international organizations such as the African Union (AU), the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), successfully proposing candidates for leadership roles. Using these leadership roles, Angola has shown a willingness to be at the forefront of resolving some of the continent's most difficult crises, including its current role in encouraging stability in the Central African Republic and Chad.

Angola also recently enacted legislation which provides the structure for its military to be deployed in peacekeeping operations. The United States can better engage Angola to serve as a constructive voice in Southern and Central Africa by consulting with the Angolan Government in Luanda and in Washington, exchanging views and encouraging mutually beneficial courses of action.

*Question.* Despite Angola's vast natural resource reserves and economic reforms that have pleased international financial institutions, much of the country still lives in poverty and remains in need of assistance? How can the United States help ensure that Angola's wealth and opportunity reach all corners of the country?

Answer. U.S. Government assistance programs in health and landmine clearance improve the health and living conditions for Angolans throughout the country. Our programs stress capacity building within the Angolan Government and reinforce the need to address the issues of all Angolans. In addition, multiple small grant programs target economic development throughout the country. If confirmed, I will continue to engage within the U.S. Government to support the establishment and continuation of complementary and expanded programs that advance U.S. interests in Angola.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TULINABO S. MUSHINGI BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Strengthening Angola and the Region*

*Question.* After decades of corrupt and authoritarian rule under former President dos Santos, Angola has undergone a remarkable transition since President Lourenço came to power in 2017. Under Lourenço, Angola has undertaken an economic and political reform agenda that aligns with U.S. interests and presents a unique opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial partnership.

- Four years into President Lourenço's term, Angola appears headed in the right direction with a growing economy, tangible efforts at political reform, and a focus on combatting corruption. What can the United States do to help Angola as it seeks to diversify its economy, improve governance, and continue combatting corruption?

Answer. Angola still faces many challenges in the form of high debt, a legacy of corruption, lack of capacity, and weak institutions, along with the need for increased professionalism in law enforcement. Civil society, press freedoms and political com-

petition exist in Angola, but would benefit from further strengthening. If confirmed, I will continue to press for political and economic reforms, support the fight against corruption, and buttress Angola's development efforts. Opportunities exist for the U.S. Government to continue providing technical assistance and to cooperate further on potential corruption investigations, and on capacity building in the justice system in constructing corruption cases. As Angola explores options to diversify its economy and to create an environment more welcoming to investors, I will seek to foster continued U.S. investment if confirmed.

*Question.* Angola has a reasonably strong military, and recently played a helpful role in mediating conflict between Uganda and Rwanda. Is Angola prepared to take more of a leadership role in the region? Do you see potential for Angola increasing its participation in peacekeeping or other stability operations on the continent?

*Answer.* I understand that under President Lourenço, Angola has systematically raised its level of active participation in international organizations such as the African Union (AU), the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), successfully proposing candidates for leadership roles. Using these leadership roles, Angola has shown a willingness to be at the forefront of resolving some of the continent's most difficult crises, including its current role in encouraging stability in the Central African Republic and Chad.

Angola also recently enacted legislation which provides the structure for its military to be deployed in peacekeeping operations. The United States can better engage Angola to serve as a constructive voice in Southern and Central Africa by consulting with the Angolan Government in Luanda and in Washington, exchanging views and encouraging mutually beneficial courses of action.

*Question.* Despite Angola's vast natural resource reserves and economic reforms that have pleased international financial institutions, much of the country still lives in poverty and remains in need of assistance? How can the United States help ensure that Angola's wealth and opportunity reach all corners of the country?

*Answer.* U.S. Government assistance programs in health and landmine clearance improve the health and living conditions for Angolans throughout the country. Our programs stress capacity building within the Angolan Government and reinforce the need to address the issues of all Angolans. In addition, multiple small grant programs target economic development throughout the country. If confirmed, I will continue to engage within the U.S. Government to support the establishment and continuation of complementary and expanded programs that advance U.S. interests in Angola.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TULINABO S. MUSHINGI BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* Ambassador Mushingi, the election of a new president in Angola in 2017 provided a clear opportunity for the U.S. to support political and economic reforms, including in the areas of anti-corruption and human rights. While the Angolan administration continues to make progress, there continues to be limited U.S.-support for Angola in the democracy and governance space.

- What opportunities do you see for U.S. engagement and assistance in this space?

*Answer.* The Government of Angola needs to continue to improve its public financial management capacity as well as to strengthen accounting, oversight, and auditing capabilities. It should also increase law enforcement and judicial capacity to investigate and prosecute corruption and financial crimes and better coordinate the efforts of public institutions working on the investigations. The Government should also ensure that private sector financial institutions are regularly reporting suspicious transactions to the appropriate authorities for action.

U.S. engagement in this space will include technical assistance for Angola's Financial Intelligence Unit and Ministry of Finance. Additional opportunities exist for the USG to cooperate further on potential corruption investigations and possible sanctions, capacity building in the justice system in constructing corruption cases/prosecutions in international courts, and capacity building in the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) reporting mechanisms.

The Government of Angola has made significant improvements on human rights-related issues over the last few years, and if confirmed, I and the Embassy will con-

tinue to engage with Angolan Government officials to support progress in this area. In 2020, the United States and Angola held their third ministerial level dialogue on human rights, discussing the need for respect for freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression as well as the continued need for training of law enforcement, which the U.S. will continue to support, consistent with Leahy law and Department policy. I understand the United States and Angola are planning the 2021 human rights dialogue, which will give the U.S. an opportunity to assess progress and press on any remaining issues. Finally, Post has encouraged the Government of Angola to follow through on its commitment to hold local government elections, which would be a positive step in the democratization process of Angola, giving people direct representation at the local level of government.

*Question.* Ambassador Mushingi, China's presence looms large in Angola. Angola is one of China's largest borrowers in Africa, with more than \$20 billion in outstanding debt to some Chinese entities.

- How can the United States help Angola to begin chipping away at that debt and the restraint put on Angola's economy and political system by China?

*Answer.* As a key condition of its IMF program, Angola cannot hold new oil collateralized debt. The United States supports the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) agreed to by the G-20 which has suspended official bilateral debt payments for 40 countries including Angola since May 2020. Rolling back dependency on oil will require significant investment in other economic sectors to stimulate growth. The Embassy has leveraged U.S. interagency technical assistance and high-level messaging to support Angola's anti-corruption campaign and economic reforms, especially ongoing efforts to improve transparency and compliance in the financial sector. An improved environment will make U.S. firms more competitive in Angola. I understand that the Embassy has successfully advocated for U.S. investors to break into sectors long dominated by Chinese companies, such as telecommunications. President Lourenço lobbied U.S. private sector representatives in a December 2020 virtual roundtable to invest in Angola, demonstrating the high-level desire to attract U.S. investment in various sectors. If confirmed, I will lead the Embassy to continue reporting on opportunities for American companies and advocate for them to compete for tenders and other investment opportunities as the Angolan economy diversifies. Programs such as the DFC and Prosper Africa will also help target alternatives to Chinese investment and commercial interests.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ELIZABETH MOORE AUBIN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, Algeria was identified as Tier 3 due to lack of significant efforts to combat human trafficking in the reporting period. The Government made little to no attempts to improve resources for victims, including punishing victims for crimes their traffickers forced them to commit. What steps would you take as Ambassador, if confirmed, to engage with the host government and civil society organizations on bolstering efforts to improve prosecution and protection efforts?

*Answer.* If confirmed, improving Algeria's efforts to combat human trafficking will be one of my highest priorities. The Embassy is already working with the Algerian Government to improve its efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers and proactively identify and assist trafficking victims, including by offering technical support. If confirmed, I will urge Algerian officials to pass a standalone Trafficking in Persons (TIP) law this year to bring their legal framework in line with international commitments and to formalize their victim referral mechanism. We will continue to support Algerian efforts to raise awareness of TIP in the law enforcement community, including through trainings for prosecutors and judges.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom Report and the 2021 U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Annual Report, the U.S. identified Algeria as having poor religious freedom conditions, with the Government continuing its repression of Christian and minority Muslim communities. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Government-led persecution of marginalized minorities, including Christian and minority Muslim and non-Muslim religious groups, continues to be a significant issue in Algeria. Our Embassy is in regular contact with a wide variety of

religious leaders in Algeria and maintains an active dialogue with the Algerian Government on religious freedom issues. The United States Government has publicly and privately stressed the importance of religious tolerance and the equal and transparent application of the laws governing religious organizations. If confirmed, I will raise issues of religious persecution identified by the Office of International Religious Freedom with the Algerian Government and encourage embassy reporting on specific cases.

*Question.* Algeria was subsequently designated as a Special Watch List country by USCIRF for its actions to systematically repress religious minorities. If confirmed, will you suggest Algeria for the State Department's Special Watch List for engaging and tolerating severe violations of religious freedom?

*Answer.* USCIRF's Special Watch List (SWL) functions as a warning to avoid possible Country of Particular Concern (CPC) designation by the Department of State. For countries designated as CPCs, the International Religious Freedom Act provides the Secretary of State with a range of policy options to address serious violations of religious freedom. The SWL applies to countries that we deem to have engaged in or tolerated severe violations of religious freedom, but that do not meet all of the CPC criteria. If confirmed, I will prioritize the promotion of religious tolerance and impress upon the Algerian Government the seriousness of the potentiality of a SWL or CPC designation, and actions that could be taken now to preclude these designations.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you encourage embassy officials to attend public country proceedings on church closures to emphasize USG concern regarding this issue?

*Answer.* The Algerian Government continues to use COVID-19 restrictions and the status of churches as un-registered associations to justify closures. If confirmed, I will encourage embassy officials to attend public proceedings on church closures, as appropriate, to emphasize U.S. Government concern regarding this issue and to urge the Algerian Government to allow the legalization of religious minority groups by approving their requests to be registered associations.

*Question.* The constitutional referendum passed in November indicates a further erosion of religious freedom conditions in country. Please describe your potential engagement with the Algerian Government regarding this referendum.

*Answer.* The Algerian constitution provides for freedom of worship, but religious minorities continue to face difficulty registering as legally recognized organizations. Though the new constitution allows for the creation of a religious organization by declaration, the Government needs to amend the 2012 Law of Associations to implement this change. The State Department's Annual Human Rights and Religious Freedom Reports for Algeria cite this need and, if confirmed, I will continue to advocate for religious freedom.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Algeria was identified as having committed severe human rights abuses, including government sanctioned attacks on freedom of assembly for protestors in early 2020. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize the promotion of human rights and impress upon Algerian leaders the importance of these issues. The annual Human Rights Report regularly garners press attention and is studied carefully in Algeria. If confirmed, I commit to continuing my predecessors' tradition of meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and in Algeria to support their efforts on advancing human rights. Our embassy is in regular contact with human rights activists and journalists in Algeria and maintains an active dialogue with the Algerian Government on human rights issues.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct my embassy to maintain contact with civil society organizations in Algeria to support civil society development. Funding for the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and other civil society assistance programs will empower nascent civil society in Algeria, building capacity to better represent citizens' interests and hold the Government accountable. If confirmed, I will also urge the Algerian Government to issue an updated NGO law to ease restrictions on registering and operating civil society organizations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ELIZABETH MOORE AUBIN BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* During the last two years we have seen significant political events in Algeria. These include a mass leaderless protest movement, a contentious election resulting in a successor to the long serving former president and a new constitution. What are your thoughts about how the events of the past two years have affected the U.S.-Algeria partnership and what opportunities do you think it creates for the U.S.?

*Answer.* The U.S.-Algeria bilateral relationship has remained strong through the momentous events of the last two years. Algeria has taken steps towards political and economic reform and the United States will continue to support efforts that expand observance of human rights, including freedoms of expression and association. We will also work to facilitate U.S. investment opportunities to deliver economic benefits to the American and the Algerian people. If confirmed, I will also promote the embassy's entrepreneurship programs for youth and women as well as pursue a grant-funded project to expand English language instruction in Algeria to better prepare Algerians for professional and commercial opportunities at home and abroad.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO EUGENE S. YOUNG BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, Republic of the Congo was upgraded to Tier 2 due to increased efforts to eliminate trafficking, but the Government still lacks adequate resources to screen vulnerable populations and lacks a national action plan and clear understanding of anti-tracking laws. How will you work with the host government and local civil society organizations to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* As you note, the Congolese Government has shown the political will to address trafficking issues. The Government has drafted a national action plan against Trafficking in Persons but has yet to ratify it. The Congolese successfully prosecuted seven human traffickers and successfully repatriated eight victims in the past year. If confirmed, I will continue the positive work begun under my predecessor. My team and I will use the resources available from the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to help train and equip the Congolese police, judiciary, and legislators, as well as support the NGOs on the ground doing the heroic day-to-day work of identifying trafficking victims and their traffickers.

*Question.* The U.S. Embassy is actively engaging with government officials and organizations on religious freedom issues, including supporting virtual events with religious leaders and youths. How will you, if confirmed, continue this work and bolster efforts already underway?

*Answer.* One of the major components of Congo's stability is the ability of different religious groups to coordinate and work together to promote civil society and meet the needs of the Congolese people. This collaboration dates all the way back to the 1960s at the formation of Congo as an independent country. If confirmed, I will continue our Embassy team's efforts to bring together religious organizations, international partners, private businesses, and members of the Government to ensure international religious freedom continues to be a priority of our bilateral relationship.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, the Republic of the Congo was identified as having committed human rights abuses, notably that political activists and civil society members, including human rights defenders, continued to face intimidation, harassment and arbitrary detention by the Government or other state actors.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?
- How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* I share your concern about these developments and the treatment of journalists and human rights activists in the Republic of the Congo. This concern is something repeatedly conveyed by our staff at Embassy Brazzaville to the highest

levels of the Government. This focus on human rights is a practice that I will continue if confirmed.

While Congo's human rights record is far from clean, we have seen some progress. Congolese peacekeeping troops who were accused of human rights violations while in CAR in 2016 did face consequences, and our ongoing training with the Congo military educates troops about human rights protections. If confirmed I would work alongside civil society organizations to bring increased attention to human rights violations and abuses and to offer what we can in terms of training programs and other resources to promote respect for human rights.

*Question.* As U.S. Ambassador, how will you engage with the international financial institutions, including the IMF, in the Republic of Congo over their engagement with the Sassou Nguesso administration despite significant corruption and lack of transparency in finances and debts?

*Answer.* Across Africa our goal is to increase debt transparency. Debt transparency is vital for maintaining debt sustainability, facilitating resolutions when necessary, and minimizing corruption. The Republic of Congo is in debt distress in part due to non-transparent Chinese lending. We can't always stop governments from excessive and corrupt borrowing, but setting the standard of transparency makes it harder to borrow corruptly and unsustainably. In fora such as the IMF where we can better control the terms of loan and financial programs, if confirmed, I will seek to engage in the process to insist on the inclusion of transparency measures.

*Question.* The Congo River Basin is one of the major focuses of U.S. supported conservation and environment programming, including through the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). How can the U.S. better engage with the Republic of Congo these efforts?

*Answer.* Our embassy in Brazzaville has been hard at work ramping up our environmental cooperation with the Congolese. Thanks to the team's efforts, Congo's Minister of Tourism and Environment was the first African to speak at the international round table discussion before the recent Leaders' Summit on Climate. Our embassy is also working with the Congolese to develop side events focusing on the Congo rainforest for the upcoming COP 26 conference. Finally, a new USAID position in Brazzaville is set to come online later this summer. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts to engage Congo on this important area of bilateral cooperation.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO EUGENE S. YOUNG BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* As you know, Congo's president is one of Africa's longest serving leaders with power vested in him and a network of family and associates. One result has been prolific corruption in the oil sector. I'm curious about your thoughts on what tools you think you would employ as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Congo to encourage anti-corruption and democratic development in one of the most kleptocratic and closed political and civic environments in Africa?

*Answer.* Corruption inhibits economic and democratic development and runs counter to American values. It damages trade, guts institutions, and destroys citizens' confidence in their government. Recent calls for more American investment in Congo to counter malign influence show me the Congolese people want to address this problem as well. If confirmed, I will push hard for that investment, and the transparency and fair dealing it brings. In addition, I will work with international partners such as the World Bank and IMF to increase transparency in Congo's borrowing, procurement, and financial systems.

*Question.* Congo has seen a rapid accumulation of debt over the past decade—much of it owed to China. Given this increase in China's influence, what opportunities do you think there are for us to increase our engagement with the Republic of Congo, both to support development in line with American values and to counter China's role in the country?

*Answer.* China's investment in the Republic of Congo is considerable. Chinese debt of over \$4 billion risks permanent damage to Congo's future growth. However, there are important strengths in the U.S.-Congolese relationship that we can focus and build on to help counter Chinese influence. America's continued appeal as a country of ideas, future trends, and freedom resonates with the Congolese, especially the youth. Drawing a distinction with China by highlighting and dem-



onstrating America's strengths is our best way of countering China's influence over the long term. Our areas of collaboration with the Government of Congo include environmental protection, human rights, and health development, among many others. These are areas where we believe the United States can do the most good for the American and Congolese people.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Politics and Economy*

*Question.* How do you intend to capitalize on the heightened attention Secretary Blinken and recent sanctions have brought to the Anglophone crisis, and how will you advance engagement with the French to work toward a peaceful resolution?

*Answer.* The Secretary's decision to impose visa restrictions on those involved in undermining peace in Cameroon reflects the U.S. commitment to advance dialogue to peacefully resolve the Anglophone crisis and support respect for human rights. This decision followed cuts in security assistance in recent years and the determination that Cameroon was ineligible for AGOA starting on January 1, 2020. These actions demonstrate the U.S. Government's resolve to back up words with actions. The United States will continue to consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions.

We continue to engage other UN member states, particularly the French, in bilateral and multilateral fora and at all levels on the importance of rule of law and ending impunity in Cameroon and to explore ways we can work together to move towards a resolution of the violence in the Northwest and Southwest Regions. If confirmed, I will make resolving the Anglophone crisis my top policy priority and will engage in discussions with France and other partners on the ground and look for tangible ways to advance peace in Cameroon.

*Question.* What have been the impacts on Cameroon's economy and U.S.-Cameroon commercial ties of the termination of Cameroon's AGOA eligibility, and how would you seek to expand and protect U.S. commercial interests there?

*Answer.* Cameroon was found ineligible for AGOA in 2019 and lost AGOA benefits starting on January 1, 2020 under the criterion that excludes countries that engage in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. Cameroon can regain AGOA eligibility by preventing such violations, by strengthening human rights protections in the law, and by impartially and transparently investigating reports of such violations and holding accountable those responsible.

In 2018, Cameroon exported roughly \$220 million in goods and services to the United States; of that figure, \$63 million was exported under AGOA, over 90 percent of which was crude petroleum. The United States will continue to pursue robust and diverse commercial ties, deploying other tools at our disposal toward realizing the enormous potential of this relationship for our mutual prosperity and economic growth. More than any government program, however, the entrepreneurial initiative of Cameroonian and American businesses and a business climate that helps them flourish will be the key to stronger commercial ties between the United States and Cameroon. If confirmed, I will urge the Government to take tangible steps to improve the business climate, advocate on behalf of U.S. companies, and direct our embassy to continue to look for opportunities to expand commercial ties, using all the tools and resources that we have at our disposal.

*Question.* It was recently reported that most of a \$335 million loan to fight COVID-19 from the IMF could not be accounted for. How will you address endemic corruption and work to increase transparency and accountability of the Government of Cameroon?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the challenges in the fight against corruption in Cameroon. The United States is concerned about allegations about misuse of funding aimed at helping Cameroon respond to the pandemic. The Embassy provides financial and technical support to the fight against corruption. The Department of Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance assists the Ministry of Finance, specifically the Taxation Directorate, to identify and manage compliance and institutional risks and facilitate the efficacy of internal audit and employee anti-corruption investigations. Another transparency and good governance activity is the Fiscal Transparency Innovation Fund (FTIF). In 2018, the Department of State, through the FTIF, granted \$276,500 to a financial auditing firm to train financial

practitioners in the public and public sector on modern financial reporting norms and develop a plan for the adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards.

If confirmed, I would continue to explore opportunities like these to address endemic corruption in Cameroon and engage other diplomatic and international missions with a view to leveraging our resources and voices to advocate for change. I would also urge the Government to take meaningful steps to hold those complicit in corrupt practices accountable, change institutional practices that facilitate corruption, and do so transparently to help restore public faith in governance practices.

#### *COVID-19*

*Question.* How has COVID-19 impacted our health programs, and how do you intend to leverage U.S. Government bilateral global health program platforms to help the people of Cameroon respond to and address the impacts?

*Answer.* Cameroon has made significant efforts in managing the COVID-19 outbreak, despite challenges around national coordination, resurgence of cases fueled by limited adherence by the general population to mitigation measures, and concerns about mismanagement of COVID-19 funds. The COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted routine immunizations and service delivery across Cameroon's health sector, but we continue to support recovery of health systems and sustain gains made through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Global Health Security Agenda, the President's Malaria Initiative, and other global health programs.

Across U.S. agencies present in the health sector, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Defense (DOD), and Peace Corps, we have invested over \$600 million since 2010 to strengthen the health system and fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other diseases, including COVID-19. U.S. public health experts have worked hand-in-hand with Cameroonian officials on COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts, helping to build capacity for emergency management, surveillance, laboratory testing, case management, and infection prevention and control. If confirmed, I will ensure that health diplomacy remains a priority. I will encourage the Government of Cameroon to increase spending on health, support efforts to improve accountability in the provision of health care nationwide and continue to work towards reaching epidemic control of HIV/AIDS within the next two years.

#### *Democracy & Human Rights*

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* I have spent most of my career as a consular officer, focused on the protection of U.S. citizens and the application and enforcement of U.S. immigration law. I also served as an election observer in both Cameroon (1992) and the Central African Republic (1993), and I worked to improve prison conditions in the Dominican Republic (2002-05). In Ghana, where I was Deputy Chief of Mission (2018-21), we dedicated significant effort to combatting child labor in the fishing and cocoa sectors, addressing trafficking in persons, and promoting respect for the human rights of all individuals in Ghana. Through our DOJ Resident Legal Adviser, we also worked with the Ghanaian Ministry of Justice and court system to implement reforms on pre-trial detention, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and strengthening the public defender corps, all of which gave Ghanaians greater and more equitable access to justice.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Cameroon? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Many Cameroonians and outsiders perceive poor governance to be the root of most problems in the country. They view the bureaucracy as slow-moving and suffering from internal competition, cite corruption as an endemic problem, and point to the ongoing investigation into the alleged misused of funds aimed at helping Cameroon to combat the COVID-19 pandemic as a tangible example of the issue. There are also concerns about the lack of space for political opposition leaders, human rights defenders, journalists, and others to operate in if they espouse views that run counter to the Cameroonian Government's views and policies. Cameroonians are also frustrated with lapses or failure of delivery of public services, deteriorating infrastructure, poverty, and lack of progress on decentralization. They hope that the Government will address the root causes of extremism in the

Far North and those that led to the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions, and address allegations of human rights violations and abuses by security forces.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Cameroon? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* Building the capacity of civil society to promote respect for human rights and democracy is a top priority for our mission in Cameroon. The United States provides funding to local organizations focused on supporting dialogue and peace initiatives related to the crisis in Anglophone regions, strengthening the rule of law, improving the legislative process, promoting access to justice, enhancing anti-trafficking efforts, monitoring elections, and promoting civil engagement and human rights.

Civil society actors focused on the protection of human rights and the promotion of democracy and good governance operate in a difficult political environment. They often face consistent harassment and arrests for exercising their oversight role and exposing human rights violations and abuses committed by the Government.

If confirmed, I will continue to advance opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate with these organizations for the betterment of Cameroon, and ensure that we coordinate our efforts with diplomatic and international missions. Strengthening civil society will allow them to better advocate for change to improve the lives of ordinary Cameroonians.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* Supporting democracy and governance is a priority for our mission in Cameroon. Through a \$550,000 grant from the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, we conducted programming from August 2019 through December 2020 that sought to strengthen civil society's capacity to support dialogue and peace initiatives related to the crisis in Anglophone regions. Each year, we support organizations with an estimated \$400,000 through Africa Regional Democracy funding, with projects focused on strengthening the rule of law, improving the legislative process, promoting access to justice, enhancing anti-trafficking efforts, monitoring elections, and promoting civil engagement. We use Ambassador's Special Self-Help Funds, approximately \$75,000 each year, to support grassroots community organizations to find local solutions to basic problems.

In 2019, USAID launched for the first time the Civil Society Sustainability Index (CSO SI) in Cameroon. The CSO SI assesses the capacity of civil society to serve as both a short-term partner in implementing development solutions and a long-term actor in ensuring that development outcomes are sustained. To further bolster the capacity of the civil society sector, USAID designed a new Civil Society Strengthening and Community Resilience program. The anticipated program will primarily focus on strengthening civil society capacity to deliver services and promote citizen engagement.

If confirmed, I will continue these efforts to bolster Cameroon's civil society capacity, exploring all potential funding options that could help us achieve this objective. I will also assess what additional resources we can tap and programs we can undertake to advance democracy.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Cameroon? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* The promotion of respect for human rights is a central pillar in our relations with Cameroon. If confirmed, I will continue and strengthen the relationships built by the mission and the Department of State more broadly with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Cameroon. I will continue to advance opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate with these organizations for the betterment of Cameroon, and ensure that we coordinate our efforts with diplomatic and international missions.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine

political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continue and strengthen the relationships our mission has built with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. I will strive to support the efforts of these figures and parties to develop a more inclusive political environment in Cameroon, including their efforts to advance electoral reform. I will urge the Government to ensure the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly for all political actors, even those who do not agree with the Government. Through public statements, small grants and other programming, and direct engagements, I will advocate for a political environment that is inclusive of women, youth, minorities, and Cameroonians who might otherwise be marginalized.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Cameroon on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Cameroon?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage with Cameroon on press freedom issues. I will call on the Government to prevent and stop the harassment and arrests of journalists whose reporting is critical of the Cameroonian Government's policies, which has a negative impact on press freedom. I will also underscore the need for the Government to be transparent as doing so would make independent media outlets better positioned to share accurate information with ordinary Cameroonians. We will also continue to prioritize providing training and other capacity building opportunities for journalists. If confirmed, I will commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Cameroon.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue and, as appropriate, expand upon the Embassy's ongoing engagements with civil society and government counterparts to promote the importance of countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Cameroon on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will commit to actively engage with Cameroon on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions, and call out incidents when this right is restricted.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Cameroon, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. Promoting human rights and democracy is a priority for our mission in Cameroon. If confirmed, I will use all diplomatic tools at my disposal to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Cameroon, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Cameroon?

Answer. Cameroonian society is conservative, with many Cameroonians vehemently opposed to the idea that basic civil, legal, and human rights extend to Cameroon's LGBTQI+ citizens. The constitution provides for equal rights for all citizens, but Cameroonian laws do not explicitly prohibit discrimination against LGBTQI+ persons in housing, employment, and access to government services such as health care. Since 2020, there has been an uptick in arrests of LGBTQI+ individuals. The overwhelming majority of these cases do not meet basic due process standards. Defendants have been accused and convicted based on their manner of walking or appearance, as well as unsubstantiated rumors. The recent sentencing of two transgender women to five years in prison for "attempted homosexuality" highlights the threats and stigma LGBTQI+ Cameroonians face.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Cameroon?

Answer. Promoting the basic human rights of LGBTQI+ people is a challenging endeavor in a society as conservative as Cameroon. It is, however, a priority of the Biden-Harris administration, and, if confirmed, I commit to carrying out the President's mandate. It is critically important that we remain aware and take account of the local context in carrying out this mandate. As I saw most recently in Ghana,

the embassy's overriding principle must always be "First, Do No Harm." Even as we have the best intentions, we must not inadvertently make the situation worse. For instance, it may not always be appropriate to issue public statements in response to a given arrest, but to engage in quiet, closed-door diplomacy that minimizes additional risks to LGBTQI+ people. In gauging how, when, and whether to engage on this topic, it is invaluable to understand the local LGBTQI+ community, and I commit that, if confirmed, the Embassy team and I will engage with the LGBTQI+ Cameroonians and their allies.

*Congressional Consultations*

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Cameroon?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit, in coordination with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs, to appropriately respond to requests for briefings and information by this committee. As a former Pearson Congressional Fellow, I firmly believe that Congress has an important role to play not only in foreign policy legislation but also during the implementation process. It cannot be a one-way street in which the State Department merely advises Congress after the fact of the actions we have undertaken. Our foreign policy is stronger when the two branches of government coordinate.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Anglophone Crisis Negotiations*

*Question.* In January, the Senate passed a bipartisan resolution (S.Res.684), which calls on the State Department to engage other partners in helping end the Anglophone conflict, and specifically calls out the French, whom the Senate believes could get all the parties to the table. Secretary Blinken reportedly raised Cameroon with his French counterpart at a recent G7 meeting.

- How is the Department mobilizing other partners to assist Cameroon to find peace and justice, and how do you plan to lead such an effort once in-country?

*Answer.* The Secretary's decision to impose visa restrictions on those involved in undermining peace in Cameroon reflects the U.S. commitment to advance dialogue to peacefully resolve the Anglophone crisis and support respect for human rights. This decision followed cuts in security assistance in recent years and the removal of Cameroon's AGOA eligibility on January 1, 2020. These actions demonstrate the U.S. Government's resolve to back up words with actions. The United States will continue to consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions.

We continue to engage other U.N. member states, particularly the French, in bilateral and multilateral fora and at all levels on the importance of rule of law and ending impunity in Cameroon and to explore ways we can work together to move towards a resolution of the violence in the Northwest and Southwest Regions. If confirmed, I will make resolving the Anglophone crisis my top policy priority and will engage in discussions with France and other partners on the ground and look for tangible ways to advance peace in Cameroon.

*Question.* What is your stance regarding U.S. leadership in mediating an end to the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and do you classify it as an armed conflict at this stage of the crisis?

*Answer.* The United States has an important role to play in pushing for a resolution to the crisis in the Anglophone regions. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Swiss Government's efforts to advance dialogue with all sides and explore ways with the international community to move this effort forward. I will also support other meaningful initiatives that could advance peace on the ground, including local initiatives, and to amplify the voices of Anglophones who support peace. The United States stands ready to provide additional support if asked to do so and if appropriate.

Per the Geneva Conventions, which the United States has ratified, the International Committee of the Red Cross has the purview to designate a conflict as a non-international armed conflict. To date, they have not done so.

*Question.* Why do you think the Government of Cameroon has not heeded the U.S. calls for cessation of hostilities and a negotiated resolution of the conflict in the North West and South West regions?

*Answer.* The Cameroonian Government continues to focus on neutralizing the armed separatists through combat in the field and to advance disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration efforts in both regions to put an end to the violence and insecurity. The Government also believes that implementation of the recommendations offered during the Grand National Dialogue held in 2019 will address the grievances held by many Anglophone Cameroonians. This includes advancing decentralization, such as by holding regional elections in December 2020. If confirmed, I will continue to call for an inclusive dialogue without preconditions and for all parties to end violence.

*Question.* Would you support mediation or accountability efforts by international organizations such as the U.N. Security Council or the African Union?

*Answer.* The United States regularly engages U.N. Security Council member states and other countries regarding the need to resolve the Anglophone crisis. We also regularly raise the Anglophone crisis with the Secretary General's Special Representative and Head of the U.N. Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) Francois Fall. The United States supports UNOCA's role in promoting inclusive political dialogue in Cameroon and the resolution of the Anglophone crisis. We will continue to encourage UNOCA to engage the Government of Cameroon and encourage other U.N. member states, specifically including our P3 partners France and the UK, to play a constructive role to resolve the crisis. The United States has engaged and will look to increase our engagement with the African Union on Cameroon. If confirmed, I will highlight the need for efforts by international actors to be complementary and not compete with one another.

#### *Sanctions*

*Question.* On June 7, 2021, Secretary Blinken announced that the United States would impose visa restrictions on individuals who are believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. While I did applaud this important first step, I believe additional accountability measures are needed.

- What is your view regarding the use of sanctions to bring those responsible to account for their abuses and undermining of peace in Cameroon?

*Answer.* The decision to impose visa restrictions on those involved in undermining peace in Cameroon reflects U.S. commitment to advance dialogue to peacefully resolve the Anglophone crisis and support respect for human rights. This decision followed cuts in security assistance in recent years and the removal of Cameroon's AGOA eligibility on January 1, 2020. These actions demonstrate the U.S. Government's resolve to back up words with actions. The United States will continue to consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions.

#### *Trafficking in Persons*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, the U.S. downgraded Cameroon to Tier 2 Watch List for recruiting child soldiers, a lack of standard operating procedures and convicting fewer trafficking crimes. Additionally, the Government has not passed anti-trafficking legislation to conform to international law. Yet, the Government did investigate more trafficking cases and identify more victims.

- If confirmed, how will you build on Cameroon's successes and strengthen their weaknesses, most notably, aiding in establishing a national framework for anti-trafficking?

*Answer.* The United States regularly engages with Cameroon on the issue of human trafficking. We have provided training to government and civil society stakeholders through the International Visitors Leadership Program and presented draft language for anti-trafficking legislation that would bring national law in line with international norms. We will continue to work with the Government of Cameroon to ensure that its security forces do not violate their internal regulations and recruit or use child soldiers. We will also encourage the Government to urge vigilance committees to refrain from doing so.

If confirmed, I will ensure that we will continue to engage constructively with the Inter-ministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons and encourage the Government to make progress in the fight against human trafficking by focusing on mile-

stones that need to be achieved on key deficiencies and by engaging more robustly with civil society.

#### *International Religious Freedom*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom Report, the Department noted Cameroon as having poor religious tolerance, including threats of non-state actors like ISIS-WA and Boko Haram.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue, and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Religious leaders wield significant influence and are potential allies in bringing peace to the Northwest, Southwest, and Far North Regions where persistent violence from non-state actors, armed separatists, and government actors infringes upon religious freedom and all aspects of life in the affected communities. The United States will continue to work with religious leaders and the Government to encourage greater cooperation and respect for the right to practice religion freely and unencumbered.

If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to resolve the ongoing conflict in the Anglophone regions through a framework that supports an inclusive peace process. Peaceful resolutions to the many ongoing conflicts in Cameroon will be pivotal in reducing the incidence of abuses against religious freedom. Under my direction, if confirmed, the embassy will also engage with the Office of International Religious Freedom and other key offices to determine how best we could assist religious leaders.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, the Department identified Cameroon as having committed severe human rights abuses. Amnesty International categorized the state-sanctioned behavior as "Security forces and armed groups continued to commit human rights violations and abuses. Hundreds of thousands of people were displaced due to violence; and gender-based violence against women was widespread."

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* Promotion of human rights remains a key element of our bilateral relations with Cameroon. While we have seen some progress in this area with specific cases, we would like the Government of Cameroon to share information about what it is doing to address human rights violations by security forces and to take steps to address violations writ-large beyond training. If confirmed, I will continue to call for accountability and transparency related to allegations of human rights violations committed by the Government. I will direct the embassy to look for opportunities to work with the Government to reduce incidences of human rights violations and urge them to hold accountable those found responsible for these violations.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* Building the capacity of civil society is a top priority for our mission in Cameroon. We provide funding to local organizations focused on supporting dialogue and peace initiatives related to the crisis in Anglophone regions, strengthening the rule of law, improving the legislative process, promoting access to justice, enhancing anti-trafficking efforts, monitoring elections, and promoting civil engagement and human rights.

If confirmed, I will continue to advance such opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate with these organizations for the betterment of Cameroon, and ensure that we coordinate our efforts with diplomatic and international missions.

*Question.* In December 2019, the Trump administration curtailed U.S. military assistance to Cameroon because of gross human rights violations, including women and children's extrajudicial killings. To date, has there been an improvement in the Cameroon military's human rights record? If confirmed, how do you intend to work with the Government of Cameroon and its military leadership to improve on this issue?

*Answer.* Since early 2019, the United States has significantly reduced security assistance due to the Government of Cameroon's unwillingness to share information in response to credible accusations of gross violations of human rights by its security forces. The Government has since taken some steps towards holding security forces

accountable, which we commend. These include the murder conviction in August 2020 of four soldiers for the 2015 killing of two women and two children in the Far North, the arrest and ongoing prosecution of soldiers believed to be responsible for the February 2020 extrajudicial killings in Ngarbuh, Northwest Region, and the arrest of soldiers involved in a case of alleged torture of a detainee in early 2021. However, the United States would like to receive more information from the Government of Cameroon on actions it has taken and plans to take to address allegations of human rights violations and to put measures in place that advance human rights that go beyond human rights training.

If confirmed, I will continue to encourage the Government to provide updates on investigations into allegations of human rights violations and continue to work with Cameroonian armed forces on areas of mutual interest. I will continue to review security assistance on a case-by-case basis so that assistance we provide aligns with U.S. interests, including promotion of human rights, and U.S. law requires those receiving our security assistance be vetted prior to receiving assistance.

#### *Biya Succession*

*Question.* If confirmed, you will arrive in Cameroon at a time when there is a lot of speculation about the wellbeing of the country's president, Paul Biya, who is 88 years old and has been in power for four decades. Does the State Department have a contingency plan in place should the country be thrust into a succession battle during your tenure?

*Answer.* President Biya's current term of office doesn't end until 2025, and Biya has not made clear whether he intends to run for reelection at that time. The State Department has a plethora of experience responding to various political transitions around the world, should such a scenario arise. We will draw on that experience, and our regularly updated emergency plans for all scenarios, including natural disasters or other major events. If confirmed, I will ensure that crisis management planning will remain a top priority for our Mission.

*Question.* In several Francophone African countries—Togo, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, and recently Chad—dying and long-serving presidents have manipulated fragile constitutions to pave the way for their sons to replace them should they pass away while in office. Is such a scenario likely in Cameroon, and if so, what should be the U.S. position if this occurred?

*Answer.* The United States supports peaceful, timely, and civilian-led transitions of power to a democratically elected government throughout the world. We advocate for free, fair, and secure elections that reflect the will of the people in all countries, including Cameroon. President Biya is serving a seven-year term, and the next elections are to be held in 2025. The Cameroonian constitution outlines a democratic process in the event of a succession. If confirmed, I will advocate for good governance, peace, prosperity, and the promotion of human rights in Cameroon, as well as for efforts by Cameroon to support stability in the region despite the ongoing conflicts within its borders.

#### *Security*

*Question.* Another crisis that confronts Cameroon is in the Far North region, where the country is part of the multinational Task Force battling Boko Haram and other violent extremists in the Lake Chad Basin. In the past year, Boko Haram attacks on civilian populations have increased. Some analysts believe that Cameroon may have moved military equipment and personnel initially assigned to this region of the country into the Anglophone areas of the North West and South West.

- To what extent is this divided focus undermining Cameroon's contribution to fight against Boko Haram and broader counterterrorism efforts in the Sahel?

*Answer.* Cameroon has always played a crucial role in regional stability. With the protracted crisis in the Central African Republic, instability in Nigeria, the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa and increasing incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon's role as a partner in securing and maintaining stability in the region is even more important.

Cameroon has been a leader in both the efforts to address piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and the fight against terrorism and has contributed troops to the United Nation's peacekeeping mission in the Central Africa Republic since 2014. The ongoing violence in the Anglophone regions and the Far North, along with insecurity on its eastern border, could put at risk Cameroon's ability to continue to lead these efforts to ensure the security of Central African region.

If confirmed, I will continue to push for the Government to pursue dialogue with separatist armed groups in order to end the violence in the Northwest and South-



west. We will also continue to push the Government hold those found responsible for violations of human rights accountable for these violations.

*Question.* While restrictions currently exist, which security assistance, if any, should the U.S. prioritize to Cameroon in the future?

*Answer.* All U.S. security cooperation activities with Cameroon take place in full coordination with the Government of Cameroon. The United States works with Cameroonian armed forces on areas of mutual interest. If confirmed, I will ensure that our security assistance will continue to focus on assisting the Cameroonian military in its efforts against ISIS-West Africa and Boko Haram as part of the Multinational Joint Task Force, maritime security, training, and assistance to develop professional military forces, and health security through disease vector research and HIV/AIDS assistance.

#### *Regional Impact*

*Question.* Do you agree that a further escalation of the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon contributes to greater instability in neighboring Nigeria and could soon jeopardize vital U.S. interests in the Gulf of Guinea and most of West and Central Africa?

*Answer.* Cameroon has always played a crucial role in regional stability. With the protracted crisis in the Central African Republic, instability in Nigeria, the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa and increasing incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon's role as a partner in achieving and maintaining stability in the region is even more important, despite the continuing crises within the country's borders.

Cameroon has been a leader in both the efforts to address piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and the fight against terrorism. The country has also contributed troops to the United Nation's peacekeeping mission in the Central Africa Republic since 2014. The ongoing violence in the Anglophone regions of the country, combined with the need to address the continuing threats posed by Boko Haram and ISIS-WA in the Far North Region and insecurity on its eastern border, could put Cameroon's ability to continue to lead these efforts to ensure the security of the Central Africa region at risk.

If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government to pursue dialogue with separatist armed groups in order to end the violence in the Northwest and Southwest Regions. We will also continue to call on the Government to hold those found responsible for violations of human rights accountable for these violations.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

#### *Anglophone Crisis*

*Question.* The Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon has killed thousands, displaced more than 800,000, and kept more than one million children out of school. In January, the Senate passed S.Res.684, which I introduced with Senator Risch, calling on the Government of Cameroon and separatist armed Anglophone groups to end all violence, respect the human rights of all Cameroonians, and pursue a genuinely inclusive dialogue toward resolving the ongoing conflict. The resolution also called on the U.S. Government to help bring about and support that dialogue.

- If confirmed as Ambassador to Cameroon, what steps would you take to help initiate the dialogue process, and how would you ensure that all relevant stakeholders are represented?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would continue to urge all parties to end violence and to engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. I would make clear U.S. support for the Swiss Government's efforts to advance mediation between the Government and separatist armed group leaders and encourage the Government to take concrete steps to move this effort forward.

The United States regularly engages U.N. Security Council member states regarding the need to resolve the Anglophone crisis. We raise the Anglophone crisis regularly during briefings by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and Head of the U.N. Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) François Fall. We will continue our engagement with France and other key allies both bilaterally and in multilateral fora to find ways to work together to achieve tangible progress towards peace. The U.S. Government will continue to consider all the tools at our disposal aimed at pro-

moting a peaceful resolution of the ongoing violence, which has resulted in much suffering.

*Question.* I appreciate Secretary Blinken's recent decision to impose visa restrictions on some of those responsible for undermining peace in Cameroon. Are any financial measures, such as Global Magnitsky sanctions, also being considered?

*Answer.* The recent decision to impose visa restrictions on some of those responsible for undermining peace in Cameroon is one of many possible approaches we can take to push for peace and dialogue. It is yet another sign of our commitment to back up words with actions. The U.S. Government will continue to consider all the tools at our disposal to encourage a peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions.

*Question.* How could we be better engaging our international partners, especially France, to address this conflict?

*Answer.* The United States remains closely engaged with France and other international partners regarding the crisis in Cameroon, including at the highest levels. For example, Secretary Blinken discussed Cameroon in May with French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, and Undersecretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland discussed Cameroon in high-level meetings with the French. We continue to support the efforts by the Swiss-led process to encourage dialogue between the Government and the armed separatist groups. We also support efforts by the U.N. Office in Central Africa (UNOCA) to advance peace in Cameroon.

If confirmed, I will engage with all of these actors and determine how best we can work together to make a positive difference on the ground. Advancing peace in Cameroon will be my top priority.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* As you know, the U.S. has limited leverage with Cameroon regime, particularly since the suspension of security assistance. With these limitations, I am curious about your view on potential U.S. leadership in mediating an end to the crisis in the Anglophone regions?

- If this is even feasible, are there resources you think could help mediation?

*Answer.* The United States is deeply concerned about continued violence in Cameroon and condemn all attacks against civilians. There is no military solution to this crisis; dialogue is needed to restore peace and improve respect for human rights. The United States appeals to all parties to enter into a broad-based dialogue without pre-conditions.

The United States has an important role to play in pushing for a resolution to the crisis in the Anglophone regions. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Swiss Government's efforts to mediate dialogue and explore ways with the international community to advance this effort and other meaningful efforts. I will also review the different tools, including the implementation of appropriate measures under U.S. law such as the visa restrictions that the Secretary recently announced and coordinating with appropriate Department of Justice prosecutions of those inciting violence. We have to press for a resolution to this crisis, including through discussions with French Government officials and P3 counterparts. The United States has provided and will continue to provide strong support for peace, but the responsibility for the resolution of the crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions ultimately lies with the Cameroonian people.

*Question.* In the north of Cameroon, terrorism has accelerated. Meanwhile, in other regions, violence between security forces and armed separatists claiming to represent the Anglophone minority has spurred concerns over Cameroon's territorial unity.

- Do you think the U.S. is adequately leveraging diplomatic and assistance tools, both with Cameroonian stakeholders and our European and African allies, to address these challenges as well as challenges to democratic development?

*Answer.* I understand we continue to engage Cameroonian stakeholders and key international actors bilaterally and multilaterally on the importance of the rule of law and ending impunity in Cameroon and to explore ways we can work together towards a peaceful resolution of the violence in the Northwest and Southwest Regions, and advance good governance and promote respect for human rights nationwide.

Our diplomatic engagement is deployed at various levels, including at the most senior level of the U.S. Government. For example, Secretary Blinken discussed Cameroon in May with French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, and Undersecretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland discussed Cameroon in high-level meetings with the French. We also engage regularly with U.N. Special Representative François Fall who heads the U.N. Office for Central Africa.

The United States regularly reviews our assistance to ensure that we do no harm, that we support civil society, human rights defenders, and humanitarian workers, and that we comply with Leahy laws. We have consistently said all those responsible for human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable, and we have taken actions to back up this principle. If confirmed, I will continue to consider what more can be done to address Cameroon's complex challenges, always with a view to benefit the Cameroonian people.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CHRISTOPHER JOHN LAMORA BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Violence and Instability in Cameroon and Beyond*

*Question.* U.S. relations with Cameroon have been mostly positive, although they have been adversely affected by concerns over human rights abuses, in particular in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions, and the pace of political and economic liberalization. Cameroon plays a key role in regional stability and remains a regional partner in countering terrorism in the Lake Chad Region.

- Last year, I joined with 19 of my Senate colleagues to sign a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Cameroon, and remain deeply concerned by the ongoing violence there. I am curious as to what you think it will take to conclude and uphold a ceasefire, guaranteed humanitarian access, and establish a process of political dialogue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make resolving the Anglophone crisis my top policy priority. Our position remains that all sides must end violence and engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. The Government is focused on countering armed separatists in the field and maintains that its convening of a Grand National Dialogue in 2019 and decentralization efforts thus far, including regional elections in late 2020 and the establishment of a special status for the two Anglophone regions, address the root causes of the crisis. I believe the Government must do more to resolve the crisis. Specifically, it must be willing to engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. The armed separatist groups, as well, must be willing to engage peacefully in such a dialogue and cease human rights abuses, as called for in the Senate resolution.

If confirmed, I will consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions. We will engage in discussions with other partners on the ground and look for tangible ways to advance peace in Cameroon.

*Question.* In 2019, the United States took the relatively rare step of terminating Cameroon's AGOA eligibility due to persistent gross violations of human rights. Unfortunately, this does not appear to have impacted the Government's behavior in the ongoing conflict. If confirmed, what other measures do you plan to take to hold state and non-state actors in Cameroon accountable for human rights abuses?

*Answer.* On June 7, 2021, Secretary Blinken announced that the United States was taking steps to impose visa restrictions on individuals who are believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. This decision reflects the continuing U.S. commitment to advance dialogue and promote respect for human rights. This decision followed cuts in security assistance in recent years, and, as you noted, the determination that Cameroon was ineligible for AGOA starting on January 1, 2020. These actions demonstrate the U.S. Government's resolve to back up words with actions.

If confirmed, I will consider all potential diplomatic tools to advance dialogue and end violence in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions. We will engage in discussions with other partners on the ground, as well as the Cameroonian Government and people, to identify tangible ways to advance peace in Cameroon.

*Question.* In addition to the internal violence related to the Anglophone Crisis, Cameroon is also facing threats from Boko Haram and ISIS West Africa. How do we square our support for Cameroon's efforts against Boko Haram and ISIS West

Africa with our concerns about human rights abuses and political abuses inside Cameroon? In other words, how can the State Department ensure that President Biya does not use foreign counterterrorism assistance to fund its efforts against Anglophone separatists in the Southwest and Northwest part of the country?

Answer. Cameroon has long played a crucial role in regional stability. With the protracted crisis in the Central African Republic, instability in Nigeria, the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, and increasing incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon's role as a partner in securing and maintaining stability in the region is even more important. Since early 2019, we have significantly reduced security assistance because the Government of Cameroon had not taken sufficient action to investigate credible accusations of gross violations of human rights by its security forces or hold the perpetrators accountable. The United States continues to review security assistance on a case-by-case basis so that assistance we provide aligns with U.S. interests, including promotion of respect for human rights. We vet potential recipients of security assistance, consistent with the Leahy laws, and do not provide assistance to Cameroonian security force units where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. U.S.-granted assistance is explicitly prohibited from being used in the Anglophone regions. We have made this prohibition clear at all levels of the Cameroonian Government and we carefully monitor the use of U.S. assistance to ensure this commitment is followed. Risk of misuse or potential diversion to the Anglophone regions are key criteria in our security assistance decision-making.

Since our cuts, the Cameroonian Government has taken some limited steps towards holding security forces accountable, including the conviction of four soldiers for murder in August 2020 and the arrest of soldiers believed to be responsible for one case of extrajudicial killings and one case of alleged torture of a detainee. While we hope these steps indicate a willingness to address the problem, abuses by government forces continue.

Between FY 2019 (the last year for which there is full obligation data) and FY 2020 funding, the State Department has obligated approximately \$8.3 million in assistance to support the Cameroonian military. This funding supported professional military education; technical support for unarmed intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms; small boat training; communications training; and air-to-ground integration training. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that U.S.-provided equipment is not misused by Cameroonian security forces, and would actively and fully address verified reports of such misuse.

---

## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in Room SD-106, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Kaine, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Portman, Young, Cruz, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider nominees for three important positions, Ambassador Todd Robinson to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Ambassador Daniel Kritenbrink to be Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and Mr. Brett Holmgren to be Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research.

So congratulations to the three of you on your nominations. We appreciate your commitment and willingness to serve our country and your families as well.

Ambassador Robinson, it is nice to have you back before this committee for another confirmation hearing, this time as the nominee to lead the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, which we know as INL, one of the most important offices for strengthening democratic governance and the rule of law globally.

INL's work around the world is critical to countering narcotics trafficking, criminal syndicates, money laundering, and other financial crimes, addressing the criminal use of ransomware and malware, combating illegal mining and fishing, and supporting efforts to combat gender-based violence.

Over the last decade, authoritarian leaders have increasingly wielded criminality and kleptocracy as tools to debilitate democracy at home and foment instability beyond their borders.

I welcome President Biden's recent directorate establishing the fight against kleptocracy as a key national security priority and making it clear that we will tackle its corrosive impact.

INL has a central role to play in that fight. INL is also at the forefront of our international efforts to combat narcotics trafficking.

CDC data shows that over 70,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2019, including over 2,800 in my home state of New Jersey.

I am particularly concerned about the lethal impact of fentanyl as well as the illicit production and trafficking routes that extend through Mexico and back to China. While we must improve our public health responses to address drug abuse domestically, INL's work is essential to countering drug trafficking by transnational criminal organizations.

So I look forward to hearing from you about your vision for the Bureau and your plans for strengthening justice systems and law enforcement cooperation to advance our national security interests.

Ambassador Kritenbrink, I am also pleased to have you back before this committee for another confirmation hearing. I think the last time we saw each other was in China, and your post there—your career as a public servant and your extensive experience in the region will be critical as you take on this important role.

In recent years and under administrations and Congresses of both parties the United States has reassessed and rebalanced our approach to the Indo-Pacific to take into account the reality of our competitive relationship with China.

Although this new era of strategic competition may not be what many of us had hoped for in the U.S.-China relationship, it is our reality and we must deal with it with clear-eyed pragmatism, starting with rebuilding and replenishing the sources of our national strength here at home and our alliances and partnerships abroad.

The recently passed Senate China competition package, including the Strategic Competition Act that the ranking member and I and other members of this committee authored, marks our effort to contribute to that process.

Beyond China, the region you will be responsible for is rich with pressing challenges, from North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, which only grew stronger under President Trump's ill-conceived North Korea policy, to a coup plunging Burma back into chaos, to a roll back in human rights and democracy across the region.

I know that you are intimately familiar with these issues and we look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can best position the United States for success there in the years ahead.

Mr. Holmgren, the independent analysis of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research has long been recognized as among the best, most reliable, and most careful of the intelligence community.

We have today a nominee for the Assistant Secretary of INR that brings a great breadth of experience to its mission.

Mr. Holmgren has held significant experience relevant to INR's mission, including serving as a senior director for intelligence and for counterterrorism at the National Security Council, as well as service at the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon.

I have little doubt that such experience would be of immense benefit to the State Department Bureau.

INR is an invaluable resource for the Secretary of State, senior officials, and department overall. Indeed, the Bureau could also be of immense benefit to this committee.

Our oversight of U.S. foreign policy would be better served by more regular contact and briefings from INR, and I look forward to that engagement with you should you be confirmed, something that has been missing in the past and I hope, under your leadership, we can engage with the committee more robustly.

In closing, the three of you have an immense task ahead, but I have no doubt about your knowledge and experience will serve you well and the nation well as you take on these new responsibilities.

I look forward to each of your testimony. Let me turn to the ranking member for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Certainly, these are important nominations we are hearing today. There is a broad swath of responsibility here and an important responsibility.

Personally, my top two foreign policy priorities are China and global health. Regarding China, my main concerns are the Chinese Communist Party's aggression and coercion in the Indo-Pacific and the urgency of the Taiwan issue.

To counter Chinese aggression, I believe we must ensure that the State Department is appropriately resourced in terms of funding and personnel in the Indo-Pacific.

I am interested to hear from you, if confirmed, plans to advocate for this critical region in this—in the State Department budgeting process.

Additionally, our network of alliances and partnerships is key to advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific. The U.S. security commitments, including extended deterrence and commitments to help allies and partners develop advanced capabilities, are crucial to this effort, and it is important to remember U.S. policy will only be successful if we work closely with our allies.

Also, I am particularly concerned about Chinese aggression against Taiwan. Taiwan is an important democratic partner, and how we support and work with Taiwan will have significant implications for our strategy in the region and our alliance system. Taiwan must be a main focus of the administration and the State Department.

Regarding global health, the Indo-Pacific region is in great need of more COVID-19 vaccines, especially given China's aggressive vaccine diplomacy.

Supporting our partners as well as countries in need during this global health crisis will be a mark of U.S. commitment to the region.

Finally, I believe it would be a mistake to use U.S. taxpayer dollars to buy and distribute Chinese vaccines.

Moving on to the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, I am concerned about reports of directed energy attacks against State Department personnel, both abroad and here at home.

This has been widely written about, greatly discussed, but the amount of information available is pretty *de minimis*. The Bureau of Intelligence and Research will play an important role in helping to identify the perpetrator and the means of these attacks.

The Assistant Secretary also has a responsibility to provide our committee and the Intelligence Committee with up to date information on all investigations into these attacks.

If confirmed, I expect to be in regular contact on this important issue. In addition to supporting the intelligence needs of the Secretary of State, INR must also work closely with the intelligence community.

It is imperative that the Bureau maintain its analytical independence from policymakers within the State Department to ensure information is objective and accurate.

Finally, the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Transnational criminal organizations, money laundering, and trafficking of people, narcotics, and weapons undermine international stability and pose complex threats to U.S. public health and security.

INR plays an important role in improving the capacity of our foreign partners to disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal activity. But these efforts do not exist in a vacuum.

I am concerned about the negative impact the administration's decision to reduce our military presence in Afghanistan will have on narcotics production and associated criminal activities, including funding terrorism.

I am also concerned that the administration's open borders policy has incentivized record-breaking waves of illegal migrants and undermine U.S. efforts to improve governance, security, and economic prosperity in Mexico and in the North and Central America.

I look forward to hearing plans you have to overcome these and other international law enforcement challenges, should you be confirmed.

We have a lot to cover today, and with that, I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

With that, we will start with our nominees and their testimony. All of your full records will be included in the—I am sorry. Your full statements will be included in the record. We ask you to summarize in about five minutes or so so we can have a conversation with you.

We will start with Ambassador Robinson and work our way down. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TODD D. ROBINSON OF NEW JERSEY, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS), VICE KIRSTEN DAWN MADISON**

Mr. ROBINSON. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

I am honored by President Biden's nomination and the support of Secretary Blinken for the opportunity to continue to serve the American people.



I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the support of my friends, colleagues, and, most importantly, my family, my mother, Willetta BaCote, and my brothers, Mark Robinson and Jeffrey BaCote. Their encouragement has been invaluable to me.

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, INL, which I called home for three and a half years as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, is a key component in protecting the American people by countering crime and supporting the rule of law to maintain stability abroad.

I look forward to the possibility of leading my Foreign Service, civil service, contractor, and local staff INL colleagues working in Washington and more than 90 countries.

If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress to tackle the great challenges laid out in the president's national security agenda, including combating narcotics trafficking, addressing transnational organized criminal threats, corruption and cybercrime, countering Chinese malign influence, and tackling issues of bias and discrimination in criminal justice systems.

Stopping illegal drugs like synthetic opioids from reaching America will be among my highest priorities. We know some terrorist organizations traffic drugs to fund their illicit activities. Transnational criminal organizations have seemingly limitless appetites for illicit profits from synthetic drugs.

If confirmed, I will prioritize INL's critical engagement with partners and allies to combat this threat. Transnational criminal organizations are not static, so INL cannot be either.

Working with our interagency partners, such as the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, INL can lead the effort to ensure that our programs are better coordinated and show results.

Example—after the People's Republic of China scheduled fentanyl as a regulated chemical class in 2019, direct flows of fentanyl from the PRC to the United States dropped precipitously.

However, nonfentanyl opioids and precursor chemicals continue to flow from the PRC to Mexican criminals that manufacture the fentanyl and traffic it to the United States.

If confirmed, I will prioritize continued diplomatic engagement at all levels to decrease the shipment of these precursors from the PRC and to reinvigorate shared security cooperation between the United States and Mexico.

In fact, U.S.-Mexico cooperation must continue to address another high priority issue, the management of migration across the region and to the U.S. southern border.

Strategic thinking and data will help us address irregular migration and build a smarter border. INL is working closely within the administration to shape a central America—Central America root causes strategy to look at the drivers of this migration.

I know this topic is a high priority to members of the committee and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can make our foreign assistance dollars more effective on this issue.

If confirmed, I vow to respond to these complex challenges using the experience gained in relationships built over my 35-year Foreign Service career.

Another global challenge we confront today is corruption. Simply put, corruption kills. I saw its effects in Guatemala where political,

economic, and social elites, at times working with criminal organizations, buy judges and threaten independent and courageous judicial actors.

I saw it in Venezuela, where the Maduro regime reaps ill-gotten profits by selectively distributing food and pillages that nation's natural resources.

As President Biden and Secretary Blinken have noted, corruption undermines U.S. foreign policy and national security interests around the world, and damages the credibility of countries where U.S. businesses may want to invest.

INL, with our interagency partners, acts as a bulwark against global corruption, and if confirmed, I would seek to enhance this work by identifying like-minded crime fighters around the world, build their capacity to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption, and reinvigorating multilateral global anti-corruption networks.

INL can also use rewards and visa restrictions to promote accountability for corrupt actors globally. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Congress on advancing America's interests at home and abroad.

Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Robinson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. TODD D. ROBINSON

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as the nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. I am honored by the President's nomination and the support of Secretary Blinken for the opportunity to continue to serve the American people.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the support of my friends, colleagues and, most importantly, my family—my mother, Willetta BaCote, and my brothers Mark Robinson and Jeffrey BaCote. Their encouragement has been invaluable to me.

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs—INL—which I called home for three and a half years as a Deputy Assistant Secretary, is a key component in protecting the American people by countering crime and supporting the rule of law to maintain stability abroad. I look forward to the possibility of leading my foreign service, civil service, contractor, and local staff INL colleagues working in Washington and more than 90 countries.

If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress to tackle the great challenges laid out in the President's national security agenda including combating narcotics trafficking; addressing transnational organized criminal threats, corruption and cybercrime; countering PRC malign influence; and tackling issues of bias and discrimination, in criminal justice systems.

Stopping illegal drugs, like synthetic opioids, from reaching America will be among my highest priorities. We know some terrorist organizations traffic drugs and other commodities to fund their illicit activities. Transnational criminal organizations have seemingly limitless appetites for illicit profits from synthetic drugs. If confirmed, I will prioritize INL's critical engagement with partners and allies to combat this threat.

Transnational criminal organizations are not static, so INL cannot be either. Working with our interagency partners such as the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, INL can lead the effort to ensure that our programs are better coordinated and show results. Example: after the People's Republic of China (PRC) scheduled fentanyl as a regulated chemical class in 2019, direct flows of fentanyl from the PRC to the United States dropped precipitously. However, non-fentanyl opioids and precursor chemicals continue to flow from the PRC to Mexican criminals that manufacture the fentanyl and traffic it to the U.S. If confirmed, I will prioritize continued diplomatic engagement at all levels to decrease the shipment of these pre-

cursors from the PRC, and to reinvigorate shared security cooperation between the United States and Mexico.

In fact, U.S.-Mexico cooperation must continue to address another high priority issue—the management of migration across the region and to the U.S. southern border. Strategic thinking and data will help us address irregular migration and build a smarter border. INL is working closely within the Administration to shape a Central America Root Causes Strategy to look at the drivers of this migration. I know this topic is a high priority to many Committee Members and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can make our foreign assistance dollars more effective on this issue. If confirmed, I vow to respond to these complex challenges using the experience gained and relationships built over my 35-year Foreign Service career.

Another global challenge we confront today is corruption. Simply put, corruption kills. I saw its effects in Guatemala where political, economic, and social elites—at times working with criminal organizations—buy judges and threaten independent and courageous judicial actors. I saw it in Venezuela where the Maduro regime reaps ill-gotten profits by selectively distributing food rations and pillages that nation's natural resources. As President Biden and Secretary Blinken have noted, corruption undermines U.S. foreign policy and national security interests around the world and damages the credibility of countries where U.S. businesses may want to invest.

INL, with our interagency partners, acts as a bulwark against global corruption. If confirmed, I would seek to enhance this work by identifying like-minded crime fighters around the world; building their capacity to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption; and reinvigorating multilateral global anticorruption networks. INL can also use rewards and visa restrictions to promote accountability for corrupt actors globally.

Criminals and state-actors use technology to target the American people, our institutions, and critical infrastructure. The detrimental impact of cybercrime on America is clear, with one in four U.S. households affected, and annual losses reported to the FBI last year of \$4.2 billion. If confirmed, I will want INL to build the necessary know-how and cross-border cooperation to address 21st century transnational security challenges.

Finally, given its decades of criminal justice sector reform experience, INL has a unique responsibility to work with foreign partners to recognize, prevent, and counter bias and discrimination within their criminal justice systems. If confirmed, INL programs and partnerships will continue to reflect a respect for human rights and best practices in balancing individual rights with public safety.

If confirmed, I commit to working with the Congress on advancing America's interests at home and abroad. Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Mr. Holmgren?

**STATEMENT OF BRETT M. HOLMGREN OF MINNESOTA, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH), VICE ELLEN E. MCCARTHY**

Mr. HOLMGREN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me, and to Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines for supporting my nomination.

I would not be here today if it were not for the love and support of my family, my wife, Dana, my son, Teddy, my parents, Michael and Mary, and my siblings, Stacy, Christa and Ryan. Each of them has inspired me to live my life with a sense of purpose, love, and humility.

Like many Americans of my generation, the tragic events of 9/11 were a turning point in my life. I left my home state of Minnesota 18 years ago to pursue a career in public service, to defend the freedoms, values, and liberties we all cherish.

I came to Washington with a sense of optimism, and a deep and abiding belief in the ideals of this country, that America is a force for good in the world and that all men and women are created equal with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Those ideals derived from my upbringing in Minnesota, where I was surrounded by family who believed deeply in the role of public service.

Both of my grandfathers were World War II veterans, and my parents, both of whom were public school teachers for 40 years, instilled in my siblings and me the importance of service.

I still share that same sense of optimism and commitment to public service that I brought with me to Washington two decades ago.

While I may be a new face to members of this committee, I have a long track record of working on intelligence and foreign policy issues. As an analyst first at the Defense Intelligence Agency and later at the CIA, I authored all sorts of analytic products to inform policy decisions.

Through deployments overseas, including in war zones, I have seen firsthand the key role that intelligence plays in shaping national security and the tremendous sacrifices of our diplomats, intelligence officers, and warfighters.

Throughout my career, I have also served in policy roles in the Pentagon and on the National Security Council staff at the White House.

These experiences gave me a richer understanding of the vital role and the limitations of intelligence in shaping policy. Most significantly, I gained through these experiences a greater appreciation for the importance of analytic objectivity and the need for the intelligence community to tell the policymaker what they need to know, not what they want to hear.

I have been nominated for this position at a time when the United States and its allies are facing a diverse interconnected array of threats against the backdrop of a global pandemic that is straining governments and societies, fueling unrest, and accelerating global competition.

From China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, the continuing threat of terrorism, cyber, emerging technologies, these threats pose new challenges and opportunities.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that INR has a unique role to play in addressing these challenges. As the oldest civilian intelligence agency in the United States, the Bureau has a long and proud history of providing policymakers with valuable insights into America's most pressing national security issues, while empowering diplomats with the information and analysis needed to advance U.S. foreign policy.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading this remarkable institution. I understand the role comes with important responsibilities, including serving as the principal intelligence adviser to the Secretary of State and as the head of one of the nation's 18 intelligence agencies, providing timely objective all-source information to inform consideration of foreign and national security policies, and finally, assuring that intelligence and sensitive law enforce-

ment activities are conducted consistent with and supportive of U.S. foreign policy objectives.

If confirmed, four inter-related imperatives will shape my approach to leading INR.

First, I will ensure that INR's capabilities and resources are aligned and strategically prioritized to address the most pressing challenges and opportunities to include China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, as well as global health security, cyber, climate change, and how to capitalize on the revolution in open source intelligence.

Second, I will prioritize investments in INR's greatest assets, its people. We must continue to attract, train, and retain the best and brightest while placing much greater emphasis on diversity recruitment.

Third, I will focus on upgrading INR's technology to empower its analysts with the tools they need to improve the delivery of INR's products and services to better support its customers, especially U.S. diplomats overseas.

Finally, I will insist on strong cybersecurity practices throughout INR to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of its data systems and networks.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I want to recognize the important role that I believe congressional oversight plays in ensuring that U.S. intelligence activities are lawful, ethical, and consistent with our values.

If confirmed, I look forward to partnering closely with Congress as we confront the many challenges ahead.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Holmgren follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRETT M. HOLMGREN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me, and to Director of National Intelligence, Avril Haines, for supporting my nomination.

I would not be here if it were not for the love and support of my family: my wife, Dana, our son Teddy, my parents, Michael and Mary, and my siblings Stacie, Krista and Ryan. Each of them has inspired me to live my life with a sense of purpose, love, and humility.

Like many Americans of my generation, the tragic events of 9/11 were a turning point in my life. I left my home state of Minnesota nearly 18 years ago to pursue a career in public service to defend the freedoms, values, and liberties we all cherish. I came to Washington with a sense of optimism and a deep and abiding belief in the ideals of this country—that America is a force for good in the world, and that all men and women are created equal with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Those ideals derive from my upbringing in Minnesota, where I was surrounded by family who believed deeply in the role of public service. Both of my grandfathers were World War II veterans. My parents, both of whom were public school teachers for 40 years, instilled in my siblings and me the importance of service. I still share the optimism and commitment to public service that I brought with me to Washington nearly two decades ago.

While I may be a new face to many of the members here today, I have a long track record of working in and with the Intelligence Community. As an analyst, first at the Defense Intelligence Agency and later at Central Intelligence Agency, I authored all-source intelligence products to inform policy decisions. Through deployments overseas, including in warzones, I have seen firsthand the key role that intelligence plays in shaping national security and the tremendous sacrifices of our diplomats, intelligence officers, and warfighters.

Throughout my career, I have also served in policy roles at the Pentagon and on the National Security Council staff at the White House. These experiences gave me a richer understanding of the vital role and the limitations of intelligence in shaping policy. Most importantly, I gained a greater appreciation for the importance of analytic objectivity and the need for the Intelligence Community to tell the policymaker what they need to know, not what they want to hear.

I have been nominated for this position at a time when the United States and its allies are facing a diverse, interconnected array of threats against the backdrop of a global pandemic that is straining governments and societies, fueling unrest, and accelerating global competition. From China, Russia, North Korea and Iran, to terrorism, cyber, climate change, and evolving technologies, these threats pose new challenges and opportunities for the Intelligence Community.

INR plays a unique role in addressing these challenges. As the oldest civilian intelligence agency in the United States, the Bureau has a long and proud history of providing policymakers valuable insights into America's most pressing national security issues, while empowering our diplomats with the information and analysis to advance U.S. foreign policy.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading this remarkable institution, serving as the principal intelligence advisor to the Secretary of State and the head of one of the Nation's 18 intelligence agencies. INR's responsibility to provide timely, objective, all-source analysis and to assure that intelligence and sensitive law enforcement activities are consistent with, and supportive of, our foreign policy objectives is more critical than ever.

If confirmed, four interrelated imperatives will shape my approach to leading INR. First, I will ensure that our capabilities and resources are aligned and strategically prioritized to address the most pressing challenges and opportunities, to include China, Russia, Iran and North Korea, as well as global health, cyber, climate change and how to capitalize on the revolution in open-source intelligence.

Second, I will prioritize investments in INR's greatest asset—its people. We must continue to attract, train, and retain top talent while placing greater emphasis on diversity recruitment.

Third, I will focus on upgrading INR's technology infrastructure to empower our analysts with the tools they need to improve the delivery of our products and support our customers, especially our diplomats overseas.

Finally, I will insist on strong cybersecurity practices throughout INR to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of our data, networks, and systems.

In closing, I want to recognize the important role that Congressional oversight plays in ensuring that U.S. intelligence activities are lawful, ethical, and consistent with our values. If confirmed, I look forward to partnering with Congress as we confront the many challenges ahead.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Holmgren. Thank you.

Ambassador Kritenbrink?

Am I pronouncing your name correctly?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS), VICE DAVID STILWELL**

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

I want to thank my wife, Nami, children, Mia and Joe, my parents, Don and Joyce, and sisters, Kay and Nancy, for their love and support.

It would be the honor of a lifetime to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, a region in which I have been engaged for 24 out of my 27 years in the U.S. Foreign Service.

If confirmed, I look forward to consulting closely with the Senate and, of course, with this committee.

President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed diplomacy at the center of U.S. foreign policy and emphasize the centrality of a free and open Indo-Pacific to the security and prosperity of the American people.

If confirmed, I would focus on the following six priorities.

First, revitalizing ties with allies and partners. Our network of alliances and partnerships is our greatest strategic asset, enabling us to pool our strengths to advance shared interests, deter common threats, and promote universal values, to include our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific that is rules based and unconstrained by coercion, the peaceful resolution of disputes, freedom of navigation and over flight, and respect for human rights.

If confirmed, strengthening these relationships will be my top priority. The priority placed on our treaty alliances was demonstrated by President Biden's hosting of his Japanese and Republic of Korea counterparts in April and May.

The president's hosting of the first ever Quad leaders summit in March showed the resolve of the Indo-Pacific democracies—Australia, India, Japan and the United States—to work together to support the region.

I support ASEAN's centrality and, if confirmed, will work to strengthen our partnership, our strategic partnership, with ASEAN, including treaty allies Thailand and the Philippines.

If confirmed, I will reinforce our partnership with friends in the Pacific Islands, including our unique relationship with the Freely Associated States. I will also further develop our robust ties with our democratic partner Taiwan.

Second, prevailing in our strategic competition with China. The People's Republic of China is our biggest geopolitical test.

I support approaching the PRC from a position of strength by working with allies and partners, engaging with international organizations, standing up for our values, and investing in our diplomatic and military capabilities and the American people.

Secretary Blinken has said our approach to China will have competitive, adversarial, and cooperative aspects. The United States will counter PRC attempts to erode the international rules-based order, push back on unfair PRC trade practices, secure critical supply chains, protect sensitive U.S. technology, and build our strength at home.

We will continue holding Chinese authorities responsible for the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang, the trampling of autonomy and civil liberties in Hong Kong, and systematic repression in Tibet.

We will bolster partners' capacity to resist PRC intimidation and oppose China's unlawful maritime claims. We will also cooperate with Beijing when in our interests, such as on the climate crisis, counter narcotics, and nonproliferation.

As President Biden has said, we are not looking for conflict, but welcome stiff competition and will defend U.S. interests across the board.

Third, reducing the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. President Biden has stated we remain committed to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and will work with allies to address that threat through diplomacy and deterrence.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure North Korea and others abide by U.N. Security Council resolutions while supporting a calibrated and practical diplomatic approach that prioritizes the security of the United States, our allies, and our deployed military forces.

Fourth, supporting inclusive economic policies that benefit all Americans. If confirmed, I will ensure that our diplomats in the region fight for every job in the interests of American workers by insisting on market access and fair treatment, stopping intellectual property theft and currency manipulation, and combating corruption.

Fifth, promoting democracy and human rights. Our values and our example are critical to successful diplomacy in Asia.

If confirmed, I would work with our allies and partners to support democracy, promote human rights, and stand against abuses wherever they occur.

In Burma, I would work with partners to press the military to reverse course following the February 1 coup, cease violence, release those unjustly detained, including American citizens, and return Burma to the democratic path chosen by its people.

I would work to support the people of Burma by holding accountable those responsible for violence. I would also promote accountability for PRC officials responsible for human rights violations across China.

Sixth, if confirmed, I pledge to address global priorities in the region, particularly combating COVID-19 and the climate crisis.

If confirmed, I will also prioritize the safety and well being of my team, maintain their focus on top goals, and ensure they represent the diverse talents of the American people.

Thank you for inviting me to testify here today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kritenbrink follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. I want to thank my wife Nami, children Mia and Joe, my parents Don and Joyce, and sisters Kay and Nancy, for their love and support.

It would be the honor of a lifetime to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, a region in which I have been engaged for 24 out of my 27 years in the Foreign Service. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting closely with the Senate.

President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed diplomacy at the center of U.S. foreign policy, and emphasized the centrality of a free and open Indo-Pacific to the security and prosperity of the American people. If confirmed, I would focus on the following six priorities.

*First, revitalizing ties with allies and partners.* Our network of alliances and partnerships is our greatest strategic asset, enabling us to pool our strengths to advance shared interests, deter common threats, and promote universal values—including



our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific that is rules-based and unconstrained by coercion; the peaceful resolution of disputes; freedom of navigation and overflight; and respect for human rights. If confirmed, strengthening these relationships will be my top priority. The priority placed on our treaty alliances was demonstrated by President Biden's hosting of his Japanese and Republic of Korea counterparts in April and May. The President's hosting of the first-ever Quad Leaders Summit in March showed the resolve of the Indo-Pacific democracies Australia, India, Japan, and the United States to work together to support the region. I support ASEAN centrality and, if confirmed, will work to strengthen our strategic partnership with ASEAN, including treaty allies Thailand and the Philippines. If confirmed, I will reinforce our partnership with friends in the Pacific Islands, including our unique relationship with the Freely Associated States. I will also further develop our robust ties with our democratic partner Taiwan.

*Second, prevailing in our strategic competition with China.* The People's Republic of China is our biggest geopolitical test. I support approaching the PRC from a position of strength, by working with allies and partners, engaging with international organizations, standing up for our values, and investing in our diplomatic and military capabilities—and the American people. Secretary Blinken has said our approach to China will have competitive, adversarial, and cooperative aspects. The United States will counter PRC attempts to erode the international rules-based order, push back on unfair PRC trade practices, secure critical supply chains, protect sensitive U.S. technology, and build our strength at home. We will continue holding Chinese authorities responsible for the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang, the trampling of autonomy and civil liberties in Hong Kong, and systematic repression in Tibet. We will bolster partners' capacity to resist PRC intimidation and oppose China's unlawful maritime claims. We will also cooperate with Beijing when in our interests, such as on the climate crisis, counternarcotics, and nonproliferation. As President Biden has said, we are not looking for conflict but welcome stiff competition and will defend U.S. interests across the board.

*Third, reducing the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.* President Biden has stated we remain committed to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and will work with allies to address that threat through diplomacy and deterrence. If confirmed, I will work to ensure North Korea and others abide by U.N. Security Council resolutions while supporting a calibrated and practical diplomatic approach that prioritizes the security of the United States, our allies, and our deployed military forces.

*Fourth, supporting inclusive economic policies that benefit all Americans.* If confirmed, I will ensure our diplomats in the region fight for every job and the interests of American workers by insisting on market access and fair treatment, and by stopping intellectual property theft and currency manipulation. We will also work with regional partners to foster economic development that is transparent and sustainable, including via APEC.

*Fifth, promoting democracy and human rights.* Our values and our example are critical to successful diplomacy in Asia. If confirmed, I would work with our allies and partners to support democracy, promote human rights, and stand against abuses wherever they occur. In Burma, I would work with partners to press the military to reverse course following the February 1 coup, cease violence, release those unjustly detained, including American citizens, and return Burma to the democratic path chosen by its people. I would work to support the people of Burma by holding accountable those responsible for violence. I would also promote accountability for PRC officials responsible for human rights violations across China. Throughout the region, we will champion transparency, the rule of law, civil society, and independent media.

*Sixth, addressing global priorities, particularly combating COVID-19 and the climate crisis.* On COVID-19, if confirmed, I pledge to support our work with regional partners and international initiatives such as COVAX and the Quad Vaccine Partnership to provide U.S. leadership in the fight to end the pandemic. On the climate crisis, I would work to advance climate solutions with countries in the region, which include some of the world's largest emitters as well as those most vulnerable to climate change.

If confirmed, I will also prioritize the safety and well-being of my team, maintain their focus on top goals, and ensure they represent the diverse talents of the American people.

Thank you for inviting me to testify. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all. We will start a round with five minutes. I am going to ask, first, before that some perfunctory questions that we ask all of our nominees.

It is very brief questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you.

So I would just simply ask you each to provide a yes or no answer.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. HOLMGREN. Yes.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. HOLMGREN. Yes.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. HOLMGREN. Yes.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. HOLMGREN. Yes.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you very much.

Now, Ambassador Kritenbrink, as you know, and I think the Senate has spoken with collectively and nearly one voice and that is not easy these days, we believe that China is our major geostrategic challenge in the world, and you address some of that in your remarks.

The Senate passed a sweeping China competitive bill. That includes the strategic competition that this committee put out led by the ranking member and myself and supported by the 19 members of the committee, a truly bipartisan effort.

What do you think of that legislation? What tools would you, if confirmed, want to see in your toolbox that Congress can provide? And can you elaborate on how you plan on approaching the China challenge?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me say again what an honor it is to be here today and I think, Mr. Chairman, you have identified, obviously, very correctly the major challenge that the United States faces today, and I would argue that our friends and partners around the world face today.

I do believe, Mr. Chairman, as I attempted to outline in my statement, for us to prevail in this strategic competition with China we need to do so from a position of strength.

I think we are stronger when we do that together with our like-minded partners around—our like-minded partners and allies around the world.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think we will do our best when we are fully united here at home as well. I am very grateful to you and members of this committee for the support and leadership that you have shown on these issues. I know when Secretary Blinken testified last week he stated his strong support for the bill that you described.

And I might say, as a career diplomat, the more tools and resources that the Senate and other members of Congress can give us as diplomats the more effective we can be.

Of course, to prevail in this long-term competition with China, I think it will be, largely, determined by how we do as a nation together and many of the investments we make here at home.

But I am very grateful for the leadership that the Senate has shown on these issues, and I can pledge to you that with the resources made available to us we will compete and we will prevail in this competition with China in every domain.

The CHAIRMAN. Let us talk about some of the elements of that competition. In Taiwan, given the increased muscle flexing and threatening rhetoric from Beijing, some policymakers and analysts have called for an end to the policy of strategic ambiguity with regard to Taiwan.

There is increasing concern that Beijing may seek to make the cross-straits an early test for this administration. How can the United States most effectively signal our resolve and deter Chinese aggression towards Taiwan?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

I do think showing strength and clarity and deterrence is key. What I think is crystal clear to me, Senator, is the United States commitment, rock-solid commitment, to meeting our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act, to provide Taiwan with the means to maintain a credible self-defense.

If I were confirmed, I pledge to the committee that I will work very hard to support meeting those obligations and, further, to support further developing our very robust unofficial relationship with our Taiwanese democratic partners. It is one of our most important partners in—

The CHAIRMAN. Let me ask you—I agree. Do you support strategic ambiguity or do you think we need additional clarity or a new framework for managing the cross-strait relations?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Mr. Chairman, my own view is that the framework outlined by our long-standing one-China policy based on the Taiwan Relations Act, the three joint communiqués, and the six assurances to Taiwan provides the framework that has ensured cross-strait stability and Taiwan security for these many decades.

I do think that maintenance of that status quo and of that security is a dynamic situation. As the threat from the PRC grows, as Beijing's aggressive and bullying behavior vis-à-vis Taiwan grows, I think that our response has to be calibrated as well.

But I am confident that the framework that we have and meeting those obligations in the Taiwan Relations Act gives us the tools to do so.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Holmgren, let me ask you, we rely on the Bureau of Intelligence and Research for insights and particular perspective that sometimes varies from the rest of the intelligence community, and when there is an opinion or assessment that is different for the IC, it is critical that we understand those differences.

Do you agree to be candid with the committee when those differences occur and to make sure we understand where and why INL comes to different conclusions?

Mr. HOLMGREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think that, as you know, INR has a long and proud history of speaking truth to power and telling it like it is, and if there are instances where INR reaches a conclusion that is different than the rest of the intelligence community, I believe, absolutely, that it would require informing and engaging with this committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

One other question. The Bureau of Intelligence and Research's analysis is going to be critical to our understanding as policy-makers and in response to a number of pressing issues, including the apparent attacks on U.S. personnel and the origins of COVID-19.

Do you commit to engaging proactively with the committee as INR's work on these matter advances and to keep us fully informed on your assessments both on these and other critical matters?

Mr. HOLMGREN. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to follow up, Mr. Kritenbrink, on the Taiwan issue that was raised by the chairman.

What—I had the same questions he had, and I think all of Congress does, really. But what—from your expertise and your experience in this area, what do you think the end game is here for the—for the Chinese Communist Party as far as Taiwan is concerned? And what do you think the end game is and how do you think they intend to achieve it?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Well, Mr. Ranking Member, I am reluctant to try to put myself in the shoes of the leadership in Beijing, but they have stated that their long-term goal is reunification.

I think where I believe that we should remain focused and, if confirmed, where I would remain focused as EAP Assistant Secretary would be on meeting our obligations and responsibilities under the Taiwan Relations Act. I am confident that we have the tools to do so.

For example, through the support of this committee and others in Congress, the United States has made available to the authorities on Taiwan more than \$30 billion in arms sales since 2009.

I think it is also incumbent upon us to further develop our robust relationship with Taiwan in every sector. They are a top 10 trading partner, which is vitally important. We have important cultural and other relations as well.

They play a very critical important role, we believe, in international health and, therefore, we should support growing Taiwan's international space as well to make sure that they fully participate

in organizations where sovereignty is not required and have a meaningful role in those that do.

So I believe, Mr. Ranking Member, that we have the tools to continue to grow this robust partnership with Taiwan and to meet our commitments to ensure that Taiwan can maintain a credible self-defense.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate your thoughts in that regard. All good thoughts. I guess what crosses my mind is that we all know that the Communist Party wants reunification.

We also know that that is not the same view that Taiwan has, and, obviously, where you have two different views that are very much opposed, at some point in time it is going to come to a crossroads and that is what I am concerned about is what happens at that point.

What—how is that resolved?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir, Mr. Ranking Member.

I think the best thing that we can do is to continue to demonstrate our resolve and our commitment to meeting our rock-solid obligations, and I think by doing so I am confident that we can continue to effect the stability across the strait that we have benefited from for many years.

But, Mr. Ranking Member, I would, again, reemphasize we are deeply concerned by the increase in aggression and harassment and coercion that we have seen directed at Taiwan, and we continue—we intend and if I were confirmed I would intend to continue—to show our resolve to, again, meeting our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that. There is no doubt that the coercion and harassing and everything else has ratcheted up tremendously to the point, for instance, where Taiwan is having trouble scrambling jets every time that there is an incursion into airspace.

And that is done intentionally, there is no doubt, and that is something that is going to be on our plate, I think, sooner rather than later.

Mr. Holmgren, the matter of the Havana syndrome issue, as you know, has been kicking around for some time and, obviously, we are in an open session and cannot talk about all the details of it.

But I am assuming that you have been involved in that in some fashion. Am I right on that or not?

Mr. HOLMGREN. Thank you, Ranking Chairman. I very much share the concerns about these incidents. I have spoken to some of the victims of these attacks, and I can tell you they are they are suffering and their families are suffering.

And, if confirmed, I would have no higher priority than ensuring the safety and security of U.S. citizens, their families, and U.S. personnel overseas and would commit to ensure that INR is continuing to support the department and the interagency, especially CIA and DOD, with information and analysis around the origins of these incidents. So I believe it is a serious increase.

As a testament, I have committed to asking for a classified briefing, if confirmed, on my first day in office.

Senator RISCH. Well, thank you. This is, certainly a vexing problem and I can tell you it is very high up on the priority of this committee and the Intelligence Committee, particularly since it affects

our hard-working people around the world and outside the United States.

Mr. Robinson, the—Afghanistan produced and, I guess, continues to produce about 90 percent of the world's opium, and with us downsizing in Afghanistan, this is going to be the problem that it was before we ratcheted up there. It is going to raise its ugly head again.

What are your thoughts on this?

Mr. ROBINSON. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I share your concerns, frankly, about the production and distribution of opioids from Afghanistan. We know that they are also interested in, perhaps, trying to get back into government and my—what I would say to the Taliban and to anybody there who is producing narcotics or opioids is that, you know, if you want to be seen as credible and you want to be treated as part of the international community, then you cannot do these things.

The other part of that, though, is while we may be drawing down in Afghanistan, there are programs that INL would wish to continue in that region. The hard part is figuring out how to—how to do that and keep our people safe.

So those are the two—sort of the two priorities we would have. One, you know, making sure that we are continuing programs that would go against, obviously, narcotics trafficking and sending very strong messages to those in government that they also have to commit to fighting against the narcotics trafficking.

But it is also very important if we are going to continue our programs there, and we want to continue our programs there, to make sure that we are taking care of our people and making sure that they can be there safely.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand that Senator Cardin is with us virtually.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me start by thanking all three of our nominees for their prior service to our country and their willingness to serve in these critical positions that they have been appointed to.

I want to talk about the issue of fighting corruption, and, Ambassador Robinson, I must tell you, I think you said it very succinctly in your—in your statement—in your testimony when you said that corruption kills. It also is the fuel for autocrats in fighting democracies and trying to bring our democratic countries down.

Freedom House just recently issued their 2021 report that shows that we have the continuing trend of erosion of democratic states, and one of the principal reasons has been the growth of corruption that fuels this type of activity.

I enjoyed our conversation, but I just really want to drill down a little bit more on specifics. You laid out part of that in your comments to our committee. But I want to just get your assurance that you will work with Congress and leverage both branches of government in fighting corruption.

There is legislation pending in the United States Senate that I have introduced with Republican colleagues, bipartisan legislation that would establish a greater capacity within our missions and

State to understand the circumstances of corruption in each country, to use a rating system similar to what we do in trafficking in persons so that we can have consequences and international standards as to what we expect countries to do to fight corruption.

We have legislation that would establish specific funds so we can respond quickly to opportunities to help countries deal with corruption, and we have the Magnitsky sanctions to make them permanent.

So do I have your assurances that you will work with Congress to strengthen our tools to fight corruption globally?

Mr. ROBINSON. Absolutely, Senator. You have a firm commitment to work with Congress, to use all of the tools that we have in our toolbox to fight corruption, and I will further commit that you will not find a more stronger advocate to fight corruption than me.

It was to my—to my great joy to see the Biden/Harris administration raise corruption to the national security level. I think that that will—that will help us go after official corruption, unofficial corruption, in the region and around the world.

And further, it will give us greater tools to identify crime fighters around the world that we can partner with to fight this—to fight this scourge. There is no doubt corruption undermines democratic institutions around the world, and I know the bread and butter—INL's—one of INL's main jobs is going after those who would—who would take part in corrupt acts.

Senator CARDIN. I would just quote from my friend, Kara-Murza, who is one of the leading opposition leaders in Russia, who says that Putin steals from the Russians to spend it in the West.

So he uses the corrupt resources in order to try to undermine our system, and we have got to speak out against that. The Magnitsky sanctions are, of course, one area at some of these other tools that we are suggesting can help.

I just really want to underscore that we are all sincere about this. But we need the push of Congress to help prioritize within each of the missions countries that have significant problems of corruption to focus on this issue.

So I am going to hold you to your commitment to work with us to strengthen those tools so that we can all fight this a little bit more effectively.

Mr. Kritenbrink, Asia—China, of course, is the most significant country in that region from the point of view of concern about the United States on the erosion of governance.

Their One Road policy is, certainly, based upon using marketing—government-controlled economies and corruption to try to control the economics of the world. The Belt and Road Initiative really needs to be addressed.

Do you—are you committed to working with us to root out the way that it is based in corruption, stealing intellectual property, intimidating countries, so that we can take China on in a more aggressive way?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes, Senator, absolutely. I would—I would simply say that I agree with you wholeheartedly that we need to counter China's Belt and Road Initiative, as it is offered through means of coercion, corruption, lack of transparency, unsustainable debt loads, and the like.

Countries, I think, need to be very careful in signing on to the Belt and Road. But I think even more importantly, Senator, we need to have an affirmative agenda, affirmative programs that we can offer as an alternative, and I am very grateful to you and other members of Congress for giving us those tools, whether it is the BUILD Act or other resources we have at our disposal.

I would also note, Senator, that I was encouraged by the communiqué that came out of the G-7, and it is quite clear to me that our democratic partners around the world see eye to eye with us on this challenge.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I look forward to working with you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank each of you for your service.

I would like to start with you, Mr. Robinson, if I might. The issue that I have been deeply concerned about is fentanyl, and the impact on youth in my home state has been significant, particularly so since the borders have collapsed. In late January, we have seen an increase not only in overdoses but in deaths from fentanyl.

And I would like to read a definition to you, if I might, to see if we are on the same page. According to United States law, a weapon of mass destruction is defined as the following. One of these definitions is a weapon that is designed to cause death or serious injury through toxic or poisonous chemicals.

Would you define fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction under these sort of circumstances?

Mr. ROBINSON. Senator, that is a great question. I do not know if I would define it as a weapon of mass destruction. But I absolutely am heartbroken by what fentanyl is doing to our communities across the United States.

I think—I think that we have a lot of work to do here at home on the demand side. But, more importantly, I think that there is very much we can do in terms of diplomatic engagement to work with our partners in Mexico, to work with our partners in—well, to work with China to stop the flow of precursors to Mexico and stop the distribution from Mexico by narcotic—

Senator HAGERTY. Yes. I was just in Mexico about two weeks ago meeting with their foreign minister and economic minister, and they are deeply concerned at the increase in inflow of fentanyl and its precursors from China coming into Mexico. It is being mixed there, shipped across the borders, and killing our children.

So as a parent, as an American, I very much appreciate your efforts here and I look forward to working with you, should you be confirmed, in pushing back against what I would call a weapon of mass destruction that is being unleashed against our population here.

Thank you.

Mr. ROBINSON. Thank you, sir.

Senator HAGERTY. Ambassador Kritenbrink, it is wonderful to see you again. My regards to Nami and to your two children.



Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY. Again, thank you for your service at a most challenging time. I think you are the perfect person—

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY.—be brought forward for this position. I would like to talk with you about an area that you and I have had plenty of conversations before, and that is—that is the Quad and the Indo-Pacific.

I think that we have made great strides with our allies in the Quad. I think there is a lot more that we can do. I would love to get your perspective on how we might engage other nations in that effort.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator, very much for your comments.

I fully agree. I think the Quad is a vitally important mechanism. I was deeply impressed and grateful for the president's hosting of the first ever leaders level Quad summit, and I think it truly has shown that the four Quad democracies in the region have decided to stand together and advance these interests and these values that we share.

But they have also agreed, we have also agreed, to work in very practical areas, and I think, as a career diplomat, I am focused on the ways in which we, together with our partners, can move the needle in the region in practical ways.

So the Quad leaders summit issued a roadmap and a work plan for the rest of the year focused on public health, particularly, combating COVID-19, focusing on climate, but also issues related to technology, and I know you and I have discussed that in detail.

I think—I think we need to focus in those practical ways, but I do agree with you, Senator, it cannot be just the Quad. It has to be all of our like-minded partners, whether it is our treaty allies, whether it is our important friends and partners in ASEAN or across the region.

I think most of the region is united behind the vision of a region that is peaceful, stable, where countries large and small play by the rules, large countries do not bully small countries. I think that is where we need to focus our energy.

Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate your perspective on—

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Senator, the Quad is central.

Senator HAGERTY. Yeah, I appreciate your perspective on that.

I would just like to turn to one more thing and that is the movement of supply chains from China out—you know, companies that are trying to derisk their exposure to China.

Of course, I want every one of those companies to come back to American shores, to see those jobs back in America. But to the extent that those jobs do not come back here, what are the opportunities that we might have with some of our allies in the region to work together for joint economic prosperity, to work together to strengthen our economic ties, and that will bring our national security ties even closer?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator.

I fully agree. I think we need to focus on supply chain resiliency, security, to make sure that neither we nor the world are completely dependent upon and vulnerable to one country.

Again, as we do that, the preference, of course, would be to bring most of those home. Where that is not possible, I think ensuring that those supply chains are diversified and resilient and strong is key, particularly, working with like-minded democratic partners, I think, especially in the technology space, especially related to semiconductors, but also, as we discovered in COVID-19, even personal protective equipment and other medical equipment as key.

But I think—when I think about our competition with China, I do think these issues related to our economic competition, particularly related to technology and the resilience of our supply chains, will probably be central to that competition.

And I would be committed to doing everything possible, both within the State Department and across the U.S. Government, to advance—

Senator HAGERTY. Should you be confirmed, I look forward to working with you closely.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you for your service, Ambassador Kritenbrink.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator KAINE?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to this panel of nominees. I think you are all very highly qualified for these positions. Look forward to supporting you.

Ambassador Kritenbrink, I think I am going to spend my five minutes with you talking about a topic that matters a lot to me, the Chinese persecution of Uighurs in the Xinjiang province.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes.

Senator KAINE. There is a sizable Uighur population in Virginia, and I have talked to many of my constituents as well as just following news about this.

The leadership of Xi Jinping has seen China not only become bolder and more effective in projecting malign influence and power worldwide, but the Government has become more ruthless in many ways—uses of technology, forced sterilization, separation of families, and attempting to reduce and disperse its Uighur Muslim population.

Both Secretaries of State Pompeo and Blinken have indicated that this is a genocide under the technical term, an intentional and very strategic effort, in the words of China's own officials, to, basically, carry out the elimination or reduction of the Uighur population and other Muslim populations in Xinjiang province.

Last week, we had a joint subcommittee hearing in this committee. It was the first joint subcommittee hearing we had had in seven years and it was about China's atrocities in the Xinjiang province.

The chair—the subcommittee I chair on Western Hemisphere, Global Democracy, and Human Rights worked together with the Subcommittee on East Asia, chaired by Senator Markey. Senators Rubio and Romney were very involved in this.

And we heard from a number of witnesses in very powerful ways. One was my constituent, Ms. Rushan Abbas. She spoke very mov-

ingly about her sister, Dr. Gulshan Abbas, who has been in detention for three years. Her birthday was last Saturday, her third birthday in prison.

They know she is in prison. They do not know where she is, but they did find out that she was secretly sentenced in a secret trial to a 20-year prison term. She is a physician who had made her career in the Xinjiang province just helping patients.

U.S. efforts, global efforts thus far to combat the terrible atrocity have not been effective. So what more can we do as a committee, as an administration, as a country, to increase pressure on China to end this grim persecution of the Uighur and other Muslim populations in Xinjiang?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for your comments and your leadership on this issue.

I agree completely with your assessment of the challenge. I had the privilege of viewing most of your hearing last week and I, too, was moved by the testimony, particularly of Ms. Abbas.

The ongoing genocide in Xinjiang shocks the conscience. We estimate more than 1 million Uighurs have been forcibly detained, put into reeducation camps, forced to provide labor, and many other disturbing allegations about how they are being treated.

I think, Senator, working together with this committee, our obligation is to continue to shine a very bright light on this ongoing genocide, and I have been gratified to see that our other partners around the world, whether it is the G-7 or Japanese and Korean partners or our Quad partners as well have all spoken out against the abuses happening there.

But more importantly, Senator, I think we need to continue to take steps using all the tools that the U.S. Government has at its disposal to hold to account the leaders who are carrying out these atrocities.

And if I were confirmed, I would be committed to doing just that. I know that we have used a variety of tools, including Global Magnitsky tools, to sanction a number of the leaders, officials, and entities who are carrying out this repression in Xinjiang, including the Xinjiang party secretary, Chen Quanguo.

And if I were confirmed, Senator, I pledge that we will continue to work not just to shine a bright light on the abuses, but also to take steps to hold those responsible accountable.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Two additional items in my last 40 seconds is related to the same topic.

First, a lot of U.S. companies may be directly or indirectly, even unknowingly, facilitating this persecution in Xinjiang through their contacts in the region.

Human Rights Watch had witness before us last week, Dr. Sophie Richardson, who indicated that they have written U.S. companies to get information to try to make sure the companies are aware of the dangers and they, generally, have not gotten responses.

It is my hope that we might work together with you, should you be confirmed, so that a request by the U.S. Government might produce a response from some of these companies.

And then, in addition, we need to work with allies outside the region. China is engaged in a pretty aggressive practice of having Uighurs arrested—

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes.

Senator KAINE.—in countries like the UAE and Egypt and Saudi Arabia, allies in the United States, and then deported back to China, and we need to work with our allies to make sure that they do not facilitate the long arm of this gruesome persecution campaign all over the globe.

And I would look forward to working with you on that together as well.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

Senator, again, I fully agree with your assessment and your recommendation on both points. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and members of the committee on both of those issues.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you so much.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand Senator Young is with us virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you so much.

Ambassador Robinson, in the midst of this global pandemic, Americans have continued to suffer under the scourge of narcotics trafficking, much of that being trafficked through our southern border.

Despite some public calls for the designation, the Trump administration notably refrained from designating the Mexican drug cartels as a foreign terrorist organization.

As the cartels use kidnapping, execution-style killings, the targeted killing of journalists and politicians, and with the flow of narcotics and violence into the United States continuing unabating it seems clear that the legal standard for this designation of foreign terrorist organization has been met.

But I understand that Mexico may oppose such a designation. If confirmed, Mr. Ambassador, would you consider such a designation?

Mr. ROBINSON. Thank you, Senator, for that—for that question, and I absolutely share your concerns with—about the malign influence of narcotics traffickers and the threats they pose to communities throughout the region.

I think, you know, it is probably worth, you know, looking at. I am not a lawyer so I do not know what the legal definition is.

But there is no doubt that the influence of narcotic traffickers throughout the region is crushing to communities, not just in the United States but in Mexico, in Colombia, and throughout Central America.

And I will, certainly, commit to you that we will use all of the necessary tools to go after these criminal organizations and traffickers.

Senator YOUNG. Well, I thank you for that. Perhaps you could—I understand you are not being—you are not an attorney, and you will want to refer to others' analysis.

I am an attorney. I do not want to overstate my qualifications to make this assessment, and attorneys can disagree.

But it seems to me that the legal definition is, indeed, met as I look at the different pillars that need to be analyzed. Time does not permit me to get into those.

But I also understand that there will be diplomatic considerations that play into this. What secondary effects may undermine the effectiveness of such a designation? This would be diplomatic analysis on your part.

Mr. ROBINSON. I think that is—I think that is a great question. I would—you know, I would have to talk to—you know, should I be confirmed, I would make it my—one of my missions to talk to governments in the region to find out what secondary effects there may be.

I, certainly, do not see why there would be obstacles to using maximum efforts to go after the narcotics traffickers and criminal organizations, and if this is a tool that we could effectively use, I would, certainly, want to engage with the governments in the region and governments globally to see what further we could do to sanction these groups.

Senator YOUNG. Like I said, I will look forward to working with you on that. I am encouraged by what seems to be an aggressive bias for action on this. I expect the Mexicans may indicate a lack of motivation to work with us on other matters if we go this direction.

That can be a concern, and there may be some—an increased migration flow into this country of Mexican nationals fleeing terrorism if the terrorist designation is made.

But with that said, would you commit to working with my office in working through this matter should you be confirmed, sir?

Mr. ROBINSON. Should I be confirmed, absolutely, Senator. I will work with your office.

Senator YOUNG. Okay, thank you. I know our time is winding down. I just wanted to put one other matter, a stake sort of in the ground about my interest in it. Perhaps we can work together, should you be confirmed.

One of the missions of your bureau is to enforce maritime rights and practice law enforcement at sea in the Indo-Pacific region. Admittedly, Ambassador Robinson, this is a mission larger than any single federal agency.

It will involve collaboration and cooperation with the Navy and the Coast Guard and other entities and agencies and individuals.

And given China's predatory actions at sea throughout the Pacific, I would be interested in exploring your priorities for INL's practicing of maritime law enforcement throughout the Pacific, especially in Oceania, and seeing where INL might better coordinate with the Coast Guard, moving forward. I would like to help do anything I can to ensure that INL is successful in this mission.

So thank you for your desire to serve.

Mr. ROBINSON. Thank you, Senator. And I agree, I think that that INL has a fairly good story to tell about cooperation in that region on maritime security.

I know when I was deputy assistant secretary we worked very closely with partner countries, allies in the region, on that issue. We did the same in West Africa.

And so I would be happy to, should I be confirmed, work with your office on this.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to each of you for your willingness to be considered for these critical posts at this time.

I would like to begin with you, Ambassador Robinson, because I come from a state that has been very hard hit by the opioid epidemic, and fentanyl has been the killer.

We have one of—have had one of the highest overdose death rates in the country, and so I share the concerns that have been expressed on both sides of the aisle about how we respond to this and I appreciated your comments.

Senator Portman, who is also a member of this committee, and I recently introduced legislation to build the capacity of foreign law enforcement agencies to detect and interdict fentanyl and other synthetic drugs, and also to try and increase collaboration between the United States and foreign countries.

As someone who has worked in this arena in the past, can you tell me if you think there are particular best practices or areas where cooperation has really worked to make a difference to address this issue?

Mr. ROBINSON. Thank you, Senator, and it is a very important point. I just want to emphasize how heartbreaking it is to know—to see the ravages of this drug on American communities and, particularly, communities like your state—in your state.

Actually, INL, working on the—with the interagency, working with our partners in DEA and the Department of Justice, we have been able to do lots of training and capacity building globally, working with like-minded police organizations in countries around the world on training, identifying strategies, you know, making sure they are looking at going after the money and going after governments that participate in these things.

So there is a—there is a whole range of tools that we can use to work with police organizations on these issues, and I would be happy to explore that with your office, should I be confirmed.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. Perhaps you could look at the legislation that we are introducing and see if there are ways that we can make it more effective and other authorizations or other needs that you might have at INL.

Mr. ROBINSON. Yeah, absolutely, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Mr. Holmgren, you have been asked about Havana syndrome, and this is something that my office heard about almost immediately after the attacks because I have some constituents who have been affected by it.

And I am still concerned that six months into this new administration that we are still hearing from some of those people who have been affected about the lack of coordination, about the inabil-

ity to meet with leadership, and particularly at State about the willingness of State to cooperate with the Department of Defense and the red tape that is still involved with getting treatment.

So can you commit to not just trying to get to the bottom of that but to finding out what is causing it and why there is not more, at this point, coordination around how we are responding to this serious concern that is affecting too many employees within the federal government?

Mr. HOLMGREN. Thank you, Senator, for that important question and for your leadership—excuse me—on this issue.

I absolutely commit to understanding if there are ways in how we can improve the interagency coordination process on this and, in particular, what role INR can and should be playing to both support the department but also, as you mentioned, the interagency.

I understand that the NSC has established a coordination cell. I think that is a good—a very good positive development to bring together the different parts of the interagency and that State has now—has a lead, a person responsible for coordinating the State Department's efforts.

And so, if confirmed, I am—I am eager to be involved in that. As I said up front, I have friends and former colleagues from CIA and other places that are affected by this, and so I think it is—I take it as a personal responsibility to address the issue.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I really appreciate that.

And I will say to you what I have said to others, that I think one of the challenges with this issue is the classified nature of all of the information, and it makes it very difficult when there is an unwillingness of our State Departments and agencies to share with members of Congress what is going on and also to share with members of the public.

So I would urge you to look at ways in which we can unclassify information that is not going to be harmful so that people really understand what is going on.

Mr. HOLMGREN. Thank you, Senator. I hear your concern and I pledge to do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Schatz. I was giving you—I do not know if it is a promotion.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Some would consider it a promotion.

Senator SCHATZ. We can ask Ambassador Hagerty if that is a promotion or not.

The CHAIRMAN. He is here, so I do not know. That may be the answer. I am sorry.

Senator Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for your service.

Ambassador Kritenbrink, I want to start with Oceania. Secretary Blinken spoke at the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders a week ago.

These kinds of engagements are really meaningful. They underscore our commitment to the region, including helping them to confront COVID and the climate crisis.

Can you just talk about how you will engage in Oceania and your role to ensure that it will be elevated in our Indo-Pacific strategy?

And I think, you know, generally speaking, as we think on this committee, in the broader Senate, in the media, when we think about our Asia Pacific strategy, when we think our Indo-Pacific strategy, everyone is immediately thinking about China and China only.

And it occurs to me that there is a vast ocean full of nations—  
Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

Senator SCHATZ.—that we need to reengage with that are our longtime partners and allies and friends, and for both moral reasons and strategic reasons, we need to reengage, and I am wondering if you can comment on that.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for your comments and for your leadership on these issues.

I fully agree with your assessment. If confirmed, I would be committed to making sure we expand our robust engagement with the countries—with the Pacific Island countries.

I think, Senator, the first issue that you identified is one of the most important. First, we have to show up. We have to demonstrate our commitment by engaging and participating in meetings and organizations like the PIF.

Secondly, Senator, I believe that we need to engage across the board because we have a number of vital national interests that are implicated amongst our Pacific Island friends.

You mentioned climate, of course. Important security issues at play, issues related to illegal and unregulated fishing. Of course, climate change is an existential threat for many of these partners and, of course, COVID-19 is a great challenge across the region.

If I were confirmed, Senator, I would be committed to upping our engagement across the board to advance those interests and to ensure that our strategic competitors like China as well do not take advantage or use their malign influence to advance their interests at the expense of ours or our partners in the Pacific Islands.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Ambassador Robinson, I want to stay on Oceania for the moment. I introduced a bill with Senator Murkowski to elevate all of Oceania in U.S. foreign policy.

One aspect of this bill is to increase our ability to counter the Chinese Government's foreign practices—foreign corrupt practices in Oceania, and much of that work runs through INL.

We have heard, though, that INL does not have the resources to be present in the Oceania region to the extent that you may wish and that they have had to make quote/unquote, “hard choices” about not prioritizing the Pacific Islands.

I was glad, however, to see that the president's budget carves out funding in INL to counter the Chinese Government's global malign influence campaign. But we need to make sure that Oceania is part of that effort.

Can you talk about what you see in Oceania and what we ought to do about it through INL?



Mr. ROBINSON. Thank you, Senator. I think that is a—that is a very important question.

You know, as you have pointed out, most of our focus has been on focusing on the malign influence of China in the region. I suspect I would have to look more closely, but I suspect much of the work we are going to do INL would do in the region, if I am confirmed, would focus on China's malign influence.

But there are—you know, there are other issues in the region that we can—that we can and should focus on, and we spoke about it a little earlier. Working with like-minded partners on maritime safety, for instance, will be key.

And, you know, INL can take a look at issues a little bit outside of our area. We do work on wildlife trafficking. We do work on illegal mining. We do work on illegal fisheries.

And so all of those issues or many of those issues might get us closer to the region and closer to the issues that you are raising.

Senator SCHATZ. Final question. I will make it quick.

You know, I have been working on Lacey Act amendments. I know Senator Merkley and others have prioritized this over the many, many years.

The thing with the Lacey Act is it does not quite get to about half of all of the tropical deforestation, which is the result of illegal deforestation for commercial agriculture.

And so I am wondering if we can work with you and the other relevant federal agencies to get more supply chain transparency and also to dig into the root causes that result in deforestation, clear cutting for agriculture and for commodity development.

The Lacey Act was a very important start, but we are sort of stuck there, and even our partners in the business community who want to do the right thing have great difficulty in terms of the supply chain transparency.

So I think it is time for another round of collective thinking about what is the next iteration of the Lacey Act so that we can actually make sure that we do not just declare that we find illegal deforestation offensive to us and to the globe but that we are actually going to crack down on it, and I am wondering if I can have your commitment to work with us on that.

Mr. ROBINSON. Absolutely, Senator, you have my commitment.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member. Congratulations to all of you on your nominations.

Let me start with you, Ambassador Kritenbrink.

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Yes, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I was pleased to see the statements made by President Biden and others at the recent NATO summit regarding a more coordinated coherent strategy with respect to China's efforts to use its centralized economic power to export its authoritarian model, and I was pleased to hear your response to Senator Hagerty with respect to the Quad and you also mentioned other allies in the area including, of course, South Korea and others.

One of the important issues that has come up with respect to the situation in the South China Sea is the importance of something

many of us have been in favor of for a long time, which is ratifying the Law of the Sea Treaty.

In your opinion, would that be an important step that the United States could take along with the international community to provide clear rules of the road that would benefit not just the United States but others in the region and around the world?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for your question.

I know that when Secretary Blinken was asked that same question in testimony last week, he stated that he was not yet aware if there was an administrative—administration position, but that he personally supported the ratification and believed it would be helpful.

I think what I would say, Senator, is whatever we can do to reinforce the rules-based international order where countries large and small play by the rules the better.

The great irony, of course, is that even though the United States has not ratified UNCLOS we do abide by it because we believe it represents customary international law.

China, of course, has ratified it and violates it on a daily basis.

Nonetheless, Senator I am—I would be supportive of any action that strengthens our position on maritime issues, including our legal rates.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So would not it put the United States in a stronger position vis-à-vis China and its violations of the Law of the Sea Treaty if the United States were a party to the agreement?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Well, I would associate myself with Secretary Blinken's comments on that last week.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I will take that—I understand. He said he was personally in favor of it and I—

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Thank you, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So—

Mr. KRITENBRINK. But can I just underscore? I think you have hit the nail right on the head that we have to advance our interests in supporting the rules-based international order.

Many other things we need to do in the maritime domain as well, but that is a key one. Thank you, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Let me ask you about a piece of legislation that we passed a couple years ago here. It was called the BRINK Act. I authored it together with Senator Toomey, and it was designed to close some of the loopholes in the sanctions that we have imposed on North Korea.

There was a recent U.N. panel of experts report on the implementation of international sanctions against North Korea, and they painted a picture of a very leaky sanctions regime, especially with respect to some goods flowing from China.

They also mentioned key imports, refined petroleum and coal, had surged into North Korea last year. So the BRINK Act establishes a secondary sanctions regime similar to the earlier Iran sanctions regime that helped bring Iran to the table for the JCPOA.

Could you commit to working with us and the Department of Treasury to make sure that we fully apply this law? And what is

your current assessment of, you know, the role sanctions can play in putting pressure on the North Korean regime?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much.

If confirmed, I can assure you that I would look forward to working with you and your team on these issues.

As I noted at the outset, the Biden administration—Biden/Harris administration is committed to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and, if confirmed, I would support an approach that relies both on sanctions enforcement and deterrence as well as a practical calibrated approach open to democracy.

If confirmed, I would be delighted to learn more about the BRINK Act and how we can strengthen the sanctions regime.

But, Senator, I do agree, enforcing the sanctions regime with tools that we have, together with U.N. tools, I think is vitally important to the denuclearization goals that we have.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. And again, thank all of you for your service.

And Mr. Holmgren, let me just say I think INR is one of those great agencies in the federal government that punches way above its weight.

So I hope you will hold your own within the IC because, in my experience, INR has called it right more than the other agencies, on average.

Mr. HOLMGREN. Thank you, Senator. It is an honor to be nominated to lead INR.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to each of the three of you.

Mr. Holmgren, let us start with you. If confirmed, you would be the principal intelligence adviser to the secretary and other State Department principals.

You would be charged with driving the intelligence apparatus advising the secretary of state on the risks and the benefits of reentering any nuclear deal with Iran.

I want to ask you about that. One of the most troubling aspects of the catastrophic Obama Iran nuclear deal were the enormous holes in verifying Iranian compliance.

Some of those holes were obvious, such as giving Iran weeks to clean up sites before inspections and functionally prohibiting inspection of military facilities.

Others were less obvious but even more damaging. One side deal forced the IAEA, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, to prematurely close investigations into past Iranian nuclear weapons work, leaving the scope and the nature of Iran's weapons program unknown.

According to Bloomberg, the Obama administration provided Congress with a classified annex, saying that the deal could still be verified if Iran fully complied and did not cheat.

Today, we know, of course, the deal failed to detect vast portions of Iran's nuclear weapons program. We know it because of daring raids and revelations by our Israeli allies.

We know that between the implementation of the deal in January 26 to May 2018 the IAEA was not aware that Iran was concealing a nuclear weapons archive, nor was the IAEA aware that Iran was contained—had containers at a warehouse called Turqazabad where the IAEA later reportedly discovered traces of man-altered uranium.

The agency subsequently visited three other undisclosed sites and found nuclear material at two of them. The IAEA has never inspected any facility run by the SPND, a military organization employing nuclear weapons scientists, which, until last year, was run by the founder of Iran's nuclear weapons program. That is unknown sites and zero military facilities inspected.

Despite all of this, the Biden administration is rushing to reenter the Iran deal.

Mr. Holmgren, do you support reentering the deal in light of those failures?

Mr. HOLMGREN. Senator Cruz, thank you for that question.

As a former intelligence analyst who focused on the Middle East, I very much appreciate the multi-dimensional threat that Iran poses—their state sponsorship of terrorism, their nuclear ambitions, cyber, human rights violations, and their ballistic missile capabilities.

So I very much appreciate the threat. If confirmed to lead INR, which is part of the intelligence community, my commitment to you and to this entire committee is that we will supply objective information and analysis regarding all of Iran's malign activities to include its compliance with the—with the nuclear requirements as part of the JCPOA even if those conclusions diverge from your policy interests, but especially, because I think it is even more important, if the intelligence community has a different view based on all sorts of information of where policymakers are that we would absolutely provide that information to support the secretary but also other policymakers as well as this committee.

Senator CRUZ. In your assessment, what additional measures would be required to close the loopholes that allowed these failures in the prior deal?

Mr. HOLMGREN. Senator, I am not—I am not privy to—I have not been in government the last few years so I am not privy to the—any classified details and additional measures.

But what I could tell you is that, from an intelligence perspective, I think having an incredibly strong collection and analytic regime focused on Iran's compliance would be—certainly, would be a top priority.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, I view Iran as one of the top big four threats we face, and so making sure that INR has the resources and the expertise to provide objective analysis would absolutely be a priority for me, sir.

Senator CRUZ. Okay.

And, Mr. Kritenbrink, the Obama administration implemented a policy that forbade our Taiwanese allies from displaying symbols of their sovereignty, whether flags or medals or uniforms, on U.S. soil.

During the Trump administration, I pressed the Trump administration to change that policy to reverse the ban, and they did so.

Unfortunately, after Secretary Blinken came through his confirmation hearing where I asked him about it and he committed to maintaining the policy of allowing Taiwan to display its symbols of sovereignty, subsequently, the Biden State Department reversed that policy and now prohibits our Taiwanese allies from displaying their symbols of sovereignty.

This committee just a few weeks ago took up legislation I had to reverse the new Biden ban and to return to the preexisting policy that allowed Taiwan, like our other allies, to display their symbols of sovereignty.

This committee passed that overwhelmingly. The Senate passed it overwhelmingly in a bipartisan manner. If confirmed, will you restore the previous policy allowing our Taiwanese allies to display their symbols of sovereignty, and if not, why not?

Mr. KRITENBRINK. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

I want to emphasize at the outset, Senator, if confirmed, I would be absolutely committed to growing our robust and vitally important partnership with democratic Taiwan.

I would argue that our partnership with Taiwan is perhaps stronger than it has ever been, from our commitments demonstrated under the Taiwan Relations Act, including \$30 billion in arm sales since 2009, to the provision of vaccines, to our close health cooperation to the visit by three members of the Senate in just the last few weeks.

I think we have made clear our commitment to growing that partnership with Taiwan.

Senator, since 1979, for decades now, the United States has followed a set of contact guidelines for our engagement with Taiwan, and my understanding, Senator, is for decades now those guidelines have outlined that during our important engagements with our unofficial—our Taiwan counterparts to advance our unofficial relationship that symbols of sovereignty are not allowed on U.S. Government property.

And those guidelines, as I understand them, Senator, have been in place for decades and were in place for the vast majority of the previous administration as well.

Based on the briefings and discussions that I have had, Senator, the new guidelines that have been enacted under the Biden administration are significantly liberalized. They are explicitly designed to further develop our relationships and our partnership with Taiwan, and they have been welcomed by the Taiwan leadership, including President Tsai herself.

So I can assure you, Senator, that I am committed in every way to growing our partnership with Taiwan and I will hasten to add that, of course, I will always enforce U.S. law.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you.

Ambassador Robinson, I am going to close up with you, I think, because this will be the last set of questions. I do not want you to think I—you have no—none of my attention. So let me just, briefly, make a statement about Mexico.

I had some deep concerns about Mexico over the last year. In the fall, the United States arrested Mexico's former defense minister on

drug trafficking charges. Very literally this case highlighted that Mexican drug trafficking organizations are capable of co-opting individuals at the highest levels of Mexico's Government.

When we released General Cienfuegos, albeit under some rather murky circumstances, the López Obrador government responded by publishing U.S. law enforcement documents, in violation of our mutual legal assistance treaty and then pushing a law to the Mexican Congress that seemed intent on constraining bilateral law enforcement cooperation.

I understand how important the U.S. trade, economic, political, and security relationship is with Mexico and I am fully supportive of efforts to strengthen it.

However, we have to be clear eyed. We cannot ignore evidence about the links between certain members of Mexico security forces and drug traffickers.

So, if confirmed, I trust you will give these issues your full attention?

Mr. ROBINSON. Absolutely, Mr. Chairman.

I share your concerns and look forward, should I be confirmed, to working with the interagency and working with the Congress to addressing and focusing on these issues.

The CHAIRMAN. And one last question for you. We had a very good in-depth discussion so a lot of the issues have been raised.

As I thought, fentanyl and others have been raised. I am increasingly concerned by reports that the Assad regime is earning hard currency in the face of international sanctions and cratering currency and economy by manufacturing and exporting Captagon, a potent and addictive amphetamine, often with the cooperation of Hezbollah.

This drug is being smuggled, often by Hezbollah, across Lebanon's border with Syria and through Lebanon's weak import and export controls to be distributed throughout Europe and the Middle East, prompting bans on Lebanese exports recently that the Lebanese economy can ill afford.

What steps can we take to counter such drug smuggling, including assistance to strengthen the Lebanese border and customs enforcement?

Mr. ROBINSON. Mr. Chairman, that is a great question.

INL has a great track record on working with the government of Lebanon on training and capacity building, and we will continue. Should I be confirmed, I would make sure that we would continue to do that.

I would also say that we can work with the interagency—we have been working with the interagency to track these shipments, particularly with DEA, and working with like-minded partners in the region.

We know Saudi Arabia is particularly concerned about this, the trafficking of this drug, and we can continue to work with like-minded partners on this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I just want to highlight it because, of course, we often hear about fentanyl, as we should because it is causing deaths in America. But in this case of this Captagon, you have got a lot of bad players.

You have Hezbollah, you have Assad, and undermining what little is left of the Lebanese economy. That is a bad trifecta, at the end of the day.

So I hope that you will make it one of your priorities upon confirmation.

Mr. ROBINSON. I share your concern, Chairman, and should I be confirmed, we will absolutely track it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator? All right.

With that, with the thanks of the committee, this record will remain open until tomorrow at the close of business.

There may be questions for the record. We would urge the nominees to answer those questions expeditiously so you can be considered for a business meeting.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:37 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TODD D. ROBINSON BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

#### *Central America/Illegal Migration*

*Question.* Given your previous experience in Central America and at INL, can you describe the nexus between transnational criminal organizations and human smuggling/trafficking across Central America and Mexico? What financial benefits would you estimate drug trafficking groups are reaping from the increased flows of illegal migrants arriving at our Southwest border?

*Answer.* Systemic corruption and impunity contribute to the permissive environments that enable the illicit activities of transnational criminal organizations across Central America and Mexico, some of which are involved in smuggling migrants across countries' borders or are profiting from the exploitation of individuals in sex trafficking or forced labor, including forced criminal activity. I understand corruption, insecurity, and low levels of trust in institutions are among the root causes driving irregular migration in the region, including to the United States, and undermine economic growth and development, weaken the rule of law, and lead to a loss of hope. If confirmed, I will continue to press these governments to take concrete actions to combat corruption and impunity, improve democratic governance, and strengthen the rule of law. Reliable estimates of the ill-gotten financial gains of drug trafficking groups or transnational criminal organizations are hard to confirm, but remain a concern.

#### *Mexico/Illicit Narcotics*

*Question.* What specific actions would you encourage Mexico take to meaningfully tackle transitional criminal activities through its territory, including trafficking of fentanyl and other illicit narcotics?

*Answer.* INL strengthens Mexico's capacity to reduce the production and trafficking of fentanyl and other illicit drugs. I understand that INL supports Mexico's recent steps to regulate fentanyl precursor chemicals and encourages Mexico to increase and better integrate its investigations into precursor chemical diversion, drug production, and trafficking. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department works to strengthen cooperation on this vital issue through the cabinet-level security dialogue committed to during Vice President Harris' June 8 meeting with Mexican President López Obrador.

#### *Venezuela*

*Question.* Can you describe how the Maduro regime's involvement in transnational criminal activities impacts peace and stability in Colombia?

*Answer.* Colombia has worked hard to extend effective state presence throughout its national territory, but the Maduro regime's mismanagement and its tolerance of

illicit activities and evident lack of interest in controlling such activities within its own borders has made Colombia's task vastly more difficult. The Maduro regime's profit-seeking ties with dissident members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the Colombian-origin National Liberation Army, and Venezuelan paramilitary groups facilitate illicit activity, public corruption, and graft schemes. These relationships, combined with historically weak government presence at the border between Colombia and Venezuela, have allowed Colombian terrorist groups and narcotraffickers to operate with impunity. Venezuelans and Colombians are the victims of the Maduro regime's inability or unwillingness to provide security within Venezuela and of the predatory behavior of these criminal groups.

*Cuba/State Sponsor of Terrorism*

*Question.* Should Cuba be removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism (SST) while they continue to harbor U.S. fugitives and U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations?

*Answer.* I understand the administration has committed to carefully reviewing decisions made in the prior administration, including the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.

If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the administration's review of Cuba policy. Our priority in Cuba, as the rest of the Hemisphere, needs to be democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

*Afghanistan*

*Question.* Given the Biden administration's decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, how can INL realistically and effectively counter Afghanistan's opium problem or provide oversight of existing counternarcotic programs?

*Answer.* I understand that most cultivation and production of poppy in Afghanistan occurs in areas under Taliban influence or control, compounding the challenge of implementing effective counternarcotics projects. INL has a constructive working relationship with the Afghan Government and supports specialized counter-drug enforcement units in Afghanistan, such as the National Interdiction Unit and the polygraphed Sensitive Investigative Unit, with enablers including a modern wiretap system and a team of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration mentors. These units have mounted successful operations in insurgent-held areas. Additionally, INL funds border and customs police to effectively search and profile passengers and cargo at ports of entry, treatment for Afghans suffering from substance use disorders, licit alternatives to poppy for farmers, and capacity building for the Afghan Government. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to utilize a tiered approach to monitoring existing projects, including third party monitors for end-use monitoring and implementation activities, and multiple organizations to provide assessments and evaluations on INL activities.

*Lebanon-Internal Security Forces (ISF)*

*Question.* As Lebanon faces a potential state collapse, please comment on continued assistance to the ISF in Lebanon.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize our support to the ISF, a key partner in maintaining peace in Lebanon. Following the August 2020 Port of Beirut explosion, I understand INL increased efforts to provide basic equipment support to the ISF, including PPE as it dealt with the COVID crisis, address internal corruption, and improve internal and external cooperation through cross functional collaboration. This includes human resource automation efforts, which can reduce administrative demands, increase productivity, reduce costs, and provide more transparency and accountability within the ISF. Continued support to the ISF can help mitigate further instability in Lebanon.

*West Bank-Palestinian Security Forces (PASF)*

*Question.* Is this an appropriate focus for the PASF without securing concessions on pay to slay? How have Israeli attitudes towards the PASF evolved following recent violence with Hamas and Gaza? USSC has also suggested that PASF should be allowed to attend US military training and schools. Is this an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars given the PASF's non-state status?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure INL delivers its assistance consistent with its authorities and other U.S. laws. The shift in focus reflects improved performance and maturity by the PASF since we began providing assistance in 2007. I understand that INL believes taking this new focus will sustain that trend. The PASF units INL assisted performed well in their daily missions as well as during crises, especially including the latest round of violence, when they had to coordinate with



Israeli security forces. The PASF will receive their operational training at their own training centers in Jericho. If confirmed, I will ensure that any decision to send a small selection of well-vetted senior officers to U.S. military institutions is based solely on a commitment to provide them the best leadership training available that will make them better officers and further improve the performance of the PASF.

#### *Libya*

*Question.* How does INL plan to work with the MOI in Libya to re-establish a governmental monopoly on the use of force and reduce the presence of non-state militias and mercenaries?

*Answer.* A move away from the informal and hybrid relationships that have developed over the past war-torn years will require a combination of different strengths across the Department to address these challenges, particularly with disarmament, demobilization, and deradicalization, and to facilitate the movement towards re-legitimization of criminal justice institutions and law enforcement.

To that end, I understand INL aims to help build the capabilities of legitimate institutions that can provide for civilian security focused on their needs, incorporate the rule of law, and include greater emphasis on appropriate use of force that is compliant with international standards on human rights. INL is developing opportunities with the Ministries of Interior and Justice to return criminal justice facilities previously damaged by the hostilities witnessed in Libya back to Ministry of Justice control and out of the hands of militias.

#### *Tunisia*

*Question.* How does INL plan to work to ensure allegations of police violence and credibility and transparently investigated, and those found responsible held to account? Are there ways in which INL can tailor programming to ensure police officers and unit commanders are held accountable for instances of excessive use of force? What role should Tunisia's police unions play moving forward?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure INL continues to work across the Tunisian criminal justice sector to foster and institutionalize transparency and accountability. INL's law enforcement programming incorporates international best practices, including the use of modern policing techniques, methods of internal accountability, transparency to the public, and citizen-oriented approaches. INL complies with statutory provisions to vet units and individuals for potential gross violations of human rights and encourages the Government to investigate and hold accountable those responsible. The 2014 Tunisian constitution permits internal security forces to unionize; however, it does not define the unions' role beyond the prohibition to strike, and INL does not work with the unions.

*Question.* Are there specific steps that INL can take to advance security sector reform in Tunisia? What does INL consider to be the most pressing priorities in terms of advancing a wider security sector reform agenda?

*Answer.* Given security challenges, the need for broad reform, and limited resources, security sector reform in Tunisia has not been linear. Within this dynamic environment, INL designs its programming in Tunisia to address civilian criminal justice sector reform holistically across law enforcement, justice, and corrections. INL prioritizes assistance to the Government of Tunisia to improve core operational capacities and competencies in support of fair, transparent, and independent criminal justice organizations responsive to citizens' needs.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TODD D. ROBINSON BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

#### *Addressing Corruption and Kleptocracy*

*Question.* The Combating Global Corruption Act obliges the Executive to identify corruption in countries and rank them; establishes minimum standards for combating corruption; and evaluates foreign persons engaged in grand corruption for consideration under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

- If confirmed, in what ways will you strengthen efforts at the State Department to focus on combating corruption abroad?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work across the department to combat corruption as a top foreign policy priority of the Biden-Harris Administration. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs plays a key role in the promotion of internationally recognized standards and commitments to prevent and combat

corruption, provides targeted foreign assistance to strengthen criminal justice systems and institutions to both resist and root out corruption abroad, and implements visa restrictions to promote accountability for corrupt actors. I will work to expand these efforts and our partnerships and coordination across the interagency to ensure the range of foreign assistance and diplomatic tools are brought to bear in cultivating strong, transparent institutions to prevent and combat corruption abroad.

*Question.* Do you see opportunities to improve our whole-of-government approach towards fighting corruption?

*Answer.* The United States enforces one of the most robust anticorruption frameworks in the world. The President's National Security Study Memorandum on the fight against corruption presents a unique opportunity to further integrate the expertise of U.S. federal agencies into these efforts and create a more expansive and effective whole-of-government response to this complex threat. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs maintains deep partnerships across the interagency in support of our shared mission to disrupt and deter transnational organized crime and corruption, both at home and abroad. If confirmed, I will continue to support these vital partnerships, and the State Department's commitment to this Administration priority.

#### *Strengthening the Global Magnitsky Act*

*Question.* The Global Magnitsky Act has proven valuable as a tool that can penalize human rights abusers and corrupt actors without rupturing bilateral relations. The Global Magnitsky Act sunset was removed in the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act of 2021.

- Do you agree that “Magnitsky-like” sanctions are an effective tool for countering human rights abusers and corruption around the world?

*Answer.* The Global Magnitsky sanctions program is an effective and impactful tool as part of our broader efforts to combat corruption and promote human rights globally. The Global Magnitsky sanctions program, along with other similar tools, such as Section 7031(c) visa restrictions, promotes accountability of corrupt actors and human rights abusers and deters future corruption and human rights abuse abroad.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to robustly implementing the Global Magnitsky Act through high-impact sanctions designations, including by appropriately staffing relevant State Department offices and bureaus?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work across the Department and interagency to use all available tools, including the Global Magnitsky sanctions program, to combat corruption globally. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) has a dedicated team focused on implementing a range of deterrence tools, including supporting implementation of the corruption prong of Global Magnitsky. If confirmed, I will continue to support robust implementation of these tools in conjunction with INL's foreign assistance and diplomatic efforts to disrupt and deter corruption abroad.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support the permanent authorization of Global Magnitsky sanctions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support the permanent authorization of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act. This sanctions program has demonstrated its impact and supports our broader efforts to prevent and combat corruption and protect human rights abroad.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. TODD D. ROBINSON BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

#### *Guatemala*

*Question.* Given your extensive background and experience in Central America, most recently as United States Ambassador to Guatemala, you understand the threats these nations are facing—not just from violent transnational criminal organizations, but also from external malign actors like China and Russia, which are trying to gain a foothold in our hemisphere.

- Do you believe that the United States' approach should be to disengage from these governments and cut our assistance to them?

**Answer.** It is in the U.S. national interest for Central American countries to have strengthened democratic governance, expanded economic opportunity for their citizens, and the capacity to address the security challenges that cause many to flee the region and present direct harms to the United States. U.S. foreign assistance is an essential element of our regional strategy that includes strengthening civil society, promoting transparency and rule of law, combating corruption, and improving respect for human rights. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that our foreign assistance is accompanied by robust U.S. diplomatic engagement and appropriate oversight. President Biden is clear-eyed about the challenge and has insisted governments step up as true partners in creating the conditions for economic opportunity and security, which includes fighting corruption and impunity.

**Question.** During your time as United States Ambassador to Guatemala, please describe your knowledge, if any, of Russia's involvement in Guatemala's mining sector.

**Answer.** During my tenure, our embassy kept track of various issues affecting Guatemala's economy, including in the area of energy and mines. If confirmed, I will prioritize countering the malign influence of Russia and other actors in Guatemala and elsewhere as part of our efforts to bolster good governance and combat corruption.

**Question.** What is your knowledge of the legal issues related to the EXIMBAL nickel mine, owned by Russian interests, and the (then) Canadian-U.S.-owned San Rafael mine?

**Answer.** According to news reports, the Constitutional Court (CC) initially suspended operations of the EXIMBAL nickel mine in July 2019 for failure to conduct consultations with affected indigenous communities under International Labor Organization convention 169 (ILO 169), confirming the decision again in June 2020. However, the mine, owned by Switzerland-based Solway Investment Group, continued production until February, when the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM) suspended the mine's exploitation license to conform with the CC's July 2019 ruling, confirmed again by the CC on March 1.

Operations of the San Rafael mine have been suspended since 2017, also for failure to conduct community consultations in accordance with ILO 169. In 2018, the CC ordered the Guatemalan Government to conduct community consultations prior to reopening the mine.

**Question.** Can you provide the most recent update on the cases mentioned above?

**Answer.** I understand that in June, deputies from the political party Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza alleged to the MEM that Fenix mine continues to conduct some operations illegally, despite its ordered suspension. Pre-consultations with local indigenous groups under ILO 169 are scheduled to begin July 15 in Izabal. The pre-consultation process for the San Rafael mine began on May 21 in Santa Rosa. The next meeting is scheduled for June 20.

**Question.** Can you describe the role played by Gazprombank and VTB Bank, two entities sanctioned by Treasury, in the mining sector in Guatemala?

**Answer.** I do not have current information about the role played by Gazprombank and VTB in Guatemala's mining sector. On the issue of sanctions, if confirmed, I will prioritize working with colleagues across the interagency to pursue appropriate measures, including visa revocations and sanctions, to promote accountability for corruption.

**Question.** Are you aware of any evidence that Guatemalan authorities worked with VTB Bank through CICIG?

**Answer.** No. To my knowledge, CICIG was an independent, U.N.-backed commission that helped Guatemala build capacity and make progress in the fight against corruption during its tenure.

#### *Assistance with Law Enforcement Agencies*

**Question.** If confirmed, will you ensure strict oversight of U.S. support for security forces under the control of the Palestinian Authority and ensure any assistance complies with all U.S. legislative restrictions on these funds?

**Answer.** Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure strict oversight of U.S. support for security forces under the control of the Palestinian Authority (PA). I will ensure any assistance complies with all U.S. legislative restrictions on these funds. I understand INL provides its assistance through letters of agreement that ensure strict oversight, and conducts end-use monitoring of the materials it supplies to ensure it is accounted for and being used for the purposes it was provided. I understand INL

will implement a robust vetting process, including Leahy vetting and vetting through the Department's Risk Analysis and Management Office, to mitigate the risk that U.S. Government resources could benefit terrorist groups or their supporters. If confirmed, I will ensure INL also vets all recipients of PA assistance, including students enrolled in training programs, for suspected terrorist organization affiliation and human rights violations. If the vetting results show any level of doubt, INL will exclude them from the program.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions do you intend to take in order to combat Hezbollah?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to continuing our support to Lebanon and exploring ways to adapt our support to address the pressing needs of key partners in the security and judicial sectors such as targeted interventions to improve criminal information collection, analysis, and sharing; build on efforts to eliminate security vacuums that criminals and terrorists exploit by expanding police professionalization efforts; and solidify and sustain anti-crime gains through the delivery of specialized skills. Such support bolsters legitimate institutions in Lebanon and can help counter Hezbollah's malign influence.

*Question.* What is your position on reports of Hezbollah financing itself with networks involved in the drug trade in Latin America?

*Answer.* I am concerned about Hezbollah's purported role as a facilitator of the narcotics trade. Financial supporters, facilitators, and sympathizers of Hezbollah operate in the Western Hemisphere, raising funds in support of the organization through a variety of illicit activities, including narcotics trafficking and trade-based money laundering. As a part of INL's broader efforts to combat transnational crime, I understand INL will continue to prioritize anti-money laundering and counter-narcotics programming globally.

*Question.* What is your view on U.S. cooperation with law enforcement authorities in Ukraine?

*Answer.* I understand the United States has worked closely with Ukraine's Ministry of Internal Affairs to advance sweeping law enforcement reforms since 2014, starting with the creation of the Patrol Police. The Ministry continues to be a constructive partner on law enforcement reform, to include providing support and development of the Patrol Police in the major cities and rolling out the newly established Territorial Community Police Officer initiative in rural communities throughout Ukraine. The foundation of both reform efforts incorporates the respect for human rights and adopts international best policing practices to ensure officers are trained to be accountable, service-oriented, and transparent. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing this cooperation on advancing meaningful law enforcement reform in Ukraine.

*Question.* What actions will you take to work with the law enforcement agencies of our partners and allies to prevent the export of products produced with the forced labor of Uyghurs in China?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working with partners and allies to address the People's Republic of China (PRC) Government's ongoing atrocities in Xinjiang and will consider and support the use of all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those involved, including import restrictions for goods made with forced labor. If confirmed, I will support Secretary Blinken's call on other governments to take "concrete actions" to ensure no companies or governments provide the PRC with products or services that facilitate repression in Xinjiang or purchase goods from Xinjiang made with forced labor. If confirmed, I will also strengthen our law enforcement partnerships and coordination with allies to ensure we are taking a multilateral approach to stopping the genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, including by working with the interagency in its efforts to identify and block the import to the United States of goods produced through forced labor.

*Question.* Please elaborate with specificity on the issues you kept track of with respect to energy and mines during your tenure.

- For example, did you discuss litigation involving the U.S.-based Tahoe Resources' El Esocabal silver mine (Minera San Rafael), owned by Canadian-U.S. interests, with anyone, and if so, with whom? Please detail what was discussed.
- Did you discuss the nickel mine owned by the Russian concern CGN, located in Izabal, known variously as EXIMBAL?

*Answer.* I had several discussions on this issue with various persons during my time in Guatemala. In fact, for the purposes of advocacy for U.S. business, Tahoe Resources was treated as an American company despite its ownership being largely

Canadian. I believe we made this determination after consultation with the Department of Commerce. I know I had at least two (maybe more) meetings with representatives of Tahoe Resources in Guatemala and one in Washington, DC. I discussed the issue with Guatemalan congressional representatives. I discussed the issue with members of Guatemala's court system (both Supreme Court and Constitutional Court). I also discussed the issue with members of Guatemala's executive branch (both the President, the Vice President, and cabinet members). In addition, I discussed the issue with visiting U.S. congressional delegations.

Among the issues discussed were:

1. The possibility of clearing a path for the mine to open or reopen successfully;
2. The value of the mine to the community around the mine and the value of the mine to Guatemala to show it was open for foreign direct investment;
3. The obstacles to full functionality of the mine and the role of a consultative process between the mining company and the local community;
4. The mining company's journey through Guatemala's judicial process.

I do not recall that I ever discussed EXIMBAL. However, that is not to say it was not discussed by other U.S. officials at the embassy. These issues—San Rafael and/or EXIMBAL—would have been largely handled by the Economic Section and/or the Commercial office.

*Question.* Did you ever meet with any legal representative of either Gazprombank or VTB Bank?

- If so, what dates and how many times?
- Did you discuss Russia's involvement in the mining sector with them, or litigation involving EXIMBAL or Minera San Rafael? If so, please provide details.

*Answer.* I do not recall that I ever met with any representative of Gazprombank or VTB Bank.

*Question.* How frequently did you meet with the attorney general of Guatemala?

- In your meetings and conversations, did you discuss Russia's involvement in the mining sector with the attorney general?
- Did you discuss litigation involving Minera San Rafael? If so, when?

*Answer.* I met formally and informally with the attorney general of Guatemala on a fairly regular basis between 2014-2017. I do not believe the attorney general and I ever discussed Russia's involvement in the mining sector. I also do not believe we discussed litigation involving Minera San Rafael.

*Question.* How frequently did you meet with members of Guatemala's Constitutional Court?

- In your meetings and conversations, did you discuss Russia's involvement in the mining sector with them?
- Did you discuss litigation involving Minera San Rafael?

*Answer.* Over the course of my three years in Guatemala, I met with members of the Constitutional Court both formally and informally on a regular basis. Other embassy representatives did as well. Apart from the political upheaval that occurred during that time, we had technical programs with the supreme and constitutional courts involving case tracking systems and equipment to expand the ability of the courts to reach beyond the capital.

I do not believe I discussed Russia's involvement in the mining sector with any court members. The Minera San Rafael issue was discussed as the case wound its way through the Supreme and Constitutional Courts.

*Question.* Did you meet with any non-governmental organizations involved in court-ordered consultations with respect to the Minera San Rafael to discuss issues related to the mining sector?

*Answer.* Since I met with several NGOs on numerous topics during my time as Ambassador over four years ago, I do not recall specific conversations with respect to the Minera San Rafael issue. If this issue was discussed, it would have been to understand Tahoe Resources' concerns to see if any agreement could be brokered between the two sides.

*Question.* What past information did you have with regard to the role played by Gazprombank and VTB in Guatemala's mining sector dating back to your tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala or as Senior Advisor for Central America in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs?

Answer. I do not recall that I had any prior knowledge of either Gazprombank or VTB in Guatemala's mining sector. It was not something I was tracking during my time in Guatemala or later in Washington.

*Question.* Did you meet with any agents of either Gazprombank or VTB bank? If so, how many times? Was CICIG discussed?

Answer. To the best of my recollection, I have never met with any representatives of either bank.

*Question.* According to testimony from Bill Browder before the CSCE in 2018, VTB Bank—an entity sanctioned by the U.S. Department of Treasury—gained legal status as an “interested party” in a legal case against the Bitkov family. In 2015, a criminal case was opened against the Bitkovs at CICIG's direction. Immediately after, officers raided the Bitkov's home and detained the family.

During your time as Ambassador to Guatemala, were you ever briefed on this issue? If so, when? If so, what was your takeaway when you were in this post?

Answer. To the best of my recollection, I was never briefed on this issue. Any knowledge I had of this issue came from open sources. There were some local newspaper articles on the Bitkovs and I also remember a long in-depth article about their case in either the Atlantic Monthly, Vanity Fair, or the New Yorker magazine. To my knowledge, while I was in Guatemala (2014-17), the State Department was not tracking the Bitkov case beyond the fact that they had been swept up in a larger probe of corruption within the Guatemalan Government.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. TODD D. ROBINSON BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* In recent months the Mexican Government has shifted to a confrontational and in some senses even adversarial approach to the United States, including by undermining the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) capability to operate in Mexico, publishing sensitive information that had been shared by the Department of Justice (DOJ), and maneuvering to ensure the freedom of former Defense Minister Salvador Cienfuegos Zepeda from drug charges. To what degree are you concerned about the status of the U.S.-Mexican relationship in these dimensions?

Answer. U.S.-Mexico security cooperation remains a top national security priority. If confirmed, I look forward to comprehensive conversations with the Mexican Government to deepen our security cooperation and ensure it works for the benefit of the United States and Mexico. I look forward to working to strengthen collaboration through the cabinet-level security dialogue committed to during Vice President Harris' June 8 meeting with Mexican President López Obrador.

*Question.* What steps will you take to ensure that the Mexican Government understands their recent actions against the DEA are unacceptable and returns to a posture of cooperation?

Answer. Law enforcement cooperation between the United States and Mexico is vital to countering the shared threat of transnational crime. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Mexican Government to strengthen this cooperation, including through the cabinet-level security dialogue committed to during Vice President Harris's June 8 meeting with Mexican President López Obrador.

*Nicaragua*

*Question.* What role, if any, should INL play in regards to the situation in Nicaragua?

Answer. I condemn the Ortega regime's repression of its own people and the clear erosion of democratic norms in Nicaragua. Civil society must be supported to promote accountability for human rights abuses and corruption. INL engages with relevant elements of civil society in Nicaragua—including independent media, human rights, and anticorruption organizations—to address narcotics and criminal threats, improve civic education, and strengthen the rule of law through discreet programs aimed at minimizing the risk to individuals from government persecution. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing these efforts.

*Bolivia*

*Question.* How do you plan to engage with the Government of Bolivia on drug production, trafficking, and interdiction?

Answer. I am concerned about drug production and trafficking in Bolivia. Should the Arce administration be interested in partnering with the United States to combat narcotics trafficking and associated criminality, if confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to enhance coordination with Bolivia.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO BRETT M. HOLMGREN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Directed Energy Attacks/Havana Syndrome*

*Question.* INR plays a role in supporting the U.S. Government's efforts to identify the perpetrator and means of the directed energy attacks against State Department personnel, as well as a key role in providing SFRC with up to date information on all USG investigations into these attacks.

- How is INR contributing to the investigation into these nefarious sonic attacks on our US diplomats?

Answer. My understanding is that INR has provided intelligence support to the Department on the anomalous health incidents since January 2017, and is facilitating the passage of available information and material between relevant elements of the Intelligence Community and the Department. If confirmed, I am committed to getting up to speed quickly on this matter, and I will have no higher priority than supporting the Department and the IC in ensuring the safety of U.S. personnel, their family members, and U.S. citizens overseas.

*Question.* Will you commit to keeping this committee fully informed as this investigation progresses?

Answer. Yes. Secretary Blinken has committed to working with Congress on this matter. If confirmed, I will also commit to working closely with Congress on this issue and will keep this committee fully informed of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research's assessment of these incidents.

*Question.* Will you commit to redoubling efforts to identify the culprit? And will you do a survey of the policy issues/regional focus the victims were working on?

Answer. My understanding is that INR is coordinating with multiple agencies to identify the cause and culprit of these incidents, to include understanding where the various incidents occurred. If confirmed, I will make sure INR continues to leverage its deep expertise to assist the Department, the Intelligence Community, and the interagency in protecting all U.S. personnel overseas.

*State Department and Membership in the Intelligence Community*

*Question.* INR also plays an important role in supporting the intelligence needs of the Secretary of State, but it also plays a role in the intelligence community (IC). It is imperative that INR maintain its analytical independence from policymakers within the State Department while also best supporting those same policymakers.

- How do you propose to ensure that INR remains in-step with the intelligence community while maintaining an autonomous analytical State Department point of view?

Answer. I believe that constant training and adherence to the Intelligence Community's analytic tradecraft standards, as well as a willingness of leadership to support analysts in speaking truth to power, are at the core of protecting the independence and integrity of INR analysts and Intelligence Community products. INR has a well-earned reputation for deep expertise and analytic independence while still supporting State Department policymakers. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that INR maintains both its analytic objectivity and quality and timely support to policymakers.

*Question.* Do you feel that detailees from other IC components would be beneficial for INR? Will you commit to increasing the number of detailees at INR from other IC components to better plug into IC capabilities and improve the connection of intelligence to policy?

Answer. Having served as a detailee when I was in the Intelligence Community (IC), I believe strongly in the value of exposing IC analysts to other departments and agencies and believe that the receiving agencies receive an extraordinary benefit from bringing in outside expertise and perspectives. Such detail assignments can build bridges across the IC and provide useful points of view to both agencies. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing the status of detailees to INR and will

look for ways to strengthen joint duty assignments to benefit both INR and the broader IC.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you make more resources available to ensure the Department employees have more access to the classified email systems used by other agencies to share and discuss intelligence relevant to policy makers?

*Answer.* I understand that INR allows appropriately cleared Department personnel to access intelligence reporting and analysis directly through a classified system, which includes an e-mail capability. I believe that we can balance the need to protect sensitive information with the need for access for appropriately cleared Department personnel. If I become aware of sensitive intelligence that Departmental personnel need to see in order to do their jobs, I would advocate for and seek to facilitate that access, consistent with appropriate clearances and the need to protect sensitive sources and methods.

*Question.* How do you propose to better distribute timely intelligence to regional bureaus? Is there more INR can do to improve communication between INR and the regional bureaus to improve collection guidance?

*Answer.* I believe INR has a responsibility to help facilitate access to intelligence and analysis by regional bureaus for appropriately cleared personnel. Customer feedback (including from regional bureaus) into collection guidance is also key to improving intelligence support to policy. If confirmed, I will review INR's existing processes for providing intelligence to regional bureaus and for receiving collection requirements and will make improvements, if necessary.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO BRETT M. HOLMGREN BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to fully uncover the origin of SARS-CoV-2? Do you commit to make this a priority?

*Answer.* It is vital that we understand the origins of SARS-CoV-2 in order to prevent or minimize the risk of another global pandemic in the future. On May 26, 2021, the President asked the Intelligence Community (IC) to redouble its efforts to collect and analyze information that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to him in 90 days on the origins of SARS-CoV-2. If confirmed, I am committed to prioritizing INR's efforts to support the IC's work to understand the origins of SARS-CoV-2.

*Question.* What actions do you believe are important to take to prevent the next pandemic?

*Answer.* I believe the Intelligence Community, of which INR is a component, has an important warning function to play in evaluating all sources of information and providing assessments that could shed light on an emerging pandemic in the future. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing INR's analytic resources and expertise related to global health security and will ensure that INR provides accurate and timely intelligence to policymakers on such matters moving forward.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO BRETT M. HOLMGREN BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*JCPOA Verification*

*Question.* Under a plan aimed at facilitating the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) prematurely closed its file on the Possible Military Dimensions (PMDs) of Iran's nuclear program. The decision rendered permanently opaque the scope and nature of Iran's weapons program, and was broadly criticized for foreclosing the possibility of baselining that program—a critical prerequisite to robust monitoring and verification. According to Bloomberg, the Obama administration provided Congress with a classified annex saying that the deal could still be verified if Iran fully complied and didn't cheat.

It has now been confirmed that under the deal, the IAEA failed to detect vast portions of Iran's nuclear weapons program. Between the implementation of the deal in January 2016 to May 2018, the IAEA was not aware that Iran was concealing a nuclear weapons archive. Nor was the IAEA aware that Iran was storing containers at an alleged nuclear warehouse reportedly called Turqzabad, where the



IAEA later reportedly discovered traces of man-altered uranium. The agency subsequently visited three other undisclosed sites and found nuclear material at two of them. According to public reports, the IAEA has never inspected any facility run by SPND, a military organization employing nuclear weapon scientists, which until last year was run by the founder of Iran's nuclear weapons program

- Do you support reentering the deal, in light of these failures?

Answer. I believe it is critically important that the Intelligence Community (IC) and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) focus on the range of threats posed by Iran—from its state sponsorship of terrorism and nuclear ambitions to its development of ballistic missiles. If confirmed in my role as the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, I will ensure that INR, which is a component of the IC, provides the Secretary of State and other policymakers with the best available intelligence and analysis on Iran to inform policymakers as they assess the best possible options to address Iran's nuclear ambitions.

*Question.* In your assessment what additional measures would be required to close the loopholes that allowed these failures?

Answer. If confirmed in my role as the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), which is a component of the Intelligence Community, provides the Secretary of State and other policymakers with the best available intelligence and analysis on Iran to inform policymakers as they assess the best possible options to address Iran's nuclear ambitions. I would also ensure that INR has the resources and expertise to address this threat.

#### *Iran/NPT*

*Question.* As traditionally understood, Article IV of the NPT entitles member states to the benefits of peaceful civil-nuclear technology to the extent that they are members in good standing with the NPT. In the last administration, Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed to the SFRC in writing that "Iran's standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as 'good.'"

- Do you consider Iran's past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. nuclear activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran's past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT. If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's nuclear activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran a member in good standing of the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's nuclear activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's nuclear activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology for any reason? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's nuclear activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis with respect to its use of nuclear technologies.

*Iran/UNSCR 2231 snapback*

*Question.* UNSCR 2231 ended a long-standing international arms embargo against Iran, described across the previous six resolutions terminated by paragraph 7(a) of the resolution. After an effort to extend that embargo, the Trump administration took two measures. First, it invoked the "snapback mechanism" described in paragraphs 10-15 of UNSCR 2231, reversing the termination of those resolutions. You and others have publicly suggested that the U.S. was not entitled to invoke that mechanism. Second, the Trump administration implemented EO 13949, "Blocking Property of Certain Persons with Respect to Conventional Arms Activities of Iran," which authorizes sanctions for transfers to and from Iran of arms or related material or military equipment. As a result, the U.S. established a baseline deterrent against major arms sales to Iran. Multi-billion dollar arms agreements publicly described and anticipated by Russia, China, and Iran did not occur.

However, in February 2021, the Biden administration rescinded that decision. In June, it was revealed that Iran had dispatched two warships believed to be carrying arms intended for transfer to Caracas. The Biden administration declared it would take "appropriate measures" to counter this "threat."

- What measures does the administration believe it has to counter the reported shipment of arms to Venezuela by Iranian warships?

Answer. I have never publicly suggested that the United States was not entitled to invoke the "snapback mechanism." If confirmed in my role as the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), which is a component of the Intelligence Community, provides the Secretary of State and other policymakers with the best available intelligence and analysis on Iran to inform policymakers as they assess the best possible options to address Iran's nuclear ambitions. I would also ensure that INR has the resources and expertise to address this threat.

According to press reports on June 17, 2021, the Iranian ships believed to be headed towards Venezuela recently changed course and are currently headed towards the coast of Africa.

*Question.* Do you agree with the decision to rescind invoking the snapback mechanism?

Answer. If confirmed in my role as the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, I will ensure that the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), which is a component of the Intelligence Community, provides the Secretary of State and other policymakers with the best available intelligence and analysis on Iran to inform policymakers as they assess the best possible options to address Iran's nuclear ambitions. I would also ensure that INR has the resources and expertise to address this threat.

*Question.* Do you believe that Russia would be in violation of any UNSCR if Russia sold advanced weapons to Iran? If so, which ones?

Answer. I believe it is vitally important for the Intelligence Community and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to focus on destabilizing activities and cooperation between Iran and Russia. If confirmed, I will ensure that INR prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's destabilizing activities and cooperation with Russia and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran and Russia to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you believe that Russia would be in violation of any UNSCR if Russia purchased advanced weapons from Iran? If so, which ones?

Answer. I believe it is vitally important for the Intelligence Community and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to focus on destabilizing activities and cooperation between Iran and Russia. If confirmed, I will ensure that INR prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's destabilizing activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran and Russia to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you believe that China would be in violation of any UNSCR if China sold advanced weapons to Iran? If so, which ones?

Answer. I believe it is vitally important for the Intelligence Community and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to focus on destabilizing activities and cooperation between Iran and China. If confirmed, I will ensure that INR prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's destabilizing activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran and China to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you believe that China would be in violation of any UNSCR if China purchased advanced weapons from Iran? If so, which ones?

Answer. I believe it is vitally important for the Intelligence Community and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to focus on destabilizing activities and cooperation between Iran and China. If confirmed, I will ensure that INR prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's destabilizing activities and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran and China to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran would be in violation of any UNSCR if Iran conducted any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology?

Answer. I believe it is critically important for the Intelligence Community and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to focus on Iran's ballistic missile program and nuclear ambitions. If confirmed, I will ensure that INR prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's ballistic missile program and nuclear ambitions and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran to help inform treaty compliance verification.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran would be in violation of any UNSCR if Iran conducted any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology?

Answer. I believe it is critically important for the Intelligence Community and the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) to focus on Iran's ballistic missile program and nuclear ambitions. If confirmed, I will ensure that INR prioritizes analysis focused on Iran's ballistic missile program and nuclear ambitions and will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis that describes the actions and intentions of Iran to help inform treaty compliance verification.

#### *EO 14034*

*Question.* On June 11, the Biden Administration published in the Federal Register Executive Order 14034, which revoked Executive Order 13942 of August 6, 2020 (Addressing the Threat Posed by TikTok, and Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain), Executive Order 13943 of August 6, 2020 (Addressing the Threat Posed by WeChat, and Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain), and Executive Order 13971 of January 5, 2021 (Addressing the Threat Posed by Applications and Other Software Developed or Controlled by Chinese Companies). Those three EOs had restricted applications controlled by Chinese companies. According to EO 13971, “[b]y accessing personal electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, Chinese connected software applications can access and capture vast swaths of information from users, including sensitive personally identifiable information and private information. This data collection threatens to provide the Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with access to Americans’ personal and proprietary information—which would permit China to track the locations of Federal employees and contractors, and build dossiers of personal information.”

- Please assess the potential intelligence risks associated with these applications including the risk to State Department personnel and their families overseas.

Answer. Since I have not been in government for the last five years, I am not privy to any classified assessments or intelligence that has informed this administration's or the last administration's executive orders. However, I take seriously the threat posed by the use of Chinese-developed software, hardware, firmware or Chinese-operated communication networks, and I believe it is vitally important that U.S. departments and agencies conduct threat and risk assessments of any and all foreign-owned—especially Chinese—software, firmware and hardware to minimize the risk posed to U.S. government employees and their family members.

If confirmed, I will ensure that INR provides the best available intelligence and analysis to help inform policy decisions about what steps to take to minimize the Chinese counterintelligence risk to State Department personnel and their families.

*State Department*

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF.

- Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I have a deep and sincere commitment to transparency and Congressional oversight of intelligence activities. If confirmed, I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*North Korea*

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you recommend that the Biden administration approach North Korea?

*Answer.* Our goal remains the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Our policy toward the DPRK will not focus on achieving a grand bargain, nor will it rely on strategic patience. Instead, the United States will take a calibrated, practical approach that is open to, and seeks to establish diplomacy with, the DPRK to make progress that increases the security of the United States, our allies, and our deployed forces. At the same time, the United States will continue to implement sanctions and work with our partners and allies to promote the full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. The United States will continue to consult closely with the Republic of Korea, Japan, and other allies and partners at every step of the way. If confirmed, I will work to support the administration's approach as we work toward this goal.

*Question.* What is the pathway to denuclearization and a stable, peaceful and prosperous Korean Peninsula?

*Answer.* The United States will pursue diplomacy and dialogue, based on previous commitments such as those in the 2018 Panmunjom Declaration and Singapore Joint Statement, while continuing to implement U.S. sanctions and working with partners and allies to promote implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. This will be essential to achieve the complete denuclearization of and a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. The United States will take a calibrated, practical approach to make progress that increases the security of the United States, our allies and our deployed forces. The United States has and will continue to consult closely with the Republic of Korea, Japan, and other partners as we pursue complete denuclearization and a stable, peaceful and prosperous Korean Peninsula. If confirmed, I will work to support that objective and advance our diplomacy to that end.

*Question.* What does success with North Korea look like?

*Answer.* Our goal remains the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The United States will take a calibrated, practical approach that is open to and seeks to establish diplomacy with the DPRK to make progress that increases the security of the United States, our allies and our deployed forces. This will be essential to achieve the complete denuclearization of and a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. If confirmed, I will work to achieve that goal.

*Burma*

*Question.* If confirmed, what are the first three steps that you would recommend to the Secretary to reset our policy towards Burma?

*Answer.* If confirmed, first, I will continue to use all tools available to exert pressure on the junta and deny the regime international credibility. I will encourage the international community to do the same in order to restrict the junta's access to financial institutions and enhance scrutiny of any financial ties to or transactions with the military. I will further strengthen our robust engagement within the U.S. interagency to identify ways to exert pressure on the military regime, including financial pressure applied both bilaterally and multilaterally. Second, if confirmed, I would work to continue to support Burma's pro-democracy movement, including the "National Unity Government" (NUG), various ethnic and religious groups, and others working peacefully to restore Burma's democratic transition. The United States will continue to encourage our partners, allies, and other members of the international community to engage representatives of the pro-democracy movement, including in international organizations and major international events. Third, if confirmed, I will continue to promote human rights, justice, and protections for members of Burmese civil society and all people from Burma, and encourage other countries to adopt programs similar to the Temporary Protective Status (TPS) extended to people from Burma in the United States in March for 18 months. In sum, if confirmed, I will utilize every tool and opportunity available to the United States and the international community to expose the junta's horrific brutality, deny the junta credibility, promote accountability, and support the human rights and aspirations of the people of Burma, who yearn for democracy and do not want to live another day under military rule.

*South China Sea*

*Question.* I welcomed the Trump administration's clarification of our legal position on China's unlawful claims in the South China Sea. But, as you know, international law is not self-enforcing, and having now taken this position, it is critical that we make our legal position a reality, not just rhetoric.

- What does the Biden administration intend to do to implement this new approach? What consultations are you planning with partners and allies on how to forge a unified approach to the South China Sea?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has reaffirmed the July 2020 policy statement on the U.S. position on maritime claims in the South China Sea and regularly consults with partners and allies to support international law in this crucial waterway. The United States has made clear that we stand with Southeast Asian claimant states in resisting Chinese intimidation. The administration is committed to using all of the tools at its disposal—diplomatic, military, economic, and informational—to uphold a free and open South China Sea. If confirmed, I would support U.S. efforts across each of these domains.

Freedom of navigation and adherence to international law in the South China Sea are vital interests for the entire international community. As a result of U.S. diplomatic efforts with allies and partners in Asia and beyond, we have seen a greater willingness by countries to underscore the importance of making and pursuing maritime claims in accordance with international law. Ten nations, including the United States, have formally protested China's unlawful maritime claims through the United Nations. An increasing number of countries are also demonstrating their commitment to freedom of navigation through transits, presence operations, and working with Southeast Asian claimants to strengthen their maritime domain awareness and law enforcement capacity. If confirmed, I would support the many U.S. programs designed to build our partners' maritime capacity. Moreover, if confirmed, I would also support the activities of the U.S. military, including freedom of navigation operations and presence operations, designed to demonstrate that U.S. forces will fly, sail, and operate anywhere that international law allows.

*Hong Kong*

*Question.* How can the United States—working with our partners in the international community—be effective in exercising leverage to support the people of Hong Kong?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will stand united with our allies and partners in speaking out for human rights and fundamental freedoms, promoting accountability for the PRC's assault on Hong Kong's autonomy, and seeking to support people in Hong Kong. I will strengthen coordination with allies and partners on joint actions and messaging, recognizing that a multilateral approach will have the greatest effect in promoting accountability and stopping Beijing's erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy.

Together with partners and allies, I will continue to demonstrate the depth of international concern about Hong Kong and the strength of international support for Hong Kongers.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Indo-Pacific Strategy*

*Question.* What should our main goals be in the short-, medium-, and long-term be in the Indo-Pacific? What are the areas in which the State Department can strengthen its role in pursuing these goals?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, to achieve this, I will work to revitalize ties with our allies and partners; prevail in our strategic competition with China; reduce the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile programs; support inclusive economic policies that benefit all Americans; promote democratic resilience and respect for human rights; and address global priorities, particularly combating COVID-19 and the climate crisis. Investing in our capabilities and working with allies and partners, including in regional organizations, will be critically important to prevailing in our strategic competition with China and in defending the international rules-based order, its foundational values, and international law. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with Congress in advancing these priorities.

*Question.* In terms of specific regional initiatives, what aspects of the Trump administration's Indo-Pacific strategy will be retained; what will be changed; and what will be discarded?

*Answer.* The Trump administration recognized that the United States has deep and enduring interests in the Indo-Pacific. The Indo-Pacific region accounts for half the world's population and two-thirds of global economic growth, and it sits on the front lines of our strategic competition with China. To protect U.S. interests in this important region, if confirmed, I will deepen ties with our allies and partners, including regional organizations, and promote the values we share, including the rules-based international order and freedom of the seas and skies, prosperity, good governance, and human rights. I will work to prevail in our strategic competition with China while countering PRC attempts to erode the international rules-based order. The United States will remain focused on enhancing U.S. economic engagement in the region, including on infrastructure, clean energy, and the digital economy. If confirmed, I will also work together with partners to address shared challenges such as transnational crime, climate change, pandemic recovery, global health security, and the threat posed by the DPRK's nuclear program.

*Vaccines for the Indo-Pacific*

*Question.* Several Indo-Pacific countries, such as the Philippines—a U.S. treaty ally—have purchased U.S. vaccines directly from U.S. companies. Do you believe the United States should lift export controls on its vaccines so that these countries can secure the supplies they have purchased? Do you believe U.S. allies and partners should receive priority for delivery of vaccines purchased?

*Answer.* The administration's top priority is saving lives and ending the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is a global challenge that requires a global response, and we have not imposed any bans on the export of vaccines or vaccine inputs. If confirmed, I will work with the rest of the U.S. Government to facilitate access to vaccines to countries in need. We are working with partners to increase vaccine manufacturing and distribution, as well as to respond to country requests. Our principles for sharing U.S. vaccines include achieving broad global coverage and responding to surges and other urgent situations and public health needs, while being responsive to country requests. The administration considered public health criteria, including the potential impact of the donated doses in reducing the global burden, incidence, and severity of COVID-19 and limiting the emergence and spread of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern. We also considered factors such as the effect on U.S. national and economic security and recipient countries' access to other sources of vaccines.

*Question.* Which countries would you consider to be priority countries for U.S. vaccines in the Indo-Pacific? What is the country-by-country breakdown of the vaccine donations that the Biden administration has already announced in the Indo-Pacific, whether through COVAX or through bilateral donations?

*Answer.* On June 3, the administration announced that the United States will share at least three-quarters of its first 25 million donated vaccine doses (approximately 19 million) through COVAX. Of these doses, approximately seven million will go to the Indo-Pacific: India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Maldives, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, Laos, Papua New Guinea, Taiwan, and the Pacific Islands. Of the remaining 25 percent of the 25 million vaccine doses (approximately six million) to be shared directly, the Republic of Korea has received one million Johnson & Johnson doses. Our principles for sharing U.S. vaccines include achieving broad global coverage and responding to surges and other urgent situations and public health needs, while responding to country requests. We also considered factors such as the effect on U.S. national and economic security and recipient countries' access to other sources of vaccines. If confirmed, I commit to making combating the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthening global health security in the region a top priority.

*Question.* With regard to U.S.-purchased vaccines: Your answer indicates that the United States has not imposed any sort of export restrictions with respect to U.S. manufactured COVID-19 vaccines. Does this mean the administration has no restrictions—including de facto restrictions—on U.S. companies delivering vaccines purchased via a commercial contract? Please explain.

*Answer.* The United States has not imposed any bans on the export of vaccines or vaccine inputs. The United States is committed to using all available tools, including the Defense Production Act (DPA), to expand domestic vaccine manufacturing and ensure that all Americans can be vaccinated quickly, effectively, and equitably. But these actions are not export prohibitions, and manufacturers in the United States are free to export such products so long as they first fulfill the terms of their contracts with the U.S. Government. What we're all dealing with here is a global shortage of materials—that's a very different issue and separate from the DPA. Pfizer and Moderna are now exporting doses abroad and we have already lifted the DPA priority ratings for AstraZeneca, Novavax, and Sanofi.

*Question.* With regard to U.S.-donated vaccines: The United States is also buying up vaccine stocks and donating them to other nations. Are our donations being prioritized over commercial orders? If so, how are we prioritizing those donations (including for countries seeking vaccines commercially and through COVAX simultaneously)?

*Answer.* On the 500 million Pfizer doses, thanks to our work scaling up Pfizer's manufacturing, they will be able to deliver on these 500 million doses without relying on the Defense Production Act. The world is embarking on an unprecedented vaccine production effort and there is more production demand than can be supplied at this time. At the same time, the United States Government orders make up a small part of the demand on supply, and the manufacturing companies are making the allocation decisions.

Our work on a vaccine supply strategy is guided by a three-part approach. First, having successfully secured enough vaccine supply for Americans, we are donating surplus U.S. vaccine supply and encouraging other countries with surplus supplies to do the same. We will continue to donate additional vaccine doses across the coming months as supply becomes available—but we know that won't be sufficient. So, second, we are working with U.S. vaccine manufacturers to significantly increase vaccine supply for the rest of the world. And third, we are working with our partners, investment entities, pharmaceutical companies and other manufacturers to create the kind of global vaccine production and manufacturing capacity and capabilities that can not only help the world beat this pandemic, but also help prepare the world to respond to potential future threats.

*Question.* Please provide a country-by-country breakdown of vaccine donations to the Indo-Pacific as stated in the question. Of all the donations announced, how many doses will each country receive (and when)?

*Answer.* On June 4, 1.1 million doses of the J&J vaccine arrived in the Republic of Korea. On June 20, 2.5 million doses of the Moderna vaccine arrived in Taiwan. We are in active conversations with potential recipient countries about needs, absorptive capacity, and national vaccine plans, as well as logistics and legal considerations, and that will in part determine allocation and distribution plans. As we do so, we will work through logistics like coordinating with country health ministries and organizations like UNICEF and the World Health Organization, as appropriate. Our immediate goal is to get doses on the ground as quickly as possible—but again, this is a complex logistics operation. We will continue to work to keep you all updated as these doses land in country.

On June 21, the Biden-Harris administration announced plans to allocate the remaining 55 million doses towards the commitment to donate 80 million doses by the end of June, including: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Pacific Islands. We continue to work with the White House and the interagency to facilitate access to these doses.

#### *COVID Origins*

*Question.* Do you support a thorough investigation by the U.S. Government into the origins of COVID-19? Do you commit, if confirmed, that EAP will prioritize this issue and contribute to any State Department or interagency processes? Will you commit that EAP will not prevent the release of findings or outcomes of the investigation that could potentially strain our relationship with China?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has made clear it supports a robust and transparent investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. The administration has called for a second phase of the World Health Organization's investigation into COVID-19 that must take place in China and have full access to all information on the origins of the virus. An impartial public health investigation into the origins and early spread of any novel outbreak is vital to protecting against future health security threats. It is imperative to have transparency on the early events of the pandemic and determine how COVID-19 spread so future emergence events with pandemic potential can be averted. The Biden-Harris administration has committed to continuing to review all available information about the origins of COVID-19, and President Biden has requested the U.S. intelligence community redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information relevant to the origins of the virus, report back on their analysis and their recommendations for areas of further inquiry that may be required, including specific questions for the PRC. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring EAP continues supporting these efforts to identify the origins of the pandemic and will share relevant information with Congress as appropriate.

#### *Biosecurity Issues*

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S. Department of State has a role to play in determining whether the United States conducts, funds, or engages in research and development or other cooperation on gain-of-function research or other potentially high-risk research related to pathogens, viruses, or toxins? From your perspective, what role should EAP play in cases where these concerns relate to Indo-Pacific countries within EAP's purview?

*Answer.* The Department of State participates in the interagency processes, led by the National Security Council and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, that address oversight policies for research that might pose particular concerns. These policies require careful consideration of risks and benefits, and where appropriate, measures to mitigate risks. Subject to these policies, decisions about the funding of specific research proposals are made by the responsible funding agency. If confirmed, I will work with other State Department bureaus and the interagency to make sure that EAP provides any necessary information in a timely manner to make informed decisions in the best interest of the United States.

*Question.* Should the United States conduct, fund, or engage in research and development or other cooperation on gain-of-function research or other potentially risky research related to pathogens, viruses, or toxins with countries where we have concerns about any or all of the following: (1) biosecurity standards, (2) violations of the International Health Regulations, (3) intellectual property theft of vaccines or health-related technology, or (4) compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention?

*Answer.* Factors that bear on the risk of accident, misuse, or misappropriation should be taken fully into consideration in considering whether to conduct, fund, or engage in such research. Federal funding and oversight policies help guide these decisions for research that might pose particular concerns. These policies require careful consideration of risks and benefits, and where appropriate, measures to mitigate risks. If confirmed, I will work with other State Department bureaus and the interagency to make sure that EAP provides any necessary information in a timely manner to make informed decisions in the best interest of the United States.

*Question.* What is the benefit to the United States and to global health more broadly of providing to China innovative intellectual property related to vaccines?

*Answer.* Incentives for innovation, including the protection of intellectual property (IP), are crucial to support innovative new treatments against COVID-19 and other devastating diseases. The United States supports voluntary licensing agreements on



mutually agreed terms and opposes forced technology transfer. The administration believes strongly in IP protections and the importance of safeguarding U.S. innovation from illicit acquisition. The decision to support a waiver of IP protections for COVID-19 vaccines reflects the extraordinary circumstances of this pandemic. We are committed to working with other WTO members and will be clear-eyed about potential risks as we enter text-based negotiations. These negotiations will take time given the consensus-based nature of the WTO and the complexity of the issues involved. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to support efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen global health security in the region.

#### *Defense Issues*

*Question.* Do you believe that extended deterrence is foundational to U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region? Will you commit that you will advocate against policies, whether declaratory policy or otherwise, that erode or dilute U.S. extended deterrence commitments?

*Answer.* Yes. Extended deterrence is foundational to U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I commit to advance policies that strengthen our extended deterrence commitments to our allies and partners.

*Question.* In your experience, how would U.S. treaty allies react to major change in U.S. declaratory policy with respect to nuclear weapons, such as the declaration of a sole purpose doctrine? What impact would declaration of a sole-purpose doctrine have on U.S. extended deterrence commitments in the region, and therefore overall stability and security in the region?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to maintaining a strong, credible deterrent to defend the United States and our allies, while also taking steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons. Extended deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region plays a critical role in advancing U.S. national security interests, including providing assurance to allies and promoting nonproliferation. If confirmed, I commit to advance policies that strengthen our extended deterrence commitments to our allies and partners. If confirmed, I will also consult closely with our allies and with Congress as we review the vital role the U.S. nuclear arsenal plays in extended deterrence.

*Question.* Will you prioritize the issue of overseas basing by the People's Liberation Army, as raised by Deputy Secretary Sherman on her recent trip to Cambodia?

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about the PRC's military presence and construction of facilities at Ream Naval Base on the Gulf of Thailand. During her recent trip to Cambodia, Deputy Secretary Sherman sought clarifications on the demolition of two U.S.-funded buildings at Ream without notification or explanation and observed that a PRC military base in Cambodia would undermine its sovereignty, threaten regional security, and negatively impact U.S.-Cambodia relations. Maintaining an independent and balanced foreign policy is in the best interests of the Cambodian people. If confirmed, I will make this a priority issue.

*Question.* Is the status of the Philippines and Thailand as States Parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons consistent with their treaty alliances with the United States?

*Answer.* U.S. alliances with the Philippines and Thailand are forged in common experiences and shared values, and they serve as an anchor for peace and security across the Indo-Pacific region. The United States remains fully committed to these deep and abiding alliances. If confirmed, I will consistently convey current U.S. policy to oppose the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which does nothing to address pressing proliferation and security challenges.

*Question.* How can the United States expedite providing advanced and critical capabilities to Indo-Pacific treaty allies and other key partners? Do you commit to prioritizing expediting such capabilities to regional allies and partners?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and Congress to ensure Indo-Pacific treaty allies and key partners are receiving the advanced and critical defense and security capabilities necessary for their national security and to advance the U.S. national interest in peace and stability of the region.

Each year, the United States provides hundreds of millions of dollars in security assistance and cooperation to critical allies and partners to advance our foreign and national security goals for the region. This assistance provides training, equipment, and assets to security partners across the Indo-Pacific region.

The United States arms export regime ensures close allies and partners have access to advanced capabilities, provided they have a track record of protecting the technology, respecting human rights, and using the equipment for its intended pur-

pose. The State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs continually reviews exports available for important Indo-Pacific allies.

#### *Economic Engagement*

*Question.* What role can the State Department play in expanding U.S. economic engagement in Southeast Asia? What are the current obstacles to U.S. commercial activity in that part of the region?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with partners and allies to address Southeast Asia's most pressing economic needs: access to expertise and capital to help build the infrastructure, energy, and digital foundation to allow these countries to grow their economies. Through major economic initiatives like the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network, Asia Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy, and the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership, the State Department and our interagency partners are providing technical assistance, commercial advocacy, and financing for projects. We will also continue to engage through APEC, ASEAN's economic track, and further deepen our commercial engagement through events like the annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum to underscore the U.S. commitment to the region's economic growth. If confirmed, I will also ensure that our diplomats in the region fight for every job and the interests of American workers by insisting on market access and fair treatment, stopping intellectual property theft and currency manipulation, and combating corruption.

*Question.* Do you commit to robust support of the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network? Will you prioritize coordination and cooperation with the interagency on deployment of U.S. Government tools to support infrastructure abroad?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to prioritizing coordination and cooperation with the interagency to promote quality infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific region. The Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network plays a key role in providing the technical assistance, advocacy, and financing tools necessary for the region's growth. I commit to continuing the program's efforts to promote transparent, private-sector infrastructure investments in the region.

#### *Energy Policy*

*Question.* The Biden administration has taken multiple steps to prevent the United States from engaging with other countries on coal, oil, and natural gas. This includes disallowing the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation from financing fossil fuel development projects. In the Indo-Pacific, nations like Vietnam and Indonesia are still heavily reliant on coal and gas and are not in an economic position to switch to other alternative fuels quickly. In the absence of U.S. engagement or engagement from other partners like Japan, what alternatives will Southeast Asian countries have in satisfying growing energy demands? Is it in the U.S. interest, for example, for these countries to become reliant on coal from China, which is building and financing coal plants all over the world?

*Answer.* The Indo-Pacific presents concurrent challenges of rapidly growing energy demand coupled with reliance on unsustainable fossil fuels, aging infrastructure, and outdated market mechanisms to deliver energy requirements. U.S. engagement to address these challenges, while simultaneously reducing greenhouse gas emissions, will focus on bolstering partners' energy security, supporting sustainable development goals, and implementing decarbonization strategies.

If confirmed, I will work with other State Department bureaus as well as with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation—and through the Asia Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy (EDGE) program and the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network (ITAN)—to support countries' improved energy efficiency, the deployment of renewable energy infrastructure and technologies, and financing for projects in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### *Counter PRC Malign Influence Fund*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to conduct oversight of how funds are appropriated to the Countering PRC Malign Influence Fund (originally called the Countering Chinese Influence Fund) and how they are used by the Department? Do you commit that these funds will only be directed to projects and initiatives that have a direct nexus to malign influence from China? Do you commit that you will take steps to ensure this fund will not be pulled from to support efforts unrelated or tangentially related to China that the Department wants to fund for advancing other priorities?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Deputy Secretary and other senior leaders in the Department and at USAID to engage in a full review

of the CCIF to ensure the funds are used strategically in a manner that advances U.S. economic, diplomatic, military, and technological leadership in our strategic competition with China and in support of a stable and open international system. The PRC's use of coercive and corrupting tools of influence to undermine and interfere in countries are a major concern for the United States and our partners around the world. I support the CCIF's overall goals and objectives, including efforts to increase transparency and accountability associated with the Belt and Road Initiative.

*International Organizations and Human Rights*

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that the Government of Thailand respects freedom of expression and internet freedom?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize human rights in our relationship with Thailand, including on freedom of expression and Internet freedom. I believe that free and open access to, and the free exchange of, information and ideas, including through the Internet, is fundamental to democracy and important to all people. I will urge the Royal Thai Government to respect the rights of those who exercise their freedom of expression and to protect human rights across the board, consistent with Thailand's international obligations and commitments.

*China Human Rights*

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to pressure the Government of China to respect the rights of minority groups, in particular the Uyghurs, Turkic Muslims, Tibetans?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and to standing up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. If confirmed, I will work with partner and allies to address our shared concerns regarding the human rights situation in the People's Republic of China, and will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible for abuses.

*Hong Kong*

*Question.* As the Chinese Communist Party has increased its repression of the people of Hong Kong, how will you work to promote freedom of speech and expression?

*Answer.* The State Department will consider all available tools to promote freedom of speech and expression, including public diplomacy and statements, joint messaging with like-minded partners, the imposition of sanctions and visa restrictions, and the use of the Hong Kong Policy Act to underscore that Hong Kong is no longer autonomous. If confirmed, I will proactively support these efforts.

*Trafficking in Persons*

*Question.* In last year's State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, Singapore was ranked as a Tier 1 country after spending 10 years on Tier 2. Singapore has made significant strides in identification and protection of victims, partnering with NGOs and foreign governments to develop trainings for police and civil society, as well as building trafficking shelters.

In last year's State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, Singapore was ranked as a Tier 1 country after spending 10 years on Tier 2. Singapore has made significant strides in identification and protection of victims, partnering with NGOs and foreign governments to develop trainings for police and civil society, as well as building trafficking shelters.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to work with Singapore and like-minded stakeholders to capitalize on this success?

*Answer.* Singapore has taken steps to curb human trafficking, including through adoption of the 2014 Prevention of Human Trafficking Act, which criminalizes all forms of human trafficking. The State Department works closely with the Singapore Interagency Task Force on Trafficking in Persons and Singaporean civil society to address this challenge. If confirmed, I pledge to continue working closely with Singapore on anti-trafficking efforts.

*Question.* How can we use Singapore as a model for the region to support victims and eventually eradicate human trafficking?

*Answer.* The State Department believes Singapore's efforts can offer a positive example in combating trafficking in persons for other countries in the region. After spending ten years as a Tier 2 country, Singapore ranked Tier 1 in the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report for the first time since 2006. Singapore has demonstrated serious efforts in prosecuting labor trafficking, as well as with the identification and

protection of victims. Singapore has also partnered with foreign governments to offer victim identification trainings for its officials. The Government is also taking steps to prevent trafficking within its large migrant worker population by introducing new measures to decrease the risk of indebtedness for foreign workers. If confirmed, I will make combating trafficking in persons a priority, and will look for ways to use the Singapore experience as an example for other countries to study in making progress on these issues.

#### *Human Rights Regionally*

*Question.* The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated an already precarious human rights situation across Southeast Asia. Authoritarian governments have used COVID-19 restrictions as a facade to further squash dissent, protestors, online expression and discussion, as well as other practices of human rights. If confirmed, what are your priorities for protection of human rights regionally?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work across the interagency to promote human rights in the region and hold accountable perpetrators of violations and abuse. At the center of our whole-of-government efforts for a free and open Indo-Pacific is building the capacity of our partners to promote civil society, rule of law, transparency, and good governance across the region. I will prioritize addressing systemic challenges that enable malign influence, including the atrocities against Uyghurs and other minority groups in Xinjiang, as well as repression in Tibet; a further crackdown on freedom online; attacks against Burmese protesters; the assault on freedoms in Hong Kong; and the targeting of activists and journalists in places like Cambodia and Malaysia.

*Question.* How will you work with other stakeholders at the department, interagency, and on the ground regionally to combat the growing encroachment on human rights by authoritarian governments?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with our partners within the State Department, including the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as well as interagency partners such as USAID, Treasury, and DoJ, to promote anti-corruption and fiscal transparency, democracy assistance, youth and emerging leader development, media and internet freedom, and to protect fundamental freedoms and human rights for all in the region. I will also work with likeminded governments, civil society, and private sector partners to support and empower human rights defenders and civil society organizations.

#### *Burma*

*Question.* It has been roughly four and a half months since the violent military coup in Burma, endangering thousands and threatening ending democracy in country. Since the coup, we have seen thousands of arbitrary arrests, detentions, and a severe crackdown on human rights. If confirmed, how will you engage with the relevant stakeholders to support human rights defenders in country and work to return Burma to a civilian-led rule?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will utilize every tool and opportunity to expose the junta's horrific brutality, promote accountability, and support the aspirations of the people of Burma, including ethnic and religious communities, who yearn for democracy and do not want to live another day under military rule. The United States will continue to support Burma's pro-democracy movement, including the "National Unity Government" (NUG), various ethnic and religious communities, and others working peacefully to restore Burma's democratic transition. In addition, the United States will continue to encourage our partners, allies, and other members of the international community to engage representatives of the pro-democracy movement, including in international organizations and major international events.

The United States has also engaged the pro-democracy movement, including the NUG, at high levels, and has encouraged other countries to do so as well, which has served to further empower and support human rights defenders in the country. If confirmed, I will make it a top priority to support the Burmese people and work to return Burma to the democratic path chosen by its people.

*Question.* The plight of the Rohingya must also not be forgotten. I am deeply concerned about the potential forced return of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to Burma, which constitutes a violation of international law. What steps will you take alongside the bureaus of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), and alongside our international partners to support the already robust United States Government (USG) response to the Rohingya refugee crisis?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to promote justice and accountability for the atrocities and other abuses the military has committed against the people of Burma, and humanitarian assistance for all vulnerable communities in and from Burma, including Rohingya. The United States will continue providing this life-saving humanitarian assistance, including through ongoing coordination with international partners.

In addition to urging the military to restore the democratically elected government, release all those unjustly detained, and end violence, I will ensure achieving justice and accountability for atrocities against Rohingya remains pivotal to our policy. The United States continues to support the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees and internally displaced persons, when conditions allow.

During his confirmation hearing, Secretary Blinken promised a comprehensive review of military atrocities against Rohingya. If confirmed, I intend to support that process and secure international support for any determination made by the Secretary.

#### *Vietnam*

*Question.* The Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) bore witness or committed significant human rights abuses during the reporting period for the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, including torture, arbitrary killings, serious restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, significant corruption, trafficking in persons, as well as substantial interference with the freedom of assembly and association. If confirmed, please describe your action plan for engaging with the CPV regarding the improvement of human rights in country.

Answer. I am concerned about the human rights situation in Vietnam, and if confirmed, I would be committed to pushing for improvements. Despite progress in some areas, including labor rights, the trend of escalating harassment, unjust arrests and convictions, and increasingly harsh prison sentences of journalists and activists for peacefully exercising their right to express their opinions is deeply troubling. Vietnam is an extremely important partner in the Indo-Pacific region, but that partnership will reach its fullest potential only when the Vietnamese Government improves its human rights record.

If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Vietnam to improve its implementation of its human rights obligations and commitments. I will urge the Government of Vietnam to encourage law enforcement and the judicial system to effectively and fairly enforce existing constitutional guarantees and laws protecting human rights, including freedom of religion or belief. I will continue to raise our concerns with the Government of Vietnam, including during the annual U.S.-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue, and call on Vietnam to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, consistent with its international obligations and commitments.

#### *Repatriation of Foreign Terrorist Fighters*

*Question.* There are around 10,000 ISIS fighters housed at various detention facilities around the world. This includes at least 2,000 Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) that U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) characterizes as "hardcore foreign terrorist fighters." Many of these FTFs are housed at Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, like al Hol in northeastern Syria. The al-Hol IDP camp has become fertile ground for ISIS recruitment of vulnerable populations, posing a serious risk to global security. Despite this risk, countries with foreign terrorist fighters have failed to make any progress to date towards repatriating their nationals.

- Can you commit to working with countries in the East Asia Pacific region to help mitigate the threat posed by FTFs including through increased support to humanitarian agencies providing assistance to vulnerable IDP populations?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working with countries in the East Asia Pacific region to help mitigate the threat posed by FTFs, including through encouraging increased support to humanitarian agencies providing assistance to vulnerable IDP populations. I will also urge partners to provide additional support to vulnerable IDP populations within Syria. The U.S. Government strongly believes that repatriations—followed by appropriate prosecution of the FTFs in domestic courts of law—is the best way to keep these fighters off the battlefield and hold them accountable for their crimes. The United States regularly engages in diplomatic discussions with our local partners (including the Syrian Democratic Forces) and foreign allies on this dire issue. We have and will continue to work through ASEAN fora to address FTF issues and capacity building for the ASEAN Humanitarian Centre for disaster management.

*Question.* How do you plan to engage with EAP countries to advance repatriation efforts of their nationals, which remains a critical to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS?

*Answer.* The U.N. has expressed serious concern at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation at al-Hol and Roj camps in northeast Syria, and is urging all member states to repatriate their citizens without delay. If confirmed, I will urge partner nations to repatriate their citizens without delay. We continue to strongly encourage countries to take back their citizens from Syria and Iraq. The United States believes that repatriations, followed by a.) prosecution of FTFs would be the best way to keep fighters off the battlefield and address security threats; and b.) rehabilitation and reintegration of associated family members are the best ways to end the humanitarian crisis in al-Hol and Roj IDP camps.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In your engagements with Beijing, will you require meaningful progress as a precondition for further rounds of dialogue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the administration's approach to work with China when it is in our national interest to do, conducting practical, results-oriented diplomacy that will require meaningful progress from Beijing.

*Question.* Do you commit to raise issues that Beijing deems "sensitive"—such as human rights, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet, and the Uyghurs—regardless of whether doing so may affect the CCP's willingness to engage in further dialogue?

*Answer.* Yes. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and to standing up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. If confirmed, I will always be willing to speak out on behalf of our values.

*Question.* As you know, the CCP has failed to uphold many of its agreements with the United States. Xi Jinping told President Obama that Beijing would not use its intelligence services to steal intellectual property for commercial gain. Xi made the same promise to President Trump in 2017 and 2018, but this theft has not stopped. Xi promised President Obama that China would not militarize the South China Sea. And in Hong Kong, Beijing has violated its commitments under the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.

- Can you name a single bilateral agreement between the United States and the PRC that Beijing has honored in full and without later reneging?

*Answer.* China's failure to uphold past international commitments is a significant factor in how we will develop our approach to China. If confirmed, I will support the administration's approach of remaining clear-eyed and keeping these past shortcomings in mind as we deal with Beijing.

*Question.* Do you believe that the CCP can be trusted to uphold any of its commitments, including those pertaining to climate change?

*Answer.* I believe the United States must judge Beijing by its actions, not its words, and work with allies and partners to impose costs on China when it violates international norms and agreements. We know that addressing the climate crisis will require significant additional action by China. As such, we will continue to press Beijing to raise its climate ambition significantly during this critical decade. At the end of the day, we will consider what Beijing actually does—not what it says it will or won't do—to determine whether the PRC is serious about climate action.

*Question.* How will you ensure that Beijing fulfills its climate change commitments given its record of broken promises?

*Answer.* We know the climate crisis will not get addressed successfully without significant additional action by China. The Paris Agreement sets forth a robust transparency framework, under which Parties, including China, will need to report and be reviewed with respect to their greenhouse gas emissions and the extent to which they implement and achieve their respective nationally determined contributions. The United States will continue to press Beijing to raise its climate ambition significantly, including to update and implement existing Paris Agreement targets as ambitiously as possible. If confirmed, I would consider what Beijing actually does—not what it says it will or won't do—to determine whether the PRC is serious about climate action.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Chinese Communist Party's united front and intelligence activities inside the borders of the United States, and those of our allies and partners, challenge the integrity of our policymaking? Why and how should we address this problem?

*Answer.* It is important that we bring greater transparency to bear on PRC influence activities in the United States and abroad. China's use of information operations and other coercive and corrupting efforts to undermine and interfere in democracies poses a threat to the United States and our allies and partners. If confirmed, I will push back on Beijing's attempts to write the rules of the information age by working with allies and likeminded partners to support an affirmative, democratic vision for the global information space, while building resilience against these threats and exposing China's influence activity. I would also work to educate important U.S. constituencies, including state and local governments, on these threats.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you maintain the requirements that PRC diplomats report certain categories of meetings to the U.S. Government, including meetings with educational institutions and Chinese community groups?

*Answer.* It is important that there is transparency in China's influence activities in the United States. If confirmed, I commit to review this policy carefully.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you maintain the prior administration's designation of multiple Chinese media outlets as foreign missions, as well as its visa restrictions on PRC reporters (who frequently act as intelligence gatherers as much as reporters)? Are you prepared to explain and defend the difference between these PRC media outlets and a genuine free press?

*Answer.* It is important that there is transparency in China's influence activities in the United States. If confirmed, I will always be prepared to explain and defend the difference between China's state-run media outlets and a genuine free press.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you maintain the prior administration's policy of denying visas to certain classes of PRC-national researchers, including those who have concealed their affiliation with the People's Liberation Army?

*Answer.* National security is the State Department's top priority when adjudicating visa applications. It is a critical U.S. interest to make sure that we protect the technology and intellectual property that is produced in this country and that, if used to advance the PRC's military modernization, could undermine our security. We must likewise guard against efforts by visa applicants to unlawfully conceal information in the course of the visa application process and, where appropriate, take legal action. If confirmed, I will review the tools available to address these challenges, including visa policy.

#### *Chinese Influence Operations*

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to support Australia, and other victims of PRC economic coercion and United Front activities, to build resistance to the CCP's political influence inside their countries?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would not leave Australia and other allies and partners alone in the face of PRC economic coercion and United Front activities. We will face down these threats from a position of collective strength. I will work with the Global Engagement Center (GEC) to counter PRC propaganda and disinformation, including through programs that identify and expose the PRC's malign influence tactics and techniques and puncture Beijing's false narratives. I will also support continued coordination and cooperation through the counter disinformation working group with Australia, announced at Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) last year. U.S. and other foreign firms have also faced economic coercion such as boycotts and other pressure tactics for challenging PRC preferred narratives. If confirmed, I will work to align our actions with those of democratic and like-minded partners to counter these threats and to advance bilateral and multilateral efforts that build resilience abroad to PRC covert, coercive, and corrupt activities. Efforts to diversify supply chains, support increased trade between like-minded partners, and encourage best practices to screen potentially threatening investments will help to build resilience and reduce the impact of PRC coercion.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that human rights concerns are integrated into every senior bilateral engagement, and that specific prisoner cases are raised at the highest levels, both publicly and privately?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and to standing up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that human rights

issues are integrated into bilateral engagements with the People's Republic of China at all levels. This requires not only general statements but also raising specific cases, both publicly and privately, as appropriate.

*Question.* Do you see the link between China's pervasive, egregious human rights abuses, and its failure on so many other fronts to be a responsible global actor?

Answer. I am alarmed by human rights violations and abuses in China and call on PRC authorities to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms to which their citizens are entitled, consistent with China's international obligations and commitments. If confirmed, I will work to continue holding accountable PRC authorities responsible for abuse, while also countering PRC attempts to erode the international rules-based order.

*Question.* What are the appropriate tools for holding the PRC and its officials accountable for its atrocities against Uyghurs and other Muslims in Xinjiang? If confirmed, do you commit to using such tools in a timely fashion?

Answer. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is committing crimes against humanity and genocide in Xinjiang against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups. If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and deter future abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions.

*Question.* What actions can the U.S. take to address the issue of forced labor in Xinjiang, including to protect against retaliatory actions from China?

Answer. The U.S. Government has condemned the People's Republic of China (PRC) Government's retaliatory actions against individuals, businesses, and organizations that stand up for human rights. If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for PRC Government actors and entities responsible for the atrocities and human rights abuses in Xinjiang, including forced labor, and work with interagency partners to address PRC actions. I also commit to working with the like-minded countries and the private sector to counter economic retaliation against companies when they take actions to avoid complicity in PRC human rights and forced labor abuses.

*Question.* How can the U.S. best provide support to civil society actors in Muslim-majority countries who are conducting advocacy on this issue?

Answer. If confirmed, I will commit to working with partners and allies, civil society, advocates, and other groups around the world to address our shared concerns over the PRC Government's atrocities in Xinjiang.

*Question.* Will you work to ensure that discussions over arbitrary mass detention and forced labor in Xinjiang are integrated into trade discussions?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and to standing up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we continue integrating our Xinjiang concerns into bilateral engagements with the People's Republic of China at all levels.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions will you take to work with countries hosting Uyghur communities to ensure they do not summarily deport Uyghurs to China?

Answer. The PRC Government's atrocities in Xinjiang raise serious refoulement concerns. If confirmed, I will work with other governments to ensure that Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups that have escaped repression in Xinjiang are not forcibly returned to China.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States can and should use its diplomatic and economic leverage to protect Uyghurs from unjust deportation from other countries back to China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will consider all available tools to ensure that Uyghurs and other vulnerable individuals are not forcibly returned to China.

*Question.* Do you believe that the CCP is engaged in a deliberate campaign of cultural erasure against Tibetans, whose civilization is distinct from that of China and boasts its own rich language, literature, religion, and culture?

Answer. The PRC Government has deliberately suppressed the distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious identity of Tibetans. If confirmed, I will make addressing these abuses a priority.



*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to convey clearly to Beijing the United States position that we will not accept a Chinese-controlled process to select the next Dalai Lama?

*Answer.* The PRC Government should have no role in the succession process of the Dalai Lama or any other Tibetan Buddhist lama. If confirmed, I will call on the PRC to respect the religious freedom of Tibetans, including by ending its interference in the selection, education, and veneration of Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders.

*Question.* If the Chinese authorities attempt to force a politically chosen successor on the Tibetan people, will you commit to impose serious sanctions in response?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consider the use of all appropriate tools, including financial sanctions and visa restrictions, to promote accountability for PRC officials responsible for abusing the religious freedom of Tibetans, including by interfering in the succession process of the Dalai Lama, consistent with the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020.

*Question.* Would you, if confirmed, personally commit to pressing the PRC leadership to address Tibetan concerns through the resumption of dialogue with the Dalai Lama, or his representatives, without preconditions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with our allies and partners to press Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to achieve meaningful autonomy for Tibetans.

*Question.* Will you commit to regularly raise the case of the Panchen Lama and press for his release?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to engaging the PRC Government on the case of the Panchen Lama.

*Question.* Will you ensure that no U.S. official meets with, or provides a public platform to, the individual that Beijing appointed in his place?

*Answer.* The PRC Government should have absolutely no role in the succession process of the Dalai Lama. If confirmed, I will work to ensure all U.S. engagements reflect this position.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to direct our diplomatic missions in the region, including in Hong Kong, to do their utmost to assist Hong Kongers who fear political persecution under the National Security Law, and use all consular options, including Special Public Benefit Parole, to provide safe harbor?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that our diplomatic missions in the region, including Hong Kong, will continue to do their utmost to assist Hong Kongers who fear persecution, to include working to pursue all options, as appropriate, to provide avenues for those who seek to depart.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that the State Department maintains a high degree of pressure on Beijing for its violations of Hong Kong's autonomy and prioritizes this issue above all other competing interests in Hong Kong?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure the State Department will continue to put pressure on PRC and Hong Kong officials responsible for undermining Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy as promised in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and Basic Law. Maintaining Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy is a central focus of our policy toward Hong Kong.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to appoint only senior officers as Consul General who are strongly committed to the democratization of Hong Kong?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with State Department leadership and human resources to identify suitable candidates for Consul General who will carry out the Department's policy of advocating for Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy, promote fundamental freedoms and human rights, and build support for international pressure on the PRC to meet its obligations under the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to advocate on behalf of Hong Kong protesters who are imprisoned for violations of the so-called National Security Law, or for similar politically motivated charges, both in your private conversations with Hong Kong and PRC central government officials, as well as in public diplomacy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will advocate by any available means on behalf of Hong Kong people imprisoned on politically motivated charges. We continue to stand with the people of Hong Kong and for their human rights, and fundamental freedoms.

I will ensure that we continue to support the aspirations of people in Hong Kong and for the system and rights that the PRC promised them.

*Question.* Did you agree with former Secretary Pompeo's decision to decertify Hong Kong as sufficiently autonomous to warrant special treatment under U.S. law?

*Answer.* On March 31, in conjunction with the Hong Kong Policy Act Report, Secretary Blinken again certified to Congress that Hong Kong does not warrant differential treatment under U.S. law in the same manner as U.S. laws were applied to Hong Kong before July 1, 1997. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to work with Congress and our allies and partners around the world to stand with people in Hong Kong against the PRC's egregious policies and actions that undermine the autonomy and freedoms promised in the Sino—British Joint Declaration and Hong Kong's own Basic Law.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you use decertification and all other available means to deny legitimacy to the government of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region until the fundamental freedoms guaranteed under Basic Law are restored?

*Answer.* The State Department has a variety of policy tools available to deny credibility to the government of Hong Kong, including the Hong Kong Policy Act, under which we certified again this year that Hong Kong is no longer autonomous. In addition, under Executive Order 13936, the Department has authority to impose sanctions on Hong Kong and People's Republic of China (PRC) officials in connection with efforts to undermine Hong Kong's autonomy. The Hong Kong Autonomy Act also authorizes sanctions on foreign persons that materially contribute to the failure of the PRC to meet its obligations under the Sino-British Joint Declaration or Hong Kong's Basic Law, as well as on foreign financial institutions that knowingly engage in significant transactions with such persons. If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate all available tools and use them as necessary to pressure the Government.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to robust efforts to increase Taiwan's international space and to counter Beijing's attempts to isolate Taiwan in international organizations and beyond?

*Answer.* Yes. The Biden-Harris administration's support for Taiwan is rock-solid. If confirmed, I plan to continue to deepen our ties with Taiwan in the face of PRC efforts to constrain its international space and to support Taiwan's membership or meaningful participation in international organizations.

*Question.* If President Biden follows through with his campaign promise to assemble a summit of democracies, will you ensure that Taiwan is invited to participate and at the same level as other participants?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support President Biden's commitment to host a Summit for Democracy. I believe the global community of democracies would benefit from Taiwan's participation in such events and could learn from Taiwan's experience of democracy under pressure due to foreign malign influence, including disinformation campaigns that seek to undermine its democratic processes.

*Question.* Do you agree with former Vice President Pence's statement that "America will always believe that Taiwan's embrace of democracy shows a better path for all the Chinese people?"

*Answer.* Yes. Taiwan is a leading democracy and a critical economic and security partner. If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen U.S. ties with Taiwan as an important priority.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to use your position as Assistant Secretary to promote Taiwan as a model of democratic success that China and others should emulate?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will continue to work with allies and partners to highlight the positive role that Taiwan plays in addressing global challenges and encourage them to stand with Taiwan in defending against threats to its democratic values.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to do your utmost to ensure that Taiwan's requests for the sale of military equipment will be processed as quickly as possible?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will support making available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy.

*Question.* Will maintaining Taiwan's defense capabilities be a top priority for EAP under your leadership?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, in response to the growing PRC threat, I will continue deepening our unofficial security relationship with Taiwan to ensure it has sufficient capabilities to defend itself, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act.

The United States notified more than \$32 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but arms sales alone cannot ensure Taiwan's ability to defend itself, nor should the impact of arms sales be judged on total value alone. Our expanding security cooperation seeks to encourage Taiwan to prioritize cost-effective, resilient, distributed, and sufficient capabilities. We are also encouraging Taiwan to prioritize reserve force reform, civilian defense capabilities, and cybersecurity and critical infrastructure resilience.

U.S. security cooperation with Taiwan is calibrated to meet the threat from the PRC and is consistent with the U.S. "one China" policy, which is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the Three Communiques, and the Six Assurances. If confirmed, as part of that cooperation, I also will encourage Taiwan to spend on defense an amount commensurate with the growing threat it faces.

*Question.* Do you commit to wholeheartedly support the full scope of bilateral defense cooperation, including joint trainings and exercises and any other substantive exchanges that will enhance Taiwan's security posture?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will support engagement that would advance U.S. interests and foreign policy objectives. The United States has long maintained our abiding interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

In response to the growing PRC threat, we will continue deepening our unofficial security relationship with Taiwan to ensure it has sufficient capabilities to defend itself.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work with our U.N. Ambassador to look for bold and creative ways to promote Japan's candidacy for permanent membership on the U.N. Security Council?

*Answer.* A reformed Security Council that is representative, effective, and relevant is in the best interest of the United States and all U.N. member states. If confirmed, I would support a modest enlargement of the Security Council for both permanent and non-permanent members, provided doing so does not diminish its effectiveness or its efficiency, and does not alter or expand the veto. Regarding member state suitability, we remain principally focused on a country's ability and willingness to contribute to international peace and security.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work with your counterpart in Tokyo, and at the Department of Defense, to ensure that U.S. forces and Japanese forces are planning for possible Taiwan contingencies?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the United States and our allies and partners pool our collective strength to advance shared interests and deter common threats. We will underscore the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

*Question.* Will you encourage Tokyo to engage in security cooperation with Taiwan to complement existing U.S. cooperation with Taiwan?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will encourage our allies and partners to continue to work together to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values in the Indo-Pacific region. Japan is a capable, thoughtful, and dynamic ally that has helped us to secure our interests and values in Asia more effectively than we could have done alone.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to strengthen U.S. relations with Mongolia and protect its sovereignty against potential encroachment by the People's Republic of China?

*Answer.* Yes. Mongolia is a democracy and our strategic partner, and if confirmed, I will work to continue strengthening our bilateral relationship and supporting Mongolia's sovereignty.

*Question.* If President Biden follows through with his campaign promise to assemble a summit of democracies, will you ensure that Mongolia is invited to participate?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support President Biden's commitment to host a Summit for Democracy. Participating governments will be expected to deliver on both domestic and international commitments that advance democracy, fight corruption, and protect human rights. As a vibrant democracy, I expect Mongolia will be favorably considered for participation.

- Will you, as a matter of policy, seek to increase U.S. investment in Mongolia and bilateral trade ties?

Answer. Yes. As Mongolia's strategic partner and proud "third neighbor," the United States will continue to seek opportunities to increase both bilateral trade and U.S. investment in Mongolia.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work with your counterpart in Ulaanbaatar to promote programs to protect the Mongolian language, culture, and Buddhism, and wherever possible, to extend such promotion to Mongolians in the PRC?

Answer. Yes. Mongolia holds a unique place in world history and possesses a rich culture stretching back centuries. If confirmed, I will work to promote programs that protect Mongolian language, script, culture, and Buddhism, wherever they are found.

*Question.* Mongolia's presidential election on June 9, 2021 was conducted in a manner that was free and fair, but the incumbent president was blocked from running for reelection in a manner that many Mongolians found troubling. The Mongolian People's Party (MPP) now controls the presidency in addition to holding a supermajority in the parliament and yielding significant influence over the judiciary. If confirmed, do you commit to efforts to guard against democratic backsliding in Mongolia and to ensure that the MPP does not revert to its authoritarian past under the influence of its authoritarian neighbor?

Answer. Mongolia recently conducted a free and fair presidential election, its eighth since the country's peaceful transition to democracy in 1990. As strategic partners, Mongolia and the United States share a common commitment to democratic values and the strengthening of democratic institutions. The U.S. has a strong strategic interest in ensuring Mongolia remains a stable and viable democracy. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. tradition of working closely with our Mongolian counterparts to deepen their democracy and to strengthen good governance and civil society in Mongolia.

#### *Korea*

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to expand U.S.-ROK trade and investment ties, and encourage Seoul to diversify its trade and investment away from China in order to reduce its vulnerability to Chinese economic coercion?

Answer. The U.S.-ROK Alliance is bolstered by our strong and growing economic relationship and grounded in our shared democratic values. If confirmed, I will support the full and faithful implementation of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, which remains the foundation of our bilateral trade and investment relationship and an important pillar of our bilateral relationship. I will work, in cooperation with my U.S. Government colleagues, to continue to expand robust U.S.-ROK economic ties, promote Korean investment in the United States, and enhance our mutual prosperity and security through close collaboration on supply chain diversification, regular coordination on economic security matters, and enhanced cooperation between our two countries to advance our common vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific and world.

*Question.* What is your opinion of the South Korean Government's decision to ban the distribution of leaflets and other materials into North Korea by North Korean human rights organizations?

Answer. As a global policy, the United States advocates for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms around the world. With regards to the DPRK, if confirmed, I will continue to promote the free flow of information into, out of, and within the DPRK. It is critical for the North Korean people to have access to fact-based information not controlled by the North Korean regime. The United States promotes and supports freedom of expression around the world, including with valued allies like the Republic of Korea.

The United States has been in close contact with the ROKG to express our strong views about the importance of the free flow of information into the DPRK and freedom of expression.

We respect the fact that the ROK, as a democracy with an independent and strong judiciary, has tools in place to allow for review of the law.

If confirmed, I will continue to work with our partners in the NGO and North Korean escapee community to promote human rights in North Korea and North Koreans' access to information.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you respond to a resurgence of the protest movement in Thailand?

Answer. The United States supports freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly as essential to Thailand's democracy. The United States does not support any political party or position in Thailand; we support the democratic process,

human rights, and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Royal Thai Government to respect the human rights of those who exercise their freedom of expression. I will also call on the Royal Thai Government to respect the human rights of those who have been arrested or detained, including adequate access to medical care and the legal counsel of their choosing. Thailand is a valued U.S. ally and partner, and the strong relations we have built up over time allow the United States to engage constructively with the Royal Thai Government.

Our shared history, shared interests, and the common values that unite our peoples make me confident that we can continue to navigate these challenges for the good of both countries.

*Question.* How will U.S. policy promote human rights and democracy in Thailand going forward?

Answer. The United States strongly supports human rights and democracy in Thailand, the Indo-Pacific, and around the world. We are committed to a long-term partnership with Thailand, and the promotion of democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms has been a major part of U.S. engagement with Thailand for many years. If confirmed, I will continue to support our robust diplomatic engagement to advance democracy and the protection of human rights in Thailand. I will call on the Royal Thai Government to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to act in a manner consistent with its international obligations and commitments.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to counter PRC influence in Thailand and increase awareness of the risks of dependency on trade and investment from China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our alliance with Thailand and our partnerships in Southeast Asia, while also working to counter the PRC's malign influence in the region. I will review our approach to enhancing economic engagement with Thailand and regional partners. I will encourage internationally accepted best practices in trade and investment and an open and inclusive approach to economic development. Furthermore, if confirmed, I am committed to working with Thailand to combat COVID-19 and climate change; to strengthen our defenses, including in cyberspace; and to produce and secure the technologies of the future. Additionally, I will support Thailand as a regional leader in the Mekong region and key partner in the Mekong-U.S. Partnership.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do to deny legitimacy to the junta that seized power in February?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to use all tools available to exert pressure on the junta and deny the regime international credibility. In the immediate aftermath of the coup, we worked quickly to impose sanctions on those responsible for the coup, as well as state-owned enterprises and military-affiliated companies that are providing financial resources to the military regime. The United States has worked with our international partners to deny the regime access to hundreds of millions of dollars in resources in international financial institutions, as well as pushed for an arms embargo and restriction on the export of dual use technology. We have encouraged the international community to use all levers available to restrict the junta's access to financial institutions and enhance scrutiny of any financial ties to the military.

In addition, the United States has engaged the pro-democracy movement, including the "National Unity Government" (NUG), at high levels, which has served to further deny international credibility to the regime. If confirmed, I will utilize every tool and opportunity to expose the junta's horrific brutality, promote accountability, and support the democratic aspirations of the people of Burma, including ethnic and religious communities, who yearn for true democracy and do not want to live another day under military rule.

*Question.* Do you commit to block the junta's efforts to replace the legitimate representatives of Myanmar at international organizations?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make it a top priority to support the Burmese people and work to return Burma to the democratic path chosen by its people. The United States has strongly condemned the military's actions to overturn the will of the people of Burma as freely expressed in elections in November 2020. The United States has also engaged the pro-democracy movement, including the "National Unity Government" (NUG), at high levels, which has helped deny international credibility to the regime. The United States will continue to support Burma's pro-democracy movement, including the NUG, various ethnic and religious groups, and others working peacefully to restore Burma's democratic transition. If confirmed, I will

support U.S. efforts to continue encouraging our partners, allies, and other members of the international community to engage representatives of the pro-democracy movement, including in international organizations and major international events, and push for dialogue among all relevant stakeholders to secure a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Burma.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work with the Treasury Department to impose punishing sanctions on all industries that fund the Tatmadaw, including the oil and gas industry and the mining industry?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue our robust engagement within the U.S. inter-agency, including the Treasury Department, to identify ways to exert additional pressure on the military regime, including financial pressure. The United States has already sanctioned over 30 military leaders, adult family members, commanders, and military units responsible for the coup and the horrific violence. We have sanctioned top revenue generators for the military, including the largest military conglomerates, the Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) and Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited (MEHL). We have designated the largest state-owned enterprises in the gems, timber, and other sectors that the military has used to enrich itself at the expense of the people of Burma. In addition, we have successfully led an international effort with partners and allies, including the UK, Canada, and EU, to sanction the same individuals and entities, further denying the military international credibility and access to revenue.

While we have sought to impose significant sanctions on the regime, the United States has also been careful to avoid steps that could hurt the interests of the people of Burma and deepen the humanitarian suffering caused by the coup, and negatively impact our partners in the region. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that, in identifying potential additional targets designed to exert pressure on the military regime, including the oil and gas industry and the mining industry, we also continue to study and take into account the impact on the people of Burma.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Taiwan*

*Question.* If confirmed, will you restore the Trump administration's policy allowing our Taiwanese allies to display symbols of their sovereignty? If not, why not?

*Answer.* In keeping with longstanding U.S. policy across Democratic and Republican administrations, the United States Government does not permit displays of Taiwan sovereignty, including flags, on United States Government premises. Though the United States does not maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan, U.S. support for Taiwan has never been stronger, as demonstrated by, for example, ongoing arms sales designed to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, the provision of vaccines announced by three U.S. Senators during their visit to Taipei on June 6, and the repeated and unprecedented public mentions of Taiwan in the recent U.S.-Japan joint statement, U.S.-ROK joint statement, U.S.-EU joint statement, and G7 leaders' communique.

To deepen and broaden our unofficial relationship with Taiwan, the Biden-Harris administration also issued new Guidelines for Interacting with Taiwan ("contact guidance"), which are more permissive than any previous iterations. Taiwan has welcomed the new contact guidance, including through statements by President Tsai, Foreign Minister Wu, and TECRO Representative Hsiao. If confirmed, I will work to further develop our robust ties with our democratic partner Taiwan and ensure we fulfill our commitments under the Taiwan Relations Act.

*EO 14034*

*Question.* On June 11, the Biden administration published in the Federal Register Executive Order 14034, which revoked Executive Order 13942 of August 6, 2020 (Addressing the Threat Posed by TikTok, and Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain), Executive Order 13943 of August 6, 2020 (Addressing the Threat Posed by WeChat, and Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain), and Executive Order 13971 of January 5, 2021 (Addressing the Threat Posed by Applications and Other Software Developed or Controlled by Chinese Companies). Those three EOs had restricted applications controlled by Chinese companies. According to EO 13971, "[b]y accessing personal

electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, Chinese connected software applications can access and capture vast swaths of information from users, including sensitive personally identifiable information and private information. This data collection threatens to provide the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with access to Americans' personal and proprietary information—which would permit China to track the locations of Federal employees and contractors, and build dossiers of personal information.”

- Please assess the potential intelligence risks associated with these applications including the risk to State Department personnel and their families overseas.

Answer. Under Executive Order (E.O.) 13873, Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain, the Secretary of Commerce evaluates potential threats to the United States presented by information and communications technology or services designed, developed, manufactured, or supplied by persons owned or controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction or direction of the People's Republic of China and other designated foreign adversaries.

To enhance this effort, on June 9 President Biden issued E.O. 14034, which instructs the Secretary of Commerce to evaluate transactions involving foreign adversary-connected software applications that may pose a risk to Americans' data, utilizing clear criteria that may indicate a heightened risk, including software applications that are owned, controlled, or managed by persons that support foreign adversary military or intelligence activities, or are involved in malicious cyber activities, or involve applications that collect sensitive personal data. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues at the Department of Commerce in assessing these risks, as well as the risk to State Department personnel and their families overseas.

#### *State Department*

*Question.* The Obama administration was broadly criticized, especially in the context of its Middle East policy, for co-mingling unclassified documents with classified documents. This practice requires that documents be placed in a secure location, unnecessarily limiting access to unclassified documents and stifling public debate. The Biden administration already seems to be repeating such practices: according to an exchange during the State Department press briefing on February 11, a notification describing the lifting of terrorism sanctions on Iran-controlled terrorists in Yemen was unnecessarily transmitted to a Congressional SCIF. Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working to ensure that information provided to Congress is, to the fullest extent possible, in a format that facilitates its access by authorized personnel, while complying with Executive Order 13526, the Department of State classification guide, and the executive branch rules on the handling and storage of classified information.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. DANIEL J. KRITENBRINK BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* Ambassador Kritenbrink, I would like to bring to your attention the case of Greg Kelly, a Tennessee constituent who, in my view, has been wrongly detained for nearly three years in Japan. I'm deeply concerned about Mr. Kelly's treatment by the Japanese legal system.

After being taken into custody in November 2018, Mr. Kelly—who maintains his innocence—was forced to wait for nearly two years for his trial in Japan even to begin in September 2020. News media now report that it has been proven at trial that the entire case against Greg Kelly was fabricated for the sole purpose of preventing Renault from taking over Nissan. There is no deadline by which the court in Japan must deliver a verdict in Mr. Kelly's case, and he likely faces the prospect of no decision until well into next year.

- If confirmed, do you commit to working with me and to using every tool at your disposal to get Greg Kelly back to the United States and home with his family?

Answer. One of the most important tasks of the Department of State and U.S. embassies and consulates is to provide assistance to U.S. citizens who are incarcerated or detained abroad. We take this obligation to assist U.S. citizens arrested or detained abroad seriously. Mr. Kelly's case is a high priority for the Bureau of Con-

sular Affairs and the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. The Department is actively monitoring Mr. Kelly's case and Embassy Tokyo's American Citizens Services unit has been in frequent, regular contact with Mr. Kelly and his legal teams. While the Department cannot intercede on the merits of his case, the Department monitors developments in his case very closely. The Department continue to urge the Japanese authorities to ensure Mr. Kelly's trial and verdict are concluded as expeditiously as possible. If confirmed, I will make Mr. Kelly's case a priority, and I look forward to working closely with you and your office on his case.

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, and Hagerty.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee shall come to order. We are here to consider nominees for four important positions: Ambassador Gentry Smith to the Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security, Ambassador Rena Bitter to be Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, Ms. Monica Medina to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, and Mr. Marc Knapper to be the Ambassador to Vietnam.

Congratulations to the four of you on your nominations, our thanks for your willingness to serve our country in this capacity, and the members of your family because this is a family sacrifice as well. So we appreciate their sacrifices.

I see that our distinguished colleague and member of this committee, the senator from Massachusetts, is going to be introducing Ms. Medina this morning.

So we will turn to him first before any opening statements.  
Senator Markey?

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much and Ranking Member Risch, thank you so much as well.

It is my pleasure this morning to introduce President Biden's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environment and Scientific Affairs, and my friend for 38 years, Monica Medina.

It is impossible to think of anyone more qualified for this job.

The CHAIRMAN. You knew her in your infancy then?

Senator MARKEY. And, again, I am now in the infancy of my second adulthood, as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee makes it possible for us to enjoy extended political life expectancy.

It is impossible to think of anyone more qualified for this job. Monica has been working for decades and across multiple administrations on environmental law and policy.

She understands the interconnected world we live in and knows that the 21st century U.S. foreign policy goes not simply beyond the water's edge, but to the seas and the skies and the sands of the world where universal threats and their solutions lie.

Monica won a Reserve Officers Training Corps scholarship while at Georgetown University, and while working at the Defense Department in the Obama administration, she worked to end discrimination against women in the military, to provide them with opportunities that were previously closed to them simply because of their gender.

Monica has always been a fierce fighter for justice and never backs down from a tough challenge, and she has confronted some of the world's toughest global challenges.

Ms. Medina has called out the connection between illegal wildlife trafficking and organized criminal networks. She has fought against illegal fishing, which is tied to global piracy and human rights violations.

Just like the climate crisis, these are global spanning threats to our national security, and Monica's expertise in these areas is why former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and the Center for Strategic and International Studies have turned to her as an expert and advisor.

Monica knows that we cannot protect ourselves at home without a robust strategy abroad, and diplomacy is not just something that she has practiced in international work. She has worked across the aisle with stakeholders from different states and industries in the United States to protect our oceans and our ocean economy.

After the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, she worked with the five Republican governors of affected states to get \$1 billion in restoration funds from oil company BP so that states could quickly start rebounding from the disaster.

Her work at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was praised by groups like the Seafood Harvesters of America, who support her experience and legacy of protecting our oceans, and the workers and communities that depend upon them.

Louis Pasteur once said that science knows no country because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.

Science is the highest personification of the nation because that nation will remain the first which carries the furthest the works of thought and intelligence.

Monica Medina has dedicated her career to promoting America's excellence in these two realms, the tools of science and the values of humanity, because it is there where America's excellence and promise to the world is to be found.

She knows that, and throughout her distinguished career, she has become supremely prepared for the role of Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Science.

She has been training for it in every position in which she has served, every mission that she has fulfilled, every discussion she has held with key stakeholders.

I am so grateful for her continued commitment to our country and planet, as well as for our years of friendship, and I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting her for this important position.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey. A rather glowing introduction—

Senator MARKEY. Well deserved.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. And we know that you have, I am sure, well earned. I know that you may have other committee business to do, and so at your leisure you are welcome to depart from us, and thank you for your introduction.

Let me turn to our panel, speak briefly about each of them, turn to Senator Risch, and then we will listen to your testimony.

Ambassador Smith has served the United States and the State Department during his entire professional career with two and a half decades, ensuring the security of U.S. diplomatic personnel and U.S. citizens here and abroad.

He has been a special agent protecting the secretary of state, the regional security officer in multiple foreign posts, a deputy assistant secretary and senior advisor in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

He has served as director for the Office of Foreign Missions for which he was previously confirmed by the Senate. There is no question in my mind that he is fully qualified and deeply experienced for this position.

Ambassador Smith's experience and commitment will be needed, as the State Department faces multiple challenges in keeping its personnel safe, including a relatively new one.

Indeed, U.S. personnel have recently faced the prospect of silent stealthy assaults from what may be some sort of directed energy weapons, first employed in Cuba and now showing up in other parts of the world.

These incidents deserve the full attention of the United States in order to ensure accountability and that the parties responsible are brought to justice, but most of all, to protect personnel.

So, Ambassador Smith, I trust that, if confirmed, you will be devoted in your efforts to meet this and all threats against U.S. diplomatic and other personnel.

Ms. Medina, as our colleague, Senator Markey has said, your knowledge and experience, including as Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Oceans and Atmosphere at the Department of Commerce and in various leadership roles focused on ocean conservation and environmental policy, suits you well for this position.

If confirmed as Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Oceans, International, Environmental and Scientific Affairs, you will be responsible for maintaining U.S. leadership on cooperative efforts to maintain the health and sustainability of the world we all share.

If confirmed, you will also be responsible for managing U.S. diplomacy on addressing global plastic pollution, protecting endangered species, and combating wildlife trafficking, representing the U.S., the Montreal Protocol, and the Arctic Council, among others.

I know you are up to that challenge. As you may know, I co-authored the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act, and I look forward to working

with you on the next steps to combating plastic pollution and other global environmental problems.

Ambassador Bitter, I am pleased to see you back before the committee. Your service in Laos these past several years, apparently, may not have made headlines in Washington, but it has been with distinction.

The position you are nominated for as Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs is perhaps one of the most challenging positions in the department today.

The effects of the COVID pandemic have been particularly felt in the CA on the massive repatriation of American citizens abroad carried out by the department last year, to the financial challenges resulting from the consular office fee-for-service model at a time when fees have dried up as a result of decreased international travel.

That is something that has changed dramatically. We have now a huge demand and a big backlog on passports, which several colleagues on the committee have raised with me. I am sure that may be raised with you as to how we deal with it.

The mismanagement of the department, broadly speaking, and the Consular Affairs in particular over the past four years leaves the next Assistant Secretary with no shortage of challenges.

As Consular Affairs is also the part of the department that has the most engagement with American citizens processing passports and visas, supporting overseas travelers in need, and the like, it is also a bureau that receives a high level of congressional scrutiny.

While the challenges in the bureau are evident, I am confident in your abilities and capacity to serve capably in this position.

Finally, I am pleased to see Marc Knapper before the committee for consideration as our next ambassador to Vietnam.

We look to develop a genuine strategic partnership with Hanoi, one animated by our shared interests and our values, and I can think of few more qualified Foreign Service professionals than Mr. Knapper to be entrusted with this important task.

In closing, while the four of you have a series of challenges ahead, I am confident that your knowledge and experience will serve you well as you take on your new responsibilities upon confirmation. I look forward to each of your testimonies.

And with that, let me turn to the distinguished ranking member for his opening comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank the witnesses for being here today and being willing to serve in these positions, and your families, who we know share the sacrifices that you make.

I want to start with the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environment and Scientific Affairs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed what I believe to be serious gaps in U.S. international pandemic prevention, preparedness, and, importantly, response efforts. This includes the failure of the Department of State over multiple administrations of both parties

to adequately prioritize global health policy and diplomatic engagement beyond the PEPFAR program.

We now realize how important that is. PEPFAR, of course, was an exception to that. It was very successful, and it is important that we duplicate the success that we had in PEPFAR in what will undoubtedly be future challenges of a global health nature.

Ms. Medina, if confirmed, you will lead the bureau responsible for ensuring foreign policy coherence and program integrity for global health and biosecurity.

I look forward to hearing from you how you plan to improve State's leadership in these vital areas, which, as I said, I think suffer some shortcomings, which have become painfully obvious as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, COVID-19 has brought to light the risks of collaboration on life sciences research with countries that do not share our interests like China.

If confirmed, you will have a role in overseeing international scientific cooperation and global health security, and it is critical that you work across the department to prevent the misuse of such research.

Lastly, as we discussed when we met last month, the Columbia River Treaty remains an important issue to myself and the rest of the Northwest delegation. I look forward to hearing more about how you plan to make Columbia River Treaty negotiations a priority.

Next, we have the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security. For decades, the State Department has struggled with what has been dubbed colloquially a bunker mentality, which greatly over-prioritizes security to the detriment of our diplomatic effectiveness.

Security is undoubtedly very important, but as with all things, it must be put in its proper place. This severe risk aversion often keeps our diplomats cooped up behind embassy walls instead of engaging with the local community and conducting traditional diplomacy.

America's adversaries do not place similar burdens on their diplomats, putting the United States at a strategic disadvantage.

Earlier this year, I introduced legislation to improve the process for investigating security incidents abroad so that the department's diplomats can safely do their jobs, promote U.S. interests with host countries, and engage local populations with appropriate protection.

If confirmed, it will be vitally important to ensure the department learns to manage risk more effectively.

Ambassador Smith, I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these issues.

Moving on to the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, the Bureau of Consular Affairs has a unique opportunity to demonstrate how the State Department assists U.S. citizens every day while also advancing our national interests.

Whether it is helping Americans who lost a passport on vacation get home or visiting U.S. citizens who have been incarcerated abroad, Consular Affairs often directly serves the American people.

However, last year's travel restrictions and resulting loss of visa fee revenue greatly hurt the Bureau's finances, potentially affecting its ability to provide these important services.

As vaccination rates climb, there will be more people seeking to travel. Demand for passports and visas are rapidly increasing, leading to significant delays in processing times.

Ambassador Bitter, I look forward to hearing your plan to get Consular Affairs fully operational and to reduce these extremely irregular passport processing times.

Finally, we have the nomination of Ambassador to Vietnam. Vietnam is an important U.S. partner and an ASEAN member. I am very glad to see the recent U.S. donation of 2 million Moderna vaccine through COVAX to Vietnam in addition to separate donations to Indonesia and Malaysia.

Southeast Asian countries need vaccines. Given the importance of this region to the United States and the pressure some countries are facing from China to accept its clearly substandard vaccines, it is crucial that the United States continue to prioritize deliveries to our partners there.

We need to redouble our efforts following the nontransparent COVAX procurement deal announced earlier this week that will allow China to profit mightily from the distribution of its substandard vaccines, all of this very erotic.

Beyond vaccines, I think it is crucial that we advance collaboration with Vietnam in important areas such as the South China Sea and the Mekong region, and the crisis in Myanmar.

We should also continue to prioritize all forms of energy engagement, including liquefied natural gas.

Finally, in closing, I continue to support engagement with Vietnam to promote freedom of speech and religion.

Mr. Knapper, I look forward to hearing how you will tackle all these issues if you are confirmed.

We have a lot to cover today, and I will yield back.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

All right. We will start our testimony from our nominees. We would ask you to summarize your statement at about five minutes.

All of your full statements will be included in the record, without objection, and we will start with Ambassador Smith and then move down the aisle.

Ambassador Smith?

**STATEMENT OF GENTRY O. SMITH, OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [DIPLOMATIC SECURITY]**

Mr. SMITH. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

I am grateful for the confidence that the president and Secretary Blinken have placed in me and I am humbled by the opportunity to lead such an outstanding organization.

In the 105-year history of diplomatic security, I am just the third DS agent to be nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary.

In my 30-year career with the Foreign Service, I am proud to have served as a DS agent for 27 years prior to my appointment as the director for the Office of Foreign Missions, a position that I held into my retirement in 2017.

I would like to thank you for your continued and unwavering support for both the department and for diplomatic security. I am very proud to be associated with the outstanding women and men who labor tirelessly to protect America's diplomatic facilities, critical information, and, most importantly, American lives.

They also conduct extensive important law enforcement investigations necessary to keep our country safe.

I want to thank my wife, Georgette, our adult children and their spouses, and our six adorable grandchildren for the love and support and for allowing me to return to rejoin an institution that I love.

It is, indeed, an honor to lead the dedicated special agents, security engineers, diplomatic couriers, security technicians, and other specialized personnel in providing a secure environment in which to conduct U.S. foreign policy.

I first joined Diplomatic Security in 1987 after proudly serving as a police officer in Raleigh, North Carolina. These were the early days of building the Diplomatic Security Service.

I grew up in the organization as it grew to meet increasing global security challenges as well as domestic challenges and U.S. national security interests.

Having served in Cairo during both Gulf wars and Rangoon during a period of unrest and uncertainty that rivals the current situation, I am familiar with the importance of strong leadership and requisite security operations.

Upon returning to the U.S. and serving in senior positions in Diplomatic Security, I am proud to have collaborated closely with other department colleagues, the intelligence community, DOD, and members of Congress to construct and improve diplomatic facilities here and abroad while enabling our personnel to project U.S. Government interests around the world.

I am also proud and honored to have received Senate approval to lead the Office of Foreign Missions during my last tenure with the department.

My body of work within the department and subsequent experiences as an independent consultant in the private sector is what has prepared me to assume leadership as the assistant secretary for Diplomatic Security.

I am aware that there will always be challenges as we seek to advance U.S. interests around the world. With support and continued guidance from members of this committee and Congress as a whole, my top priority, if confirmed, will be to help to ensure that the department effectively protects its physical assets, information, and, most importantly, lives.

At the same time, however, I recognize that effective diplomacy is virtually impossible without the ability to take considered risk in service of strategic goals and objectives.

It will be my responsibility to evaluate various threat-mitigating strategies and help the department make the best possible calculations in support of American diplomacy.

Risk management is particularly critical in high-threat countries, most notably at the moment in Afghanistan as American troop levels are drawn down.

Closer to home, we need to do more to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within our ranks, while empowering diplomatic security agents to conduct effective investigations in support of protective details, as well as passport and visa fraud.

The recent SolarWinds intrusion has underlined the importance of DS' role in maintaining a 24/7 watch on the department's global cyber infrastructure, a challenge which promises to intensify over the coming years.

I also look forward to overseeing further improvements in our law enforcement and other security training at the department's new Foreign Affair Security Training Center in Blackstone, Virginia.

Finally, if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this body to ensure your interests and concerns are properly address and that we work together to protect our personnel, facilities, and national interests abroad and domestically.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I am happy to entertain any of your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. GENTRY O. SMITH

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. I am grateful for the confidence that the President and Secretary Blinken have placed in me, and I am humbled by the opportunity to lead such an outstanding organization. In the 105-year history of Diplomatic Security, I am just the third DS agent to be nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary.

In my 30-year career with the Foreign Service, I am proud to have served as a DS Agent for 27 years prior to my appointment as Director of the Office of Foreign Missions—a position I held until my retirement in 2017. I would like to thank you for your continued unwavering support for both the Department and Diplomatic Security. I am very proud to be associated with the outstanding women and men who labor tirelessly to protect America's diplomatic facilities, critical information, and, most importantly, American lives. They also conduct extensive, important law enforcement investigations necessary to keep our country safe.

I want to thank my wife Georgette, our adult children and their spouses, and our six adorable grandchildren for their love and support, and for allowing me to rejoin an institution that I love. It is indeed an honor to lead the dedicated Special Agents, Security Engineers, Diplomatic Couriers, Security Technicians, and other specialized personnel in providing a secure environment in which to conduct U.S. foreign policy.

I first joined Diplomatic Security in 1987, after proudly serving as a Police Officer in Raleigh, North Carolina. These were the early days of building the Diplomatic Security Service. I grew up in the organization as it grew to meet increasing global security challenges, as well as domestic challenges to U.S. national security interests. Having served in Cairo during both Gulf Wars and in Rangoon during a period of unrest and uncertainty that rivals the current situation, I am familiar with the importance of strong leadership and requisite security operations. Upon returning to the U.S. and serving in senior positions in Diplomatic Security, I am proud to have collaborated closely with other Department colleagues, the Intelligence Community, DoD and Members of Congress to construct and improve diplomatic facilities here and abroad while enabling our personnel to project U.S. Government interests around the world. I am also proud and honored to have received Senate approval to lead the Office of Foreign Missions during my last tenure with the Department.

My body of work within the Department, and subsequent experience as an independent consultant in the private sector, is what has prepared me to assume leader-



ship as the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security. I am aware that there will always be challenges as we seek to advance U.S. interests around the world.

With support and continued guidance from members of this committee and Congress as a whole, my top priority, if confirmed, will be to help ensure the Department effectively protects its physical assets, information, and, most importantly, lives. At the same time, however, I recognize that effective diplomacy is virtually impossible without the ability to take considered risks in service of strategic goals and objectives. It will be my responsibility to evaluate various threat mitigation strategies and help the Department make the best possible calculations in support of American diplomacy. Risk management is particularly critical in high threat countries, most notably at the moment in Afghanistan as American troop levels are drawn down.

Closer to home, we need to do more to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within our ranks while empowering Diplomatic Security agents to conduct more effective investigations in support of protective details, as well as passport and visa fraud.

The recent SolarWinds intrusion has underlined the importance of DS's role in maintaining a 24/7 watch on the Department's global cyber infrastructure—a challenge which promises to intensify in the years to come.

I also look forward to overseeing further improvements in our law enforcement and other security training at the Department's new Foreign Affairs Security Training Center in Blackstone, Virginia.

Finally, if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this body to ensure your interests and concerns are properly addressed, and that we work together to protect our personnel, facilities, and national interests abroad and domestically.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Ambassador Bitter?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. RENA BITTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLOMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [CONSULAR AFFAIRS]**

Ms. BITTER. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the trust they have placed in me.

It is with no small measure of humility that I approach the responsibility before me, if confirmed. I believe there is no part of the Department of State more directly responsible for the security and well-being of Americans at home and abroad than the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

In fact, diplomats have been serving their fellow citizens abroad in consular missions since before the Constitution was written.

These are the oldest and most vital functions of the Department of State. Consular work is not glamorous and it can often be heart-breaking. But colleagues in the bureau do not do this work for recognition. They are the truest of public servants, working under sometimes very difficult conditions on behalf of the American people.

For a recent example, the men and women of the Bureau of Consular Affairs led the repatriation of nearly 100,000 Americans at the beginning of the pandemic, often risking their own health and safety.

The Senate recognized this effort with Senate Resolution 567 commending the department for its efforts on behalf of our fellow citizens.

I would also like to add my thanks to the Bureau for all it does on behalf of the American people, much of which takes place below their notice.

If confirmed, it would be the honor of a lifetime to lead this extraordinary team. I have had many jobs and many proud moments during the span of my 27-year career, but the proudest have revolved around Consular Services.

In Amman, my team issued the very first Special Immigrant Visas for Iraqi translators at the start of that program in 2006. I understand on a very personal level the U.S. Government's commitment to the men and women who serve beside us.

Another proud moment was more recent as ambassador when I received a letter from two grieving New England families whose newlywed children were tragically killed while on their honeymoon in Laos.

The families wrote to thank me for the compassionate support they received from our embassy team during their time of immeasurable grief. They enclosed their children's joint obituary from their hometown paper, in which the families thanked our consular officer by name.

As I said, the work can often be heartbreaking, but it is vital and never more so than now. President Biden promised to craft a foreign policy for the middle class. A strong healthy Bureau of Consular Affairs will be critical to this effort.

But the global pandemic has taken a toll on the bureau. I know the department is very grateful to Congress for its support for consular services over the last several months.

I am aware that the bureau has had to make some difficult decisions due to pandemic-related constraints on space and resources. More difficult decisions lie ahead. But prior to the pandemic, international visitors contributed more than \$260 billion to the U.S. economy and directly supported millions of jobs, and we must get back there again.

If confirmed, my top priority will be that we do, to see that the bureau is able to meet the need for consular services even in this constrained resource environment and with the continued uncertainty of the global pandemic.

A related priority, if confirmed, I will work with department stakeholders and our partners in Congress to develop a more resilient funding model so the bureau will always have a stable platform from which to carry out its mission.

Finally, I believe the Bureau of Consular Affairs has no more important partner than Congress. The Department of State is charged with representing the interests of U.S. citizens around the world with reminding foreign governments that the United States has no higher priority than the welfare of its citizens, and with ensuring that our foreign policy reflects that goal.

I believe executing these responsibilities are at the heart of the mission that the president and secretary have entrusted me with and to which I am prepared to dedicate all my energy.

If confirmed, I will advocate for your constituents. On a personal note, I would like to thank my family and my family of friends, who have put up with long absences over the course of my career,

and then generously welcomed me home as if I had never been gone. Many of them are here today or watching.

When I last had the honor to appear before this committee, my nephew, Josh, was among them sitting behind me. He died in December, and today, as every day, we mourn his absence.

But I think he would be pleased to know that our love for him would be memorialized in the Congressional Record, and I thank the committee for indulging me in doing so.

With that, I thank you and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bitter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RENA BITTER

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the trust they have placed in me. It is with no small measure of humility that I approach the responsibility before me if confirmed. I believe there is no part of the Department of State more directly responsible for the security and well-being of Americans at home and abroad than the Bureau of Consular Affairs. In fact, diplomats have been serving their fellow citizens abroad in consular missions since before the constitution was written. These are the oldest and most vital functions of the Department of State.

Consular work is not glamorous and can often be heartbreaking. But colleagues in the Bureau do not do this work for recognition. They are the truest of public servants, working under sometimes very difficult conditions on behalf of the American people. For a recent example, the men and women of the Bureau of Consular Affairs led the repatriation of 100,000 Americans at the beginning of the pandemic, often risking their own health and safety. The Senate recognized this effort with Senate Resolution 567, commending the Department for its efforts on behalf of our fellow citizens. I, too, would like to add my thanks to the Bureau for all it does on behalf of the American people, much of which takes place well below their notice. If confirmed, it would be the honor of a lifetime to lead this extraordinary team.

I have had many jobs and many proud moments during the span of my 27-year career. But the proudest have revolved around Consular services. In Amman my team issued the first Special Immigrant Visas for Iraqi translators at the very start of that program in 2006. I understand on a very personal level the U.S. Government's commitment to the men and women who serve beside us. More recently, as Ambassador, I received a letter from two grieving New England families whose newlywed children were tragically killed while on their honeymoon in Laos. The families thanked me for the compassionate support they received from our Embassy during their time of immeasurable grief, and they enclosed their children's joint obituary from their hometown paper, in which they thanked our consular officer by name. As I said, the work can be heartbreaking.

But its vital and never more so than now. President Biden promised to craft a foreign policy for the middle class -- a strong, healthy Bureau of Consular Affairs will be critical to this effort. But the global pandemic has taken a toll on the Bureau. I know the Department is grateful to Congress for its support for Consular Services over the last several months. I am aware that the Bureau has had to make some difficult decisions due to pandemic-related constraints on space and resources. More difficult decisions lie ahead. But prior to the pandemic international visitors contributed more than \$260b to the U.S. economy and directly supported millions of jobs. We must get back there again. If confirmed, my top priority will be to ensure that we do—that the Bureau is able to meet the need for Consular services, even in this constrained resource environment and with the continued uncertainty of the global pandemic.

A related priority—If confirmed I will work with Department stakeholders and our partners in Congress to develop a more resilient funding model so the Bureau will always have a stable platform from which to carry out its mission.

Finally, I believe that Bureau has no more important partner than Congress. The Department of State is charged with representing the interests of U.S. citizens around the world, reminding foreign governments that the United States has no higher priority than the welfare of its citizens, and ensuring that our foreign policy reflects that goal. I believe executing that responsibility is at the heart of the mission that the president and secretary have entrusted me with, and one to which I

am prepared to dedicate all my energy. If confirmed, I will advocate for your constituents.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my family and my family of friends who have put up with long absences over the course of my career, then generously welcomed me home as if I'd never been gone. Many of them are here today or watching. When I last had the honor to appear before this committee, my nephew Josh was among them, sitting behind me. He died in December and today, as every day, we mourn his absence. I think he would be pleased to know that our love for him would be reflected in the congressional record and I thank the committee for indulging me to do so.

I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador, and our sympathies to you and your family for the loss of your nephew.

Ms. Medina, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF MONICA P. MEDINA, OF MARYLAND, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [OCEANS AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS]**

Ms. MEDINA. I want to begin by thanking Senator Markey.

Make sure my microphone is on. There. Can you hear me now?

Thank you, Chairman Menendez. I want to begin by thanking Senator Markey for that very kind introduction and for decades of friendship.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is a tremendous honor to appear before you today as the president's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans, International, Environmental, and Scientific Affairs, or OES.

I am deeply honored to be nominated by President Biden and for the trust that he and Secretary Blinken have placed in me. I am also thrilled to have the chance to serve my country again.

I would like to begin by thanking my family. I am eternally grateful to my husband, Ron, and our grown children, Hannah, Michael, and Daniel, for their constant support and encouragement as I pursued a career in environmental conservation, even when it took me far from home.

I also must thank my mother, Jeanne, a retired middle school teacher, who, through her passion for elephants and other wildlife, taught me the importance of biodiversity to life on Earth.

If confirmed, I am eager to consult, engage, and collaborate with members of this committee and to build on your great work on ocean conservation, ending wildlife trafficking and illegal fishing, stemming the rise of future pandemics, fighting plastic pollution, and other OES issues of interest to you.

I would not be here today if it were not for the opportunity the U.S. Army gave me to attend Georgetown University on an Army ROTC scholarship at a time when there were not many women who received them.

Both my parents were teachers, and I could not have afforded a private university like Georgetown otherwise, and my dream was for a career in government and law.

I could not have imagined then that my scholarship would lead me to where I sit today, that I would serve twice in the Pentagon, once in uniform, work in positions of responsibility on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee staff, at the Depart-

ment of Justice, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Department of Commerce twice, and now, with your approval, at the State Department.

OES is at the forefront of our responses to the global challenge of the present and also the global challenge of the future. Clearly, our nation must continue to work to defeat COVID-19 globally and better prepare for and prevent future pandemics.

Likewise, there is no greater long-term threat to our safety and security than climate change. I look forward to supporting the administration's work on both these fundamental threats to our health, security, and prosperity.

I would, additionally, raise three areas of particular concern to me. My decades of experience attending and representing the U.S. at international meetings leads me to believe that there will be increasing global tensions over limited natural resources.

If confirmed, I would dedicate special attention to the following.

First, the loss of biodiversity is a crisis and it is often overlooked. But there is great bipartisan work being done here in Congress to conserve species globally and to assist countries in Africa, Asia, and the Americas in their efforts to do the same.

I greatly admire the International Conservation Caucus' efforts to work collaboratively with legislative counterparts from around the world to ensure that we do not lose elephants or rhinos or tigers or penguins or pangolins to extinction.

Second, the ocean needs our attention. There is too much tension, damage, and lawless behavior in the seas due to deep disagreements over a plethora of hot-button issues, such as excessive maritime claims, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, the dramatic changes and rapid development in the polar regions, and the disregard by bad actors of global shipping, safety, and security rules as well as pervasive plastic pollution and ocean chemistry changes.

I am very impressed by the work of the Ocean Caucus on these issues, and if confirmed, implementing the recently passed Save Our Seas 2.0 Act will be a priority of mine.

Finally, given the rapid growth and competition in space exploration and commercialization, space policy is at a key inflection point.

A new space race could escalate global tensions among superpowers and create problems for future generations if we do not work to ensure today that space actors are complying with their obligations under international law and space activities are pursued in a manner that is safe, responsible, and sustainable.

All of these issues also merit special attention by OES, in my view, because they are central to addressing our nation's strategic competition with China. Moreover, each of these challenges must be handled in a way that ensures the equitable inclusion of diverse stakeholders and the private sector in our solutions.

In tackling these and other challenges, I want to assure the committee that I will work every day on behalf of the American people with the goal of ensuring that our efforts around the world support Americans at home and make their lives better.

Thank you for considering me for this position, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Medina follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MONICA P. MEDINA

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is a tremendous honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, or OES.

I am deeply honored to be nominated by President Biden, and for the trust he and Secretary Blinken have placed in me. I am also thrilled to have the chance to serve my country again.

I would like to begin by thanking my family. I am eternally grateful to my husband Ron, and our children, Hannah, Michael and Daniel, for their constant support and encouragement as I pursued a career in environmental conservation even when it took me far from home. I also must thank my mother, Jeanne, a retired middle school teacher, who through her passion for elephants and other wildlife, taught me the importance of biodiversity to life on Earth.

If confirmed, I am eager to engage, consult, and collaborate with members of this committee and to build on your great work on ocean conservation, ending wildlife trafficking and illegal fishing, stemming the rise of future pandemics, fighting plastic pollution, and other OES issues of interest to you.

I would not be here today if it were not for the opportunity the U.S. Army gave me to attend Georgetown University on an R.O.T.C. scholarship at a time when there were not many women who received them. Both my parents were teachers and I could not have afforded a private university like Georgetown otherwise—and my dream was for a career in government and law. I could not have imagined then that my scholarship would lead me to where I sit today—that I would meet my husband, attend Ivy League law schools, serve twice in the Pentagon, work in positions of responsibility on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee staff, at the Department of Justice, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the Department of Commerce twice, and now, with your approval, at the State Department.

OES is at the forefront of our responses to the global challenge of the present and the global challenge of the future. Clearly, our nation must continue to work to defeat COVID-19 globally and better prepare for and prevent future pandemics. Likewise, there is no greater long-term threat to our safety and security than climate change. I look forward to supporting the administration's work on both of these fundamental threats to our health, security and prosperity.

I would additionally raise three areas of particular concern to me, and ones that, if confirmed, I would dedicate special attention to:

- The loss of biodiversity globally is a crisis and it is often overlooked. But there is great bi-partisan work being done here in Congress to conserve species globally and to assist countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas in their efforts to do the same. I greatly admire the International Conservation Caucus' efforts to work collaboratively with legislative counterparts from around the world to ensure we don't lose elephants or rhinos or tigers or penguins or pangolins to extinction.
- The ocean also needs our attention. There is too much tension, damage and lawless behavior in the seas due to deep disagreements over a plethora of hot button issues such as excessive maritime claims, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, the dramatic changes and rapid development in the polar regions, and disregard by bad actors of global shipping safety and security rules, as well as pervasive plastic pollution and ocean chemistry changes. I am very impressed by the work of the Ocean Caucus on these issues. If confirmed, implementing the recently passed Save Our Seas 2.0 Act will be a priority of mine.
- Finally, given the rapid growth and competition in space exploration and commercialization, space policy is at a key inflection point. A new space race could escalate global tensions among superpowers and create problems for future generations if we don't work to ensure today that space actors are complying with their obligations under international law and space activities are pursued in a safe, responsible, and sustainable manner.

All these issues also merit special attention by OES, in my view, because they are central to addressing our nation's strategic competition with China. Moreover, each of these challenges must be handled in a way that recognizes the disparity between developed and developing nations, and ensures the equitable inclusion of diverse stakeholders and the private sector in our solutions. In tackling these and

other challenges, I want to assure the committee that I will work every day on behalf of the American people, with the goal of ensuring that our efforts around the world support Americans at home and make their lives better. Diplomacy, cooperation, and compassion for our fellow residents of the planet we call home have never been more important.

Thank you again for considering me for this position, and I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Mr. Knapper?

**STATEMENT OF MARC EVANS KNAPPER, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

Mr. KNAPPER. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of this committee, for the opportunity today to appear before you. I am honored in the faith that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me.

I also want to express my deep love and gratitude to my wife, Suzuko, and our son, Alex, for their support and their sacrifice. They have repeatedly changed homes and schools and have been distant from family and friends so that we could serve the United States overseas. Without them, as well as my parents, Jay and Yolanda Saltsman, I would not be here today.

The United States-Vietnam relationship has undergone a profound transformation since the normalization of diplomatic relations 26 years ago, and my own family history tracks the arc of our relationship with Vietnam.

My late father, Marine Colonel Roger Knapper, was a decorated Vietnam combat veteran who often recounted difficult memories from his time at war. Yet, he also talked many times of his earnest wish to return to Vietnam and see that beautiful country at peace and thriving.

This wish was fulfilled three times during my previous service at our embassy in Hanoi, and although he will not make it back for a fourth visit, we will always be grateful for the efforts and sacrifices he and millions of other Americans have made during our long journey with Vietnam.

Our two countries have moved from a history of conflict to a comprehensive partnership that spans political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties.

If confirmed, I will work to continue developing the U.S.-Vietnam relationship across a wide range of shared interests in four key areas.

First, security. Our two countries have significantly expanded our security cooperation, including through U.S. support to strengthen Vietnam's maritime capabilities.

The U.S. and Vietnam share an interest in upholding international law and resisting China's provocative behavior in the South China Sea and Mekong region, and, if confirmed, I will make every effort to deepen our cooperation in this area.

Second, trade and investment. Bilateral trade with Vietnam has grown significantly, increasing from nearly nothing in 1995 to more

than \$90 billion in 2020, benefiting American manufacturers, farmers, and ranchers as well as consumers.

But despite this growth, challenges remain, and if confirmed, I will advocate for a level playing field for U.S. companies and investors, including by urging Vietnam to maintain equitable market access for U.S. digital services and agricultural products.

Third, war legacy and humanitarian issues. If confirmed, providing the fullest possible accounting for U.S. personnel missing from the Vietnam War era will be my solemn duty. Furthermore, for decades, Vietnam has provided critical assistance to those efforts and we are grateful.

Since 1993, the U.S. has also contributed more than \$160 million to mitigate lingering threats posed by unexploded ordnance, and together with Vietnam, we have successfully completed the remediation of dioxin contamination in Danang, and in 2019, we broke ground on another project to remediate dioxin at the Bien Hoa airbase.

Our cooperation on these issues as well as providing \$125 million since 1989 in humanitarian assistance, supporting over a million persons with disabilities regardless of the cause, has been an important foundation for our bilateral relationship.

Fourth, and finally, people-to-people ties. The bonds between the American and Vietnamese people are strong and growing.

Prior to the pandemic, nearly 700,000 Americans traveled to Vietnam annually, including more than 1,200 American students, and here in the U.S., we welcome 30,000 Vietnamese students each year. These people-to-people ties are an important bridge between our two countries.

All that said, our thriving relationship is not without its challenges. We remain deeply concerned about Vietnam's human rights record, in particular, reports of the troubling trend of harassment, arbitrary or unlawful arrests, unjust convictions, and harsh sentences of journalists and activists.

If confirmed, I will press the government of Vietnam to respect the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and religion and belief.

Only when we see significant progress on human rights can our two countries' partnership reach its full potential, and as always, my number-one priority will be protecting the safety and welfare of all United States citizens in Vietnam and I will also make the safety and welfare of Mission Vietnam personnel a top priority.

The thriving U.S.-Vietnam partnership is a result of the courage, goodwill, and painstaking work of dedicated people in both countries who believed in the possibility of peace and reconciliation between two former enemies.

Our overarching goal remains to advance American interests and support the development of a strong, prosperous, and independent Vietnam that contributes to international security and respects human rights and the rule of law.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Knapper follows:]



## PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARC E. KNAPPER

Thank you Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and distinguished members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored in the faith that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me.

I also want to express my deep love and gratitude to my wife, Suzuko, and our son, Alex, for their support and their sacrifice. They have repeatedly changed homes and schools and been distant from family and friends so that we could serve the United States overseas. Without them, as well as my parents Jay and Yolanda Saltsman, I would not be here today.

The U.S.-Vietnam relationship has undergone a profound transformation since the normalization of diplomatic relations 26 years ago. My own family history tracks the arc of the United States' relationship with Vietnam. My late father, Marine Colonel Roger Knapper, was a decorated Vietnam combat veteran, who often recounted difficult memories from his time at war. Yet, he also talked many times of his earnest wish to return to Vietnam and see that beautiful country at peace and thriving. This wish was fulfilled three times during my previous service at our Embassy in Hanoi. Although he will not make it back for a fourth visit, we will always be grateful for the efforts and sacrifices he and millions of other Americans have made during our long journey with Vietnam.

Our two countries have moved from a history of conflict to a Comprehensive Partnership that spans political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties. If confirmed, I will work to continue developing the U.S.-Vietnam relationship across a wide range of shared interests in four key areas.

First, security. Our two countries have significantly expanded security cooperation, including through U.S. support to strengthen Vietnam's maritime capabilities. Last year, Vietnam welcomed the USS Theodore Roosevelt, the second U.S. aircraft carrier to visit since we established diplomatic relations. The United States and Vietnam share an interest in upholding international law and resisting provocative behavior in the South China Sea and Mekong region, and if confirmed I will make every effort deepen our cooperation in this area.

Second, trade and investment. Bilateral trade with Vietnam has grown significantly, increasing from nearly nothing in 1995 to more than \$90 billion in 2020, benefiting American manufacturers, farmers and ranchers, and consumers. Despite the growth, challenges remain. If confirmed, I will advocate for a level playing field for U.S. companies and investors, including by urging Vietnam to maintain equitable market access for U.S. digital services and agricultural products.

Third, war legacy and humanitarian issues. Providing the fullest possible accounting for U.S. personnel missing from the Vietnam War era remains our most solemn duty. For decades, Vietnam has provided critical assistance to those efforts. Since 1993, the United States has contributed more than \$160 million to mitigate lingering threats posed by unexploded ordnance. Together with Vietnam, we successfully completed the remediation of dioxin contamination in Danang in 2018, and in 2019 we broke ground on the 10-year dioxin remediation project at the Bien Hoa airbase area. We have provided more than \$125 million since 1989 in humanitarian assistance, directly and indirectly supporting over a million persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause. Our cooperation on these issues continues to build a foundation of trust to expand our relationship.

Fourth, people-to-people ties. The bonds between the American and Vietnamese people are strong and growing. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 700,000 Americans traveled to Vietnam annually, including more than 1,200 American students. Here in the United States, we welcome 30,000 Vietnamese students each year. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of U.S.-Vietnam relations last year, we signed an agreement to bring Peace Corps volunteers for the first time ever, a significant and symbolic milestone.

Our thriving relationship is not without its challenges. We remain deeply concerned about Vietnam's human rights record, in particular reports of the troubling trend of harassment, arbitrary or unlawful arrests, unjust convictions, and harsh sentences of journalists and activists. If confirmed, I will press the Government of Vietnam to respect the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and religion or belief. Only when we see significant progress on human rights can our partnership reach its fullest potential.

As always, my number one priority will be protecting the safety and welfare of all United States citizens in Vietnam. I will also make the safety and welfare of Mission personnel a top priority.

The thriving U.S.-Vietnam partnership is the result of the courage, goodwill, and painstaking work of dedicated people in both countries, who believed in the possibility of peace and reconciliation between two former enemies. Our overarching goal

remains to advance American interests and support the development of a strong, prosperous, and independent Vietnam that contributes to international security, and respects human rights and the rule of law.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We will start a round of five-minute questions, and before I start my own line of questions, I have some overarching questions for the committee.

First, I have a few questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from all of you.

So I would like to ask each of you to provide a simple yes or no answer to the following questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Ms. BITTER. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. KNAPPER. Yes.

Ms. MEDINA. Yes. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Do you commit to keep the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ms. MEDINA. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. KNAPPER. Yes.

Ms. BITTER. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation when policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Ms. BITTER. Yes.

Ms. MEDINA. Yes.

Mr. KNAPPER. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ms. BITTER. Yes.

Ms. MEDINA. Yes.

Mr. KNAPPER. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Bitter, let me ask you, there is a lot of issues under what will be your portfolio. From the question of COVID vaccines for American citizens abroad, which will not be only within the responsibility of the Bureau of Consular Affairs but I cannot imagine that you will not be engaged in it, what do you think are the primary challenges for CA and the department, more broadly, on administering such a vaccine program in the face of a global pandemic for American citizens abroad?

Ms. BITTER. Thank you, Senator, I am aware of the concern that members of Congress have and also this issue, I know, is of great concern to many Americans. You know, the way that the depart-

ment has approached this is that it has worked in the interagency to try to make sure that vaccines are available to countries who have yet to acquire them.

And then within the department, we have tried to make available consular information to Americans abroad to ensure that they are aware of how they can get access to vaccines where they are available and make sure that they have information about local medical providers in healthcare, and that is the general form of consular services to those abroad.

And if there are particular needs, of course, the embassies abroad are always prepared to address consular services and whatever needs American citizens have.

The department has not typically provided medical care to private citizens. So I think there would be many challenges attendant upon that, not least of which would simply be the issues involved in just administering the vaccines. It would be quite challenging.

The CHAIRMAN. I hope we will think about—and I understand that the department has not been involved in delivering health care services to citizens abroad, but in the global pandemic, I hope we will think about how we help an American citizen living abroad, maybe because of work or some other reason, to find access to a vaccine, because when a country has its own vaccination program, of course, it is focused on its own citizens and so that leaves an American citizen in limbo, potentially.

So I hope we will give a little thought to how we can create a greater connection for American citizens abroad in that context.

Let me turn to the question of passports. As you may know, an artifact of the COVID crisis is the department remains considerably backed up on passport processing at the National Passport Center.

I was listening to several of our colleagues on the committee and my own experience back in New Jersey of citizens for months who have applied for their passport and cannot get a response and, of course, with the opening of the world and the surge in demand, there is a greater demand.

Do you have a sense—I know you are not there, but in your briefings do you have a sense of the current backlog and what is your thoughts about working to clear it up?

Ms. BITTER. Thank you, Senator.

I am very aware of this issue and I know it is very important to you and to your constituents. It is important to the department as well, and just I share your concern about the length of time that it is currently taking, and the department takes very seriously its responsibility in this area.

It is a very visible part of the work that the department does and it is important to get secure and efficiently issued visa—passports, rather, out to American citizens as quickly as possible.

You know, like many organizations, the bureau and its partners have been faced with ramping up in a situation where COVID restrictions are lifting more slowly than demand is rising. So it is a pretty fast-moving situation.

The department is reviewing each passport agency according to the science and deciding when they can fully reopen. So it is an evolving situation.

I know, again, that this is something of great concern to you and I would be very happy to work with my colleagues in Congressional Affairs to make sure that members and your staff can get up to the minute briefings and the most recent information.

But right now, I think it is taking, between the passport office and its partners, up to 18 weeks for passports that are not expedited to be processed.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Well, I will say that briefings are great. Actions are more important. What we really need is some type of surge capacity for a period of time to deal with the backlog.

I do not think that we can—many Americans, it is not just a question of travel for leisure, but it is travel for business again. It is travel to see family members who they may not have seen for well over a year and a half, two years, because of COVID. So it is about a family reunification issue as well.

I will tell the secretary as well, but I really urge you all to think about a surge capacity for a period of time to get us into a more reasonable period of time in which people have to wait.

Finally, not because there are not many more issues, but I appreciate the important work the department does to vet visas to assure there is no fraud and abuse.

But I can tell you I have a regular stream of complaints about the department's transparency and communication and sometimes its agility and responsiveness when it comes to processing visas for non-American family of U.S. citizens to visit the United States, student visas and work and business visas.

I am interested in your thoughts about where and how we can improve the visa application and processing system so that applicants, even if they are turned down, face an open, transparent, and rapid process that speaks to our best values as a nation.

I cannot tell you how many times—I know that an applicant has to overcome the hurdle of showing that they have roots in their country, that they are likely to return, that they are not likely to stay in the United States. I am very familiar with the immigration law in that respect. So that is a hurdle they must meet.

But I cannot tell you how many times I have had individuals who have properties in their country, businesses in their country, deep family ties in their country, and no reasonable expectation that they would stay in the United States, and many of them feel they get arbitrarily and capriciously just rejected.

So there is the feeling, you know, we want people in the world to think of the United States as a place that is welcoming and follows rules of law.

Yet, they feel that they have not had, so to speak, their day in court. I understand the incredible crush on consular officers. But we have to think of how we can process in a better way.

Do you have any thoughts on that?

Ms. BITTER. Thank you, Senator. I would not be telling the truth if I had not said to you that I have not heard those comments as well. I have. And I think they speak to issues of respect and issues of making sure that our consular officers are able to have what are sometimes quite quick interactions in a respectful and clear way. It can be a very challenging job.

But I am very conscious of the fact and we all are, in the department, and I know the Bureau of Consular Affairs is as well, that these officers are often the first or sometimes the only Americans that these host country nationals will meet, and it is enormously important that that interaction does reflect our values and does reflect the best that we have to offer.

So I take your point, and I share it and I share your concern, and if confirmed it would be my goal to make sure that every consular officer in every embassy and every interaction that they have with host country nationals reflects the diplomats that they are and reflects the best values of America.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I want to associate myself with the remarks regarding a surge to get caught up on the visas and passports.

Certainly, one of the great freedoms Americans have is the freedom to travel and also to welcome their non-American family members here to the United States and it is important we get caught up on that, as we go forward.

I want to focus, however, on another area that the chairman and I are working together on and that is global health. We are here where we are on the pandemic and we are really focused on vaccines today, and that is important. It is very important.

I think the only way we are going to get past this is a good vaccine program not only in the United States but around the world.

But, more importantly, I think we need to look to the future, and I think one of the most important things that this committee can do is to work on a protocol for the future and establishing protocols and infrastructure that will get all of the countries pulling the wagon together to address a global pandemic.

That did not happen this time. We all know that. There were major flaws, major holes in various countries attempted to get through this.

And so the chairman and I have been working on global health policy and a global health bill, and I hope, Ms. Medina, that you will familiarize yourself with that and commit to helping us get in place an infrastructure protocol for dealing with these things when they happen immediately.

There is no substitute for being able to address the challenge immediately, and that is primarily what our legislation is designed to do.

We all know, and the stories are legion, as far as the failures right at the beginning of this pandemic that caused no end of problems for the world, including the number of deaths. And so I would like to hear your thoughts on that.

Ms. MEDINA. Senator Risch, thank you very much for that question. And as you know, when we discussed it in your office and with your staff, there is no higher priority for the Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Science than dealing with the current crisis and preventing and preparing for future crises, and I look forward to working with you, if confirmed, to try and build up, bulk up, the ability of the bureau to be that repository of expertise and

to prepare the U.S. for what is likely to be additional challenges like the one we faced in the future.

And I look forward to working with you on your legislation and to hearing your thoughts, if confirmed, about how we could do that together.

Senator RISCH. Well, thanks. And I will tell you that we all know the United States Government is big, it is complex, it has got many agencies, and there is an important function that Congress can play and, hopefully, we will play with legislation that the chairman and I have been working on as far as resolving who is in charge and who makes those decisions because, again, sometimes you get people of equal stature in the Government making conflicting decisions, and somebody has got to straighten that out, and this legislation attempts to address that and, hopefully, will address that.

In addition to that, of course, it is the same thing internationally, and that is establishing some type of structure internationally where these kind of questions can be answered and answered clearly.

We had a lot of gray areas particularly during the early parts of the pandemic, and these, in the best interest of the American people, in the best interest of the world, need to be straightened out and that responsibility is right here with the Foreign Relations Committee.

So we are attempting to discharge that responsibility. We will, certainly, look to you for your assistance and help, and we believe that the State Department is the appropriate place as a clearinghouse for making these kind of decisions.

And, again, I fully appreciate that we are focused on vaccine right now. But it is really important that we walk and chew gum at the same time and prepare for the next pandemic.

So with that, my time is up. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN [presiding]. I understand we have Senator Booker by WebEx who is next.

[Pause.]

Senator CARDIN. I understand he is not available. We will go to Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you to my colleagues and congratulation to the nominees for your appointments. I have questions. I have a million questions for all of you. But in five minutes, I am going to ask questions of Mr. Smith and Mr. Knapper.

Mr. Smith, Virginia is the home for training of security professionals who work not only for the State Department in the capacity center that you referenced in your opening statement at Fort Pickett in Blackstone, Virginia, but also the Marine security guards that protect our embassies around the world are trained at a wonderful facility at Quantico.

I have worked very hard as a member of this committee over the nine years I have served on it to advance the security training of our State Department professionals.

The siting of the training center at Fort Pickett was something I was very involved in in the early part of my time on the committee.

It has come a long way and I think there is even more that can be done there, and I would hope at some point, should you be con-

firmed, to possibly visit with you so we could assess together its current status and what more might be done to enhance the security training of State Department personnel.

Mr. SMITH. If confirmed, Senator, I look forward to that, and thank you for your support.

Senator KAINE. Right. Thank you so much.

And, Mr. Knapper, with respect to Vietnam, I traveled on a bipartisan CODEL to Vietnam in April of 2019. It was a tremendous visit, and we found so much interest in deeper partnerships with the United States on military cooperation.

There was appreciation for the U.S. role, led by Senator Leahy for decades now, to work on cleanup of dioxins and other contaminants at military bases in Vietnam, and the warm welcome we received from Vietnamese officials and the Vietnamese public was very heartwarming.

But of the number of concerns I have about Vietnam, one that is most significant is the deplorable absence of press freedom. The organizations that rank countries in the world for press freedom put Vietnam very low on the list of recent ranking. Had them 175th out of 180.

One of the things that seemed pretty vibrant in 2019 was, while the press was being cracked down on, there was still a pretty vibrant and open internet culture. But that has also been significantly constrained in the last two years.

What can the United States do? What would you do as ambassador, should you be confirmed, to try to promote broader notions of press and freedom and freedom of speech in Vietnam?

Mr. KNAPPER. Well, thank you, Senator, and thank you to you and your colleagues for the great support that Congress has provided our bilateral relationship over the years.

As for press freedoms and other freedoms in Vietnam, I fully agree. We have serious, serious concerns. This is something that, if confirmed, I will make a focus of mine.

I think one way we can seek to improve the situation is just to never miss an opportunity to raise with senior Vietnamese officials our deep concerns and to underline the point that our relationship will never reach its full potential unless we are able to see improvements in some of these areas, whether it is freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly.

As you noted, the internet is increasingly a contested area for these basic freedoms and, you know, among the messages we can deliver to the Government of Vietnam is that they have signed on to a number of international treaties in which they have committed to support universal rights, such as those of freedom and assembly.

And so I think a point we can strongly make is that should Vietnam seek to earn its place in the international community as a leader it is going to have to abide by some of the commitments it has made internationally.

Senator KAINE. The last thing I will say about the U.S.-Vietnam relationship is one of the powerful, I think, attraction of the U.S. relationship to the Vietnamese people: Their deep concern about China and the historic animosity that they have had because of Chinese incursions into Vietnam.

Shortly before our visit, there were massive protests all around Vietnam that were a little bit unusual, street protests, and they were fomented by the Communist Party leadership of Vietnam prepping to do sort of a sweetheart deal where China and Chinese companies would be able to come into an economic zone without really any competition from anyone else.

And it was notable to see that the Vietnamese Government wanted to do it, that the Vietnamese people took to the streets to stop them from doing it, and that at least in some temporary way it caused the Communist Party leadership of Vietnam to step back.

There is a deep desire for deeper relationship with the United States to be a counterpoint to a China that has been so often an aggressor against Vietnam, and that is important for us to know and it is important for us to contemplate as we seek to build a deeper relationship with Vietnam.

I look forward to working with all of you should you be confirmed. Very high qualified panel.

Thank you. I yield back.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Senator Cardin, and congratulations to each of you for being nominated today.

I take particular interest in one of our nominees. That is Ambassador-to-be Marc Knapper.

Marc, I am delighted to see that Suzuko and Alex have joined you today. I would say this—that I am certain Colonel Roger Knapper is smiling today, too. I am sure he takes a great deal of pride in your career.

It has been my great honor to have served with you for the past four years working with you, and I also take a great deal of pride in the fact that you are sitting here today.

I am also very optimistic. I think that you will be confirmed and I think that you are going to work with a great team—my former DCM, Joe Young, Dan Kritenbrink, I think, at EAP. We are going to be very well represented in an area that presents great strategic challenges for America today.

So I am very, very pleased to see you here. You know, America is challenged in the South China Sea like never before. The world is challenged in the South China Sea like never before, because of the claims that China continues to maintain, I think, without foundation to sovereignty over much of that region.

You have had unique experience, Marc. You have had experience in Japan. You have had experience in Hanoi. You have had experience dealing with India on the India desk, with China and Mongolia, and, certainly, you did a wonderful job as DCM and charge d'affaires in South Korea.

You understand this region. I see great opportunity between Vietnam and the United States from an economic standpoint that has been manifest. We have seen great trajectory there. I think economic ties support strategic ties.

But what I would really like to talk about for a moment is the strategic opportunity that Vietnam presents for the United States, for our Quad partners, and for the safety and security of that re-



gion. I would love to get your thoughts on the role that you would play and help lead as our Ambassador to Vietnam.

Mr. KNAPPER. Thank you very much, Senator, and thank you very much for your kind words about my family.

I mean, you are absolutely right. Right now, I think our shared view with Vietnam is that there is no greater challenge we face right now than that of China, China's aggressive and provocative behavior, particularly some of its sweeping and unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, what it is doing along the Mekong River, damming and releasing water, causing deep, deep problems for 66 million people who live along that river and rely upon it for their livelihoods.

If confirmed, Senator, I will make a priority deepening our strategic relationship with Vietnam. Right now, we have what we call a comprehensive partnership. We hope to raise it to a strategic partnership, and I will take steps to do that by strengthening even further our security relationship with Vietnam.

This is something that you mentioned, Ambassador Kritenbrink. He did a great job over three years in bringing us to the next level.

I would like to take us further. I think deepening our economic partnership by opening the market there further to American agricultural goods, digital services.

As you said, strengthening our trade and economic ties can only benefit our strategic sort of interactions and our strategic sort of interdependence. And so this, if confirmed, will be a priority of mine, as well as deepening our people-to-people ties.

The shoulders upon which all of our efforts with Vietnam stand are the ties between our two peoples, whether it is young people going back and forth, students studying in each other's countries. And so that will also be, sir, a priority of mine, if confirmed.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, thank you very much. I look forward to working with you along all of those lines and know that you have a strong ally in the United States Senate, only with me but with the members of this committee, in achieving these goals.

Could I turn to you, Ambassador Bitter?

There is an area, again related to China, which is a deep concern of mine. I am certain that you are aware of this concern, and that is overseas students coming from China that pose a security threat to the nation.

I would just like to ask you in very specific terms if you are familiar with the Executive Order 10043. That executive order suspends the entry of certain students and researchers from the People's Republic of China.

Ms. BITTER. Yes, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. And if you are confirmed, do you agree to notify me and this committee if there are any changes made to that executive order?

Ms. BITTER. Yes, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. And in the meantime, do you agree to uphold the tenets of that executive order?

Ms. BITTER. Yes, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much, Ambassador. I appreciate it.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. [presiding]. Thank you. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Well, first, let me thank all four of our nominees for their service to our country and our willingness to continue to serve our nation. We thank you. We thank your families. We know that this is very much a family commitment.

Ambassador Bitter, I would like to start with you. I just want to concur with Senator Menendez's comments in regards to the passport issues. And as Senator Menendez said, you are not responsible for the current backlog. Eighteen weeks is unacceptable. Unacceptable.

We have constituents who, in good faith, have made travel plans, expecting that if they requested a passport document that it would be done in a matter of a few months, not four months.

And some are suffering now extreme economic hardships as well as personal hardships not being able to get those documents and they do not fall into the narrow definition of a life's emergency that would require more immediate action.

We are also concerned that some have requested passport support months ago, may not even be at the front of the line in regards to people who are now requesting help. And again, we recognize that you are not responsible for the current circumstances.

I thought Senator Menendez made an excellent point about the need for surge. I would like to get your commitment that this will receive your priority, if confirmed, and that we cannot allow an 18-week backlog in passport applications.

Ms. BITTER. Yes, Senator, you have my commitment. I share your concern and it will be my top priority, if confirmed.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Knapper, I want to follow up on the questions that were asked by Senator Kaine in regards to Vietnam. I have been to Vietnam. Vietnam, certainly, is a much different country than it was when we were at war with Vietnam.

We have made significant progress in improving our relationship between our two countries. We were on the path towards the Trans-Pacific Partnership on a good governance section that was important to deal with the corruption in the country and good governance.

Vietnam was making progress, I would suggest, on basic human rights even though it is an authoritarian government, and now we have seen a backsliding, as Senator Kaine said, on freedom of the media.

I could also add the right of their citizens to peacefully protest their government has been very much infringed upon. And they have now changed their cyber laws in regards to comments about history can be now challenged by the Government and infringing upon the use of the internet.

These are trends that are very disturbing, and I would like to drill down a little bit more about your strategies for dealing with the human rights issues in Vietnam, and how you will keep us informed and work with us as we look at the tools that we have given the administration to advance human rights and making sure that they are used fully in Vietnam.

Mr. KNAPPER. Well, thank you, Senator.

I think one area in which we have seen progress over the past few years have been in the expansion of rights afforded to women, minorities, people with disabilities, members of the LGBT community, and I think one of the ways we were able to secure and see these advances was thanks to sort of increased cooperation with and assistance to the NGOs and activists within Vietnam who work within these specific areas and with these groups.

And so, if confirmed, I would seek to not only continue the great work that the U.S. Government has done, not just with activist groups and NGOs within Vietnam but also groups in the United States—the Vietnamese-American community, for example—to identify problematic areas, to try and identify potential strategies and tactics, going forward, because this is absolutely a priority area for me personally.

I worked on these issues 15 years ago when I previously served in Vietnam, and it will continue to be an area of focus for me and for Mission Vietnam. And you absolutely have my commitment to work with you and your colleagues, sir, in the Congress to look for opportunities and tools to further seek to improve the situation there in Vietnam.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. I would just add that it is very important that our mission in Vietnam support the NGOs and civil society groups that are working to advance these priorities so that our embassy is always a home for those who have roles to improve the governance in Vietnam and sometimes need the support of our embassy.

And I see you are shaking your head yes and I will just put your shaking of the head yes into the record.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. I prefer an oral answer when I ask you a question, but I do not want to interpret your headshaking as a yes and then maybe you tell me later on it was a no. So—

Mr. KNAPPER. Well, it was actually a head nodding, Senator.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

I understand there are no other members.

Oh, I am sorry. Senator Van Hollen just walked in.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and to all of you, congratulations on your nomination.

And let me start, if I could, with you, Ambassador Bitter, and I know Chairman Menendez asked you some questions about the current backlog in passport processing.

You know, obviously, we have been through a very difficult time with COVID. I recognize that, and the State Department has had to deal with all of the pressures that that brings.

In our state office, we have gone from things like small business access to PPP loans being the top priority and other issues to now number one relates to getting passports, where my understanding is we now have about a four-and-a-half-month average backlog.

And the other big issue, of course, is as families now have the opportunity to reunite and visit with friends, the issue of visas for people coming just to visit family and friends in the United States.

Can you talk about what we can do right now to address these issues and what, if confirmed, you would do?

Ms. BITTER. Thank you, Senator.

I am very aware of these issues, and I should take this opportunity, of course, to thank Congress for the support that it has given to the bureau over the last several months.

As all of you know, the bureau is under tremendous financial pressure since the start of the pandemic, and Congress has been enormously responsive in filling some of those gaps and allowing the bureau to continue to deliver consular services.

But so I know that the bureau is very grateful and that it will be continuing to engage with Congress on future budgets.

I just want to point out that these issues are not just money related. So while the U.S. is experiencing a return to what feels a little like normal, our posts overseas are still working under some pandemic space constraints, which means that they cannot offer the same number of appointments that they used to because they cannot have the same number of people in their waiting room.

So these restrictions are very important. They protect our staff, they protect the customers, they protect the community, but they do limit possibility to provide services.

And as a result, what has happened is my colleagues overseas have had to make some difficult prioritization decisions about how to use the space that is available to them.

If confirmed, this is very much job one. I recognize that visas also impact your community with respect to small businesses maybe relying on workers overseas that are unable to get back, family reunification, all of those issues. Right now it is a very difficult time.

Senator Van Hollen: Well, thank you for that statement. You know, this is the area where our constituents most frequently interact with the State Department, right, and so that is where they are really feeling the presence or lack of responsiveness and services.

So our office is working very closely with the team at the State Department. We are grateful for the relationship we have. But this is a big, big issue, the visa part but also just getting a passport for U.S. citizens who is here.

Ms. Medina, thank you for your testimony, and I appreciate your mentioning the issue of biodiversity, as you mentioned, and we are seeing a disappearance of biodiversity at alarming rates around the world and look forward to working with you on those issues, going forward.

Mr. Smith, thank you for taking on this assignment. As you well know, you know, Foreign Service officers go into the Foreign Service to really get to know and interact with the countries where they are serving.

And so while it is absolutely true that we have to provide security, I hope, as you think this through, you will also find ways to make sure that our Foreign Service officers overseas can interact with the rest of the population. Otherwise, they might as well just be in D.C.

In Kabul, we have, of course, a particularly immediate situation, and I know you will be monitoring that very carefully with respect to the situation there.

Finally, if I could, Mr. Knapper, congratulations on your nomination to Vietnam. Lots of issues to cover.

But let me just ask you about one, because over the past several years we have seen Vietnamese authorities increase their scrutiny over Vietnamese citizens' activities on the internet and social media, cracking down on any kind of free expression, requiring U.S. and other internet-based companies and social media companies to force them to comply with laws that can crack down on people's speech or try to force them.

Can you just talk briefly about how we are dealing with that situation?

Mr. KNAPPER. Well, thank you, Senator.

The one specific case right now that is attracting the most attention, of course, is that of Facebook, and the Vietnamese Government, in some instances, demanding that Facebook removed certain posts that it finds offensive or contrary to political order, so to speak.

And right now, the U.S. embassy in Hanoi, we are working very closely with Facebook folks on the ground there as well as the Vietnamese Government to try and find a way forward that, again, preserves the space on Facebook and other social networking sites to allow for free speech and to allow for the free expression of political and other views, and also just allowing an American company to be able to operate without a threat of its data being cut off or throttled, is the term that they use.

But, if confirmed, Senator, I will absolutely focus on this as a human rights issue, but also as a press freedom issue.

Thank you.

Senator Van Hollen: I appreciate that. As you say, it is really part of the larger, I think, growing challenge in Vietnam with respect to human rights. But thank you all for your testimony.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Some final questions.

Ambassador Smith, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, I am deeply concerned about what seems to be an emerging threat of directed energy attacks targeting U.S. personnel and our ability to pivot and adequately protect them and their families in the face of these attacks.

I hope that will be a major focus for you upon your confirmation?

Mr. SMITH. Yes, it will, Senator, and I look forward to engaging as we progress on this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that is incredibly important to us because, you know, we ask our people to do incredible work for the United States. We put them, sometimes, in harm's way. We need to do everything possible to protect them.

And this is something that seems to be challenging and escaping us. So I hope this will become one of your highest priorities upon taking office.

One of the most significant challenges I can see on the horizon is the security at Embassy Kabul. What is your current assessment—I know you are not there yet but from your experience of

our ability to ensure the safety and security of the embassy compound?

And will you commit to keeping the committee updated on the steps that Diplomatic Security has taken to ensure the safety of U.S. personnel?

Mr. SMITH. If confirmed, Senator, yes, I will commit to that. Afghanistan will continue to garner a lot of attention, particularly as U.S. forces continue to withdraw, and it is going to be important for Diplomatic Security to remain very much engaged both with our colleagues and contacts here and also with the Afghan forces on the ground to see how they can help to enhance our security operations.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, if you, when you get confirmed, I hope you will give us an assessment of what is needed, if anything is needed beyond what we have.

And also Port-au-Prince—we, obviously, have an ongoing difficult situation in Port-au-Prince. I know you will pay attention globally. But these are some hotspots that I think we need to pay attention to.

Do you have any sense of that, our embassy at Port-au-Prince?

Mr. SMITH. Again, I agree with you that Port-au-Prince is definitely a point of concern at this moment. I have not received any additional briefings on the activities there beyond what is in the open source.

But look forward, if confirmed, to focusing very, very clearly and specifically on that activity as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. We will look forward to hearing from you once you are confirmed.

Mr. Knapper, finally, as you contemplate the possibilities of taking the relationship that we have with Vietnam to the next level and inaugurating a genuine strategic partnership, an aspiration I certainly support, how will you balance our very real shared strategic interests with Vietnam with our ongoing human rights concern?

A couple years back we had the president of Vietnam here. It was a very interesting exchange. First time in my 30 years of doing foreign policy and sitting with foreign dignitaries that he did not take any questions.

And it is not our process in the committee when we are meeting with a head of state to allow them to ramble along and eventually never take a question.

That was emblematic, in my mind, of what is going on in Vietnam. What sort of linkages or conditioning do you think is appropriate and constructive as we consider additional military security, economic or diplomatic engagement, with Vietnam?

Mr. KNAPPER. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

I think you really have nailed the challenge that we face. It is, you know, how do we address our shared strategic interests in the region with Vietnam while staying true to our values regarding human rights, religious freedom, other areas.

And I think, if confirmed, I would like to build upon the good progress we have made so far. We have been able to keep that balance, I believe, between ensuring that our values related to universal human rights are upheld and asserted in our high-level con-

versations with the Vietnamese Government, but at the same time recognizing that in Vietnam we have no stronger or more vocal partner within ASEAN when it comes to speaking out against the challenge that China poses in the South China Sea and elsewhere in the region.

So as I mentioned earlier, Mr. Chairman, I think there are ways to point out to our Vietnamese Government and Communist Party of Vietnam interlocutors that there will be limitations to how much our relationship can grow under the circumstances in which we have concerns about human rights and religious freedom.

And I think we have to make clear that as we do consider ways to expand the relationship that we will let them know that there are potential breaks on progress that we will have to consider.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Ms. Medina, I do not want you to think that I—you have no object of my affection or interest. So but between your statement—your answers with Senator Risch and Senator Markey’s incredible description of your history, I think you have answered the issues I am concerned about.

So we look forward to working with you upon your confirmation. Global health for myself and for the ranking member is a critical issue, and while it may not seem in the title of your position to be the focal point, it is a focal point for this committee. So we will look forward to working with you on that.

With no other member, as I understand it, either virtually or present, to come before the committee, the record will remain open until the close of business on Wednesday, July the 14th for questions.

I would urge the nominees if you get questions for the record to answer them fully expeditiously so we can consider your nominations at a business meeting.

And with the thanks of the committee for your willingness to serve, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:27 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. GENTRY O. SMITH BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

#### *Risk Tolerance for Diplomats Abroad*

*Question.* Diplomacy is an inherently dangerous business, and effective diplomacy cannot be conducted without accepting some degree of risk.

- How do you think the culture should change at the State Department to accommodate more risk management as opposed to risk avoidance?

*Answer.* I agree that the Department must balance the essential need to protect our people with the need to engage our partners around the world to advance U.S. interests. Department leadership acknowledges that our national security mission entails diverse types of risk and is committed to managing it appropriately. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) goes to great lengths to facilitate our nation’s diplomacy in challenging places, including high-threat locations, and welcomes further efforts, including with Congress, to ensure that the Department is able to meet mission objectives while protecting our personnel.

To quote Secretary Blinken, “The safety and security of our personnel abroad should not be politicized, nor should we assume negligence if, and when, prudent, calculated risk decisions play out with negative consequences.”

*Question.* How do you view your role in promoting that cultural shift in the department? What specifically could you do as assistant secretary—if confirmed—that would better enable our diplomats to get outside our posts abroad and advance America's interests?

*Answer.* This is an issue that, if confirmed, I intend to examine closely, in concert with senior Department leadership, especially with regard to what the Department can do to further enable diplomacy in High Threat/High Risk locations. Department leadership acknowledges that our national security mission entails diverse types of risk and is committed to managing these risks appropriately. My experience has been that the Bureau of Diplomatic Security goes to great lengths to facilitate our nation's diplomacy in challenging places, including high-threat locations, and welcomes further efforts, including with Congress, to ensure that the Department is able to meet mission objectives while protecting our personnel.

#### *Talent Retention*

*Question.* The Bureau for Diplomatic Security (DS) loses a lot of mid-level officers at the senior-two and senior-three levels for many reasons, but two frequent ones are lack of jobs at their level that reflect interest/ability and lack of promotion opportunities due to the limited number of positions available.

- If confirmed, what can you do as Assistant Secretary to address the loss of mid-level officers?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with senior Department leadership to look at ways to retain existing staff and expand opportunities for mid-level officers. We will continue to engage with Global Talent Management to assess the availability of positions at all levels and ensure that we provide all officers ample opportunities to compete for promotion.

*Question.* What policies or internal measures can you pursue to help address the loss of mid-level officers who leave due to the lack of promotion potential?

*Answer.* DS recognizes that mid-level officers have expressed concerns regarding assignments and the slow pace of promotions. In the past we sought to address concerns by reclassifying some positions to provide more opportunities for advancement. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Global Talent Management's leadership to explore additional ways to address these concerns.

#### *Resources*

*Question.* DS has multiple responsibilities that sometimes lead to a competition for resources. How do you feel DS should prioritize resources to the various missions?

*Answer.* The safety of our personnel and security of our information and facilities are among the Department's highest priorities. Congress has been very supportive to DS in providing the resources it has requested. If confirmed, I intend to work with Department leadership and this committee to prioritize resources to its various missions.

#### *Key Personnel Skills*

*Question.* The State Department faces a shortage of speakers of critical languages. Many of our pool of qualified speakers have close family ties to countries where the language is needed. Do you feel the current DS system of issuing preclusions adequately mitigates CI vulnerabilities that are identified during the background investigation?

*Answer.* The State Department is committed to a diverse, skilled workforce. Some assignment limitations are preclusions that reflect the Department's inability to accredit diplomats to foreign countries of which they are citizens or to foreign countries that consider them citizens. In adjudicating security clearances, the Department utilizes the whole person concept to determine whether facts and circumstances indicate that eligibility is clearly consistent with the national security interests of the United States. Any doubt is resolved in favor of national security. Part of this process identifies potential CI vulnerabilities and considers whether they are mitigated under the National Security Adjudicative Guidelines. The Department is committed to protecting its employees and national security information.

#### *Programming*

*Question.* Where does DS programming fit within the broader Department of State and interagency security sector capacity building structure and related planning processes?



**Answer.** Diplomatic Security is an important contributor to security capacity building in partner nations around the globe. DS serves as the primary implementer of the Department's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program, which provides selected foreign governments with counterterrorism training, equipment, and technical assistance in coordination with policy guidance and funding provided by the Bureau of Counterterrorism. Regional Security Officers (RSOs) frequently work with host country governments, local organizations, and other diplomatic missions to provide advisory security opinions to schools, hospitals, and similar institutions.

**Question.** What are DS's comparative advantages in the U.S. Government's security sector capacity building framework and tool set?

**Answer.** Numerous U.S. Government agencies have resources and skills that can contribute to assisting foreign development beneficial to the national interest. While Diplomatic Security possess its own impressive cadre of security professionals and world class training and assistance programs, DS' greatest asset is in the organization's status as a security and law enforcement agency and integral part of the Foreign Service. DS personnel are trained investigators, cyber experts, security engineers, analysts, and diplomats. That broad functionality allows DS to soundly evaluate and deploy needed security and training assistance, whether those efforts ultimately originate from within DS or from another agency.

**Question.** How can DS better leverage these advantages to further political goals?

**Answer.** Diplomatic Security should continue its role as the lead law enforcement representative on an embassy's Country Team. A Regional Security Officer's ability to advise a Chief of Mission on both diplomatic and security consequences assures that U.S. foreign policy goals are examined from both a political and security dimension.

#### *Havana Syndrome*

**Question.** Between late 2016 and May 2018, the State Department found that certain Embassy Havana community members suffered a series of unexplained injuries, including hearing loss and cognitive issues. Many other U.S. Government officials in other countries have experienced similar incidents.

- If confirmed, will you commit to continuing the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the sonic attacks?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I intend to continue to prioritize the application of DS' technical and investigative talent to support the investigation to identify the source and cause of these unexplained health incidents. I look forward to working with Congress on this very important issue.

**Question.** Will you seek to ensure the safety and security of U.S. diplomatic personnel in Havana and other posts where personnel were injured?

**Answer.** There is no higher priority for the Department or for me than the safety and security of our personnel and this certainly includes mitigating against unexplained health incidents. I know that this issue is a top priority for Secretary Blinken. If confirmed I will work closely with the interagency to fully apply DS technical and investigation resources to ensure that our efforts to determine cause and attribution remain a priority.

**Question.** If confirmed, do you commit to work constructively with other government agencies on finding the cause of the attacks as well as on how best to support those U.S. Government employees who have been injured?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I intend to continue coordinating with multiple agencies to identify the source and cause of these reported injuries. In addition, I intend to focus on ways to strengthen the already robust mitigation efforts that are taking place to further enhance the safety and security of all USG personnel and family members overseas under our security responsibility.

**Question.** If confirmed, do you commit to regularly sharing new information, including updates on any live investigations, to Congress?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will work through the Bureau of Legislative Affairs to ensure that Congress promptly has the information it needs to perform its Constitutional obligations, consistent with obligations involving interagency information and existing practices for the protection of law enforcement activities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. GENTRY O. SMITH BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Risk Management*

*Question.* Some former State Department officials, Members of Congress, and other stakeholders have expressed concern with what they view as a growing level of risk intolerance at U.S. missions abroad, especially at high-risk posts, which they maintain inhibits U.S. diplomats from effectively fulfilling their mandates. I am considering a hearing on this topic in my subcommittee.

- What is your view on the State Department's current diplomatic security risk management approach? In your view, how, if at all, should the current approach be adjusted more towards risk tolerance or, alternatively, more towards mitigating risks facing U.S. diplomats and other personnel under Chief of Mission Authority?

*Answer.* I agree that the Department must balance the essential need to protect our people with the need to engage our partners around the world to advance U.S. interests. Department leadership acknowledges that our national security mission entails diverse types of risk and is committed to managing it appropriately. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) goes to great lengths to facilitate our nation's diplomacy in challenging places, including high-threat locations, and welcomes further efforts, including with Congress, to ensure that the Department is able to meet mission objectives while protecting our personnel.

To quote Secretary Blinken, "The safety and security of our personnel abroad should not be politicized, nor should we assume negligence if, and when, prudent, calculated risk decisions play out with negative consequences."

*Question.* What is your view of the Accountability Review Board (ARB) process? Do you believe the ARB process is excessively tilted toward finding someone to blame in the case of a security incident, or alternatively, does action need to be taken to ensure accountability? What kinds of adjustments, if any, would you suggest Congress make to the ARB process?

*Answer.* The Department recognizes that the advancement of foreign policy inherently involves diverse types of risk, and that taking considered risks can be essential to advancing U.S. interests. If confirmed, I would welcome working with Congress to look at ways to improve the ARB process.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. GENTRY O. SMITH BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* Since 2016, U.S. personnel posted to the Embassy in Havana, Cuba have reported a common set of symptoms now referred to as "Havana Syndrome." Since then, these symptoms have been reported in many other countries hosting U.S. diplomats, including China and Russia. These often debilitating injuries present a major risk to U.S. diplomatic personnel there.

- What is your assessment of the risks present to U.S. diplomatic personnel assigned to Havana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will closely assess the situation in coordination with Department of State stakeholders and interagency partners.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RENA BITTER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Last year's travel restrictions and the resulting loss of visa fee revenue negatively impacted Consular Affairs' finances. Now, as vaccination rates climb and more people seek to travel, demand for passports and visas are rapidly increasing, leading to significant delays in processing times for passports and visas. Some of these delays take extra months. If confirmed, what is your plan to reduce lengthy passport processing times?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my number one priority will be the reduction of service backlogs impacting both our domestic passport agencies and our overseas posts. Prior to COVID-19, our domestic passport service standards were up to three weeks for expedited applications, and up to eight weeks for routine applications. It is my goal to return to these timelines as quickly as possible, not only through the use

of overtime and increased hiring, but also by exploring how we might utilize Department staff to surge domestic passport processing capacity. Addressing visa backlogs overseas will require solutions tailored to the unique needs of each post, but I will devote myself and the CA team to identifying and implementing these solutions as quickly as possible.

*Question.* It appears that the Biden administration is not currently prioritizing visas for seasonal workers and other business-related needs. How are you going to better balance the needs of our small and medium-sized businesses, who often rely on seasonal workers to survive?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue efforts to sustain the long-standing program of temporary workers coming to the United States, which is vital to maintaining supply chains for food and other critical items. In addition, I will seek to continue existing policies to waive the in-person interview requirement for certain first-time H-2 applicants and those renewing within 48 months. These provisions will continue to permit the processing of many H-2 applications without the need for an in-person appearance, which creates efficiencies in processing while still adhering to COVID health protocols.

*Question.* Upon a determination by the Secretary of State that the detention of a United States national abroad is unlawful or wrongful, how will you work to efficiently transfer such cases from the Bureau of Consular Affairs to the Special Envoy for Hostage Affairs?

*Answer.* The Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) works closely with the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs (S/SPEHA) and other Department offices to implement the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act. CA works hand in hand with S/SPEHA, the relevant regional bureau, post, and the Department's Office of the Legal Adviser to develop recommendations on individual cases. When a detention is determined to be wrongful, the transfer of the case to S/SPEHA is a smooth and efficient process. If confirmed, I pledge to help facilitate continued close collaboration.

*Question.* How do you plan to ensure that all families with relatives held abroad are given timely access to information?

*Answer.* The U.S. Department of State has no greater responsibility than the protection of U.S. citizens overseas. Some of our most vulnerable U.S. citizens abroad are those who are arrested or detained in a foreign country. Consular officers stand ready to provide all appropriate consular services in cases where U.S. citizens are detained and arrested abroad. We will continue to work with local authorities to ensure our embassies or consulates are notified of a U.S. citizen arrest, and our consular officers will seek access to the citizen without delay. Consistent with the decision of the detained citizen and in line with the Privacy Act, consular officers provide status updates to family members as soon as possible. I pledge, if confirmed, that CA will continue to prioritize service to these U.S. citizens including providing as much information as possible to their families.

*Question.* What steps will you take to improve the Bureau of Consular of Affairs with regards to United States nationals held abroad?

*Answer.* With all detentions, consular officers seek prompt access to ensure detained U.S. citizen prisoners are:

- receiving adequate food and necessary medical care;
- not being mistreated;
- able to access legal counsel;
- having communications facilitated with their families consistent with their preferences under the Privacy Act, and
- receiving all substantive and procedural protections under local law and fair trial guarantees consistent with international obligations, including human rights law.

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure individuals have access to any medication or medical attention they may need and highlight our concerns to local authorities, that officers also assist with the transfer of funds from family and friends in the United States to pay for attorneys' fees, food, and medicine while incarcerated, and that they raise concerns and protests regarding credible allegations of mistreatment. In cases where potential indications of a wrongful detention exist, I will ensure CA consults with S/SPEHA and other relevant Department offices on whether a wrong-

ful detention determination by the Secretary as called for under the Levinson Act might be appropriate.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RENA BITTER BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*Question.* State Department statistics released this month show fewer children are being successfully returned to the U.S. following parental abduction than before—See <https://bit.ly/3nExd6J>

The percentage of children returned to the U.S. as share of all reported outgoing abductions has steadily dropped from 2011 to 2020.) While recognizing that not all returns to the U.S. are for cases that happened in previous years, we are nonetheless concerned by the apparent decreases in proportion of children returned to the U.S.

- To what do you attribute this decline?

*Answer.* Each child’s case, and each country, is unique. If confirmed, I will ensure the Bureau of Consular Affairs continues to assist parents seeking the return of their abducted children and to engage with countries to promote procedures to achieve better outcomes for children and families in child abduction cases. I will direct our focus to those countries cited for demonstrating a “pattern of noncompliance” in our Annual Report to Congress on International Child Abduction, and those countries that are not party to the Hague Abduction Convention, as these are the countries from which it may be the most challenging to resolve cases.

In referring to the data publicly shared by the Department, I am also encouraged to observe that from 2010 to 2019, there was more than a 50 percent drop in the number of international parental child abductions reported to the Department. If confirmed, I will ensure the Bureau of Consular Affairs continues its robust efforts in collaboration with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to prevent these abductions from occurring in the first place.

*Question.* What would you do as Assistant Secretary to more forcefully and effectively advocate for the return of abducted children to the U.S.?

*Answer.* Consular Affairs has no more important role than the protection of U.S. citizens abroad, especially children wrongly removed or retained abroad by a parent from their U.S. homes. If confirmed, I will prioritize our engagement on international parental child abductions with both our Hague Convention partners and non-partner countries, with special focus on the 11 countries cited for demonstrating a “pattern of noncompliance” in our 2021 Annual Report to Congress on International Child Abduction. I will ensure we use every effective means to get these countries to work with the United States to quickly resolve these cases and help parents bring their abducted children home.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support efforts to routinely inform parents applying for passports for minor children about the potential for international child abduction?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will maintain the Bureau of Consular Affairs’ priority focus on the prevention of international parental child abduction. All recipients of a U.S. passport currently receive a flyer advising them of the risks of international parental child abduction and providing contact information for the Office of Children’s Issues. I am also encouraged that close to 55,000 children are actively enrolled in the Children’s Passport Issuance Alert program, and I will continue the Department’s work to strengthen this important child abduction prevention program.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RENA BITTER BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* The COVID–19 pandemic has placed an incredible strain on the State Department’s ability to process visas. This is, in part, due to the need to protect the safety and health of our diplomats in countries where the pandemic is still uncontrolled. However, as countries increase the vaccination of their citizens and the spread of the pandemic decreases, the U.S. should resume regular consular services in many countries.

- If confirmed, how do you plan to address the consular services backlog?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my number one priority will be the reduction of service backlogs at both our domestic passport agencies and our overseas posts. Prior to COVID-19, our domestic passport service standards were up to three weeks for expedited applications, and up to eight weeks for routine applications. It is my goal to return to these timelines as quickly as possible, not only through the use of overtime and increased hiring, but also by exploring how we might utilize Department staff to surge domestic passport processing capacity. Addressing visa backlogs overseas will require solutions tailored to the unique needs of each post, but I will devote myself and the CA team to identifying and implementing these solutions as quickly as possible.

*Question.* One consequence of the shutdown of consular services in most embassies has been the practice of referring citizens in one country to have their interviews conducted in another country. For example, ordinary Cubans have had to travel to Guyana.

- In your opinion, what message does it send to ordinary Cubans when they have to travel to Guyana to process their visas, but the Cuban baseball team was able to get visas in Havana to play a game in the U.S. earlier this year?

*Answer.* I am sympathetic to the financial and other difficulties Cuban citizens face in applying for visas and recognize there are humanitarian reasons that individuals may want to seek an appointment with the consular section in Havana. The U.S. Embassy suspended routine visa services following the ordered departure of non-emergency personnel in September 2017. The consular section must also comply with Cuban COVID-19 restrictions. Embassy Havana continues to provide emergency assistance to U.S. citizens in Cuba, and to provide limited non-immigrant visa services including for medical emergencies and official and diplomatic travelers. I am hopeful future conditions may permit a reevaluation of what services can be provided by the Embassy.

*Question.* During the Trump administration, the State Department decided to allow Americans born in Jerusalem to list "Israel" as their place of birth in their passports. This is a policy and is reflective of U.S. law that recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to upholding this policy decision?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I have no plans to seek to change the Department's current policy regarding the place of birth listed on U.S. passports for U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem.

*Question.* The Visa Waiver program is an initiative that allows citizens of participating countries to travel to the U.S. for 90 days without a Visa. Many of the participating countries are among our strongest allies and partners, such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. For several years, the State Department has worked to include Israel in the Visa Waiver program.

- If confirmed, do you commit to working with Israel on these efforts?

*Answer.* The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, may designate countries for participation in the Visa Waiver Program when and if the country meets established statutory and policy criteria. I commit to continuing the efforts to work with Israel on its progress to qualify for designation into the program.

*Question.* In 2014 the Obama administration agreed to afford multi-entry, non-immigrant visas (B1/B2) with ten years' validity to qualified PRC nationals. Now that two subsequent administrations have determined that the PRC is a strategic competitor, and have sought to calibrate U.S. policy accordingly, it is time to revisit the risks associated with visa policy.

- If confirmed, do you commit to evaluate the security risks of providing multi-entry visas of such long duration to PRC nationals, particularly Chinese Communist Party members and military personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, I will work with the administration and the Department to evaluate all security risks posed by the People's Republic of China. We maintain robust vetting of all non-immigrant visa applications, including for B1/B2 visas, under our longstanding Security Advisory Opinion process. In addition, the Department and its partners continuously vet all visa holders and may revoke a visa at any time if we identify potential security concerns. Currently, B1, B2, and B1/B2 non-immigrant visas are limited to one-month, single-entry for members of the Chinese Communist Party, as well as their spouses and unmarried children under the age of 21. This change went into effect in December 2020 and is being applied at all visa units worldwide. We will continue to assess how to update and adapt visa vetting proc-

essing to best address threats to U.S. national security. Presidential Proclamation 10043, which went into effect on June 1, 2020, has also suspended the entry of PRC students and researchers with ties to China's Military-Civil Fusion.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RENA BITTER BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Question.* COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the State Department's ability to meet passport and visa demand. Right now, wait times for a new U.S. passport are 18 weeks for routine services and 12 weeks for expedited services.

Relatedly, many U.S. embassies and consulates around the world are still only processing non-immigrant visas in emergency situations. For those that are issuing visas, the estimated wait time to receive an interview appointment can range from a couple of weeks for a student visa to months for a tourist visa.

As you can imagine, I have received a great deal of correspondence from constituents who are exasperated for themselves and family members as they seek to travel around the world.

- What plans do you have in mind to address these severe backlogs? What do you intend to do on Day 1 to help get Consular Affairs back on track?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my number one priority will be the reduction of service backlogs impacting both our domestic passport agencies and our overseas posts. Prior to COVID-19, our passport service standards were two to three weeks for expedited applications, and six to eight weeks for regular applications. It is my goal to return to these timelines as quickly as possible, not only through the use of overtime and increased hiring, but also by exploring how we might utilize Department staff to surge domestic passport processing capacity. Addressing visa backlogs overseas will require solutions tailored to the unique needs of each post, but I will devote myself and the CA team to identifying and implementing these solutions as quickly as possible.

*Question.* Through nearly two decades of U.S. assistance programming in Afghanistan, the United States has funded, through cooperative agreements and grants, multiple programs on human rights, democracy assistance, support for independent media, and the empowerment of women and marginalized groups.

Thousands of Afghan nationals directly implemented U.S.-funded civilian aid and development programs across the country, alongside U.S. and international personnel. They demonstrated a commitment and dedication to this important work for their country despite the fact that the association with the United States placed their lives at risk.

I visited Afghanistan in 2018, and have seen firsthand the dedication and sacrifice that Afghan nationals have given to support our efforts. These brave men and women are now under threat as the Taliban has stated in no uncertain terms that it plans to target those who helped the United States as translators, interpreters, and in other ways over the years. Many of these nationals have applied for Special Issuance Visas to come to the United States with their families, but the backlog for processing their applications runs into the thousands.

- What is your plan for addressing this backlog and potentially saving the lives of thousands of Afghans who helped us in our war efforts over the past two decades?

*Answer.* I take seriously our commitment to the Afghan men and women who have assumed enormous risks to support our military and civilian personnel. I am very cognizant of the threats they face and fully agree that assisting them is a top priority. The Department has increased resources and undertaken steps to streamline the process at every application stage. If confirmed, I will ensure my team completes processing of SIV applications to the fullest extent possible. We will also keep working with Congress to identify where we can make the SIV application process more efficient and adjust requirements that do not impact national security.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MONICA P. MEDINA BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed serious gaps in U.S. international pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response efforts, including the failure of the Department of State—over multiple administrations—to prioritize global health

policy and diplomatic engagement beyond the PEPFAR program. What is your plan to improve State Department leadership on global health security?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates how global health security is essential to U.S. national and economic security. The State Department is strongly positioned to lead the global effort to beat COVID-19 and increase the global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to future outbreaks, and the Secretary has appointed a Coordinator who reports directly to him to work across the Department and with other agencies to elevate global health policy in the Department's diplomatic efforts. If confirmed, I will immediately look closely at the bureau's structure and resources and come back to you to discuss this issue further, with a view to working with the committee as it considers how to strengthen health security at the Department. If confirmed, I am committed to work with Coordinator Gayle Smith of the Secretary's Office of Global COVID-19 Response and Health Security, other offices across the interagency, and with partners to improve global health security capabilities, as well as to increase transparency and accountability. This includes modernizing and strengthening international institutions including the World Health Organization, and International Health Regulations.

*Question.* Do you agree that the Department needs to play a more active role in the interagency on global health security, including by ensuring foreign policy and program coherence among the U.S. agencies implementing global health programs overseas (CDC and USAID) as well as with other international partners?

*Answer.* Yes. The Department is playing an active and robust role on global health security within the interagency process. But the Bureau needs to build up greater capacity to deal with this and other health crises in the future. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Coordinator Gayle Smith of the Secretary's Office of Global COVID-19 Response and Health Security on these issues, as well as other offices in the Department and across the interagency. The Biden-Harris administration recognizes that COVID-19 and health security are global challenges that require global responses, and I will engage with international partners and allies on this important issue. The United States will continue to engage multilaterally to respond to and recover from COVID-19 as well as to prepare for, detect, and rapidly respond to emerging biological threats.

*Question.* Is there currently a review process within the United States Government for approving or disapproving life sciences or biological research collaboration with other countries that could pose dual-use concerns, including research on pathogens, viruses, and toxins? What role, if any, does the Department of State play in this review process? Within the Department of State, what role does OES play in this process?

*Answer.* Because I am not currently an employee of the State Department, and I understand that much of this work is outside the purview of OES, I have not taken a hard look at this process. It is my understanding that there are a variety of review processes that may apply to international life science collaboration, depending on the nature of that collaboration and the pathogens or other materials involved. These include reviews undertaken by agencies before funding certain types of research deemed to pose particular risks, and, where applicable, export licensing and visa vetting. The Department of State is in general not involved in the decisions of funding agencies to support specific research activities. I understand that much of this work is outside of the purview of OES. If confirmed, I will work colleagues in other bureaus at the State Department and across the interagency to learn more about these issues, and will work with you to assist any committee oversight over such activities.

*Question.* If such a process exists, what type of evidentiary information must be included to determine whether such research collaboration is appropriate?

*Answer.* Because I am not yet in the Department, I have not looked into this question or been specifically briefed on it. I have been advised that the types of information required depend on the nature of the research collaboration and the pathogens or other materials involved. However, it is my understanding that they would typically include the pathogens, if any, to be worked with, the nature of the activity, the identities of the individuals involved, and the purposes for which the activity would be conducted. Information regarding the location of the work and the applicable biosafety standards may also be required. If confirmed, I will look further into this issue and will work with you and your staff on it.

*Question.* What steps has the Department of State taken to act on or implement the recommendations of the following guidance documents? Please be specific with respect to each document listed below:

- UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR OVERSIGHT OF LIFE SCIENCES DUAL USE RESEARCH OF CONCERN, available at <https://bit.ly/2YYcFvs>
- NATIONAL SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD FOR BIOSECURITY, PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR THE OVERSIGHT OF DUAL USE LIFE SCIENCES RESEARCH: STRATEGIES FOR MINIMIZING THE POTENTIAL MISUSE OF RESEARCH INFORMATION (2007), available at <https://bit.ly/3AfOqGZ>
- RECOMMENDED POLICY GUIDANCE FOR DEPARTMENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF REVIEW MECHANISMS FOR POTENTIAL PANDEMIC PATHOGEN CARE AND OVERSIGHT (P3CO) (2017), available at <https://bit.ly/3u2cMSt>
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, FRAMEWORK FOR GUIDING FUNDING DECISIONS ABOUT PROPOSED RESEARCH INVOLVING ENHANCED POTENTIAL PANDEMIC PATHOGENS (2017), available at <https://bit.ly/3CmAQ5o>
- NATIONAL SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD FOR BIOSECURITY, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EVALUATION AND OVERSIGHT OF PROPOSED GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH (2016), <https://bit.ly/3zkTRTQ>.

Answer. As I understand it, these policy documents primarily provide guidance for other Federal agencies considering funding of certain types of research or work with potential pandemic pathogens. I am advised that the Department of State does not fund such research. However, the Department of State has been involved in actively promoting the development and adoption of such oversight systems abroad, including through presentations and discussions at international meetings. If confirmed, I will look further into how these documents are being used and implemented by agencies with such research funding and will work with you and your staff to understand how each is being implemented.

*Question.* As we discussed when we met last month, the Columbia River Treaty remains an important issue to myself and the rest of the northwest delegation. This treaty has been in the process of being renegotiated for years and will determine energy production and costs as well as water flows. If confirmed, you will lead the bureau responsible for overseeing some of the technical inputs that negotiators will consider.

Answer. The Columbia River is the lifeblood of the region. I am generally familiar with the complicated issues regarding this key shared resource from my time at NOAA. If confirmed, I will give a close look into the whole range of negotiating issues as they stand now and determine how OES can best provide greater support to the U.S. negotiating team. Canada and the United States have a shared interest in building back the regional economy and being good stewards of the region's water resources.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you make Columbia River Treaty negotiations a priority?

Answer. I understand the importance of reaching agreement with Canada on the modernization of the Columbia River Treaty regime. Canada and the United States have a shared interest in building back the regional economy and being good stewards of the region's water resources. If confirmed, I will look into the whole range of negotiating issues and determine how OES can best support the U.S. negotiating team.

*Question.* What was the total amount of appropriations in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 used by the Department of State on global climate change programs? From which accounts did the funding come? Please provide specific details about all global climate change programs funded, including the objectives, results, and amounts of FY 2019 appropriations spent. If confirmed, how would you adjust this spending, if at all?

Answer. The Department of State used \$13,500,000 of FY 2019 Economic Support Funds on global climate change programs. These programs protect the environment while promoting economic growth and enhancing sustainable landscapes, clean energy, and adaptation. In FY19, allocated funds went to the following programs:

- SilvaCarbon—U.S. Forest Service
- Climate Fellows—U.S. Forest Service
- Clean and Advanced Technology for Sustainable Landscapes—U.S. Department of Energy
- Caribbean Natural Infrastructure Partnership for Resilience—U.S. Forest Service
- Offset National Emissions through Sustainable Landscapes—U.S. Aviation Industry Groups



- Carbon Accounting and Reporting for Wetlands—Environmental Protection Agency
- Avoiding Deforestation through a Commodities Jurisdiction Approach—Competitively Awarded Program
- Private Investment for Enhanced Resilience—Competitively Awarded Program
- Clean Energy Ministerial—U.S. Department of Energy

*Question.* In your March 31, 2020, opinion piece in the Washington Post, you wrote about the environmental “unexpected bright side” of the pandemic and point out the economic tradeoffs of doing with less. How will you measure and report on economic and social tradeoffs of climate programs at the State Department?

*Answer.* The pandemic has been an immense tragedy. It is clear that it and the climate crisis impact our economies and societies in complex and challenging ways. It is imperative that we learn from this experience and use that knowledge to build back better. If confirmed, I hope to work within the E family, and with the Department and the interagency, to address these issues holistically.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MONICA P. MEDINA BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Authorities*

*Question.* The position of Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs has not been held by a Senate-confirmed official since 2014.

- Secretary Blinken has noted that the State Department likely requires additional hiring authorities to bring in more personnel to address emerging, complex foreign policy challenges that fall within the remit of OES, including climate change, global health, and technology. Do you share this view? Could you elaborate on the kinds of skill sets you think need to be added to the Bureau’s work?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree. The Bureau has in its purview two of the major crises facing our country and the world today—climate and health—and they are likely to be difficult challenges for the foreseeable future, requiring more resources for the Bureau. OES needs the right mix of people, fresh and diverse perspectives, and people who understand how to apply the latest scientific understanding and technologies to these problems.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MONICA P. MEDINA BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with our allies and partners in the region to counter the Chinese Communist Party’s illegal territorial claims?

*Answer.* This matter is an important problem, and if I am confirmed, it will be a priority for me. I have been to China and Japan with the Secretary of Defense, and I understand the issue well. The United States can and should push back on the PRC’s coercive behavior, unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, and disregard for the marine environment. Countering the PRC’s tactics requires a government-wide effort that leads with diplomacy, development, and economic engagement. Secretary Blinken recently affirmed in his statement on the 5th anniversary of the Arbitral Ruling on the South China Sea that freedom of the seas is an enduring interest of all nations and is vital to global peace and prosperity. If confirmed, I will look forward to working with our ASEAN partners along with other partners and allies including Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and the European Union to preserve the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region including the East and South China Seas.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you intend to work with other federal agencies and international partners to crack down on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices in the South China Sea?

*Answer.* Ending IUU fishing is a top priority of mine because of the detrimental food security impacts it has in the regions where it is occurring, as well as because of the human rights and environmental harms it is causing. Nowhere is this security and environmental challenge more urgent than in the South China Sea. When

I worked for Secretary Panetta at the Department of Defense, I witnessed the growing tensions in this region and the national security concerns it creates first-hand.

I understand that the State Department and OES work with interagency partners to monitor and address IUU fishing by PRC vessels, support capacity building for coastal states threatened by it, and implement multilateral fisheries enforcement and management schemes. OES and its interagency partners also engage directly with the PRC on broader fisheries conservation and management issues to push for Beijing's responsible oversight of its fleet. I understand the State Department and other agencies have also done work with Southeast Asian coastal States to strengthen fisheries law enforcement and maritime domain awareness in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the Department's leading role in the recently formed Maritime SAFE Act Interagency IUU Fishing Working Group, where we are working with our interagency partners, as well as with key stakeholders, to coordinate and strengthen U.S. efforts to combat IUU fishing wherever it occurs. It is imperative, in my view, that we step up our efforts in international fora and at international meetings to confront China on its aggressive actions that undermine the rule of law on the seas.

*Question.* Is there currently a review process within the United States Government for approving or disapproving life sciences or biological research collaboration with other countries that could pose dual-use concerns, including research on pathogens, viruses, and toxins? What role, if any, does the Department of State play in this review process? Within the Department of State, what role does OES play in this process?

*Answer.* Because I am not currently an employee of the State Department, and I understand that much of this work is outside the purview of OES, I have not yet taken a hard look at this process. It is my understanding that there are a variety of review processes that may apply to international life science collaboration, depending on the nature of that collaboration and the pathogens or other materials involved. These include reviews undertaken by agencies before funding certain types of research deemed to pose particular risks, and, where applicable, export licensing and visa vetting. The Department of State is in general not involved in the decisions of funding agencies to support specific research activities. I understand that much of this work is outside of the purview of OES. If confirmed, I will work colleagues in other bureaus at the State Department and across the interagency to learn more about these issues, and will work with you to assist any committee oversight over such activities.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions will you take to work with our allies and partners in Africa and Latin America to combat Chinese illegal fishing?

*Answer.* Department's continued close work with the U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA, and other agencies and partner governments around the world to strengthen the rules and improve enforcement processes and capabilities for international fisheries. The Bureau plays a role in 16 bilateral cooperative fisheries law enforcement agreements between the U.S. Coast Guard and partner countries in the Pacific and West Africa, and I fully support its efforts to pursue additional agreements throughout the world, including in Latin America and Africa. These agreements allow for the United States to assist coastal and flag States to enforce their domestic laws, strengthening and supporting development of partner nations' capabilities. In addition, I understand that the Maritime SAFE Act IUU Fishing Working Group has recently determined that a number of regions in Africa and Latin America are "priority regions," as described by the Act. OES will continue to collaborate with its interagency partners through that Working Group to determine the best approaches to strengthening the capabilities of countries in those regions to address IUU fishing individually and through regional cooperation.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions will you take to work with other agencies in investigating the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Answer.* Like many, I very much want to know the origins of COVID-19. It is imperative that we learn what caused this tragedy and act to do everything we can to prevent it from happening again. President Biden recently requested a deeper review of the origins of COVID-19 by the U.S. intelligence community, with support from the National Labs and other agencies of the U.S. Government. As part of this review, President Biden has asked for investigation into all areas that may be relevant. I look forward to the results of this report and, if confirmed, identifying next steps for follow-up and assisting in whatever capacity I can. Additionally, the World Health Organization (WHO) is currently working on developing Phase 2 of its study of the origins of COVID-19, including in China.

*Question.* If confirmed, and absent passage of my bill, what actions will you take to combat the deplorable action of finning sharks in foreign nations?

Answer. Shark populations are declining globally and in my view we need to do more to conserve them. The United States, through the Department of State and the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, has spearheaded a series of agreed shark finning prohibitions in RFMOs in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The United States works through RFMOs to strengthen enforcement of current fishing prohibitions—and strengthen the measures themselves when needed—as part of our work to support the conservation and sustainable management of key shark species. If confirmed, I will press for continued and expanded U.S. leadership in these and other international organizations to ensure the sustainability of these vital species, as well as continuing to work with other countries to develop and enforce national conservation and management measures, including species-specific data collection programs for sharks.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MARC EVANS KNAPPER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* As you contemplate the possibilities of taking this relationship to the next level and inaugurating a genuine strategic partnership what is your vision of what such a partnership should look like and encompass?

Answer. Twenty-six years since the normalization of diplomatic relations, the U.S.-Vietnam partnership has never been better. We have moved from a history of conflict and division to a Comprehensive Partnership that spans political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties.

I am confident that the positive momentum in our relationship will continue. The United States and Vietnam have a common sense of purpose and a common vision for a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. We seek to deepen our cooperation that spans our close collaboration on war legacy and humanitarian issues to regional security and shared prosperity. We also seek to deepen cooperation on climate change, pandemic disease, wildlife and drug trafficking, maritime security, and transnational crime.

Our interests include maintaining the peace and stability that has allowed regional and bilateral trade to flourish over the last quarter century.

If confirmed, I commit to consulting closely with Congress as the administration considers next steps in the relationship.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you balance our very real shared strategic interests with Vietnam with our on-going human rights concerns? What sort of linkages or conditioning do you think is appropriate and constructive as we consider additional military-security, economic or diplomatic engagement with Vietnam?

Answer. Twenty-six years since the normalization of diplomatic relations, the U.S.-Vietnam partnership has never been better. We have moved from a history of conflict and division to a Comprehensive Partnership that spans political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties.

The United States and Vietnam have a common sense of purpose and a common vision for a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. We must continue to build on the progress in the bilateral relationship, but as the Biden-Harris administration has committed to putting human rights back at the center of American foreign policy, we must also bring all the tools of our diplomacy to defend human rights, including freedom of expression, and religion or belief. If confirmed, I will continue to press Vietnam to improve its implementation of human rights obligations and commitments.

*Question.* As Beijing continues to pursue its aggressive and expansionist tactics in the South China Sea, where are the opportunities—and necessity—for greater US-Vietnam maritime partnership?

Answer. We will continue to support Vietnam's enhancement of its maritime security and law enforcement capabilities to better monitor its maritime domain and resist coercion in the South China Sea.

In 2017 and 2020, the U.S. Government officially transferred to Vietnam through the State Department's Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program two 378-foot Hamilton-class cutters, with the second arriving in Vietnam earlier this summer. These vessels are the largest in Vietnam's fleet and significantly enhance Vietnam's maritime security capabilities. The United States has also transferred to Vietnam 24 Metal Shark patrol boats and six Scan Eagle UAV, as part of our effort to work

with Vietnam to make it better able to protect its sovereignty and rights in the South China Sea. Through the State Department's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement program, we are developing four training facilities for Vietnam's Coast Guard. We are bringing U.S. Coast Guard personnel to Vietnam to train Vietnamese Coast Guard and DFIRE Fisheries Enforcement counterparts on key maritime law enforcement skills to ensure that maritime law enforcement capabilities forces are modern, resilient, and capable. If confirmed, I will continue to seek opportunities for maritime capacity building.

Vietnam sent its first cadet to the U.S. Air Force Academy in August 2020, and we are hopeful to have more Vietnamese cadets attend U.S. service academies in the coming years.

*Question.* How and where can the United States work with Vietnam to assure continued ASEAN centrality as a strategic counterweight and to develop functional problem-solving regional architecture?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to deepening our engagement with ASEAN as part of reinvigorating our multilateral partnerships. ASEAN plays a central role in the U.S. vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific. Secretary of State Blinken has publicly reaffirmed the United States' steadfast support for ASEAN centrality and to expanding our work together.

Vietnam, as Chair of ASEAN in 2020, helped the organization respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and we applauded them for their leadership.

We will continue to seek opportunities to partner with Vietnam and other ASEAN partners to advance U.S. priorities and interests on pressing regional issues. This extends beyond our meetings with ASEAN to ASEAN-related fora such as the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, and Mekong-U.S. Partnership. As part of the non-traditional security pillar of this partnership, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement is developing a program to combat Transnational Organized Crime in the region, building Vietnam's capacity to investigate and prosecute crime in cooperation with its neighbors.

We will also continue our work to build the capacity of the ASEAN Secretariat on political, economic, and socio-cultural issues, and broader efforts to develop human capital and support the next generation of ASEAN leaders, including through capacity building seminars at the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV).

*Question.* What would be your priorities—resilience, zero-carbon energy resources—to work with Vietnam on climate change?

*Answer.* The 2020s will be the decade for climate action, and no region of the world has a more pivotal role in realizing the global goal of net-zero emissions by 2050 than the economies in the Indo-Pacific region. We will continue to work with Indo-Pacific countries to increase regional ambition, implement 2030 targets and net-zero goals, enhance the impact of climate financing, and increase adaptation and resiliency through regional frameworks such as the Quad as well as bilateral engagements.

I was pleased that Vietnam was invited to the Leaders' Summit on Climate and appreciated hearing from President Nguyen Xuan Phuc about the challenges Vietnam faces from climate change. Vietnam is increasingly vulnerable to the threats associated with climate change, evidenced by record floods that caused horrible devastation last year. Vietnam is also a significant greenhouse gas emitter.

If confirmed, I will prioritize elevating climate change in my discussions with Vietnamese Government and business leaders and urging Vietnam to transition to a cleaner energy environment and to commit to setting a net-zero emissions date.

*Question.* Cyber and Human Rights: in recent years Vietnam has cracked down on numerous bloggers and journalists, and adopted troubling new laws and regulations, that have closed down freedom of expression in cyberspace. How and where can we work with Vietnam to assure that civil society actors and journalists have space and freedom to operate in the cyber realm—and to convince Vietnam that China's model of digital authoritarianism is contrary to Vietnam's interests.

*Answer.* I am concerned about the shrinking environment for the exercise of freedoms of expression and association online and offline. The trend of harassment, arbitrary or unlawful arrests, unjust convictions, and harsh sentences of journalists and activists for exercising their human rights is deeply troubling.

If confirmed, I will advocate with the Government of Vietnam to respect freedom of expression, both offline and online, and engage with social media companies to promote approaches that preserve freedom of expression online and an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet.

*Question.* Fulbright Vietnam University: The establishment of FVU, with congressional support, has been a really success story for the bilateral relationship in recent years. Where do you see opportunities for FVU to continue to grow and contribute to Vietnam's development? For example, is there a role for FVU to serve as a hub for cyber-security education and training for Vietnam and for the region?

*Answer.* Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV) is an incredible symbol of the strength of our partnership with the people of Vietnam and Southeast Asia. It is the first private, independent, non-profit Vietnamese university, and is based on American higher education traditions of open inquiry, research, and critical analysis.

The U.S. Government has helped FUV develop into a center of academic independence that models core principles, including academic freedom, meritocracy, transparency, and equal access. FUV has brought world-class university standards to Vietnam and helped unlock tremendous potential in Vietnam's education sector.

We are proud to partner with FUV to create the YSEALI Academy at FUV, which offers executive-level capacity-building seminars for entry- to mid-level professionals from ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste around the themes of technology and innovation, public policy, and entrepreneurship.

If confirmed, I look forward to exploring all possible avenues to use FUV as a platform, including for cybersecurity training and educational programs on the Mekong Delta, for increased engagement with the Vietnamese people and with leaders across Southeast Asia.

*Question.* Even though we are many decades from the end of the war, legacy issues including cleaning up of UXO and addressing the use of Agent Orange continue to be important to both the Vietnamese and American people. What priorities would you have in addressing these or other war legacy issues, if confirmed?

*Answer.* Addressing humanitarian and war legacy issues is a foundational element of the strong relationship between the United States and Vietnam. Providing the fullest possible accounting for U.S. personnel missing from the Vietnam War era remains our most solemn duty. I acknowledge the Senate's longstanding support of U.S. initiatives in this regard.

Since 1993, the United States has contributed more than \$160 million to conventional weapons destruction (CWD) efforts to clear unexploded ordnance (UXO), risk education, victims' assistance, and capacity building. The U.S.-funded UXO clearance program targets high-priority sites in the most UXO-contaminated provinces of central Vietnam: Quang Tri, Quang Binh, and Tha Thien Hue. Our progress with UXO authorities in these areas is a prime example of how provincial level success can be replicated at the national level going forward. If confirmed, I will advocate for these successes to be adopted at the national level for effective implementation of U.S. taxpayer funding, and to make real progress for the people of Vietnam.

Separately, the United States and Vietnam successfully completed the remediation of dioxin contamination in Danang in 2018, and in 2019 we broke ground on the 10-year dioxin remediation project at the Bien Hoa airbase area. The United States has provided more than \$125 million since 1989 in humanitarian assistance, directly and indirectly supporting over a million persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause.

Our cooperation on these issues continues to build a foundation of trust to expand our relationship and, if confirmed, I will prioritize deepening our cooperation in these efforts.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MARC EVANS KNAPPER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What should our main goals for the Indo-Pacific region be in the short-term, medium-term, and long-term?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific region. To achieve this, I will work to revitalize ties with our allies and partners, advance inclusive economic policies that support all Americans, and promote democratic resilience and respect for human rights. I will invest in capabilities and work with allies and partners, including in regional organizations, to defend the international rules-based order, its foundational values, and international law. I will also work closely with Congress and partners in the region to address pressing challenges, including the threat posed by the DPRK nuclear program, transnational crime, recovery from COVID-19, and climate change.

*Question.* What are realistic goals for the U.S.-Vietnam strategic partnership in the next decade? Please be specific.

*Answer.* Twenty-six years since the normalization of diplomatic relations, the U.S.-Vietnam partnership has never been better. We have moved from a history of conflict and division to a Comprehensive Partnership that spans political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties.

I am confident that the positive momentum in our relationship will continue. The United States and Vietnam have a common sense of purpose and a common vision for a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. Over the next decade, we seek to deepen our cooperation that spans our close collaboration on war legacy and humanitarian issues to regional security and shared prosperity. We also seek to deepen cooperation on climate change, pandemic disease, wildlife and drug trafficking, maritime security, and transnational crime..

Our interests include maintaining the peace and stability that has allowed regional and bilateral trade to flourish over the last quarter century..

*Question.* If confirmed, what are the three main things you will seek to accomplish in your first 100 days as U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam?

*Answer.* The U.S.-Vietnam relationship has undergone a profound transformation since normalization of diplomatic relations in 1995, and our ties are thriving. President Biden's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance noted that the United States will deepen our partnership with Vietnam to advance shared objectives. I look forward to leading those efforts.

If confirmed, I will seek to deepen our security ties with the conclusion of a General Security of Military Information Agreement with Vietnam, which would enhance information sharing and expand defense trade. I will also press Vietnam to take bold steps to commit to a cleaner energy future, using the November COP 26 Conference in Glasgow as a catalyst for action. Finally, I will seek to expand on the progress that ethnic and religious minorities, the disabled, and LGBTQI+ citizens in Vietnam have made, but will express serious concern to Vietnam's leadership to underscore our commitment to supporting universal human rights—and stress that improvements in this area can only strengthen our overall relationship.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to continuing economic cooperation with Vietnam on cultivating liquefied natural gas in addition to other renewable resources? In light of recent policy changes by the Biden administration, what tools will you have at your disposal to advance such energy cooperation with Vietnam?

*Answer.* Vietnam is projected to be one of the fastest growing energy demand markets in the region. The State Department is committed to supporting Vietnam's economic aspirations, energy security and sustainable development, and to support U.S. companies seeking opportunities to invest and trade in this dynamic market.

At the same time, the United States is committed to working with key partners around the world, like Vietnam, to encourage them to select policies, measures, and investments that direct their economic growth toward a climate-aligned pathway. Those decisions will be critical to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and a global net zero future by 2050. The science is unequivocal: we have no alternative. We must keep the Earth's warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius to avoid catastrophe. To get there, the science says the world needs to get to a state of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by around mid-century.

As we head further into the 2020s, we must grow more discerning of the future role for natural gas in achieving the world's climate goals. If we are to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, the world must be especially judicious about new gas infrastructure. That said, Vietnam has an opportunity to eliminate coal projects and continue the impressive growth of solar and wind power over the past two years.

If confirmed, I will work with U.S. companies and U.S. agencies to plan their energy investments in a way that ensures access to cleaner and affordable energy and advances our climate goals.

*Question.* What else do you think the U.S. should provide to Vietnam in terms of security assistance, especially with respect to South China Sea issues?

*Answer.* We will continue to support Vietnam's enhancement of its maritime security and law enforcement capabilities to better monitor its maritime domain and resist coercion in the South China Sea.

In 2017 and 2020, the U.S. Government officially transferred to Vietnam through the State Department's Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program two 378-foot Hamilton-class cutters, with the second arriving in Vietnam earlier this summer. These vessels are the largest in Vietnam's fleet and significantly enhance Vietnam's maritime security capabilities. The United States has also transferred to Vietnam

24 Metal Shark patrol boats and six Scan Eagle UAV, as part of our effort to work with Vietnam to make it better able to protect its sovereignty and rights in the South China Sea. Through the State Department's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement program, we are developing four training facilities for Vietnam's Coast Guard. We are bringing U.S. Coast Guard personnel to Vietnam to train Vietnamese Coast Guard and DFIRE Fisheries Enforcement counterparts on key maritime law enforcement skills to ensure that maritime law enforcement capabilities forces are modern, resilient, and capable. If confirmed, I will continue to seek opportunities for maritime capacity building.

Vietnam sent its first cadet to the U.S. Air Force Academy in August 2020, and we are hopeful to have more Vietnamese cadets attend U.S. service academies in the coming years. We are also providing Vietnam with T-6 trainers, so that Vietnam's future Air Force pilots will learn on state-of the art, American-model aircraft.

*Question.* What are your views on Vietnam's use of a maritime militia in the South China Sea? What are your views on the new unit Vietnam just stood up in this maritime militia?

*Answer.* The United States supports maritime law enforcement within the bounds of international law and has consistently opposed the threat or use of force to settle maritime and territorial disputes.

The United States opposes the use of coercion and intimidation by any claimant seeking to assert its maritime claims in the South China Sea and calls for all states to ensure that all of its maritime forces and other vessels act in accordance with international law, avoid provocative behavior, and behave in a professional manner.

*Question.* Apart from maritime cooperation, what do you see as the major opportunities for growth in the U.S.-Vietnam security relationship?

*Answer.* Our defense relationship has become one of the strongest pillars of the overall relationship. While much of our current or future planned security assistance to Vietnam aims to enhance the country's ability to enforce international maritime law and police its EEZ, we hope to expand upon peacekeeping efforts, search-and-rescue abilities, humanitarian/disaster relief capacity, military medicine, and the development of Vietnam's Coast Guard and Air Force.

*Question.* What challenges does Vietnam's reliance on Russian defense technology and weapons present to the growth of the U.S.-Vietnam security relationship?

*Answer.* Vietnam is working to diversify defense partners and suppliers, and is evaluating and exploring future procurement opportunities with the United States. In this context, the United States is focusing support on strengthening maritime law enforcement and domain awareness capabilities, peacekeeping efforts, search-and-rescue abilities, humanitarian/disaster relief capacity, military medicine, and the development of Vietnam's Coast Guard and Air Force.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will be your top three priorities for working with Vietnam on Mekong issues?

*Answer.* The United States has long been a presence in the Mekong subregion and has long been a partner of Vietnam. The Mekong subregion matters to America. Not only is the subregion home to Vietnam, one of the fastest growing economies in the world, it is also home to a growing and incredibly dynamic population. Helping the subregion's economy thrive and innovate, including by ensuring opportunities for marginalized populations and helping talented young people realize their full potential, benefits us all and also helps fulfill President Biden's foreign policy for the middle class. The subregion is also the front line for strategic competition with PRC, and we want to ensure the Mekong states are secure, independent, and prosperous. Vietnam supports our efforts through the Mekong-U.S. Partnership to ensure the subregion is prosperous, resilient, and that the people of the region enjoy good governance and security.

If confirmed, I will prioritize support of a sustainable Mekong basin development plan, work with Vietnam on its efforts to combat climate change, and press for greater economic connectivity across the sub-region.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working with Congress on matters related to the financial sustainability of Fulbright University Vietnam?

*Answer.* Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV) is an incredible symbol of the strength of our partnership with the people of Vietnam and Southeast Asia. It is the first private, independent, non-profit Vietnamese university, and is based on American higher education traditions of open inquiry, research, and critical analysis.

The U.S. Government has helped FUV develop into a center of academic independence that models core principles, including academic freedom, meritocracy, transparency, and equal access. FUV has brought world-class university standards to Vietnam and helped unlock tremendous potential in Vietnam's education sector..

If confirmed, I will work with Congress to continue our work to help FUV continue to flourish and achieve financial sustainability.

*Question.* Vietnam has signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and was among the original 50 states parties to the treaty when it entered into force on January 22, 2021. Will you commit to raising U.S. concerns about TPNW with counterparts in Vietnam?

*Answer.* Yes, as appropriate. While the United States understands and shares the desire to advance nuclear disarmament goals, we do not support the TPNW. The TPNW is incompatible with U.S. extended deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security and may reinforce divisions that hinder the international community's ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. The U.S. position on this issue has spanned administrations. Seeking to ban nuclear weapons through a treaty that does not include any State Parties that possess nuclear weapons will not reduce nuclear arsenals.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to raise with the Vietnamese Government its alleged use of extraterritorial tactics against dissidents and others? For example: Vietnam's hacking of its own dissidents' accounts overseas; the alleged abduction of a Vietnamese oil executive from Berlin; and the alleged abduction of a Radio Free Asia journalist from Bangkok?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by report of such tactics against individuals for exercising their fundamental human rights. These activities run counter to Vietnam's international human rights obligations and commitments. If confirmed, I commit to engage with the Government of Vietnam to underscore our strong objection to these tactics and ensure Vietnam adheres to its international human rights commitments.

*Question.* According to Freedom House's Freedom of the Net report, internet freedom in Vietnam dropped to an all-time low in 2020. What will you do to ensure that the internet in Vietnam remains free and open?

*Answer.* I am concerned about the shrinking environment for the exercise of freedoms of expression and association online and offline. The trend of harassment, arbitrary or unlawful arrests, unjust convictions, and harsh sentences of journalists and activists for exercising their human rights is deeply troubling.

If confirmed, I will advocate with the Government of Vietnam to respect freedom of expression, including online, and engage with social media companies to promote approaches that preserve freedom of expression online and an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Vietnam was identified as a Tier 2 Watch List country for the third consecutive year. Because Vietnam was listed for three years on the Watch List, it was subject to a downgrade to Tier 3, but was provided a waiver for its general efforts to eliminate trafficking. It is clear the Vietnamese Government must improve its protection, prevention, and prosecutorial efforts in this coming reporting period in order to improve its ranking. How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* In recent years, the Vietnamese Government has demonstrated significant efforts by providing trafficking victims the affirmative right to legal representation, increasing TIP funding for law enforcement and victim support, passing new legislation that better protects workers migrating overseas and prohibits brokerage fees for overseas migrant workers, continuing large-scale awareness campaigns in communities vulnerable to trafficking, and training law enforcement officials.

Significant challenges remain, however, including insufficient victim screening, cumbersome and ineffective victim identification and assistance procedures, limited interagency coordination, and the need to better address predatory recruitment practices that charge workers seeking overseas employment higher fees than the law allows.

If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Vietnam to vigorously prosecute all forms of trafficking and convict and punish traffickers, especially in cases involving forced labor or complicit officials. I will also encourage the Government to expand victim screening amongst vulnerable groups such as migrant workers, individ-



uals in commercial sex, and child laborers, and improve victim identification and referral mechanisms.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Report on International Religious Freedom, Vietnam was depicted as a country which is not particularly tolerant of religious freedoms. In one example, Vietnam continues to enforce a Law on Belief and Religion (LBR), which requires religious groups to register with the State and allows government entities to harass unregistered groups. What is your assessment of this particular issue and, if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Vietnam's Law on Belief and Religion, while imperfect and inconsistent with international standards, reduces registration times and grants legal status to some religious groups. Some groups who remain unregistered in remote areas continue to face harassment from local authorities.

The United States remains concerned that the law maintains significant government control over religious practices and exacerbates uneven implementation of the law at the subnational level. The State Department's annual international religious freedom report to Congress detailed these concerns, and if confirmed, I will continue to raise them with Hanoi.

If confirmed, I will also continue to work closely with the Ambassador-at-Large to emphasize the importance of religious freedom with Vietnam's leaders, including cases of individuals harassed or imprisoned for their beliefs.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Vietnam was identified as continuing to undermine fundamental human rights like speech, assembly, press, religion, and association. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the Vietnamese Government?

*Answer.* I am very concerned about the human rights situation in Vietnam and committed to pushing for improvements. Despite progress in some areas, the trend of escalating harassment, unjust arrests and convictions, and increasingly harsh sentences of journalists and activists for peacefully exercising their right to express their opinions is deeply troubling. Vietnam is an important partner in the Indo-Pacific region, but that partnership can only reach its fullest potential if the Vietnamese Government improves its human rights record.

If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Vietnam to improve its implementation of its human rights obligations and commitments. I will urge the Government of Vietnam to ensure law enforcement and the judicial system effectively and fairly enforce existing constitutional guarantees and laws protecting human rights, including freedom of religion or belief. I will continue to raise our concerns with the Government of Vietnam, including during the annual U.S.-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue, and call on Vietnam to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, consistent with its international obligations and commitments.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Vietnam was identified as continuing to undermine fundamental human rights like speech, assembly, press, religion, and association. If confirmed, how will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground in Vietnam?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage my team to continue its longstanding work with civil society organizations who are trying to make space for positive progress in Vietnam. I will also continue the strong engagement with human rights and civil society organizations in the United States, including the Vietnamese-American community and local human rights NGOs in Vietnam, as previous Ambassadors have done.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MARC EVANS KNAPPER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Cybersecurity*

*Question.* Over the past several years, Vietnamese authorities have increased their scrutiny over Vietnamese citizens' activities on the Internet and in social media. Vietnam's new cybersecurity law, which went into effect in recent months, criminalizes the "distortion of history, denial of revolutionary achievements, undermining national solidarity, taking advantage of cybersecurity protection activities to violate national security, national interests or sovereignty, or disrupt public order."

What has been the impact of measures such as these on Vietnamese citizens' online activities?

Answer. I am concerned about the shrinking environment for the exercise of freedoms of expression and association online. The trend of harassment, arbitrary or unlawful arrests, unjust convictions, and harsh sentences of journalists and activists for exercising their rights, both offline and online, is deeply troubling.

If confirmed, I will advocate with the Government of Vietnam to respect freedom of expression, including online, and engage with social media companies to promote approaches that preserve freedom of expression online and an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure Internet.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MARC EVANS KNAPPER BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you support the Vietnamese Government's efforts to counter the Chinese claims in the South China Sea?

Answer. The U.S. position on the South China Sea is principled and longstanding. In keeping with its global policy, the United States does not take a position on the territorial disputes over land features among the many South China Sea claimants, while at the same time taking a strong principled position on compliance with the international law of the sea. Like Vietnam, the United States has a national interest in upholding international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight, and opposing the use of coercion to resolve disputes.

The United States will continue to support Vietnam's enhancement of its maritime security and law enforcement capabilities to better monitor its maritime domain and resist coercion in the South China Sea. In 2017 and 2020, the U.S. Government officially transferred to Vietnam through the State Department's Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program two 378-foot Hamilton-class cutters, with the second arriving in Vietnam earlier this summer. These vessels are the largest in Vietnam's fleet and significantly enhance Vietnam's maritime security capabilities. Through the State Department's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement program, we are developing four training facilities for Vietnam's Coast Guard. We are bringing U.S. Coast Guard personnel to Vietnam to train Vietnamese Coast Guard and DFIRE Fisheries Enforcement counterparts on key maritime law enforcement skills to ensure that maritime law enforcement capabilities forces are modern, resilient, and capable.

If confirmed, I will continue to support the development of a strong and independent Vietnam through its maritime capacity building, and will remain united in our support for peaceful resolution of disputes, including through international dispute resolution mechanisms.

*Question.* Since the Vietnam War, the United States and Vietnam have repaired their relationship. Vietnam is now a key strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific. However, it is my sincere belief that that relationship cannot reach its full potential unless Vietnam commits to respecting the human rights of its people. For example, in April, journalist Tran Thi Tuyet Dieu was sentenced to eight years in prison for reporting news on Vietnamese political figures. If confirmed, what steps will you take to press for the release of Dieu and other Vietnamese people who are unjustly targeted by Vietnamese security services?

Answer. I am deeply concerned by the convictions of individuals for exercising their freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. These convictions run counter to Vietnam's international human rights obligations and commitments. Vietnam should ensure its laws and actions are consistent with those obligations and commitments.

If confirmed, I will engage with activists, their family members, and lawyers to determine the facts in specific cases and urge authorities to release all persons detained for exercising their rights in Vietnam.

I will stress, above all, the need to follow through on the commitment that the Vietnamese Government has made to fundamentally reform the laws under which activists have been targeted in the past, to bring the country's laws into full compliance with its constitution and with its international obligations.

*Question.* How will you promote U.S. cooperation with Vietnam, which is important, while simultaneously encouraging Hanoi to embrace meaningful political reforms and protect the basic rights of its citizens?

Answer. Twenty-six years since the normalization of diplomatic relations, the U.S.-Vietnam partnership has never been better. We have moved from a history of conflict and division to a Comprehensive Partnership that spans political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties.

The United States and Vietnam have a common sense of purpose and a common vision for a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. We must continue to build on the progress in the bilateral relationship, but as the Biden-Harris administration has committed to putting human rights back at the center of American foreign policy, we must also bring all the tools of our diplomacy to defend human rights, including freedom of religion or belief. If confirmed, I will continue to press Vietnam to improve its implementation of human rights obligations and commitments.

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, JULY 20, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Shaheen, Coons, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, and Young.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider four important nominations, Ms. Paloma Adams-Allen, to be a Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources at the Agency for International Development, Dr. Karen Donfried to be Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs, Ambassador Mary Catherine Phee to be Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and Ms. Anne A. Witkowsky to be Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations.

Congratulations to the four of you on your nominations. We appreciate your willingness to serve our country in these capacities, as well as those members of your family, because we recognize that this is a family sacrifice as well. So we thank them as well.

Ms. Adams-Allen, your lifelong dedication to international development and distinguished career of government service, including as Deputy Assistant Administrator at the Latin American Caribbean Bureau of the United States Agency for International Development, I believe makes you eminently qualified for this position.

If confirmed, your knowledge and experience as a development professional and your distinguished tenure as the President and CEO of the Inter-American Foundation will be needed as you take the role of Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources at USAID.

I am pleased to see that President Biden's budget aims to restore the value and use of international development and foreign assistance as part of the overall goal of achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives. I know Administrator Power is entirely committed to this vital task, and I appreciated her testimony in the budget last week. I have no doubt you will share that commitment.

Dr. Donfried, your nomination is a testament to the Biden administration's efforts to rebuild the trans-Atlantic relationship, which, I believe was significantly damaged during the last administration. If confirmed, I believe your knowledge and experience, including as Senior Director for European Affairs at the National Security Council will serve you and the country well, as the Biden administration works to advance a renewed trans-Atlantic relationship.

It is imperative that this position be filled as soon as possible as we need to see forward movement on critical issues including those related to Russia, Turkey, Belarus, and our support for Ukraine, among others. I look forward to hearing from you about these and other issues.

Ambassador Phee, I am pleased to see you back before the committee, the position you are nominated for to be the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs comes at a critical time for Africa, a Continent with enormous promise and challenges. However, the impacts of the third wave of COVID-19 on top of political and security challenges could roll back years of democratic progress and economic growth.

Indeed, the Biden administration faces a series of challenges in Africa, from China and Russia, which continue to pursue actions that are inimical to U.S. interest to conflict, to instability, and a flawed electoral exercise in Ethiopia, to a fragile transition in Sudan, which could be destabilizing to the entire Horn of Africa.

These are just a few among the many challenges facing Africa and U.S. interests there. In short, the challenges in the region are pressing and vast, I know that you are well equipped, based on your experience, to carry on and meet those challenges, and trust that if confirmed you will do so with skill and commitment.

Ms. Witkowsky, your knowledge and experience, including as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs will be critical, if you are confirmed, to be the next Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations. Indeed, your commitment and expertise with many of today's complex conflicts from Burma, Venezuela, Ethiopia, the Sahel, Yemen, to Afghanistan will be needed as CSO develops long-range, strategic policies and plans in order to address ongoing conflicts, as well as to prevent future ones. I will look forward to hearing from you about how you will approach this task.

In closing, while the four of you have a series of challenges ahead, I am confident that your commitment and experience will serve you well, as you take on these new responsibilities upon confirmation. I look forward to your testimonies.

And now I turn to the ranking member for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I certainly embrace a number of the issues that are going to be facing these people.

And thank you, each of you, for your willingness to serve, and your families, because they always share the sacrifice.

I want to start with the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for European Eurasian Affairs. For starters, I am concerned the administration has refused to use visa sanctions to shut down the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline, this is a continued aggravation for us, and I would like to see that resolved.

Putin has boasted that its completion will be a victory for Russian power. I would also note that any deal with the Russians would be in violation of U.S. law. And I expect to hear more from you on this topic, Dr. Donfried.

On Chinese maligned influence, Europe is a key partner, I have been encouraged to see the increased U.S.-European discussions on working together to combat China's actions.

In Georgia, I am increasingly worried by steps backward. The past weeks more than 50 journalists were beaten. One of them died from his injuries, and several judges were pushed onto the Supreme Court in contravention of the April 19th Agreement.

I know Senator Shaheen shares my concerns in that regard, and we had a number of discussions on that. I hope you will work to address the issues with Georgia's Government.

Ukraine remains a big focus on The Hill. We are disappointed to see the administration refusal to send additional help to Ukraine this spring in order that they might defend from their belligerent neighbor. I hope you will address this today.

On to the nomination of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, the Biden administration has stated that Africa is a priority, but it is unclear where Africa fits in that priority list. First, I am troubled by the conflict and humanitarian situation in Tigray, however, I am concerned that the U.S. is so focused on the Tigray crisis, that it is ignoring the significant challenges to peace, democracy that we face across Ethiopia.

This is a complex challenge. I get that. I look forward to hearing how we navigate Ethiopia's challenges, and the other crises across the Horn of Africa, which is becoming more and more of a focus and a crisis.

Aside from Ethiopia, I remain deeply concerned about the lack of initiative the international community has shown, including our European, French, and African partners, in pushing for a resolution to the crisis in Cameroon, as well as corruption challenges by the regimes in Zimbabwe and South Sudan.

African countries are crucial partners in our fight to combat malign Chinese influence. The United States remains the top contributor of health and humanitarian assistance to Africa, but we must do more to commit ourselves to building strong economic and security partnerships with our African allies.

Next we have the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations. Like many, I am concerned by this administration's response to the crisis unfolding in Afghanistan. It is clear that the administration had no plans in place to manage the withdrawal and provide for the people that worked side by side with our troops.

President Biden publicly stated that his administration was, "Working closely with Congress to change the authorization legislation in order to expedite the processing of Afghan special immi-

grant visas.” But I have yet to see such outreach on the specific legislative fixes they are seeking.

Finally, we have the nomination of a Deputy Administrator of the USAID for Management and Resources. U.S. foreign assistance can help advance the national security, economic and humanitarian interests of the United States, but it must be thoughtfully targeted and designed to ensure the greatest possible impact. The responsibility for aligning roughly two-thirds of the U.S. foreign assistance budget, with the strategic objectives of the United States overseas falls here.

I am eager to hear about the modernization of USAID’s workforce, and operations to stretch the aid dollars further so we can save lives and advance U.S. interests. We have a lot to cover today.

I will yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

Okay. So we will turn to our nominees. All of your statements will be included in the record without objection.

We will start with Ms. Adams-Allen, and move down the aisle as I introduce you.

So the floor is yours, Ms. Adams-Allen.

**STATEMENT OF MS. PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE A DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT [MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES]**

Ms. ADAMS-ALLEN. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden’s nominee to be Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources of the United States Agency for International Development.

I would like to thank the President and Administrator Power for their trust in me. I am grateful for the opportunity to return to USAID, an agency dear to my heart, at a moment when its leadership and development expertise are so urgently needed.

I am here today before you because of the love and support of so many. My mother, Emilie Adams, a proud Minnesotan who instilled in me a deep sense of fairness and justice; my father, Llewelyn Adams, who I credit for my strong Jamaican work ethic; my husband, Travis Allen, still the best human I know; my daughters, Priya and Emilie, whose creativity and empathy inspire me every day; and a network of extended family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors spanning the globe. Thank you all.

My international development and diplomacy experience started early, informed by the duality of my upbringing: summers spent in the relative wealth and safety of my mother’s community in the United States, and the school year spent in the beauty and vulnerability of my father’s home country in Jamaica. It was in the jarring journey back and forth between these worlds that I settled on what I wanted to do with my life: pay forward the incredible privilege I have as an American, by working to fuel hope and opportunity in communities like the one that helped raise me.

This early decision informed my 20-plus years working in the foreign assistance arena, primarily Latin America and the Caribbean.



During a decade in policy and programming roles at the Organization of American States, I saw the potential of multilateralism to calm tensions between neighboring countries, and mobilize regional support for humanitarian crises like the 2010 earthquake.

But it has been my experience in the federal government, serving in leadership and management positions at USAID, and now as Head of the Inter-American Foundation, where I have been able to effect the change I dreamed of as a child. During a decade of public service, I have had the honor of investing in and learning from young people bravely building peace in El Salvador; smallholder farmers in Colombia selling their coffee to global corporations, and proud grandmothers in Haiti financing businesses through their savings and loans associations.

Throughout my career, I have demonstrated an ability to successfully manage complex operations, effectively steward resources, create and lead diverse purpose-driven teams, and advance reforms designed to enhance the impact and sustainability of development investments.

And I have done so in a bipartisan manner, recognizing and respecting Congress' role as an equal partner in U.S. foreign assistance. If confirmed, I will draw upon this experience to effectively oversee USAID's management and resources needs.

As the U.S. Government's lead the global development agency, USAID needs to be nimble enough to respond to an ever-evolving set of geopolitical challenges and crises, and to do so with the management and oversight commensurate with the responsibilities given to it by the American people through the Congress.

If confirmed, my top priority will be positioning USAID to further maximize its development impact, by [1] better aligning strategy and resources to deliver results; and [2] expanding the Agency's partner base to include more nontraditional U.S. and local implementing partners with strong in-country knowledge, expertise, and a commitment to sustainability.

In order to maximize impact, we must support and invest in USAID's greatest strength, its people. If confirmed, my focus will be on making sure the Agency has a staff equipped with the right tools, and bolstered by a supportive culture, one that recognizes and responds to the outsized demands placed on USAID, and embraces the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

And finally, if confirmed, I will prioritize enhancing USAID's ability to rapidly respond and take advantage of emerging opportunities as conditions change on the ground. There are multiple layers to this goal, but perhaps most important is building on prior efforts to enhance the Agency's procurement capabilities so that it programs resources in a faster, more responsive manner.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Adams-Allen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources of the United States Agency for International Development.

I would like to thank the President and Administrator Power for their trust in me. I'm grateful for the opportunity to return to USAID, an Agency dear to my heart, at a moment when its leadership and development expertise are so urgently needed.

I am here before you today because of the love and support of so many—my mother, Emilie Adams, a proud Minnesotan who instilled in me a deep sense of fairness and justice; my father, Llewelyn Adams, who I credit for my strong Jamaican work ethic; my husband, Travis Allen, still the best human I know; my daughters, Priya and Emilie, whose creativity and empathy inspire me every day; and a network of extended family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors spanning the globe. Thank you all.

My international development and diplomacy experience started early, informed by the duality of my upbringing: summers spent in the relative wealth and safety of my mother's community in the United States, and the school year spent in the riotous beauty and vulnerability of my father's home country of Jamaica. It was in the jarring journey back and forth between these worlds that I settled on what I wanted to do with my life: pay forward the incredible privilege I have as an American, by working to fuel hope and opportunity in communities like the one that helped raise me.

This early decision informed my 20+ years working in the foreign assistance arena, primarily focused on Latin America and the Caribbean. During a decade in policy and programming roles at the Organization of American States, I saw the potential of multilateralism to calm tensions between neighboring countries and mobilize regional support for humanitarian crises like the 2010 Haiti earthquake. But it has been my experience in the federal government, serving in

leadership and management positions at USAID and now as head of the Inter-American Foundation, where I have been able to affect the change I dreamed of as a child. During a decade of public service, I have had the honor of investing in and learning from young people bravely building peace in El Salvador; small holder farmers in Colombia selling their coffee to global retailers; and proud grandmothers in Haiti financing micro and small businesses through their savings and loans associations.

Throughout my career, I have demonstrated an ability to successfully manage complex operations, effectively steward resources, create and lead diverse purpose-driven teams, and advance reforms designed to enhance the impact and sustainability of development investments. And I have done so in a bipartisan manner, recognizing and respecting Congress' role as an equal partner in US foreign assistance. If confirmed, I will draw upon this experience to effectively oversee USAID's management and resources needs.

As the U.S. Government's lead global development agency, USAID needs to be nimble enough to respond to an ever-evolving set of geopolitical challenges and crises—and to do so with the management and oversight commensurate with the responsibilities given to it by the American people through the Congress.

If confirmed, my top priority will be positioning USAID to further maximize its development impact, by (1) better aligning strategy and resources to deliver results; and (2) expanding the Agency's partner base to include more non-traditional U.S. implementing partners and local organizations, with strong in-country knowledge, expertise, and a commitment to sustainability.

In order to maximize our impact, we must support and invest in USAID's greatest strength and resource: its people. If confirmed, my focus will be on making sure the Agency has enough staff, equipped with the right tools, and bolstered by a supportive culture—one that recognizes and responds to the outsized demands placed on USAID, and embraces the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

And finally, if confirmed, I will prioritize enhancing USAID's ability to rapidly respond and take advantage of emerging opportunities as conditions change on the ground. There are multiple layers to this goal, but perhaps most important is building on prior efforts to enhance the

Agency's procurement capabilities—so that it programs resources in a faster, more responsive manner.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Dr. Donfried?

**STATEMENT OF DR. KAREN DONFRIED OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS]**

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today.

I have long valued my bipartisan collaboration with this committee, dating back to 1991, when I began a decade of work on Europe at the Congressional Research Service. If confirmed, it would be a pleasure to work with you from the State Department on issues I care passionately about and on which the United States is and shall remain a force for good.

It is an honor to be nominated by President Biden to serve under Secretary Blinken as the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs. If confirmed, I will work enthusiastically to serve the American people, and advance the interests of the United States, to reinvigorate our alliances and partnerships, to strengthen democracy in Europe and Eurasia, and to address the challenges we face around the world.

My greatest support, if confirmed for this position, will come from my husband, Alan Untereiner, our daughter, Hannah, and our son, Michael. They are an endless source of love and inspiration. Although born in New York City, I spent my early childhood in Heidelberg, where my father, a theologian, did his doctoral work, and my mother worked as a nurse at U.S. Army Headquarters.

That experience gave me the gift of speaking German fluently, which, in turn, allowed me, two decades later, to complete a Master's degree in Munich, where I met Alan, a fellow American studying abroad. Trans-Atlantic relations have been an integral part of my life story.

Professionally, I served in the George W. Bush administration as a member of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, and in the Obama administration both as the National Intelligence Officer for Europe, and as the Senior Director for European Affairs at the National Security Council. For the past seven years, I have led the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

If confirmed, I will have the responsibility, and the honor and joy of leading EUR, covering 50 countries, with 79 posts and 12,000 hard-working, dedicated public servants. I will treat each and every one of them with the care and respect they deserve, as well as work energetically to recruit and develop more diverse talent for the Bureau.

President Biden defines his number one job as ensuring that America's foreign policy benefits the American people and the American middle class. I am eager to support him in achieving this goal, including by revitalizing our alliances and partnerships. The strength of America's alliances is one of our greatest assets. Whether we are confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, economic or social inequality, climate change, corruption, threats to energy security, an aggressive Russia, an increasingly assertive China, cyber threats, or technological competition, the United States is most effective when we cooperate with our allies.

Europe is home to many of our closest allies and partners. Together, we must stand firm against Russia's broad range of desta-

bilizing actions while recognizing there are areas of mutual interest on which we might cooperate. Allies and partners must work together to blunt the Kremlin's attempts to undermine democracies and democratic institutions.

We must confront Russian aggression against its neighbors by standing with the people of Ukraine, Georgia, and Belarus. And we must stand up for universal human rights, including in Russia. The Kremlin's persecution of political opponents, such as Aleksey Navalny, remains deeply disturbing.

Additionally, we must work with our allies to counter an assertive China in the political, diplomatic, economic, military, and technological domains. How we manage our relationship with China is the biggest geopolitical test of the 21st century.

We must work to preserve the free and open rules-based order we built together with our allies seven decades ago in the wake of World War II. The Marshall Plan remains one of the most compelling examples of the United States exercising enlightened leadership.

But 2021 is not 1947. We must modernize our alliances to meet new challenges. Secretary Blinken has made clear that while we applaud the significant progress many NATO allies have made in improving defense investments, we need to do more. The common threats we face demand it.

Allies share values and interests, but we will not always agree. To manage those differences requires trust; if confirmed, I will work to deepen that trust to achieve policy successes that advance U.S. interests. If confirmed, I will seek to deepen cooperation between EUR and this committee to ensure that our diplomacy delivers for the American people.

I look forward to your questions. And thank you for your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Donfried follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. KAREN E. DONFRIED

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I have long valued my bipartisan collaboration with this committee, dating back to 1991, when I began a decade of work on Europe at the Congressional Research Service. If confirmed, it would be a pleasure to work with you from the State Department on issues I care passionately about and on which the United States is and shall remain a force for good.

It is an honor to be nominated by President Biden to serve under Secretary Blinken as the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR). If confirmed, I will work enthusiastically to serve the American people and advance the interests of the United States, to reinvigorate our alliances and partnerships, to strengthen democracy in Europe and Eurasia, and to address the challenges we face around the world.

My greatest support, if confirmed for this position, will come from my husband, Alan Untereiner, our daughter, Hannah, and our son, Michael. They are an endless source of love and inspiration. Although born in New York City, I spent my early childhood in Heidelberg, where my father, a theologian, did his doctoral work and my mother worked as a nurse at U.S. Army Headquarters. That experience gave me the gift of speaking German fluently, which, in turn, allowed me, two decades later, to complete a Masters degree in Munich, where I met Alan, a fellow American studying abroad. Transatlantic relations have been an integral part of my life story.

Professionally, I served in the George W. Bush administration as a Member of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff and in the Obama administration both as the National Intelligence Officer for Europe and as the Senior Director for European

Affairs at the National Security Council. For the past seven years, I have led the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

If confirmed, I will have the responsibility—and the honor and joy—of leading EUR, covering 50 countries, with 79 posts and 12,000 hard-working, dedicated public servants. I will treat each and every one of them with the care and respect they deserve, as well as work energetically to recruit and develop more diverse talent for the bureau.

President Biden defines his number one job as ensuring that America's foreign policy benefits the American people and the American middle class. I am eager to support him in achieving this goal, including by revitalizing our alliances and partnerships. The strength of America's alliances is one of our greatest assets. Whether we are confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, economic or social inequality, climate change, corruption, threats to energy security, an aggressive Russia, an increasingly assertive China, cyber threats, or technological competition, the United States is most effective when we cooperate with our allies.

Europe is home to many of our closest allies and partners. Together, we must stand firm against Russia's broad range of destabilizing actions while recognizing there are areas of mutual interest on which we might cooperate. Allies and partners must work together to blunt the Kremlin's attempts to undermine democracies and democratic institutions. We must confront Russian aggression against its neighbors by standing with the people of Ukraine, Georgia, and Belarus. And we must stand up for universal human rights, including in Russia; the Kremlin's persecution of political opponents, such as Aleksey Navalny, remains deeply disturbing. Additionally, we must work with our allies to counter an assertive China in the political, diplomatic, economic, military, and technological domains. How we manage our relationship with China is the biggest geopolitical test of the 21st century.

Most importantly, we must work to preserve the free and open rules-based order we built together with our allies seven decades ago in the wake of World War II. The Marshall Plan remains one of the most compelling examples of the United States exercising enlightened leadership. But 2021 is not 1947. We must modernize our alliances to meet new challenges. Secretary Blinken has made clear that while we applaud the significant progress many NATO allies have made in improving defense investments, we need to do more. The common threats we face demand it.

Allies share values and interests, but we will not always agree. To manage those differences requires trust. If confirmed, I will work to deepen the trust our partners in Europe have in the United States so we can achieve policy successes that advance U.S. interests.

If confirmed, I will seek to deepen cooperation between EUR and this committee to ensure that our diplomacy delivers for the American people. I look forward to your questions and thank you for your consideration.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Ambassador Phee?

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARY CATHERINE PHEE OF ILLINOIS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [AFRICAN AFFAIRS], A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, AND A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**

Ambassador PHEE. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee; I am honored to be President Biden's nominee for the post of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I began my career as a public servant in these halls in the office of Senator Pat Moynihan. Senator Moynihan kept only two documents on his desk: the U.S. Constitution, and the U.N. Charter. He inspired my career in the Foreign Service, and taught me an abiding respect for this institution, and this committee.

My career in foreign policy began in Nairobi, Kenya, at the United Nations Environment Program. In Kenya I was introduced to the talent and generosity of the African people. Kenyan politics were also my first exposure to the enduring challenges of governance, security, and sustainable development. Applying U.S. diplomacy to effectively meet such challenges has been the dominant theme of my career.

I thank this committee for its bipartisan recognition of the growing political, economic and cultural power of the diverse countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is up to the State Department to translate this recognition into respectful partnerships that advance our shared interests, values, and aspirations.

If confirmed, I will work to support President Biden's agenda to expand the quantity and quality of our engagement with African Governments, institutions such as the African Union, and critically, African publics.

To stand up to the threat of autocracy, the President has charged us with demonstrating that democracy is the best system to meet the challenges of our interconnected world. Africans agree and are raising their voices to set new destinies for their countries, as we see in Nigeria. The bravery of the Sudanese people in demanding a civilian-led government is another extraordinary example.

Across the Continent we will reinvigorate our focus on human rights, accountability, and good governance. President Biden has declared the fight against corruption, especially the theft of public assets for private gain, to be a core national security interest.

We see a direct correlation between African Governments that are authoritarian and the incidence of internal conflict, displacement, and migration. Many are contending with an active threat from the Islamic State, and other violent extremists like al-Shabaab in Somalia.

Diverse societies struggle to uphold inclusive and equitable power-sharing arrangements, and collaboration with regional and international partners, tailored U.S. diplomatic, development and security assistance can play a critical role to support peace and security.

This imperative is driving our current intensive effort to urge all parties to the conflict in Ethiopia to implement an immediate and unconditional ceasefire to put a halt to atrocities against civilians.

Climate change also threatens stability. Desertification in the Sahel disrupts farming and has displaced hundreds of thousands, and reckless exploitation threatens the rainforest in the Congo Basin, and the Continent's biological diversity. It is in our mutual interests to work together on environmental sustainability.

Africa is the fastest-growing and the youngest continent. By 2050, one in four persons in the world will be African. Workforce development and job creation will be necessary to tap the ambitions of the youth bulge. We are committed to expanding two-way trade and investment, and

to advancing the regional goals of the African Continental Free Trade Area. Among other strengths, the U.S. private sector offers innovative American options for green energy, and digital economies, as well as a commitment to social responsibility.

All these priorities are now threatened by the devastating human toll of COVID-19. Consistent with America's generous tradition of investment in Africa's health systems, exemplified by the landmark PEPFAR program, the White House has just announced the donation of 25 million COVID-19 vaccines for Africa. The Development Finance Corporation is also investing in vaccine production in South Africa and Senegal.

Mindful of the challenges at home and humble about the challenges in Africa, our best asset will be a dynamic and affirmative U.S. policy agenda that enlists African partners in building free-market democracies that offer liberty and prosperity and realize the Continent's full potential.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, with the Strategic Competition Act, you have given us our marching orders and new tools. If confirmed, I commit that U.S. embassies in Sub-Saharan Africa will act to confront the Chinese challenge to the international rules-based order.

Finally, and not least, if confirmed I promise to be a champion of the people of the State Department's Africa Bureau, to unleash their full potential with a vigorous commitment to diversity and inclusion, and to cultivate the special esprit de corps that has traditionally defined the Bureau. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Phee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARY CATHERINE PHEE

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Minority Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to be President Biden's nominee for the post of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I began my career as a public servant here in the office of Senator Pat Moynihan. To guide his work, Senator Moynihan kept only two documents on his desk: the U.S. constitution and the U.N. Charter. He inspired my career in the Foreign Service, and taught me an abiding respect for this institution, and this committee.

My career in foreign policy began in Nairobi, Kenya, at the United Nations Environment Program. In Kenya I was introduced to the talent and generosity of the African people, and the beauty and richness of the African landscape. Kenyan politics were also my first exposure to the enduring challenges of governance, security and sustainable development. Applying U.S. diplomacy to effectively meet such challenges has been the dominant theme of my career.

I thank this committee for its bipartisan recognition of the growing political, economic and cultural power of the diverse countries in sub-Saharan Africa. It is up to the State Department to translate this recognition into respectful partnerships that advance our shared interests, values and aspirations. If confirmed, I will work to support President Biden's agenda to expand the quantity and quality of our engagement with African Governments, institutions such as the African Union, and, critically, African publics.

To stand up to the threat of autocracy, the President has charged us with demonstrating that democracy is the best system to meet the challenges of our interconnected world. We know that the majority of Africans agree and are raising their voices to set new destinies for their countries, as we see in Nigeria. The bravery of the Sudanese people in demanding a civilian-led government is another extraordinary example. Across the continent we will reinvigorate our focus on human rights, accountability, and good governance. President Biden has declared the fight against corruption, especially the theft of public assets for private gain, to be a core national security interest.

We see a direct correlation between African Governments that are authoritarian and the incidence of internal conflict, displacement, and migration. Many are contending with an active threat from the Islamic State and other violent extremists like al-Shabaab in Somalia. Diverse societies struggle to uphold inclusive and equitable power-sharing arrangements. In collaboration with regional and international partners, tailored U.S. diplomatic, development and security assistance can play a

critical role to support peace and security. This imperative is driving our current intensive effort to urge all parties to the conflict in Ethiopia to implement an immediate and unconditional ceasefire that puts a halt to atrocities against civilians, to permit the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to restore stability through political dialogue.

Climate change also threatens stability. Desertification in the Sahel disrupts farming and has displaced hundreds of thousands, and reckless exploitation threatens the world's second largest rainforest in the Congo Basin and the continent's wonderland of biological diversity. It is in our mutual interests to work together on environmental sustainability.

Africa is the fastest growing and the youngest continent. By 2050, one in four persons in the world will be African. Workforce development and job creation will be necessary to tap the ambitions of the youth bulge. We are committed to expanding two-way trade and investment and to advancing the regional goals of the African Continental Free Trade Area. Among other strengths, the U.S. private sector offers innovative American options for green energy and digital economies, as well as a commitment to social responsibility.

All these priorities are now threatened by the devastating human toll of COVID-19. Consistent with America's generous tradition of investment in Africa's health systems, exemplified by the landmark PEPFAR program, the White House has just announced the donation of 25 million COVID-19 vaccines for Africa. Earlier the President committed the United States to providing 500 million Pfizer vaccine doses to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, for distribution by COVAX to 92 low- and lower middle-income countries and economies, and the African Union. The Development Finance Corporation is also investing in vaccine production in South Africa and Senegal. This pandemic highlights how our fates are intertwined.

Mindful of the challenges at home and humble about the challenges in Africa, our best asset will be a dynamic and affirmative U.S. policy agenda that enlists African partners in building free market democracies that offer liberty and prosperity and realize the continent's full potential. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Minority Member, with the Strategic Competition Act you have given us our marching orders and new tools. If confirmed I commit that U.S. embassies in sub-Saharan Africa will act to confront the Chinese challenge to the international rules-based order.

Finally, and not least, if confirmed I promise to be a champion of the people of the State Department's Africa bureau, to unleash their full potential with a vigorous commitment to diversity and inclusion and to cultivate the special esprit d'corps that has traditionally defined the bureau.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Witkowsky?

**STATEMENT OF MS. ANNE A. WITKOWSKY, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [CONFLICT AND STABILIZATION OPERATIONS], AND TO BE COORDINATOR FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Ms. WITKOWSKY. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations, and Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

I am deeply grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me for this nomination.

I am joined here today by my husband, John, and our son Jack, with our daughter Elizabeth watching remotely. I want to underscore how much their love and support means to me, as well as that of my mother, sister, and all family members.

Growing up in the Midwest, I am grateful my parents modeled for me the values of public service. My father served in the Army Corps of Engineers in World War II, and as the first Chairman of



the Illinois State Board of Education, while my mother volunteered for many civic organizations.

I have by now had the opportunity to serve in the Executive Branch across four administrations; within the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and on the White House National Security Council staff. While I have held positions outside government as well, there has been no greater privilege than to serve alongside the talented and dedicated men and women in the national security community, in the civil service, foreign service, the military services, law enforcement and intelligence.

Throughout, I have learned the critical importance of effectively using all U.S. national security tools, including diplomacy, development and defense to support U.S. policy priorities and advance U.S. interests and values.

From my experience pursuing conventional arms control in Europe at the end of the Cold War, to advancing counterterrorism policies and programs in the post-9/11 period, to supporting the Department of Defense response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, I have learned that the U.S. Government is most effective when integrating our policies, programs, and activities to work at common purpose. That is a key lesson I intend to bring to my position as Assistant Secretary, if confirmed.

The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, or CSO, has a vital role to play in developing and carrying out U.S. conflict prevention and stabilization policy and programs, working in close cooperation with USAID and the Department of Defense. Preventing conflict is hard, and outcomes can be tough to measure. Yet, when we do not address instability at the front end, too often we find ourselves having to address it in different, more costly ways at the back end.

The strategic environment for the CSO mission is growing more challenging. The number and duration of violent conflicts is increasing. Democracy is backsliding for the 15th straight year, and authoritarianism is on the rise. We see territory controlled by governments being reduced, as non-state armed actors gain ground.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on populations globally. The displacement of people is at a recorded high; climate change, corruption, gender inequality, and the rapid spread of disinformation pose additional underlying challenges.

Therefore, if confirmed, I will place priority on strengthening the Bureau's contributions to the U.S. Government's effectiveness in meeting these challenges.

Policies and best practices should be regularly adapted, drawing from lessons learned. We will deepen and renew U.S. partnerships on these issues, bilaterally and with multilateral organizations, to advance common objectives. And we must work collaboratively with civil society.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Members of this committee, including those who have been instrumental in providing new tools to break the costly cycle of conflict. Among those tools are the Global Fragility Act of 2019, and the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, as well as the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017, all bipartisan legislation.

CSO will exercise leadership, working with other State Department bureaus and interagency partners, to advance their implementation, together with the 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review.

And as I consider our plans, we will identify how the work of CSO can reinforce support for democratic values and human rights at the heart of our foreign policy. That work must be anchored in understanding how Russia's malign efforts undermine democracies and exploit instability, and the geostrategic challenge of China's ambitions.

Finally, I will be dedicated in full to building a strong workforce, one that is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Thank you again for this opportunity to lead the CSO Bureau, to advance American interests and values toward a more peaceful and safer world.

I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Witkowsky follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANNE A. WITKOWSKY

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee. It is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations and Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. I am deeply grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me for this nomination.

I am joined here today by my husband, John and our son Jack, with our daughter Elizabeth watching remotely. I want to underscore how much their love and support means to me, as well as that of all my family members. Growing up in the Midwest, I am grateful my parents modeled for me the values of public service. My father served in the Army Corps of Engineers in World War II and as the first chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education, while my mother volunteered for many civic organizations.

I have by now had the opportunity to serve in the Executive Branch across four administrations, within the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and on the White House National Security Council staff. While I have held positions outside government as well, there has been no greater privilege than to serve alongside the talented and dedicated men and women in the national security community, in the civil service, foreign service, the military services, law enforcement and intelligence.

Throughout, I have learned the critical importance of effectively using all U.S. national security tools—including diplomacy, development and defense—to support U.S. policy priorities and advance U.S. interests and values. From my experience pursuing conventional arms control in Europe at the end of the Cold War, to advancing counterterrorism policies and programs in the post 9/11 period, to supporting the Department of Defense response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, I have learned that the U.S. Government is most effective when integrating our policies, programs, and activities to work at common purpose. That is a key lesson I intend to bring to my position as Assistant Secretary, if confirmed.

The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (or CSO) has a vital role to play in developing and carrying out U.S. conflict prevention and stabilization policies and programs, working in close cooperation with USAID and the Department of Defense. Preventing violent conflict is hard, and outcomes can be tough to measure. Yet, when we do not address instability at the front end, too often we find ourselves having to address it in different, more costly ways at the back end.

The strategic environment for the CSO mission is growing more challenging. The number and duration of violent conflicts is increasing. Democracy is backsliding for the 15th straight year, and authoritarianism is on the rise. We see territory controlled by governments being reduced, as non-state armed actors gain ground. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on populations globally. The displacement of people is at a recorded high. Climate change, corruption, gender inequality, and the rapid spread of disinformation pose additional underlying challenges.

Therefore, if confirmed, I will place priority on strengthening the Bureau's contributions to the U.S. Government's effectiveness in meeting these challenges. Policies and best practices should be regularly adapted, drawing from lessons learned.

We will deepen, and renew, U.S. partnerships on these issues, bilaterally and with multilateral organizations, to advance common objectives. And we must work collaboratively with civil society.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the members of this committee, including those who have been instrumental in providing new tools to break the costly cycle of conflict. Among those tools are the Global Fragility Act of 2019 and the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, as well as the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017, all bipartisan legislation. CSO will exercise leadership, working with other State Department Bureaus and interagency partners, to advance their implementation, together with the 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review.

And, as I consider our plans, we will identify how the work of CSO can reinforce support for democratic values and human rights at the heart of our foreign policy. That work must be anchored in understanding how Russia's malign efforts undermine democracies and exploit instability, and the geostrategic challenge of China's ambitions.

Finally, I will be dedicated in full to building a strong workforce, one that is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Thank you again for this opportunity to lead the CSO Bureau, to advance American interests and values toward a more peaceful and safer world. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you all very much. So first I have a series of questions on behalf of the committee as a whole, and a simple yes or no to the question by each of you, is what we request. These are questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness of all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you.

So with a simple yes or no answer: Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Ms. ADAMS-ALLEN. Yes.

Ms. WITKOWSKY. Yes.

Dr. DONFRIED. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador?

Ambassador PHEE. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Do you commit to keeping the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ambassador PHEE. Yes.

Ms. ADAMS-ALLEN. Yes.

Ms. WITKOWSKY. Yes.

Dr. DONFRIED. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Did I hear a yes from you, Doctor?

Dr. DONFRIED. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed? Not just providing notification after the fact?

Ambassador PHEE. Yes.

Ms. ADAMS-ALLEN. Yes.

Ms. WITKOWSKY. Yes.

Dr. DONFRIED. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you commit to promptly responding to request for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ambassador PHEE. Yes.

Ms. ADAMS-ALLEN. Yes.

Ms. WITKOWSKY. Yes.

Dr. DONFRIED. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you, all.

So we will start a round a five-minute questions. I will start with myself. There is a lot of room, a lot of waterfront to cover here with all four of you. So it will be difficult.

But let me start by focusing with you, Dr. Donfried, on a series of issues that I am very much concerned about. Section 231 of CAATSA is a provision that imposes sanctions on entities that conduct significant transactions with the Russian defense and intelligence sectors. I help write that law. Do you agree to section 231 of CAATSA has prevented significant funding from going to the Russian defense and intelligence sectors? And do you support its full implementation?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, it is such an honor to appear before the committee, and I will turn to your question, but I do not want to let this opportunity pass to thank you for your support of GMF. And as you were giving your opening comments earlier, I had a flashback to 2019 when you delivered an important keynote speech about the importance of trans-Atlantic relations on GMF stage in Brussels. And I just want to thank you for not only your leadership of this committee, but also being such an important public voice on these issues.

You mentioned your role on CAATSA, and I would absolutely agree with you that that legislation has been important in pushing back against Russian influence and countering its malign activities. And if confirmed, I would, indeed, commit to the full implementation of CAATSA.

The CHAIRMAN. Very good. Do you commit to regularly engaging with me in efforts to ensure its full implementation?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez? If confirmed, I would look forward to working closely with you on its full implementation.

The CHAIRMAN. Now what do you think about CAATSA sanctions on Turkey unless Ankara gets rid of its Russian S-400 system?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, I would say that we have to keep sanctions on Turkey for as long as it has the S-400s.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. So, let me turn to a few other things. The administration has yet to impose congressionally mandated sanctions in response to the attempted murder of anti-corruption activist, Alexei Navalny, as required under the Chemical and Biological Weapons Act. These sanctions were due on June the 2nd. I will note that they were pending since the past administration and neither have yet acted on it.

If confirmed, will you commit to briefing us on why the administration continues to ignore the law?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, I find Russia's use of chemical weapons chilling and shocking. And if confirmed, I will follow the law and I will stand up to Russia's reckless and aggressive behavior. And I will look forward to the opportunity to consult with you in so doing.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Now let me turn to the Eastern Mediterranean. This is an increasingly important, I think, part of the world, we passed the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Partnership Act, which I think enhanced our relationships with critical countries in the region: Greece, Cyprus, Israel, to mention some,

and creating a new paradigm in the Eastern Mediterranean in both energy and security.

But we wake up today to see a statement by President Erdogan of Turkey with reference to Cyprus saying that peace talks on the future of ethnically-divided Cyprus can take place only between two states, only between two states.

Now this is in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 550 that called upon members to not recognize the Government in the North, that calls for Varosha to come under U.N. administration, and that considers any attempt to resettle Varosha by other than its inhabitants, to be inadmissible.

And it further violates the U.N. Resolution 789, that called for a significant reduction in foreign troops, that calls for U.N. peacekeepers to be deployed to Varosha, and called for a recommitment to the peace process.

Erdogan is violating all of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions. He is in the north of Cyprus today instigating, and creating a challenge to a country that is part of the European Union. Now I will say that over several administrations, we have been rather passive, from my view, about this engagement. And all we see is Erdogan encroaching in the exclusive economic zone of not only Cyprus, seeking to do so with Greece.

It has played, in my view, a nefarious role in a variety of things in the region. And unless we take an assertive role and push back, we are going to find ourselves with a significant challenge.

Now I would like to hear from you, if you were to be confirmed, what role you would take, what position you would take as it relates to these issues?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, thank you for your engagement on the Eastern Med. It has made a real difference. And I have been following the breaking news from Cyprus as I entered this hearing room, and this latest announcement by the Turkish Cypriot leader and by Turkish President Erdogan about the Turkish Cypriots taking control over parts of Varosha is exactly part of the narrative you are talking about.

This is a move that is clearly inconsistent with U.N. Security Council Resolutions. I do not know if the U.S. Government has yet issued a statement about this, but I am certain this action will be condemned, and these actions are provocative, they are destabilizing for the region, and they are an impediment to any settlement for Cyprus, that will be on the basis of a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

And if I were to be confirmed, I would want to work closely with you on this. In this particular case of Varosha I think that we need to refer the situation to the U.N. Security Council. We need to encourage the international community to give a strong response to this action. We also need to work to deescalate tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean, and I do appreciate your engagement on this.

The CHAIRMAN. So I have your commitment that if you are confirmed, this will be one of your priorities in your portfolio?

Dr. DONFRIED. Yes, Chairman, it would.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I certainly want to associate myself with those remarks regarding Erdogan and his actions throughout the globe.

Ms. Donfried, I want to start with our relationship with our friends in Europe, and particularly as it relates to both of ours and Europe's relationship with China. One of the ways, as we push back on the Chinese challenge, is it is going to take a real partners to do that. No country is going to be able to do it alone. If we put our population, Europe's population together, we are still only about a third of what the Chinese population is.

Because we have common and shared values with our European allies, it is the most natural alliance there is to push back against China. I authored a report on this, and I think others have given speeches on it, and also done reports on it. What are your thoughts on how we can work together with Europe to push back on the challenges we are going to get from China?

Dr. DONFRIED. Ranking Member Risch, thank you for that question. I have read your November 2020 Report and I would commend it. The comprehensiveness and breadth of the view you took on how the United States can work more closely with Europe on these key challenges in the relationship with China, I think in many ways is path-breaking.

And I would commit to you that I would look forward to working with you on how we flesh out what you called a concrete agenda for trans-Atlantic cooperation on China. I think there is no better moment for us to be doing this because I think Europe understands today much more than it has over the past decade, the challenge China poses.

And when President Biden made the trip to Europe just last month, at the G7, at the NATO Summit, at the U.S.-EU Summit, we saw this commitment on the part of our allies to work with us on the agenda. I think that we can put U.S. diplomatic muscle to good effect here. Thank you.

Senator RISCH. Well, I appreciate that. And I think we have all got to commit ourselves to getting China to comply with international norms, and rule of law, and enforcement of rule of law. And if we do not, it is going to be a long 21st century for all of us if we do not, if we do not do that.

Let us turn to Georgia for a minute. I and other members of this committee, have been disappointed in what has been happening in Georgia. Senator Shaheen and I were there when they had their elections in October of 2012, which we thought was a new dawn, and a new beginning. And after that we have been regularly disappointed as to what happens there.

And they come to Washington, D.C., all the time, the different parties, and each of them try to engage us and get us to take sides in their political maneuvering, which every country does. And we keep telling them that they have got to resolve this themselves. We are not going to take sides in this.

But they are not making much progress. You get to a point where you wonder whether or not it is time to just reevaluate where you are with this. What are your thoughts Georgia?

Dr. DONFRIED. Thank you, Ranking Member Risch. And I am grateful to you and Senator Shaheen for that trip that you made.

And I also would point to the CODEL that Senator Shaheen and Senator Portman took to Georgia quite recently, and I think that broad bipartisan engagement is critical in the relationship.

If confirmed, I would continue to push for the full and prompt implementation of the agreement that was signed on April 19, and urge all parties in Georgia to support that agreement. And I cannot underscore enough how important electoral reform and judicial reform is for Georgia. As you well know, Georgia has made substantial strides to strengthen its democracy, but it has much more distance to travel, and I will press for them to cover that distance.

At the same time, I would reaffirm U.S. support for Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and continue to support for Georgia's integration in the Euro-Atlantic community, which is tied to the strength of Georgia's democracy. And I would look forward to working with you on these issues.

Senator RISCH. Well, thank you. I certainly appreciate those thoughts.

My time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch. And thank you to our nominees today. And particularly to your families who have supported you in your careers in Foreign Service, so far.

Dr. Donfried, if I might? I want to associate myself with the concerns raised by the chairman about Turkey's nefarious role, both in Cyprus and in the region, and my concerns about that. We will have a hearing about Turkey, I believe tomorrow, where we will explore that more thoroughly. And the ranking member raised concerns about China that I might well have just echoed, but I would like to ask you specifically about the path forward in U.S.-German relations.

President Biden just welcomed Chancellor Merkel to the White House. We have long enjoyed a close and positive relationship. There are upcoming elections. I think Germany is one of the central powers in all of Europe. One of our core allies, one of the most important nations in the world in terms of sharing our values and an economy built on advanced manufacturing.

What do you see as the future of U.S.-German relations, and how does our work with them in Europe, around collective security, and in the rest of the world, in terms of pushing back on China, have positive and negative aspects? How do you intend to navigate all this?

Dr. DONFRIED. Senator Coons, thank you very much for that question. And I remember being at a site event at the Munich Security Conference with you in Germany.

Senator COONS. Mm-hmm.

Dr. DONFRIED. And I am mindful of how very knowledgeable you are about these issues as well. As you know, Germany is a critical partner and ally of the United States. It is, of course, the largest and wealthiest member of the European Union. And we just saw Chancellor Merkel visit President Biden last week, where the discussion based on the press conference, seemed to cover many of the issues you just referred to.

There is an election in Germany on September 26th, so as we saw last week, in many ways, this was a farewell visit by Angela Merkel as Chancellor after 16 years in office. So we are all expecting change in this relationship. It may well be that her party, the center-right party, maintains the chancellery, but the coalition is likely to look different.

And that will matter for German policy, particularly with regard to countries like China and Russia, where if you had the Greens in coalition, I think you would see a greater sensitivity to the human rights violations that we see those countries make. So I think it is an exciting moment for the relationship with Germany. While on the one hand we can celebrate what has been, I think there will be opportunities for the U.S. Government to forge and deepen cooperation on issues like China. Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you. And I am looking forward, hopefully, to participating in the Munich Security Conference again with the leadership of this committee and many other colleagues.

Ambassador Phee, if I might? Great to see you again, since we last visited in Juba in 2017. Congratulations on your nomination.

There is so much to discuss across the Continent. Let me just bear down on a few things quickly, if I might. Since my visit to Ethiopia a few months ago, on behalf of our President, the situation in Tigray, and the U.S. bilateral relationship with Ethiopia, has deteriorated significantly.

Could you just, briefly, outline your plans to make progress in opening up humanitarian relief, making progress towards a ceasefire and then, God willing, peace and some reconciliation in Tigray? And what do you think might be the path towards accountability for those who have committed human rights violations, and for possibly rebuilding the U.S.-Ethiopia relationship on the other side of this, if possible?

Ambassador PHEE. Thank you, Senator. And it is an honor and a privilege for me to see you again, in this environment.

I want to thank you and other members of the committee, including Ranking Member Risch who introduced a resolution on Ethiopia, for the efforts you have made to make clear, U.S. concerns about the situation that has resulted from the conflict in Tigray.

Your efforts have been instrumental in making sure that all parties to the conflict understand that the United States urgently seeks an immediate end to hostilities, unconditional humanitarian access, accountability for atrocities, and a new course to achieve the political and economic reforms sought by the Ethiopian people.

And if confirmed, I am committed to using all available tools in partnership with this committee to achieve those critical objectives, and to working with you to help Ethiopia get back on track.

The Prime Minister started his premiership with a positive direction, with important rhetoric that was responsive to the desire of the Ethiopian people for economic and political reforms.

That initial positive start has gone badly off track, and it is in our interest to work across the political spectrum in Ethiopia to get it back on track, both for the immediate concern for the civilians who are suffering, but also so that Ethiopia can regain its leadership role in the Horn. Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador.



Mr. Chairman, could I continue, or should I have a number of additional questions? I did not know if you were doing a second round or not.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you say you have a hundred additional questions?

Senator COONS. A few.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, a few.

Senator COONS. A very few.

The CHAIRMAN. Because I have at least a hundred.

Senator COONS. Maybe two.

The CHAIRMAN. Actually, happy to let you go on.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your forbearance.

If I might, Ms. Witkowsky; the Global Fragility Act is a, I think, promising new tool. There are many areas of fragility, Ambassador Phee and I might have gone on at greater length if we had the opportunity about the Sahel, and about Mozambique, and other places where there are significant conflicts.

The CSO Bureau has an important role to play in the implementation of the Global Fragility Act that Senator Graham and I wrote and was signed into law last December. And it tries to come up with strategies that will prevent instability. Can you just briefly share your vision for how you will employ this new tool?

Ms. WITKOWSKY. Senator Coons, thank you very much. And thank you so much for your leadership on this important issue, and for providing the opportunity of this new tool to the U.S. Government, to move forward on the complex and difficult challenges of addressing fragility.

The Global Fragility Act maps an important new way of doing business on fragility, with its ten-year commitments, its emphasis on solutions being locally led, and its requirements for tighter integration among bureaus, agencies, the field, and Washington.

If confirmed, I see that CSO will play a leadership role in the day-to-day implementation, of the Global Fragility Act implementation, one of coordination, and working with all relevant agencies who are participating in moving forward to implement the Act and supporting our embassies, working with civil society. And that process will amass to the higher-level process that you have mandated under the Steering Committee in the Act.

I look forward to drawing in my many years of leading large agency and interagency efforts to move forward successfully with its implementation. And I can assure you that implementing the Global Fidelity Act will be a high priority for me.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Witkowsky.

My last question for Ms. Adams-Allen; you have been involved in the Inter-American Foundation. Ambassador Phee will be on the Board of the Africa Development Foundation, both of them relatively small, agile responsive. One of my real concerns is about increasing localization and flexibility of our assistance programs.

I just visited Guatemala, and had a chance to visit a shelter for trafficked children, a site that I know Samantha Power, the Administrator, also visited. I am really concerned about the lack of credible partners for us to work with in a number of the countries, in Central America, and in other places in the world.

What is your strategy for increasing the localization of assistance programs so that we are not solely reliant on government partners? And what would you think about piloting that in Central America, where I think we are genuinely constrained in terms of the quality of the government partners we have available to do robust development projects with?

Ms. ADAMS-ALLEN. Thank you for the question, Senator. I could not agree more about the need to localize U.S. foreign assistance and make sure that it is sustainable and it is really locally owned. As you mentioned, this is precisely what The American Foundation does, and it is my contention that there are actually numerous potential local partners across the world.

But I know particularly in Central America that USAID could tap into a pipeline of existing, vetted, tested local partners who are working on issues of livelihoods, crime prevention, peace building, and governance in the affected communities.

In terms of a strategy, you know, if confirmed, I think it will be important for USAID to build on existing efforts, not only looking at the model of the USADF, OIF, but also building on the new Partner's Initiative and the Local Works program that they have been testing at USAID.

I think it is going to be crucial to streamline the procurement processes at USAID so that small local organizations can have access to partnership potentials with USAID.

Third, I think it is going to be crucial to strengthen the capabilities within USAID, in particular, the technical staff, and the contracting staff who are the ones we are going to need to support local organizations.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much. Thank you to the panel.

Thank you for your forbearance, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch. Congratulations to all of you on your nominations.

Dr. Donfried, it is good to see you, it was good to catch up with you a little bit the other day. You know, one of the key responsibilities I think of this portfolio you have will be to work with our European partners to counter China's use of unfair economic policies, and trade policies, to establish a set of agreed-upon rules of the road. And I know that it is going to be part of what you are focused on.

I want to also associate myself with the comments the chairman made regarding CAATSA, and the importance of fully enforcing CAATSA, and making sure that, you know, Turkey continues to see those sanctions applied because of the purchase of the S-400s.

I heard in your response to Chairman Menendez, a reference to Erdogan's, President Erdogan's visit to Cyprus today, which of course is the anniversary of the illegal Turkish invasion of Cyprus. And he is taking some very provocative steps, including talking about resettling parts of the Varosha, which would be a gross violation of numerous United Nations Security Resolutions, and U.S. policy statements with respect to not changing the status quo, except for through a negotiated settlement.

Senator Menendez and I, and Senator Rubio, and others, sent a letter to the President Biden last week on this issue. It has now

come to pass. So in addition to just making strong statements condemning the action, I think it is important that we work with our European allies in the EU to look at other sanctions that can be imposed for the violation of law here, rule of law.

President Biden has sort of recentered U.S. policy on rule of law. So do you agree that it is important to stand firm, together with our partners in the EU, on this violation?

Dr. DONFRIED. Senator Van Hollen, thank you for taking the time last week to meet with me. I appreciated that. And to your question, yes, I do agree we should work closely with the European Union, with our European allies on how we pushed back against this. I think we will be stronger for doing so.

And I also look forward to working closely with you and with the chairman, if confirmed, on these critical issues around stability and peace in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. We are going to be having a hearing. I know that the chairman has organized a hearing tomorrow on Turkey specifically. So I will have a greater chance to talk about that. But we just see this series of very provocative moves in Cyprus, in the Eastern Mediterranean, also walking away from the parameters of a bizonal Federation that had defined the talks for peace in Cyprus.

Ambassador Phee, if I could? You have a huge portfolio. I look forward to working with you on all the issues including trying to really increase U.S. investment in Africa. My question relates specifically to Sudan. Senator Coons and I visited Sudan, I think back in May now, and Sudan, of course, is one of those countries where in a world where we see retrenchment, and people moving in the wrong direction, i.e. issues of democracy and rule of law, Sudan is a bright spot.

And I know you agree that we should do everything we can to support their transition from dictatorship to democracy. At the end of June, Prime Minister Hamdok gave a very important speech. And one of the things he focused on was the importance, the urgent importance of consolidating the military, which consists, as you know, of various militia, including the RSF, under a unified command, and that command be under civilian control.

The U.S. continues to have a law in place based on the Bashir Government coup decades ago that limits our ability to engage with the armed forces through security systems.

Would you agree that we should look at ways of changing that? Given the fact that we now have seen a peaceful revolution and where the United States could play, I think, a constructive role, carefully, but a constructive role in helping Sudan, integrate and consolidate its military under unified command under civilian control?

Ambassador PHEE. Senator, it is an honor and pleasure to see you again. And I thank you for your leadership of the Africa Subcommittee. And I thank you for your efforts, such as the recent trip that you took with Senator Coons.

You have perfectly captured, I think, this critical moment in the Sudanese transition. The Senate has already played such a vital role in supporting the transition by giving us the tools, helping to dismantle. As you note, some of the architecture that was put in

place during the Bashir regime. And if confirmed, I absolutely commit to review the important option you have suggested here today, about how we might work more effectively with the security forces.

In tandem with the Prime Minister's announcement, there were also statements made by the military leadership about the importance of working together. So there are real opportunities for us to continue to support this very critical transition, which will have such a transformative impact on the Continent. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you. I look forward to working with you. And while it has taken a long time, I know AID is finally finalizing its \$700 million commitment. So the committee looks forward to working with you as that moves forward as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. There are presently no other members seeking recognition. But there is one member on their way here, so I have a few extra questions, so I am just going to pursue them now.

Let me go back to you, Dr. Donfried. You have a very large universe to cover. Earlier this year the Biden administration recognized the Armenian genocide. Do you support the administration's decision to recognize the Armenian genocide?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, I do. And I would like to thank you for your leadership on that issue. You have been a long-time champion of the U.S. Government officially recognizing the Armenian genocide. And I think it puts the United States in a very good place to be on the right side of history on this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. There is another issue in the region that is a little more complicated—well, that it took a long time for us to recognize the genocide, but I am glad. And I give credit to President Biden for doing so.

But given Azerbaijan's aggression last August in Nagorno-Karabakh war, the administration continued the use of waivers for Section 907 restrictions. I have to be honest with you, and based on the declared meaning of Section 907 as I read it I am not quite sure—it was quite a stretch, to go ahead and waive. What are your views on that?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, if I am confirmed, I would look forward to working closely with you on that issue, of the waivers for that assistance to Azerbaijan. I think it is critical that we make sure that any support we are giving to Azerbaijan is not in any way affecting the balance of power between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and that we are committed to resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The CHAIRMAN. No, I appreciate that. The Azerbaijanis are now interfering in the physical territory of Armenia, and a border issue. And it just seems to me they will continue to be aggressive unless they have a clear message that it is not acceptable.

I understand that you have had the chance to review the Ukraine Security Partnership Act. Do you support the legislation which would give increased security assistance to the country?

Dr. DONFRIED. I am grateful for the broad and bipartisan support there is on this committee for U.S. support for Ukraine. And I would read with great interest, the Act, which has many interesting and important ideas captured in it. And if confirmed, I

would very much look forward to working with you on how we can increase our support for Ukraine.

The CHAIRMAN. Finally, last week the British Government proposed halting all prosecution of British soldiers and militants involved in three decades of conflict in Northern Ireland, which sparked an angry response from victims' families, and politicians in Belfast and Dublin. The Stormont House Agreement provides a framework to deal with legacy issues from the troubles. Do you support the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement as a way to deal with legacy issues?

Dr. DONFRIED. Chairman Menendez, I mentioned earlier that I spent 10 years at the Congressional Research Service, and one of the issues, I spent a great deal of time on then, was Northern Ireland. And it was a bright time because actually we saw the peace process move forward, and that Stormont House Agreement, or the Good Friday Agreement, I think has to be the basis for U.S. policy toward the Island of Ireland to maintain peace there. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador Phee, let me ask you. The situation in Tigray and across Ethiopia is rather bleak. The Ethiopian Government's unilateral cease fire does not appear to be getting much traction, and worryingly, it appears to me that we may be entering a new phase of the conflict characterized by the mobilization of ethnic militia, and even more mass atrocities.

What more can the United States do to get the parties, to reach a negotiated ceasefire? If you were to be confirmed, what advice would you be giving?

Ambassador PHEE. Chairman Menendez, thank you for raising this very disturbing issue, which poses such a threat to the civilians of Ethiopia, and to this stability of the Horn. If confirmed, I would enthusiastically endorse the efforts of our Special Envoy, Ambassador Jeff Feltman, who is working right now to mobilize the support of partner nations in Africa, of the partner nations in the Gulf who are engaged in Ethiopia, our partners in Europe, and our partners in the United Nations.

This problem requires all of us pulling together to help Ethiopia stop the current fighting, to stop the spread that you have correctly identified as a genuine threat, and to work on a national dialogue, to address the political and economic performance that are so desperately needed.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. And I think we have to look at, if the type of atrocities that are being reported are such, I think we have to look about what other consequences for such atrocities. If we look away then, you know, at the end of the day, others in other parts of the world will do it.

Ambassador PHEE. Chairman Menendez, I fully agree with that sentiment. We have, as you know, a longstanding and multifaceted partnership with Ethiopia, and there are options for us to act in that direction if it becomes necessary. And if confirmed, I would commit to pursuing those options to make clear, just as you have said, that this kind of action is unacceptable.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me turn to the situation of the Sahel, which continues to be deeply concerning, with violence in the region fueling what U.N. agencies deemed the world's "fastest-growing dis-

placement crisis". As you may know, I am the lead sponsor of S615, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act, which calls for a whole-of-government strategy for the Sahel.

Do I have your commitment, if you are confirmed, to develop a strategic approach to the Sahel?

Ambassador PHEE. Chairman Menendez, you absolutely do. If confirmed, I would address the concerns that are outlined in your legislation, and I would do our best to pull together all the elements of the U.S. Government capability to help support a better outcome in the Sahel.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Now, Sudan's civilian-led transition to democracy is in a critical phase of the transitional government led by Prime Minister Hamdok, has initiated laudable reforms over the last two years, but there are several intractable problems that need to be addressed. What in your view are the major obstacles to democratic transition and stability in Sudan?

Ambassador PHEE. Chairman Menendez, in my view, the main obstacle to the transition in Sudan is helping the military understand that there is a new way of governance in the country, and that it is time for the civilians to remain at the forefront. That is the most important challenge we face, and it is incumbent upon us to do all we can to help them realize that transition.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Briefly. Ambassador Phee, I wanted to talk about this one detail that Senator Van Hollen mentioned. And it prodded me into thinking about it some more. And that is, regarding the \$700 million that has been provided for Sudan as a result of the legal peace settlement, what are your thoughts on how the U.S. should use that amount?

Ambassador PHEE. Ranking Member Risch, I understand that we should use that money exactly for the purposes for which you appropriated it, which is to help consolidate support for the transition to help provide economic sustainability in Sudan, so that there is popular support for this transition to continue. I understand there is frustration in the pace of disbursement, and if confirmed, I would undertake to immediately look at that issue.

Senator RISCH. Yeah. Frustration would be an understatement. The mechanics that are in place, are you familiar with those or?

Ambassador PHEE. No, sir. I am not as familiar as I should be.

Senator RISCH. I might do that as an additional question for the record. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well thank you.

Senator RISCH. I do not want our other two nominees to think I have no affection for your work. I do. And I will be submitting a series of questions for the record. For that fact, there will be a series of questions to all of the nominees from me, and I am sure from other members.

The CHAIRMAN. I would urge you to answer them fully and expeditiously so that the committee can consider your nominations at a business meeting.

With no other members before the committee, this hearing will be adjourned. The record will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, which, questions for the record will be submitted.

And with thanks to the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:13 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MS. PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)*

*Question.* Last July, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report depicting extensive demographic data demonstrating the serious challenges the Agency faces when it comes to building a diverse workforce. The GAO concluded “mixed progress” in the Agency’s efforts to increase diversity, and presented a number of troubling findings, including numerous barriers to promotion for racial and ethnic minorities in early- or mid-career Civil Service positions.

- Will you commit to prioritizing actions to address these problems?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to prioritizing actions to address these problems.

*Question.* Please describe what actions you believe USAID should prioritize to realign and advance the goals of USAID’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiative?

*Answer.* Ensuring USAID remains the world’s leading development agency requires the Agency center the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything it does—reflecting them in its people, its workplace culture, policies and practices, and funding and program approaches. If confirmed, I will make diversity, equity, and inclusion foundational priorities for both our mission around the world and how we support and invest in our workforce. The report you referenced, for example, presented data demonstrating that “promotion outcomes at USAID were generally lower for racial and ethnic minorities than for whites in early to mid career.” If confirmed, I will engage staff across the agency to understand the challenges facing them as they seek to advance in their USAID careers, solicit their advice on how to create more internal ladders and equitable opportunities for professional development and promotion, and treat these issues with the urgency they demand. I understand that one of Administrator Power’s first acts at the Agency was to approve the new DEI Strategy, affirming her commitment to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the Agency’s work with a workforce that reflects the diversity of our country. If confirmed, I commit to implementing this Strategy, including by ensuring that staff’s perspectives and experiences are reflected in USAID’s plans for recruiting, retaining, and investing in a workforce that reflects the rich diversity of our country.

*Question.* That same GAO report indicated significant understaffing in USAID’s Office of Civil Rights and Diversity, a deficiency that reduces USAID’s capacity to respond effectively to allegations of discrimination, identify potential barriers to equal employment opportunity, and submit required reports on diversity and inclusion efforts.

- Will you commit to ensuring that this Office is adequately staffed and empowered to responsibly execute its mission?

*Answer.* Answer: Yes, if confirmed, I will immediately review staffing and resource needs for USAID’s Office of Civil Rights and Diversity (OCRD) and commit to enhancing its ability to deliver its mandate. I understand the Agency increased OCRD’s operating budget from less than \$400,000 in FY2017 to \$2,723,000 in FY2021, exclusive of salaries and benefits, while doubling OCRD’s staff allocation from 13 to 25 in FY2020. In addition, I understand that OCRD’s Acting Director has a regular channel through which to engage with USAID’s senior management to discuss EEO Program matters, should OCRD have additional needs or seek additional resources in the future. If confirmed, I will ensure that OCRD has the resources and the access needed to address concerns about discrimination and to advance the Agency’s diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

*Question.* How will you approach restoring expertise and recruiting new talent?

*Answer.* Attracting and retaining purpose-driven development professionals with deep technical expertise and broad programmatic and management experience is key to the Agency delivering on its mission, and doing so nimbly and effectively in increasingly complicated settings. Rebuilding the Agency’s workforce must include examining what the practice of development will look like 10-15 years from now,

and identifying and recruiting talent to position the agency for the future. If confirmed, I commit to leading a thoughtful, forward-looking workforce planning effort.

Tapping into needed new talent demands that USAID expand its recruitment pipelines beyond traditional sources, to include U.S. community colleges, minority serving institutions, and professional organizations. I understand that USAID is currently engaging and recruiting diverse high-quality talent through targeted outreach and recruitment events and expanded partnerships with organizations serving underrepresented groups. If confirmed, I will focus on expanding the Agency's external recruitment pipelines so as to bolster its staffing overall, as well as prioritizing the retention and promotion of underrepresented groups as part of a broader effort to fill gaps in expertise by tapping into internal talent pools.

*Question.* USAID's greatest asset are the international development and humanitarian experts on staff.

- How will you establish a culture where the Agency's actions are based on the insights and talents of its experts?

*Answer.* USAID cannot accomplish any of its national security and development priorities without the top-notch development professionals who everyday tackle global development and humanitarian challenges with passion, integrity, and skill, so as to empower partners (communities, governments, local and international organizations) as they build a better world for all of us. I experienced this commitment and expertise firsthand in my time at the Agency and now in my current role at the Inter-American Foundation. Building a culture that draws on and leverages the expertise and experience of development and humanitarian professionals requires that leaders look to the experts and seek out their input into and leadership on policy, programming, and operational considerations.

Throughout my career, I have created and led diverse, purpose-driven teams; fostered open, inclusive, and transparent workplaces; and empowered staff by removing obstacles to growth and success, while relying on their expertise and championing their creativity and know-how. If confirmed, I will continue that approach and work to empower USAID staff by always seeking their input, promoting their leadership, and unlocking the support and resources they need to thrive.

*Question.* Workforce planning is essential to ensuring USAID has expertise and capacities to successfully execute the Agency's wide range of activities and achieve results that often require years of work and engagement.

- Will you commit to advising each Bureau in developing a workforce plan for its programs and missions?

*Answer.* Yes. I agree that comprehensive workforce planning is essential to ensuring that USAID has the expertise and capacities required to address the increasing global needs and manage increasingly complex programs in more than 100 countries. If confirmed, I commit to working with USAID's office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Bureaus, and Missions, to conduct comprehensive strategic workforce planning that positions the Agency to meet the needs of the moment, as well as adapt to future challenges and opportunities. This effort must include analyzing the Agency's current workforce, identifying skills gaps, anticipating future staffing and expertise needs, and developing and implementing an Action Plan to secure and support the range of expertise (policy, technical, operational, and management) needed to ensure the Agency's continued success. I look forward to working with you to support that strategy, if confirmed.

*Question.* What do you think USAID can do to improve FSNs' standing within USAID and ensure these hardworking professionals are afforded ample opportunities for professional growth, promotion, and recognition for their work?

*Answer.* Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), which constitute nearly half of USAID's global workforce, are an integral part of achieving the Agency's mission. They are a critical link to cultivating and maintaining trust and strong relationships with local communities, which is the foundation for successful development and humanitarian assistance. I understand that USAID is currently working on various initiatives designed to enhance recognition for the value that FSNs bring to the Agency, and to enhance morale among this critical part of the workforce. Specifically, USAID is working to promote leadership opportunities for FSNs at all levels; increase virtual FSN fellowship programs; increase the number of senior-level FSN-13 positions; expand professional development and training opportunities; and expand the use of ladder positions within the FSN workforce to enhance career development. If confirmed, I commit to working with USAID leadership in Washington and its overseas Missions to further advance initiatives that will afford FSNs with



opportunities for inclusion, professional growth, promotion, and recognition for their contributions to the Agency.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MS. PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*China and COVAX*

*Question.* Global health is one of the largest parts of USAID's annual budget and, in 2021, the agency received significant additional resources to support U.S. international COVID-19 relief efforts. Importantly, USAID also is responsible for managing U.S. engagement with COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the WHO-supported Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT). Unfortunately, while the United States has made \$4 billion (as well as 580 million vaccine doses) available to COVAX, China has contributed nothing. Worse yet, China now stands to profit from a pandemic that it unleashed upon the world through the sale of its state-owned vaccines to COVAX.

- If confirmed, how will you ensure U.S. contributions to COVAX will not be used to underwrite or subsidize the purchase and distribution of China's state-owned, substandard COVID-19 vaccines?
- If confirmed, will you prioritize resources for bilateral, in-kind contributions of U.S. vaccines over financial contributions to COVAX? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I understand that funds from the generous \$4 billion U.S. contribution to Gavi in support of COVAX were not used to purchase vaccines made by Chinese companies. These funds were allocated by Gavi prior to the facility's decision to purchase Sinopharm and Sinovac vaccines. I also understand that there are no further contributions of U.S. funds to COVAX planned at this time. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. continues to signal concern about procurement of lower-efficacy vaccines, and urges China to pick up its fair share of the global burden on vaccine access rather than simply profiting off of other donors' generosity.

I understand that the decision on when to use bilateral, in-kind contributions of U.S. vaccines over financial contributions to COVAX was based on multiple factors including global and domestic vaccine supply variables. If confirmed, I will work with my interagency colleagues to review the current facts, supply projections and needs in order to continue to advance global COVID vaccine availability as fast and safely as possible.

*U.S. International Food Aid and Cargo Preference*

*Question.* The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released a memo which, among other things, directs the new OMB Made in America Office to "review how best to ensure agency compliance with cargo preference requirements to maximize the utilization of U.S.-flag vessels, in excess of any applicable statutory minimum, to the greatest extent practicable." This is likely to increase pressure upon USAID to exceed existing cargo preference requirements for food aid under the Food for Peace Act, notwithstanding the fact that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) repeatedly has found that such requirements significantly increase the cost of food aid while failing to advance the statutory purpose of the Cargo Preference Act of 1954.

- Do you agree that U.S. cargo preference requirements for food aid have outlived their statutory purpose?
- If confirmed, will you work with OMB to mitigate the deleterious impact of U.S. cargo preference requirements on life-saving food aid?
- In your estimation, how would an increase of cargo preference requirements impact USAID's budget and ability to meet historic levels of need for food aid?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress and the interagency, including OMB, to make USAID's food assistance programming as effective and efficient as possible. Each food assistance modality (U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming) is critical to USAID's ability to appropriately respond to unprecedented global humanitarian needs. An increase in cargo preference requirements would directly result in increased transportation costs for food assistance programs, which would reduce the amount of resources USAID can dedicate to purchasing agricultural commodities to respond to historic levels of global hunger.

*Material Support*

*Question.* The United States has strict laws prohibiting the provision of material support to designated foreign terrorist groups.

- If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that USAID and its implementing partners strictly adhere to all relevant material support laws, regulations, policy directives, and vetting requirements?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with USAID staff and partners to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. I understand that USAID has numerous vetting tools and monitoring safeguards, financial accountability mechanisms, as well as an independent Office of Inspector General, whose work I am committed to supporting if I am confirmed.

*Question.* If confirmed, what measures will you seek to put in place to ensure not only that all contracts and agreements contain the required material support clauses, but also that adherence is closely monitored and transparently reported to Congress by USAID?

*Answer.* I am committed to ensuring that USAID funding does not fall into the wrong hands, whether it be terrorism, fraud, or waste. I understand that USAID has numerous vetting tools and monitoring safeguards, financial accountability mechanisms, as well as an independent Office of Inspector General, whose work I am committed to supporting if I am confirmed.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working with the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, and the Department of State to eliminate ambiguity and ensure that USAID's implementing partners, including USAID's humanitarian assistance partners, have clear guidance on what constitutes material support, how to identify intentional and incidental breaches, and how to respond?

*Answer.* Understanding that USAID does not administer U.S. sanctions programs, if confirmed, I do commit to working with the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, and the Department of State to ensure that all implementing partners, including those who support humanitarian programs in some of the most challenging operating environments in the world, have clear guidance about applicable sanctions.

*USAID Staffing*

*Question.* Whether Foreign Service, Civil Service, Foreign Service Limited, Foreign Service National, or other, USAID's most valuable asset is its people. Unfortunately, with at least 22 different hiring mechanisms and outdated assumptions about how specific missions, bureaus, and offices should be supported, the agency is in desperate need of a modernized strategic staffing plan that is flexible and adaptive to today's challenges. The budget request includes an increase for USAID's operating expenses and proposes to increase the number of Foreign Service Limited positions, including for global health and humanitarian assistance.

- If confirmed, how will you approach modernizing USAID's arcane staffing mechanisms?
- Should an increase in resources for additional direct-hire positions be paired with a decrease in the number of contractors USAID retains using program funds? If not, why not?
- If the requested increase for direct-hire positions is approved, how will positions be prioritized? Should the recruitment, hiring, and deployment of competent, field-based contracting and agreement officers (COs and AOs) be a priority?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID is committed to strengthening its global workforce to advance the Agency's mission and U.S. national security priorities. In my experience, USAID has complex requirements and needs to increase both the size and agility of the career workforce while also improving non-career employment mechanisms.

As the administrator stated in her recent testimony before the committee, USAID's staffing has not increased at the same rate as the programmatic needs and requirements. With regard to USAID's Contracting and Agreement Offices, she noted in her testimony that each USAID acquisition and assistance officer has managed over \$65 million annually over the past four years: more than four times the workload of their colleagues at the Department of Defense who manage an average of approximately \$15 million. I will work to rationalize non-career hiring mechanisms and strategically grow the Civil Service and Foreign Service, while building the overall cohesiveness of the Agency's workforce. If confirmed, I look forward to updating you on the Agency's progress in this area.

*USAID Budget Allocations*

*Question.* Section 653(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2413) requires that “not later than thirty days after the enactment of any law appropriating funds to carry out any provision of this Act (other than section 451 or 637) or the Arms Export Control Act, the President shall notify the Congress of each foreign country and international organization to which the United States Government intends to provide any portion of the funds under such law and of the amount of funds under that law, by category of assistance, that the United States Government intends to provide to each.” Unfortunately, delays in the appropriations process, the imposition of overlapping spending directives, and other factors relating to the relationship between OMB, the Department of State, USAID, and the Congress have contributed to excessive delays in submission of the mandated 653(a) Report. Moreover, it has become common practice for the relevant agencies to consult only with the committees of Appropriations—rather than with the authorizing committees responsible for oversight of the Foreign Assistance Act—in finalizing such report.

- In your view, what are the chief constraints to delivering the 653(a) report in a timely fashion? How can the process be fixed?
- If confirmed, will you commit to working with the Committees on Foreign Relations in the Senate and Foreign Affairs in the House on the development and execution of the 653(a) report in an open and transparent manner?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working in an open and transparent manner with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on the 653(a) report. As you note, while Section 653(a) of the FAA requires that the report be submitted within 30 days of enactment, I understand that has not been possible in years past. If confirmed, I commit to working within the Agency and with interagency stakeholders to improve the timelines for the submission of the 653(a) report.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MS. PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*USAID Transformation*

*Question.* The Trump administration had submitted proposals to Congress under its Transformation initiative to make changes to the Bureau for Management and create a Bureau for Policy, Resources, and Planning (PRP). PRP would have combined the functions of the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning and the Office of Budget and Resource Management (among others). Congress did not approve such changes and the Biden administration withdrew the proposed changes in May, 2021. Prior to the withdrawal, some international stakeholders had recommended that the Biden administration complete the proposed changes, in particular realizing the PRP Bureau.

- How do you respond to those who advocated for the completion of USAID’s organizational restructuring?
- In your view, do additional structural changes need to be made to USAID’s central bureaus and/or independent offices? If so, what challenges would those changes seek to address?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID successfully completed the majority of its restructuring efforts, co-locating vital capabilities related to humanitarian assistance; food security and water; and the Agency’s technical assistance to the field. I also understand that USAID’s staff were heavily involved in the prior organizational restructuring and so any further changes need to be thoughtfully considered. If confirmed, I will engage with the administrator, my co-deputy, and the Agency’s internal and external stakeholders, to assess the need for any further change to USAID’s organizational structure.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. KAREN DONFRIED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*Question.* Will you commit to providing vital humanitarian assistance to the people Nagorno-Karabakh including supporting the clearance of unexploded ordnance?

*Answer.* From the onset of last years fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, the United States has worked to meet urgent humanitarian assistance needs for vulnerable populations fleeing the violence and the communities that host them. If confirmed, I will support the provision of humanitarian assistance to areas affected by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I understand the Department continues to work with other relevant agencies to evaluate the needs of the region and explore opportunities to fund possible programs to clear post-conflict unexploded ordnance in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.

*Question.* I do not support the administration's decision to waive sanctions on Nord Stream 2. I think it was a mistake that will only bolster Russia's position in Europe. The measures announced last week when the German Chancellor visited Washington fall well short of what is needed to support Ukraine right now.

- What specific further measures do you think the U.S. should take to bolster Ukrainian security and energy transit in the wake of the administration's decision to waive sanctions on Nord Stream 2?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the administration's policy of supporting Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity against Russian aggression in any form. I commit to providing the assistance Ukraine requires to defend itself, including lethal weapons, based on a U.S. and Ukrainian assessment of Ukraine's defense requirements. On energy security, I believe an extension to Ukraine's gas transit agreement with Russia will help to preserve gas transit revenues for Ukraine and provide time for Ukraine to eliminate its dependence on Russian gas and transit fees, as it has long sought to do. Ukraine should also diversify its energy resources, with an emphasis on clean and sustainable energy.

*Question.* The Belarusian opposition leader is in Washington this week. The U.S. has yet to announce long overdue sectoral sanctions.

- If confirmed, do you commit to advocate for the imposition of these sanctions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to advocate for additional measures, including sanctions, to apply continued pressure to the Lukashenka regime to release all political prisoners and start a facilitated dialogue, inclusive of the opposition and civil society, that will lead to free and fair elections.

*Question.* Will you also commit to ensure that the administration produces a new Executive Order on Belarus that would authorize new sanctions?

*Answer.* In the May 28 White House statement following the forced diversion of the RyanAir flight, the U.S. Government previewed the Treasury Department's development of a new draft executive order designed to increase pressure on the Lukashenka regime. If confirmed, I will support these efforts.

*Question.* How does the Biden administration's public commitment to counter corruption correspond with the U.S.-led effort to push for an amendment to Bosnia's election law, which could significantly strengthen the position of ethnic party leaders?

*Answer.* The administration has made clear that by countering corruption and demonstrating the advantages of transparent and accountable governance, we can secure a critical advantage for the United States and other democracies. Efforts to strengthen democratic processes and reduce corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are mutually reinforcing. If confirmed, I will work with others in the administration to encourage reforms that address corruption and implement relevant decisions of BiH's Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights. I will also support efforts to ensure that BiH's electoral system meets international recommendations for electoral integrity, including those made by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Council of Europe.

*Question.* Does this not undercut U.S. efforts to counter patronage and machine politics in the country?

*Answer.* Limited constitutional and election law reforms are necessary to further BiH on its Euro-Atlantic path, a primary goal of U.S. foreign policy for the Western Balkans. The United States welcomes efforts among BiH's political and civic leaders to reach solutions that will increase the integrity, transparency, fairness, and legitimacy of BiH's democratic processes. If confirmed, I will work to bring all actors to the table to forge compromise and local ownership of an improved electoral system that represents and protects the rights of all citizens of BiH.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. KAREN DONFRIED BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Which country or countries do you believe are the most important to U.S. interests in Europe?

*Answer.* NATO is indispensable for the advancement of U.S. interests in Europe and to our security. NATO, founded 72 years ago and comprising 30 Allies, is a pillar of stability for the world and the essential forum for Transatlantic security and political issues. The United States is firmly committed to advancing NATO's founding values, enshrined in the Washington Treaty, of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. The United States' commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with all of our NATO Allies and the Alliance's partners to safeguard our shared interests in our challenging security environment. The European Union is also a fundamental partner for the United States, as many issues on which we coordinate, including economic security issues, climate policy, and sanctions, among others, are EU competencies.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S. should err on the side of undertaking diplomacy with the European Union, or should it focus its diplomatic efforts bilaterally?

*Answer.* The United States and the European Union are natural partners to write the rules of the road for the 21st century economy, rules based on our shared democratic values and harnessing the power of the largest economic relationship in the world. At the June 15 U.S.-EU Summit, the leaders of the European Union and the United States renewed our transatlantic partnership and committed to resolving long-standing disputes in order to work together on common challenges. If confirmed, I will endeavor to support that renewed partnership. The U.S.-EU partnership does not supplant the need for bilateral diplomatic efforts with member states and other likeminded countries. If confirmed, I will pursue diplomacy with the EU and bilaterally to further U.S. policy objectives.

*Question.* How do you believe relationship between the United States and the European Union (EU) has changed since the United Kingdom removed itself from that bloc? What challenges has the United Kingdom's departure from the EU presented for American diplomacy?

*Answer.* The Biden administration has already worked in concert with both the EU and the UK on sanctions actions targeting Russian officials linked to the poisoning of Alexey Navalny and Chinese officials due to human rights abuses in Xinjiang. The administration supports a strong UK and a strong EU and welcomed the entry into force of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the Northern Ireland Protocol. The United States has been unequivocal in its support for the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, which is an historic achievement that must be protected. If confirmed, I look forward to working with both partners to address the range of global challenges as the UK and the EU continue to adjust to their new post-Brexit relationship. I support the renewed commitment to the U.S.-EU partnership made by leaders at the June 15 U.S.-EU Summit. The UK's post-Brexit foreign policy presents opportunities for even closer cooperation on shared priorities. If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with the UK as it works with a broad range of partners to carry out its Global Britain agenda, including global economic, health, and climate priorities.

*Question.* In your opinion, what do you believe the United States will gain from the deal that was recently struck between the United States and Germany that will allow the NordStream 2 pipeline to go forward?

*Answer.* The package announced on July 21 puts in place measures in order to prevent the worst-case scenario—an operational Nord Stream 2 pipeline without any risk-reduction measures for Ukraine or other countries that stand to be impacted by the pipeline. The measures represent a significant commitment by Germany, supported by the United States, to push back against the Kremlin's malign activities and to advance a more secure and sustainable energy future for Ukraine and other frontline NATO and EU countries. It also makes clear that the United States will not allow the Kremlin to weaponize energy resources against our allies and partners and commits Germany to take national measures and pursue measures at the European Union-level to impose costs on Russia should it attempt to use Nord Stream 2 or any other pipeline to achieve aggressive political ends.

*Question.* Which nations do you believe the United States should work most closely with to counter China's growing malign influence and actions around the world? Which countries do you see as most aligned with U.S. goals and values vis-à-vis China?

**Answer.** The United States must engage the People's Republic of China (PRC) from a position of strength, which includes acting in close cooperation with our Allies and partners across Europe and Eurasia. There has been a convergence of views among the world's democracies on PRC activities as evidenced by the outcomes of last month's G7, NATO, and U.S.-EU summits. If confirmed, I would work with U.S. Allies and partners to respond to the PRC's non-market practices, speak out against Beijing's human rights abuses and forced labor practices, and address the systemic challenges from the PRC to the rules-based international order.

*Question.* What are your views on the recently agreed-upon EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment? Should the United States be engaging with the European Parliament to stop its ratification?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I look forward to early consultations with our EU and European partners on shared concerns about the People's Republic of China (PRC), including through the recently relaunched U.S.-EU dialogue on China and the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council. The European Parliament has conditioned any further action on the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) on the lifting of the PRC's retaliatory sanctions. Ultimately, the onus will be on the PRC to uphold its commitments on forced labor, state-owned enterprises, and subsidies.

*Question.* Many European countries have pledged to keep unsafe telecommunications companies out of their networks. What do you view as the next priority areas for cooperation between the United States and the EU?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our engagement with European allies and partners on secure development and deployment of 5G networks, including through the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council. The United States advocates for measures that exclude untrusted vendors, in line with the Prague Proposals and the EU 5G Toolbox. If confirmed, I will continue working with allies and partners to support a diverse supply chain of trustworthy telecommunications equipment and services. This includes support for open, interoperable approaches like Open RAN (radio access network) technologies that promise to increase vendor diversity and market competition and have the potential to lower costs and improve security.

*Question.* To what extent do you believe that there is an emerging Russia-China axis? Some suggest that the United States should try to drive wedges between the two nations to destroy any emerging axis. Do you agree with that analysis?

**Answer.** It is not surprising that Beijing and Moscow would seek to deepen their ties, but we should not overestimate this alignment. Russia and the PRC collaborate when it is mutually beneficial, but a deep-seated lack of trust realistically limits their so-called "strategic comprehensive partnership." Areas of friction between the two suggest they may each have reasons to hedge against over reliance and potentially slow their convergence for their own reasons. If confirmed, I would work closely with European partners and Allies to push back effectively against Russian and PRC actions that run contrary to our values and the international standards of rule-based behavior.

*Question.* It is likely that Russia has placed nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad, and there is great concern that they may do the same in occupied Crimea. How should the United States respond, if at all, should Russia place nuclear weapons in Crimea? Would that action, in your view, dramatically change the way that the United States looks at Black Sea security?

**Answer.** The administration will continue to oppose Russia's occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea, which is sovereign Ukrainian territory. If Russia were to deploy nuclear weapons in Crimea, it would represent a significant escalation of tensions not just with Ukraine, but in the Black Sea region, and in Europe. If confirmed, I will continue to work bilaterally and through NATO with Ukraine and other partners and Allies in the Black Sea region and across the entire Eastern Flank to improve their ability to deter and defend against the full spectrum of Russian military threats.

*Question.* Russia has increased its provocations in the Black Sea and is increasingly turning the region into a Russian lake. Do you believe that the U.S. and NATO responses to Russia's actions and growing militarization of Crimea have been adequate? If yes, why? If no, what more would you like to see done to push back on Russia in the Black Sea?

**Answer.** Russian provocations in the Black Sea and other parts of Europe, including its military build-up and exercises, require robust NATO deterrence and strong support for NATO partners. The United States continues to work bilaterally and

through NATO with our Allies, as well as Ukraine, Georgia, and other NATO partners, to improve their ability to deter and defend against threats to their security. Since Russia's 2014 invasion of Ukraine, NATO has implemented the most significant reinforcement of its eastern flank in the post-Cold War era. In the Black Sea region, these crucial deterrence activities include tailored Forward Presence, a series of land, air, and maritime measures that have increased NATO's presence and exercises and improved situational awareness and readiness in Romania and Bulgaria. All of this is a necessary and proportionate response to Russia's aggressive behavior. If confirmed, I will work with our NATO Allies and partners to modernize their militaries and enhance their capabilities in order to enhance deterrence and defense in the Black Sea region.

*Question.* Does Turkey's behavior with regard to increasing ties with Russia change how we and our allies think about future NATO expansion and the evolution of the NATO Strategic Concept?

*Answer.* Turkish-Russian relations are transactional and fraught with strategic rivalries. If confirmed I will urge Turkey not to retain the Russian S-400 system it took delivery of in 2019 and remind Ankara that any new major Russian purchase risks additional CAATSA sanctions. Turkey is a critical ally, it has NATO's second-largest military, and it is a key contributor to Allied missions. Ankara's support for Ukraine's and Georgia's sovereignty, and Turkey's efforts to counter Russia in Syria, the Caucasus, and Libya create significant pressure on Turkey-Russia relations. If confirmed I will work to advance the U.S. and Turkey's many shared interests while also being frank with Turkish counterparts on areas of disagreement.

*Question.* Since undersea gas fields were discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean some years ago, littoral nations have been developing strategies to harvest and export it. Turkey and the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum have emerged as competitors over the future economic development of the zone.

- How should the U.S. engage with parties to ensure that economic development is executed in a safe, stable, and fair way?

*Answer.* The United States supports regional cooperation to bring durable energy security to the region, create new markets, and provide economic prosperity in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Biden administration is committed to ensuring stability in the Eastern Mediterranean. If confirmed, I commit to encouraging peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to disagreements in the region.

*Question.* What are the challenges and threats we face surrounding the issue?

*Answer.* Recent offshore gas discoveries in Israel, Egypt, and the Republic of Cyprus (ROC) have redefined regional relationships, which presents both challenges and opportunities. These new energy sources, if managed well, can continue to improve economic and political cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean while reducing reliance on Russian and Iranian supplies. This gas would also serve as a useful transition fuel as the region continues to reduce emissions and moves to greater reliance on renewable resources. New routes and types of fuel for European and Middle Eastern partners help to end dependence on Russian gas. Turkey added more LNG to its energy mix in 2020, some of it from the United States, in part to reduce its reliance on Russian and Iranian pipeline gas.

*Question.* What are the security implications in the region?

*Answer.* Long unresolved maritime boundary disputes have led to naval confrontations between littoral states. The United States supports all efforts to reduce tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. Resource development in the Eastern Mediterranean should promote cooperation and provide a foundation for durable energy security and economic prosperity throughout the region. The "3+1" format including Greece, Israel, the ROC, plus the United States, and the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF), which Egypt hosts and in which the United States is an observer, are venues to promote greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity. The United States supports the EMGF as a technical platform.

*Question.* President Biden and his administration have repeatedly made commitments to upholding universal rights at home and abroad. In Turkey, authorities are abusing people's human rights and attacking peaceful dissidents at an alarming rate.

- How will you work to address human rights violations in Turkey?

*Answer.* President Biden's administration has elevated democracy, human rights, and rule of law in our bilateral agenda with Turkey. If confirmed, I will continue to publicly and privately urge Turkey to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, fair

trials, and association, which are important to any healthy democracy. If confirmed, I will reinforce at the highest levels of the Turkish Government that addressing democratic backsliding could positively impact our bilateral relationship. I will also ensure a continued strong focus in our own assistance on media freedom and freedom of expression and will work with the EU and international partners to defend fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* How is Turkey's declining human rights record impacting its relationship with the United States?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about the steps the Turkish Government's has taken which have weakened the freedoms of expression, association, fair trial, and peaceful assembly. Such moves erode the foundations of democratic society, stifle growth, and undermine the rights of Turkish citizens as guaranteed by their constitution. Turkey is a key Ally and critical regional partner. It is in our shared interest to keep Turkey anchored to the Transatlantic community. That means effectively pressing and supporting Turkey to do more to bolster rule of law, protect human rights, support fundamental freedoms, uphold the rules-based international order, and stand united with the Transatlantic community in addressing global challenges from Iran, Russia, and the PRC.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States should try to drive a wedge between Russia and Turkey? If so, how should we undertake that task?

*Answer.* Russia attempts to harmfully influence domestic processes and drive wedges between the United States and its Allies, including Turkey, using manipulative energy tactics, corrupt business deals, and disinformation. Turkish-Russian relations are dynamic, transactional, and frequently divided by strategic rivalries. For example, Russia and Turkey are often on the opposite side of regional conflicts (e.g., Syria and Libya). At the same time, Turkey is heavily dependent upon Russian energy supplies. Russian tourists, construction sector projects, and agricultural purchases are important for the struggling Turkish economy. If confirmed, I will work with Turkey to prevent Russian influence from weakening a key NATO Ally or harming our bilateral relationship with Ankara.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with the EU and its member states to ensure that North Macedonia and Albania are given a true and fair chance at admission to the EU?

*Answer.* The United States recognizes that a prolonged delay in starting accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania will have significant political consequences in both countries and could severely set back recent reform progress in North Macedonia and the entire Western Balkans. Both countries have enacted difficult and essential reforms to meet conditions for opening negotiations and deserve to advance on their accession paths. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and its member states as part of our shared political and financial commitment to the Western Balkan region.

*Question.* France and Bulgaria, for two different reasons, have stymied efforts to open accession negotiations with Macedonia and Albania. If confirmed, will you engage with France and Bulgaria on this topic? If so, how?

*Answer.* Although the EU approved opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania in March 2020, Bulgaria has blocked the official start of negotiations since November due to its ongoing dispute with North Macedonia. On June 10 in Paris, French President Macron reaffirmed support for North Macedonia's EU accession without delay. On May 21, the Portuguese EU Council Presidency presented to both countries' leaderships a promising, creative resolution proposal, to which the current Slovenian EU Presidency committed its continued support. If confirmed, I will work with all countries involved to see the EU hold the first Intergovernmental Conferences with North Macedonia and Albania as soon as possible.

*Question.* How do you believe the United States should interact with the EU as we work together to find a solution to the issues between Kosovo and Serbia? Should the United States be in the lead on these efforts? The EU?

*Answer.* From its inception, the United States has strongly supported the EU-facilitated Dialogue to normalize Kosovo-Serbia relations. If confirmed, I will closely coordinate with our EU partners and engage both Kosovo and Serbia to advance the process. A comprehensive normalization agreement remains the only way for Kosovo and Serbia to unlock their EU futures. The United States believes normalization should be centered on mutual recognition, as the best way for these two neighbors to put this dispute behind them. Both parties have re-engaged in the EU-facilitated



talks—the most recent high-level session took place on July 19 in Brussels—and both countries have reiterated their commitments to normalizing their relations.

*Question.* Russia and China have voiced their shared belief that the Office of the High Representative to Bosnia should be shut down in 2022, saying that Bosnia has achieved the progress necessary to have such oversight removed. Do you agree that the Office of the High Representative has outlived its usefulness? If yes, why? If no, what do you believe should be the path forward for Bosnia and Herzegovina?

*Answer.* The United States remains steadfast in our support of the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The OHR plays a critical role in pressing for BiH's progress towards reconciliation, consolidation of democratic institutions, and further Euro-Atlantic integration. The conditions for closing the OHR were clearly laid out in 2008 in the 5+2 Agenda with the support of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, including Russia. These conditions have not yet been achieved, and urgent reforms are still necessary. Focus on the fulfillment of the 5+2, plus anti-corruption initiatives, will advance BiH on its Euro-Atlantic path. If confirmed, I will collaborate with incoming High Representative Christian Schmidt on these priorities.

*Question.* Earlier this year, Senator Menendez and I passed the Ukraine Security Partnership Act out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It aims to support Ukraine in its fight against Russian-backed separatists in the east and push the country to continue necessary reforms of its military and defense sectors. In the bill, we propose placing conditions on Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding.

- What is your view on Ukraine's historical response to conditionality?

*Answer.* It is my belief that certain types of conditions on assistance, such as those imposed by the IMF or Department of Defense, can be powerful drivers for reform. The Department of Defense, in consultation with the Department of State, has annually certified that Ukraine has met the certification requirements described in Section 1237 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (c)(2). If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the Department of Defense and my colleagues in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs to ensure the conditions placed on future assistance further advance Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration and military transformation efforts.

*Question.* Do you believe that increasing conditionality on a portion of military support for the country would provide incentive for further reforms?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to advance our objectives of ensuring Ukraine has the military capabilities it needs to defend itself against ongoing Russian aggression, is systematically advancing security sector reform priorities, and is taking full advantage of U.S. assistance programs like IMET. I am committed to working with my colleagues in the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs to support a policy approach that most effectively achieves these objectives.

*Question.* What do you believe are the areas that are most ripe for reform in Ukraine?

*Answer.* Ukraine has made tremendous strides in its thirty years of independence, and particularly since the 2014 Revolution of Dignity. These gains have been made often with significant U.S. support. There remains a real need to continue to make progress, and, if confirmed, I will push for further progress on economic and rule of law reforms that address corruption and strengthen the independence, transparency, and integrity of Ukraine's democratic institutions. I will also work with Ukraine to help hold accountable corrupt actors who stand in the way of reforms or try to undermine Ukraine's efforts to ensure a bright, prosperous, and secure future for all Ukrainians.

*Question.* China is increasingly making inroads in Ukraine, wooing it with appealing business deals and the promise of vaccines. What steps should the United States and its allies take to keep Ukraine firmly rooted in the West and to keep Ukraine's valuable technological know-how from falling into the wrong hands?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to ensuring that American companies can operate on an even playing field in Ukraine, providing a meaningful alternative to China's predatory approach as well as promoting entrepreneurship and fair practices. If confirmed, I will focus on supporting Ukraine's economic and corporate governance reforms, countering the PRC's predatory business practices, and leveraging U.S. assistance to ensure outcomes in line with U.S. and Ukrainian national security interests.

*Question.* Ukraine continues to fight two wars: one with the Kremlin and its various attempts to undermine Ukraine's freedom and independence; and a second with its own demons, particularly the entrenched corruption that has so often undermined Ukraine's democratic transition and Euro-Atlantic ambitions.

- Should the United States continue to condition certain types of assistance on continued economic and anti-corruption reforms? Should existing conditions for aid be expanded?

*Answer.* It is my belief that certain types of conditionality, such as those imposed by the IMF for financial assistance to Ukraine, can be powerful drivers for economic and anti-corruption reform. At this time, I consider the conditions for continued IMF disbursement, if met by Ukraine, an important motivator of crucial judicial and corporate governance reform and protecting central bank independence. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage Ukraine to address the concerns of the IMF and the U.S. over backsliding on legislative action and empowerment of anticorruption institutions.

*Question.* What further incentives does the United States, along with our European partners, have to encourage Ukraine to complete its land reform, decentralization, privatization of State-owned-enterprises, and creation of an independent and responsive judiciary?

*Answer.* If confirmed I will continue to work in coordination with our European partners, and directly with Ukraine, to support its chosen Euro-Atlantic path, including by providing assistance and pushing for progress on economic and rule of law reforms that strengthen the independence and transparency of Ukraine's democratic institutions. I welcome the judicial reform laws recently passed by Ukraine's parliament with the strong backing of the President of Ukraine and have been encouraged by Ukraine's willingness to challenge the influence of corrupt oligarchs. For Ukraine to be a strong, secure, and democratic state, it must tackle endemic corruption and ensure the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Ukrainians.

*Question.* Since its independence, Georgia has made generally good progress in instilling democracy and implementing market-based economic reforms and has been a strong U.S. partner with ambitions to join the EU and NATO. However, over the past few years, the country has suffered democratic backsliding and oligarchic capture of the judiciary, media, and the ruling political party.

- What levers can be used to push Georgians, including and especially the ruling party Georgian Dream, to reform Georgia's judiciary and complete electoral reforms? Should we consider sanctions?

*Answer.* Much work remains to reverse backsliding and strengthen democratic institutions and norms in Georgia. Deeper electoral and judicial reforms, and the effective implementation of reforms, are needed to level the playing field and introduce transparency, independence, impartiality, and accountability. If confirmed, my team and I will support Georgia in these efforts, employing diplomatic engagement, exchanges, and assistance programs. We will also seek to take lessons learned from across the region to advance important reforms, which will strengthen Georgia's resilience to Russia's aggression and ongoing occupation of 20 percent of Georgia's territory. We will evaluate all available tools and forms of leverage to push Georgia's governing party to complete these reforms inclusively and transparently.

*Question.* Has the political and governance situation in Georgia reached the point at which we should re-evaluate our relationship with the country, including by conditioning certain aid to Georgia?

*Answer.* I share your concern about the current political tensions and lack of progress on urgently needed reforms. It is in the U.S. interest, however, to continue to support Georgia in becoming more democratic, more capable of countering Russian and other malign influence, more able to defend the rights of its citizens throughout its internationally recognized territory (included that occupied by Russia), and more economically prosperous. U.S. foreign assistance programs are an integral part of furthering U.S. strategic interests in Georgia and any proposed conditionality should be approached with this in mind. If confirmed, my team and I will evaluate all available tools and forms of leverage, and I would welcome the opportunity to work closely with you to advance U.S. interests in Georgia.

*Question.* The U.S. Embassy in Russia has been working under duress for a number of years and is now facing extreme pressure due to restrictions on the hiring of locally employed staff. The Russian Embassy in Washington and the Russian Government in Moscow have not proved terribly willing to work with the United

States to make sure that our embassy is fully staffed and able to continue operations.

- What can be done to negotiate a solution with Russia and restore our full embassy operations?

*Answer.* I am disappointed by the decision of the Russian Government to impose restrictions on the U.S. mission to Russia. It is at times like these that we need more open channels of communication between our governments, including through our respective embassies. Locally employed staff are key members of our workforce around the world. Their contributions are important to our operations and to our bilateral missions. If confirmed, I am committed to working to put our Mission on better footing to advance on our vital national security priorities.

*Question.* What can be done to support our embassy until we reach a solution, or if we cannot?

*Answer.* I look forward to working across the Department to identify how we can best leverage resources—both financial and personnel—to support Embassy Moscow. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring our embassy colleagues receive the support needed to continue executing core functions.

*Question.* What do you believe should be the role of sanctions in the creation and execution of U.S. foreign policy? With respect to Russia, how do you believe the sanctions imposed on that country since 2014 have affected the Russia's economic and foreign policy decision-making?

*Answer.* Sanctions are a critical tool in both the formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy, serving as a key deterrent to Russia as well as conveying U.S. intent. U.S. sanctions on Russia, especially those implemented in coordination with allies, send a clear message: that the international community will not stand by while Russia continues to violate international norms and laws. The sanctions imposed since 2014 have deterred and deprived Russia of the resources to carry out its aggressive and destabilizing activities around the globe. The legislative tools that Congress has created are key to the effective use of sanctions, and if confirmed, I will advocate to use them to promote accountability and impose costs for Russia's harmful activities.

*Question.* Given the wide range of Russian malign behavior, how can the United States (including Congress) and Europe do a better job of more clearly defining the conditions necessary for rolling back or removing sanctions with respect to Russia?

*Answer.* Sanctions are designed to cause a change in behavior, and the most useful sanctions are those with clearly defined intent. The administration sent a clear message to Russia that its activities against the United States would no longer be tolerated via the sanctions imposed in its April 15 action, "Imposing Costs for Harmful Foreign Activities by the Russian Government" including through the issuance of Executive Order (E.O.) 14024. This EO is an important complement to existing legislative sanctions tools, providing the flexibility to target Russian entities engaged in hostile or destabilizing activity around the globe. If confirmed, I will advocate to use all these tools to push back against harmful behavior by Russia.

*Question.* Do you believe that the imposition of more sanctions on Russia would accomplish U.S. policy goals? What are other measures besides economic sanctions that could be effective tools with respect to U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis Russia?

*Answer.* U.S. sanctions on Russia, especially those implemented in coordination with allies, send a clear message: the international community will not stand by while Russia continues to violate international norms and laws. The sanctions imposed since 2014 have imposed a measure of deterrence and diminished the resources to carry out Russia's aggressive and destabilizing activities around the globe. The administration has been clear that it will use every tool available—including economic sanctions—to promote accountability and impose costs on Russia for its continued acts of aggression.

*Question.* As relations between the U.S. and Russia have worsened, the level of people-to-people contact has likewise diminished.

- If confirmed, what outreach do you intend to undertake with to everyday Russians, if any?

*Answer.* The Russian Government has intensified its crackdown on civil society and independent media and is specifically targeting programs promoting cultural and academic exchanges with Western countries, including shutting down Bard College's 25-year-old joint degree program with Russia's Smolny University. It is therefore even more critical now for us to engage with everyday Russians and to share

our values and insights from the American experience in democracy. The U.S. Embassy Russia has been able to adopt a wide range of new virtual tools, hybrid engagements, and exchange programming for this purpose. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing and finding new ways to expand outreach to the Russian people.

*Question.* Are there new, more creative mechanisms (perhaps through technology) that the United States can use to rebuild person-to-person relationships between Americans and Russians?

*Answer.* I support the continued use of new technology and other tools to facilitate person-to-person interaction between Americans and Russians, who continue to be interested in engagement with the West despite obstacles. In addition to the work the U.S. Embassy is already doing with virtual and hybrid engagements, the U.S. Agency for Global Media is exploring ways to enhance its ability to reach Russian audiences, including through the Open Technology Fund, even if the Kremlin forces Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to leave its physical bureau in Russia. If confirmed, I am committed to strengthening civil society partners and people to people engagements to foster mutual understanding.

*Question.* The State Department just released the 2021 Trafficking in Person's Report, which identified a troubling trend of backsliding on trafficking prevention, prosecution, and protection efforts from a number of Western European nations, including Norway, Switzerland, Ireland, Portugal and more. It is clear that something must be done to address this serious, ongoing issue to curb this scourge.

- If confirmed, please outline what steps you would take in your various bilateral relationships to address this problem.

*Answer.* Trafficking in persons is an appalling crime. If confirmed, I will prioritize bilateral engagement across Europe and Eurasia to press governments, including Ireland, Norway, Portugal, and Switzerland, to address the concerns the Department has highlighted in this year's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, and to take concrete action to combat trafficking. If confirmed, I will call out shortcomings where they exist, and use the annual reports to assist each government to identify priority areas for improvement and encourage each to implement the TIP Report's recommended improvements.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you raise this issue with Foreign Ministries at the first opportunity?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will raise this issue with foreign ministries as combating human trafficking is a priority for the United States and will also be a priority of mine.

*Question.* Anti-Semitism is on the rise globally, but especially across Europe. If confirmed, what steps will you take alongside the Office of the Special Envoy To Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to address this concerning and growing problem?

*Answer.* Anti-Semitism is abhorrent. If confirmed, I will prioritize combating anti-Semitism in the region alongside the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. If confirmed, I intend to work with Congress and implement the following priorities: securing Jewish communities; reporting, investigating, and prosecuting hate crimes; countering anti-Semitism both on- and off-line; promoting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Anti-Semitism; building and strengthening coalitions across different faith communities, civil society, and the private sector; and promoting Holocaust education, remembrance, and commemoration, and combating Holocaust distortion and denial.

*Question.* Across Europe, there are over 100 detained journalists who were imprisoned for simply doing their jobs. In 2021, the Council of Europe notes 6 journalists have been killed in Europe alone. These statistics are staggering and require immediate attention and action from the United States Government. If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, how will you address this problem and assure our partners and allies that we will not allow the abuse and imprisonment of journalists anywhere in the world?

*Answer.* Promoting and defending independent media is key to an informed citizenry and healthy democratic institutions and processes. If confirmed, I will seek to deepen our engagement with partners in Europe to address the challenges facing journalists in Europe and the media globally. This includes working through regional organizations including the Council of Europe. Additionally, I will support efforts to promote accountability for those who commit abuses against journalists through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy; public messaging; sanctions and visa

restrictions; and foreign assistance programs, including rapid response resources that support journalists, civil society activists, and human rights defenders under threat.

*Question.* The lack of meaningful progress regarding Cyprus on the political front and the subsequent peacekeeping mission, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), is quite troubling.

*Answer.* The status quo is unacceptable. If confirmed, I will continue to support a Cypriot-led comprehensive settlement to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicomunal federation to benefit all Cypriots and the wider region. The United States appreciates the U.N. Secretary-General's efforts to restart political discussions on Cyprus. If confirmed, I will encourage both sides to demonstrate the necessary openness, flexibility, and compromise to find common ground to restart formal talks. I believe UNFICYP continues to play an important role in preventing a resurgence of fighting between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, supervising ceasefire lines, maintaining a buffer zone, and supporting the Secretary-General's Good Offices.

*Question.* Do you believe reaching a political settlement is possible?

*Answer.* Yes. But ultimately, the responsibility for finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves.

*Question.* Turkish President Erdogan's recent behavior regarding Varosha is unacceptable and a flagrant disregard of current international norms and two U.N. Resolutions. If confirmed, what actions would you take to address this issue and growing, illegal Turkish activity in northern Cyprus?

*Answer.* The announcement by Turkish Cypriot leader Tatar and Turkish President Erdogan on July 20 regarding the transfer of parts of Varosha to Turkish Cypriot control was clearly inconsistent with U.N. Security Council Resolutions 550 and 789, provocative, unacceptable, and incompatible with their past commitments to engage constructively in settlement talks. If confirmed, I will work to urge Turkish Cypriots and Turkey to reverse their decision announced on July 20 and all steps taken since October 2020, and work with the international community to give a strong response to this action. I will also underscore the need to avoid provocative unilateral actions that increase tensions on the island and hinder efforts to resume Cyprus settlement talks in line with U.N. Security Council resolutions.

*Question.* Do you see President Erdogan's calls for "a two-state solution" in Cyprus as feasible?

*Answer.* A Cypriot-led comprehensive settlement to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicomunal federation is the only path to lasting peace and stability. This is the only framework with broad international community support and approved by the U.N. Security Council.

*Question.* Maintaining recent stability in Kosovo remains a priority, but some Security Council members (including the United States) have indicated a desire to downsize the mission. If confirmed, would you support a strategic review of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)?

*Answer.* Although the U.N. Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has operated in Kosovo since its independence in 2008, it has long since fulfilled its original purpose. U.N. engagement with Kosovo in a more appropriate form that acknowledges and strengthens Kosovo's sovereignty could provide an important support for continued development of democratic institutions. If confirmed, I would continue to urge that the U.N. Security Council consider better ways of helping Kosovo to realize its full potential, which a strategic review could identify. It should be noted that Russia, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, unhelpfully insists on UNMIK remaining in its current incarnation. I would also caution that change to the NATO security presence should be conditions-based.

*Question.* Since the August 9th presidential election, Belarusians have peacefully protested in unprecedented numbers to contest the official results, which fraudulently awarded Alexander Lukashenka another term. The Government has responded to these peaceful protests with violence, initiating a campaign of disappearances, arrests, torture, and violence against the protestors and journalists. Since the protests began, the United States has increased its support of civil society in Belarus. What more can the United States-through USAID and along with our European allies-do to assist Belarusian advocates of democracy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to work energetically with partners and Allies to keep pressure on the Lukashenka regime to end repression, release all polit-

ical prisoners and begin an inclusive dialogue with the opposition (including the Co-ordination Council led by Svyatlana Tsikhanouskaya) that leads to free and fair elections under international observation. Specifically, I plan to continue efforts to coordinate and strengthen economic sanctions, provide assistance and support for civil society- including those working to support human rights, free press, democracy, and Belarus' independence- and keep pressure on the regime through all bilateral and multilateral diplomatic channels.

*Question.* The International Monetary Fund is in the process of sending around \$1 billion to Belarus as part of its program to use Special Drawing Rights to help the world's poorer countries emerge from the coronavirus pandemic. In Belarus, this money will go right into Lukashenka's pocket and will help keep him in power.

- What can or should the United States do to make sure that these monies are not given to Mr. Lukashenka?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the United States retains the right to refuse to purchase Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) from any country that we choose, including those under U.S. sanction regimes. We are working with Treasury to develop a strategy to engage our like-minded allies to do the same. However, these countries will not automatically be able to exchange their SDRs- which are reserve assets- for hard currencies. Belarus would need to find a willing country to provide them with hard currency in exchange for their SDRs. If confirmed, I will continue working with our partners at the Department of Treasury to increase transparency around SDR exchanges.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working to keep these funds out of Lukashenka's hands?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to using all tools at my disposal to prevent the Belarusian authorities from exchanging their SDRs for hard currency.

*Question.* How important is it that the United States and its European allies take steps to make our own systems less friendly to kleptocracy and less penetrable by dirty money?

*Answer.* The United States will continue to work with European partners to combat corruption by supporting efforts to recover and return stolen assets; deny safe haven to those who engage in corruption; combat money-laundering; stem foreign bribery; and empower and protect civil society and independent media. The United States supports the work at the OSCE and Council of Europe to help participating states implement more effective and transparent anticorruption policies and mechanisms and ensure countries are following through on their international anticorruption commitments. If confirmed, I will also support the work of countering corruption in our own system and continued use of sanctions related to the Global Magnitsky Act, Executive Order 14033 on the Western Balkans signed by President Biden on June 8, 2021, and others.

*Question.* Will the administration make a concerted push on anti-corruption in the EU and its periphery with the dual purpose of benefitting European citizens and making it more difficult for malign actors like Russia and China to gain a foothold?

*Answer.* The United States remains committed to combatting corruption not only in Europe, but across the globe. Fighting corruption benefits citizens while also making it more difficult for malign actors to exert their influence. If confirmed, I will continue to work with governments across Europe and Eurasia to strengthen anti-corruption efforts, and encourage these countries to work to fulfill their obligations under the U.N. Convention against Corruption, and to implement the recommendations of regional organizations, such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe, to combat corruption. I will also support the continued use of sanctions related to the Global Magnitsky Act, Executive Order 14033 on the Western Balkans signed by President Biden on June 8, 2021, and others to combat corruption in the region.

*Question.* The United States and France share several overlapping priorities in Sub-Saharan Africa and work together on many fronts, including fighting the terror threat in the Sahel. However, American and French interests in the region do not always align, including with regard to the ongoing conflict in Northwest and Southwest Cameroon.

- If confirmed, how will you engage our French partners to ensure that we employ a mutually-beneficial partnership across the Sahel and West and Central Africa that reflects the various points of leverage and capability the United States and France each bring to the table?

*Answer.* France has significant ties in the Sahel and West and Central Africa, and is a steadfast partner in the fight against terrorism. Our shared priorities include

security, governance, economic development, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I will continue our deep cooperation in Africa with France. I will engage the French on our priorities in West and Central Africa, encouraging them to use their strong political, economic, security, and cultural influence toward long-term stability in these regions. I will work within our interagency to support French efforts when mutually beneficial.

*Question.* How can the United States better coordinate with France to holistically address security threats and improve diplomatic engagements in the Sahel and West and Central Africa from a holistic perspective?

Answer. Both France and the United States share security, governance, economic development, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic as priorities in the Sahel and West and Central Africa. These priorities cannot be achieved independent of one another. If confirmed, I will work strategically and tactically with the French to ensure that our efforts are mutually supportive and reinforcing. I will encourage the French to use their strong political, economic, security, and cultural influence to promote the political, security, and democratic reforms that are the best path to long-term stability in these regions, and work with our interagency to support French objectives when aligned with ours.

*Question.* How can the United States better coordinate and collaborate with the European Union, as well as individual European Governments such as the U.K., to enhance policy consistency and advance mutually-beneficial opportunities for trade, investment, development, and security cooperation with the African Union, regional bodies, African Governments, and private sector partners?

Answer. The EU and European Governments are crucial partners of the United States to advance prosperity and security in Africa. On June 12, President Biden and G7 leaders agreed to launch a global infrastructure initiative called Build Back Better World that will mobilize private sector capital in four areas of focus—climate, health and health security, digital technology and gender equity and equality. The scope of this initiative will include Africa, as well as Latin America, the Caribbean and the Indo-Pacific. The June 15 U.S.-EU Summit Joint Statement confirmed that the United States and the EU are committed to peace and sustainable development in Africa, and plan to provide support for a sustainable economic recovery from the pandemic. U.S.-EU cooperation resulted in the U.N. Human Rights Council's July 13 decision to adopt an EU-led and U.S.-cosponsored resolution on the Tigray region of Ethiopia, and to defeat hostile amendments. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with our European partners to continue our cooperation.

*Question.* Russian malign activity in Africa is increasingly a growing concern, particularly given credible reports of elections interference across the continent and deployment of Russian mercenaries, including through the Wagner Group in Northern Mozambique and through nontransparent transfers of weapons and training via Russian security sector support to the Touadera administration in the Central African Republic (CAR). From your perspective, how can the Bureau of European Affairs and the Bureau of African Affairs coordinate to more effectively counter the malign activities and influence of Russia in Africa generally and, more specifically, of Yevgeny Prigozhin and affiliated mining and security companies (like the Wagner Group) in Africa?

Answer. Russian harmful activity in Africa is a matter of grave and growing concern. The use of proxies like Prigozhin's enterprise in the Central African Republic and elsewhere is a particular threat to stability, good governance, and human rights on the continent. I know the Bureaus of European and Eurasian and African Affairs are already working in close coordination on this issue, something I would seek to continue and build upon if confirmed. I would also prioritize collaboration with our European Allies and partners on this issue, as they too are invested in the future of the African continent, directly and via various U.N. programs. The UK and EU have already designated Prigozhin for sanctions, a clear signal that they also take this threat seriously.

*Question.* There are around 10,000 ISIS fighters housed at various detention facilities around the world. This includes at least 2,000 foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) that U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) characterizes as "hardcore foreign terrorist fighters." Many of these FTFs are housed at Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, like al Hol in northeastern Syria. The al-Hol IDP camp has become fertile ground for ISIS recruitment of vulnerable populations, posing a serious risk to global security. Despite this risk, countries with foreign terrorist fighters have failed to make any progress to date towards repatriating their nationals.

- Can you commit to using all tools at your disposal to press the Europe and Eurasia region to repatriate nationals from camps for ISIS fighters and affiliates in northeast Syria?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I intend to encourage countries to repatriate their nationals from northeast Syria, including foreign terrorist fighters and associated family members, and to prosecute them, as appropriate. As I understand it, the Department holds that repatriation—followed by appropriate prosecution in domestic courts of law—is the best way to keep these fighters off the battlefield and hold them accountable for their crimes. If confirmed, I will also support repatriation of associated family members as a means to rehabilitate and reintegrate individuals into their local communities, as appropriate.

*Question.* How do you plan to engage with EUR countries to advance repatriation efforts, which remains a critical to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to continue our consistent diplomatic outreach to European and Eurasian countries urging them to repatriate their nationals from northeast Syria. I will collaborate with the interagency in their work to support countries' efforts to repatriate their nationals with logistical and planning assistance for repatriations, including the use of U.S. Government assets to transport foreign fighters and associated family members out of the region.

*Question.* United Nations humanitarian assistance program in Syria relies on the border crossings from Turkey to deliver aid to millions of Syrians. Although Russia held off from vetoing the renewal of the last remaining border crossing, it will need to be renewed in December. In the event all border crossings between Turkey and Syria close, what alternatives do we have to get aid to the Syrian people? How could we pressure the Assad regime and Russia to provide aid in our stead?

*Answer.* The United States led a successful diplomatic campaign to overcome Russian opposition and renew the U.N. Security Council's mandate authorizing cross-border humanitarian assistance from Turkey into Syria. I continue to believe that cross-line assistance alone cannot meet existing humanitarian needs, which is why extending the cross-border mandate at Bab al-Hawa for another year was so important. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to move forward on a political solution in line with U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254 and continued engagement between the United States, Russia, Turkey, and other key players in Syria.

*Question.* In your assessment, what are the top five most pressing challenges the People's Republic of China (PRC) poses to both the United States and Europe?

*Answer.* The most pressing challenge posed by the PRC is its attempt to undermine the rules-based international order, including the multi-lateral U.N. system. If confirmed, I will stand up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet. I will work to support Taiwan, a leading democracy and essential partner, in keeping with U.S. commitments. I will make it a priority to support efforts to ensure supply chains for critical supplies are secure and free of forced labor. I will work with Allies and partners to defend access to the global commons, including freedom of navigation under international law. And finally, if confirmed, I will work with Congress and Allies to confront Beijing's coercive economic practices, unfair and illegal trade practices, and cyber theft.

*Question.* What are the areas that the United States and EU have the most opportunity to work together on mutual challenges posed by the PRC, and which areas still require regulatory reform (either U.S. or EU) to better facilitate cooperation?

*Answer.* The United States and EU intend to closely consult and cooperate on the challenges posed by China, including through the U.S.-EU dialogue on China and the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council. It is important that the United States and EU work together to confront Beijing on the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang and human rights abuses in Tibet and Hong Kong, protect freedom of navigation in the East and South China Seas, and ensure peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. If confirmed, I will work with the EU to promote an open, free, secure, and reliable digital space and, along with likeminded partners around the world, work to ensure the rules governing tomorrow's technology are based in democratic values.

*Question.* How do you view Europe's attempts at strategic autonomy, and what challenges does it pose to U.S. cooperation with Europe on issues related to the PRC?

*Answer.* We welcome efforts of our Allies and partners to strengthen their capacity and capabilities, but it is important that these efforts be compatible with our alliances and contribute to Transatlantic security. Together, the United States and



its Allies and partners set the global rules of the road, and we must continue to do so. If confirmed, I will seek to resolve difficult issues with our European Allies and partners while safeguarding U.S. interests and ensuring a level playing field for U.S. companies. As Secretary Blinken has noted, the United States will be much more effective in engaging the PRC when we do so with our Allies and partners.

*Question.* The United Kingdom has previously joined U.S. freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea, and France recently announced it would set up a coast guard network with the Pacific Island nations to deter predatory and coercive behavior. What other opportunities are there for the European countries to increase their presence in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* The Biden administration supports robust engagement by European counterparts in the Indo-Pacific. Some European countries, including Germany and the Netherlands, have published Indo-Pacific strategies, and EU member states have tasked the European Commission and European External Action Service to release an Indo-Pacific strategy by September. The United States supports the UK's "Indo-Pacific Tilt" to the region and its ongoing deployment of the UK-led Aircraft Carrier Strike Group 21 which plans to transit through the South China Sea. If confirmed, I plan to support ongoing efforts by the EU and European counterparts to direct more diplomatic, military, economic, and other resources to the region.

*Question.* In my China-Europe report published last fall, I discuss the importance of overcoming barriers to U.S.-Europe technology cooperation to counter Chinese technology supremacy, including working through competing regulatory approaches on joint-R&D, data transfer, and privacy shields. What steps do the U.S. and Europe each need to take with respect to technology regulations, and what do you see as the hardest obstacles to overcome in this area?

*Answer.* President Biden and his EU counterparts established the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council as a forum to demonstrate to the world how democratic approaches to trade, technology, and innovation can improve the lives of our citizens and counter authoritarian influence in the digital realm. Discussions on an enhanced Privacy Shield framework also underscore our shared commitment to privacy, data protection, and the rule of law; our mutual recognition of the importance of transatlantic data flows to our respective citizens, economies, and societies; and our common interest in aligning against the growing government surveillance ambitions of authoritarian states. If confirmed, I will work to deepen cooperation in these important areas.

*Question.* The latest EU strategy on China mentions "the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan strait." What should the EU do to better support Taiwan in light of an increasingly aggressive PRC?

*Answer.* Taiwan is a leading democracy, a critical U.S. security and economic partner, and a key U.S. partner in addressing shared global challenges. The United States continues to encourage European allies and partners to engage and publicly support Taiwan. The U.S. commitment to Taiwan is rock solid and contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to support Taiwan and encourage our European Allies and partners to do the same.

*Question.* My China-Europe report, published last fall, covers the growing presence of PRC companies in building undersea cables. The previous administration focused on this issue through its Clean Cable initiative, and by providing financing for specific cable projects in the Indo-Pacific. A PRC company—Huawei Marine (now called HMN Technologies)—is currently constructing an undersea cable that terminates in Marseilles, France. Please describe your understanding of PRC activities in the undersea cable market and the implications and risks for U.S. and allied interests. Do you commit to prioritizing this area of technology if you are confirmed?

*Answer.* As with 5G networks, the Biden administration views the security of commercial undersea communications cables as a high priority. The secure development and deployment of undersea cables and related infrastructure in both developed and developing economies is of critical concern to the United States. Countries and citizens need to be able to trust that such equipment will not introduce risks that threaten national security, personal privacy, or human rights. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging on this topic with our European allies and partners to promote open, interoperable, reliable, and secure information and communications technology infrastructure.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
DR. KAREN DONFRIED BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* Support for Governance, Democracy, and Human Rights: Supporting democracy, human rights, and good governance, which begins with fighting corruption and must continue to be a priority of U.S. policy.

- What more can we do to further these efforts with our European partners, especially on the battle against corruption?

*Answer.* The United States will continue to work with European partners to combat corruption by supporting efforts to recover and return stolen assets; deny safe haven to those who engage in corruption; combat money-laundering; and stem foreign bribery. If confirmed, I will support the OSCE's work to help participating States create robust anti-money laundering regimes, a solid ethics infrastructure, and sound financial and resource management.

*Question.* How can we better work within the OSCE to address these issues?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would also encourage the OSCE to take a cross-dimensional approach to anticorruption that focuses on building the capacity of law enforcement, strengthening legal frameworks, and defending members of civil society and the media which expose corruption.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARY CATHERINE PHEE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Somalia: As you are aware, the Trump administration ended our troop presence in the country and the Biden administration has dramatically reduced the pace of counter-terrorism operations there.

- If confirmed, what actions will you take to support a sustainable political transition in Somalia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to supporting Somali efforts to complete a timely, peaceful, and transparent electoral process, which is vital for the advancement of political reconciliation and governance, security, and economic reforms. I am prepared to engage with Somali leaders to ensure they follow through with their commitments with respect to the electoral and government formation processes. I also will coordinate closely with other international partners to ensure consistent policies and messages, and to discourage efforts that could exacerbate political tensions or disrupt a political transition.

*Question.* In what specific areas should the United States focus security assistance in Somalia going forward? Are there lessons learned from long running security assistance programs that you believe could be better applied?

*Answer.* The United States supports efforts to advance peace and security in Somalia with a wide range of activities. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing State Department-administered security assistance programs in Somalia to ensure they are effectively and efficiently advancing our policy goals. If confirmed, I will prioritize close coordination with regional and international partners in the security sector, accountability of U.S. security assistance, and mentorship and training of partnered forces.

Lessons learned applicable to Somalia include biometric enrollment of Somalia National Army (SNA) forces receiving U.S. support, sustained mentorship and training of SNA and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces and the introduction of clear accountability procedures for U.S. assistance when transferred to partners. With regard to lessons learned on mentoring, U.S. security assistance monitoring has identified that the SNA-Danab program improved by recruiting for clan appropriate battalions, increasing the recruitment of women, and ensuring the Federal Government of Somalia and its Member States agree to both support SNA-Danab. Over time, the results have demonstrated increased unit cohesion and pride, successful joint operations with the AU Mission in Somalia Forces, and lower instances of desertion.

*Somalia*

*Question.* As you are aware, the Trump administration ended our troop presence in the country and the Biden administration has dramatically reduced the pace of counter-terrorism operations there.

- If confirmed, how will you work to better manage the sometimes of unhelpful engagement of outside actors in Somalia, including neighboring states and countries from the Middle East like Turkey, the UAE, and Qatar? If confirmed, how do you plan to engage the Bureau of Near East Affairs on issues relate to the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea Corridor?

Answer. The United States has close and constructive relations with many of the external actors engaged in Somalia, including the Gulf states, Turkey, and some of Somalia's neighbors. If confirmed, I would collaborate with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to employ U.S. influence and leverage to encourage our Gulf partners to engage strategically to promote long-term security and stability in Somalia specifically and the Horn of Africa more broadly.

#### *Nigeria*

*Question.* Poor governance and leadership have prevented Nigeria from reaching its full potential. Endemic corruption remains a challenge. There is little accountability for extrajudicial killings by security forces. ISIS West Africa Province remains a potent force in the northeast, and, intercommunal violence and banditry plague various parts of the country.

- If confirmed, how will you engage with the Nigerian Government on these challenges?

Answer. The United States has a strong and enduring relationship with Nigeria, Africa's largest democracy and economy. Nigeria's stability and economic growth can advance our mutual prosperity as well as that of West Africa and the broader continent. If confirmed, I will continue to raise the profile of our engagement with Nigerian leaders to advance our national security priorities and strengthen our collaboration to address security, economic, and governance challenges. Working with other State Department bureaus and U.S. Government agencies, I will support our investments in training Nigerian security forces to build their effectiveness in fighting common threats and serving the Nigerian people, increase accountability for military or police personnel who commit human rights violations and abuses, and strengthen security forces coordination. Working across the U.S. interagency and in partnership with Nigeria's new Ambassador to the United States as well as civil society stakeholders and the Nigerian diaspora, I will undertake a holistic approach to our bilateral relationship that emphasizes shared values and candid dialogue. Through the annual Bi-National Commission and in other bilateral and multilateral meetings and fora, I will engage actively with Nigerian leaders within and beyond government to champion the strengthening of democratic institutions, diversification of its economy, and pursuit of important reforms.

*Question.* Do you commit to working with the committee to develop a coherent framework in which to provide security assistance before moving forward with additional arms sales and security assistance programs in Nigeria?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to actively reinforce the importance of civilian protection, and respect for human rights in all elements of our security assistance to Nigeria. I will urge the Nigerian Government to hold security force elements accountable for human rights abuses and violations. To help Nigeria reduce the risk of civilian harm, I will support a combination of legal training and advising to provide stronger underpinnings for the Nigerian military and police to address systematic human rights concerns, develop a professional process for military justice and police accountability, and develop more disciplined security forces.

Arms sales and security assistance programs in Nigeria help bring about incremental institutional reform. I will seek to combine military and law enforcement capability sales with comprehensive training and maintenance programs. Our goal, which the Nigerian Government supports, is greater professionalism of Nigerian security services. Recent improvements demonstrate that Nigeria is a willing security partner, making needed investments and security sector institutional reforms that will bring lasting results in combatting a variety of security challenges.

*Question.* If confirmed, what new, innovative approaches will you recommend that administration take to mitigate conflict, stop human rights abuses, counterbalance Russian influence, and help the people of CAR achieve a stable democracy?

Answer. The United States supports CAR's efforts to develop strong institutions and strengthen the rule of law through capacity building and technical assistance. If confirmed, I will work to increase coordination within the Department of State, across the U.S. Government, and with likeminded partners such as the European Union and France to ensure our efforts are aligned and mutually supportive to strengthen the CAR Government's ability to mitigate conflict, stop human rights

abuses and violations, hold those responsible for such actions accountable, and help the country achieve a stable democracy that does not require the support of dubious external actors. Specifically, to counterbalance Russia's influence, I will pursue opportunities to stand up to negative Russian behavior.

*Question.* As the U.S. engages to strengthen accountability, security, and inclusiveness, will you commit to supporting processes and institutions, rather than a specific individual or leader?

*Answer.* Yes. Across administrations, the United States has worked to advance democracy and human rights in the DRC, prevent conflict, and promote economic development. If confirmed, I will work with the DRC Government and our civil society partners, as well as our partners in the region and at the United Nations, to promote political, economic, and security reforms.

The recent inauguration of a new cabinet in the DRC opened an historic new chapter in the country's political history. If confirmed, I will urge DRC leaders to heed the calls of the Congolese people for reforms. I will emphasize to DRC leaders the early imperative of undertaking the legal, financial, and technical preparations necessary for free and fair elections in 2023, including reform of the Independent National Electoral Commission. I will also work with our partners in the DRC to counter pervasive corruption that undermines the country's institutions and will pursue accountability for corrupt actors with all tools at our disposal.

*Question.* What actions should the administration be taking right now to help support a credible presidential election in 2023, and what specific steps do you plan to take if confirmed to support credible elections?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will emphasize to DRC leaders the early imperative of undertaking the legal, financial, and technical preparations necessary for free and fair elections in 2023, including reform of the Independent National Electoral Commission. To be credible, those elections must be inclusive, conducted transparently and impartially, and held in accordance with constitutional deadlines. I will also continue to work with this committee on issues related to the 2023 elections. Appreciating your longstanding interest in this issue, I will work with you to ensure we take your views on board in advance, and that we have the appropriate resources in place to help our Congolese partners with this important task.

### *Zimbabwe*

*Question.* U.S. policy regarding Zimbabwe has been largely consistent across recent administrations, including the rigorous implementation of ZDERA and other sanctions. Yet the Zimbabwean Government of today is no less authoritarian and corrupt than it was under former president Robert Mugabe.

- If confirmed, how will you approach U.S.-Zimbabwe relations?

*Answer.* I share the committee's deep concern over the Government of Zimbabwe's authoritarian and corrupt practices, including the targeting of opposition political figures, journalists, and members of civil society through harassment, arrests, and detentions. I appreciate the willingness of this committee to publicly call out repression by the Zimbabwe Government. The Department of State, Africa Bureau, and U.S. Embassy in Harare issue condemnations when appropriate and publicly voice our support for the courageous Zimbabwean women and men who speak out against government corruption and abuses.

The United States supports democratic governance programs that improve electoral processes, refine citizen advocacy strategies, and enhance public accountability measures. We provide support to those the Zimbabwean Government singles out for abuse, and we impose targeted sanctions to promote accountability for corrupt actors and those who abuse human rights and undermine democratic processes.

But we should continue to look at all options. If confirmed, I will work with this committee, civil society, regional neighbors, and likeminded partners to shine a brighter light on the situation in Zimbabwe so that, together, we can increase the pressure on the Government of Zimbabwe to respect democratic principles and human rights. If confirmed, I will also work with our interagency partners to mobilize our sanctions programs to promote accountability for those individuals who are currently active in corruption and human rights abuses.

*Question.* Is it time to rethink our Zimbabwe policy, in your view?

*Answer.* We should continually examine our policy towards Zimbabwe to ensure that it is timely and effective. The United States currently employs a blend of programs and strategies in Zimbabwe to strengthen democratic institutions, promote equitable economic growth, boost public health, and improve food security for the

benefit of the Zimbabwean people. If confirmed, I will review these programs and strategies.

If confirmed, I will be guided by the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act in our efforts to press the Government of Zimbabwe to respect democratic principles, basic freedoms, and human rights, and to support those citizens who seek to build an open and accountable system. I also will work with this committee, likeminded partners, and subject matter experts within civil society to examine ways to ensure that our policy towards Zimbabwe is relevant and effective.

*Question.* What new measures should the U.S. pursue in advancing democracy and human rights in Uganda?

Answer. This year's flawed elections in Uganda underscored the continuing deterioration of both Uganda's democracy and respect and support for human rights and freedoms. Helping the Ugandan people reverse this trend will take new ideas and increased engagement with Ugandan leaders and the country's beleaguered civil society. If confirmed, I will assess what more the United States can do to promote democracy, human rights, and accountability in Uganda and seek to develop options for advancing these goals and objectives.

*Question.* Given democratic and human rights deficits in Uganda, what will you recommend if confirmed, relative to continued cooperation with the Museveni regime on regional security matters?

Answer. Uganda plays an important role in supporting regional security and counterterrorism efforts in Somalia and elsewhere in the region. During deployments, Ugandan units have been among the most capable and professional in regional missions. The conduct of specific Ugandan troops at home, however, is of concern. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. policy in Uganda appropriately reflects the centrality of democracy and respect for human rights called for by President Biden. In addition to working with the African Union (AU), the United Nations (U.N.), and the Government of Uganda to ensure that personnel are properly vetted, follow the rules of armed conflict, and respect human rights, I support working with the AU and the U.N. to identify potential new troop contributors that would reduce AMISOM's reliance on forces that may be implicated in human rights abuses. There is also a need to engage the AU and the U.N. in a timely and credible process to identify and remove potential troop contributors that may be implicated in human rights abuses.

*Question.* How serious is the new leadership in Tanzania about pursuing genuine political reform?

Answer. President Hassan has taken some encouraging steps in the early days of her administration. These include significant revisions to Tanzania's approach on COVID-19, reengagement with the international community, and overtures to the business community suggesting greater openness to foreign investment. Her initial outreach to opposition political parties and civil society organizations was welcome but needs to be accompanied by significant democratic and human rights reforms. The arrest of leading opposition politicians on July 20 was gravely concerning. If confirmed, I will prioritize U.S. engagement in Tanzania to encourage rule of law, good governance, political pluralism, and people's freedom to exercise their rights without fear of harassment.

*Question.* What steps will you take if confirmed to incentivize the new Tanzanian leadership to repair the damage of the Magufuli era, both in terms of political reform at home, and Tanzania-U.S. bilateral relations?

Answer. The new Tanzanian leadership has been much more receptive to engagement with both Embassy Dar es Salaam and senior Department of State officials. Such engagement has already contributed to the Hassan administration's increasingly positive steps with regard to its COVID-19 policy. If confirmed, I would work with Embassy leadership to continue to highlight to the Tanzanian Government the additional, potential benefits of closer cooperation with the United States, including renewed support for the country's development and economic recovery efforts. At the same time, I would underscore the democratic and economic reforms that would be required on the part of the Tanzanian Government in order to attain such support and repair in full the Tanzania-U.S. bilateral relationship.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARY CATHERINE PHEE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, what specific actions will you take to meet the administration's stated goal of prioritizing Africa?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to engage respectfully with African partners to meet global challenges—including security, global health, climate change, freedom and democracy, and mutual prosperity. You would see greater attention to our relationships with African states and publics, with regional institutions like the African Union, and with the African bloc in international organizations.

If confirmed, I look forward to participating in an interagency policy process as the Biden-Harris administration develops a fresh U.S. strategy for Africa that enumerates our national interests in Africa and develops operational actions to advance them, guided by the priorities of this committee. Responding to President Biden's direction, I would highlight the role of democracy and human rights and add a new emphasis on anti-corruption. Without good governance, African states will not be well-positioned to expand peace and security and manage the threats posed by terrorism and migration. I will ensure that we work with our African partners to mitigate and adapt to climate change. I will support programs that promote two-way trade and investment to create opportunities for African youth that benefit workers there and here. In line with this committee's direction, I will work to advance an affirmative agenda rooted in our values and our longstanding investments in development, security and people to prevail in the strategic competition with China. In this effort, we will seek to expand our partnership with Europe and other likeminded nations to reinforce our collective impact.

I will also capitalize on our soft power—engaging with youth, encouraging education opportunities, and engaging the diaspora. Finally, I will join the U.S. Government campaign to help Africa mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Question.* What changes in U.S. posture toward Africa are needed to demonstrate to our African partners that “Africa is a priority”?

*Answer.* We need to expand the quantity and quality of our engagement across the Continent. As Secretary Blinken noted in his January 19 testimony before this committee, senior-level engagement on a consistent basis will be one important way to demonstrate our commitment. Showing up and showing respect is important. Consistent with our values, we must champion leaders seeking positive change and hold others to account. This approach means reinvigorating our focus on human rights, transparency and accountability, and the fight against corruption which are essential for stability and economic growth. Expanding trade and investment, tackling climate change, and responding to COVID-19 are all shared priorities between the United States and African nations. If confirmed, I will support diplomacy that translates this rhetoric into action.

*Question.* What specific policies and strategies will you pursue to ensure that you and the Bureau of African Affairs are meeting what you've indicated as “President Biden's agenda to expand the quantity and quality of our engagement with African Governments, institutions . . . [and] African publics”? What changes, if any, are needed within the Bureau of African Affairs to ensure they are best prepared to carry out this vision?

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken noted in his January 19 hearing before this committee, the United States has engaged African countries as partners in pursuing our shared interests and values—including security, global health, climate change, freedom and democracy, and shared prosperity. Expanded senior-level engagement on a consistent basis will be one important way to demonstrate our commitment. If confirmed, I will actively support engagement through senior-level visits to Africa, increased consultations with the African Union and African regional organizations, initiatives and economic opportunities to harness the innovation and energy of Africa's youth, university partnerships and training opportunities, and active engagement with the African diaspora here in the United States, to name a few. If confirmed, I will closely review the Africa Bureau's organization, management, staffing, and budget to align our resources to support execution of this vision.

*Question.* If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, will you commit to work with Secretary Blinken to ensure that ambassadorial positions in Sub-Saharan Africa are filled by qualified, experience nominees in a timely manner?

**Answer.** Yes. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Secretary Blinken to ensure that ambassadorial positions in Sub-Saharan Africa are filled by qualified, experienced nominees in a timely manner.

**Question.** If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, will you commit to work with Secretary Blinken to ensure that first-time career ambassadorial nominees will not be the first choice when identifying nominees for high-profile and strategic U.S. missions in Sub-Saharan Africa?

**Answer.** The Department of State has a robust process for choosing Chiefs of Mission. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Secretary and other Department leadership to ensure that we identify highly qualified individuals for every one of these positions in the Bureau of African Affairs.

**Question.** Under your leadership as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, if confirmed, what actions will you pursue to ensure that hard to fill posts in Sub-Saharan Africa are sufficiently and consistently staffed?

**Answer.** I recognize that the Africa Bureau is chronically understaffed, both in numbers of assigned positions and vacancies in those positions. If confirmed, I will personally prioritize personnel and allocate additional resources to support that effort. I am committed to an inclusive workplace and will build on the Bureau's progress to date in implementing management reforms designed to support diversity in recruitment, hiring, and retention.

Other actions I intend to pursue include reviewing staffing levels across the continent with the goal of aligning staffing to our most pressing national interests; exploring options for enhancing incentives for service at hardship posts; and attending to morale and reinvigorating the sense of public service that attracts professionals devoted to making a difference for the United States in Africa.

**Question.** If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, how will you ensure that the Bureau of African Affairs has the requisite capacity, including sufficient number of trained contract officers and staff, to ensure that it can implement, monitor, and conduct appropriate oversight of TSCTP and other programs?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will start by reviewing existing capacity within the Bureau of African Affairs in order to identify any necessary increases in resources necessary to appropriately implement, monitor, and conduct appropriate oversight of TSCTP and other programs. I will work with the leadership of the Department of State to secure required support. I also commit to working with the committee toward our shared goal of improving the effectiveness, transparency, and oversight of TSCTP.

The Africa Bureau has already made a number of changes to respond to the OIG's recommendations. These include, but are not limited to, establishing a TSCTP secretariat to facilitate coordination and implementing best practices around procurement, management, and oversight of AF-funded TSCTP programs. If confirmed, I will review the TSCTP and consult with the committee to ensure we have the appropriate resources, authorities, flexibility, and management controls in place to meet shared objectives for this important program.

**Question.** How can the Department of State, in coordination with other relevant departments and agencies, support our African partners to manage the activities and impacts better of armed groups on populations, economies and governance?

**Answer.** Tailored U.S. diplomatic, development, and human rights-sensitive security assistance can play a critical role to support peace and security. While security cooperation is necessary, it is not sufficient to address the drivers of violence and extremism. Sustainable gains—whether governance, security, or economic—require a holistic approach across our government and in coordination with African and other partners.

If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Department of Defense, USAID, other U.S. Government agencies, and our allies and partners to support African efforts to reduce the activities of armed groups and support policies and programs that build democratic governance structures that respect human rights and deliver liberty and prosperity.

**Question.** How can the Department of State better address the cross-border movement of armed groups, including through the development and execution of regional approaches?

**Answer.** Armed groups and illicit traffickers exploit weak border controls and inadequate surveillance but also often benefit from assistance or indifference from border communities that often are underserved by governance, administration, security, and economic opportunities offered by regional and national governments. Address-

ing cross-border movement of armed groups requires holistic approaches and regional cooperation and information-sharing. Working with partners to build professional, capable, and accountable security and intelligence services to monitor and secure often vast and porous borders must complement rather than replace efforts to provide stability and economic opportunities to vulnerable communities along borders. The Department of State and our embassies across Africa are committed to leverage our influence and diplomatic engagements to promote cross-border collaboration, exercises, information sharing, and coordination among security sector and civilian entities from neighboring and regional states to develop improved cross-border protocols, relationships, and operational effectiveness. Programmatically, the Africa Bureau is reinvigorating the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) and the Partnership for East Africa Counterterrorism (PREACT) in part to strategically identify resources and expertise to address these issues and support regional and sub-regional efforts in West and East Africa to increase border management and security.

*Question.* What are your views on the role trade and investment could and should play in building stronger ties between the United States and the African continent? How should U.S.-Africa trade and investment initiatives factor into the U.S. global strategy to counter China in Africa?

*Answer.* We need to do more to boost trade and investment. We want to be partners in creating responsible and sustainable trade and investment that secures good livelihoods for both Africans and Americans. If confirmed, I will advocate for U.S. companies that provide the world class products, technology, and services that Africans seek to grow their economies. I commit to working with interagency partners to mobilize all the tools of the U.S. Government to support this effort and meet the challenges posed by China. The positive economic contributions to Africa that U.S. companies bring—robust training, capital, and high labor and environmental standards—are our best way to compete with strategic competitors such as China.

*Question.* How can the U.S. Government better promote African countries as destinations for U.S. private sector foreign investment? How can the U.S. improve access for African firms seeking to do business here? How can we best engage the U.S. African diaspora?

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken noted in his January 19 testimony to this committee, the United States, using our economic diplomacy and the tools of the DFC, USAID, MCC and Treasury, will work with the U.S. private sector, African Governments, and international financial institutions to increase trade and investment in Africa and promote U.S. business. If confirmed, I will ensure our Embassy Deal Teams in Africa prioritize trade and investment opportunities, as well as business climate reforms that can provide a strong foundation for economic growth more generally. I will make full use of all U.S. Government tools, including through Prosper Africa, to bring opportunities to the attention of the private sector.

If confirmed, I will make full use of USAID's programs to help African firms utilize the preferential access provided by the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. Likewise, I want to ensure we are making full use of the SelectUSA program at the Department of Commerce to promote the United States as an investment destination for African investors. I agree that we need to work robustly to tap the dynamic African diaspora in the United States as a partner in promoting greater two-way trade and investment between the United States and Africa. If confirmed, I will promote active outreach to diaspora organizations as a vital piece of our engagement.

*Question.* How can the U.S. Government most effectively support efforts to improve the enabling environment for competitive foreign investment by U.S. firms in Africa? What types of partnerships work best, and how can the U.S. best incentivize reforms and other actions necessary to foster economic opportunity and expand two-way trade and investment with the African continent?

*Answer.* The Prosper Africa initiative can play an important role in ensuring effective coordination of U.S. Government assistance to improve investment and business climates toward the overall goal of expanding trade and investment. U.S. Government programming needs to be targeted at areas where there is strong host country will to reform. I believe there is potential to do more in partnership with our private sector, particularly in the technology area, to incentivize governments to implement needed reforms, given our firms generally have a clear sense of what needs to be done. Successful partnerships require clear goals and expectations.

I noted in my testimony the importance of greater efforts on governance, human rights, and anti-corruption. I see these areas as vital components of work to build sound, prosperous economies, and to attract needed investment. If confirmed, I will



also support our soft power efforts—engaging with youth and encouraging educational opportunities, that amplify our good governance messaging.

*Question.* Do you agree that countries like Zimbabwe, South Sudan, and Somalia are unsuited for strategic investments under Prosper Africa?

Answer. I agree that Zimbabwe, South Sudan, and Somalia are currently unsuited for strategic investments under Prosper Africa. I also believe we should support U.S. businesses and investors across Africa wherever possible when they see opportunities for increased trade and investment.

*Question.* If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, will reinforcing democratic institutions and norms in Africa be a priority?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, I will prioritize reinforcing democratic institutions and norms in Africa.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that messaging from the Bureau of African Affairs and its embassies and leadership consistently reinforce U.S. democratic values and interests, including the need to respect democratic institutions and norms, advance human and political rights, and enhance citizen responsive governance?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary I commit to ensuring that messaging from the Bureau of African Affairs and its embassies and leadership consistently reinforce U.S. democratic values and interests.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you engage our French partners to ensure that we employ a mutually-beneficial partnership across the Sahel and West and Central Africa that reflects the various points of leverage and capability the United States and France each bring to the table?

Answer. Given its colonial history, France has significant ties in the Sahel and West and Central Africa and concerns about the direct threats posed to Europe from migration and terrorism. Our shared priorities include promoting improved security, governance, economic development, and recovery from COVID-19. France has been a steadfast partner in the fight against Islamic State-Western Sahara (IS-WI) and Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM). If confirmed, in line with President Biden's direction to revitalize partnerships with key allies, I will act to sustain and build on the historic strong coordination between the United States and France, aligning our respective comparative advantages to holistically address the security and governance challenges across the region.

*Question.* How can the U.S. better coordinate with France in Africa to holistically address the security threats and improve diplomatic engagements, particularly in the Sahel and West and Central Africa, from a holistic perspective?

Answer. Both France and the United States share security, governance, and economic development as priorities in the Sahel and West and Central Africa. These priorities cannot be achieved independent of one another. If confirmed, I will encourage the French to use their strong political, economic, security, and cultural influence toward African political, security, and democratic reforms that are the best path to long-term stability in these regions, and work with our interagency to support French objectives when aligned with ours. The United States and France regularly coordinate on issues of mutual concern and, if confirmed, I commit to working with France and our other allies and partners in Europe, including the EU, to holistically address the security threats and improve diplomatic engagement across the continent. Specifically, I see continued areas for improved coordination with our French partners in the Sahel and towards resolving the crisis in Cameroon. As your report on U.S.- European cooperation noted, the significant demographic and economic shifts underway across the African continent requires a strong transatlantic alliance, in coordination with our African partners, to collaborate on countering malign influence, and promoting the growth of healthier, more stable, democratic societies that share our values and interests.

*Question.* Political and ethnic tensions and violence in Burundi have contributed to instability, human rights abuses, and humanitarian crises in central Africa's Great Lakes region for decades. On June 9, 2020, the Government of Burundi announced that sitting President Pierre Nkurunziza (age 55) died suddenly of "cardiac arrest," two and a half months before he was expected to step down following general elections on May 20, 2020. Nkurunziza's elected successor, CNDD-FDD party head Evariste Ndayishimiye, was inaugurated in late August, after the constitutional court upheld his victory with 68% of the vote in the May 2020 elections.

- How optimistic are you about deepening ties with the new Burundian administration under President Ndayishimiye?

Answer. If confirmed, I will need to assess the approach of President Ndayishimiye's administration and will review Burundi's progress.

*Question.* Do you feel that upgrading Burundi's ranking in the State Department's 2021 Trafficking In Persons Report from Tier 3 to Tier 2 Watch List was warranted based on an objective assessment of progress made in Burundi on TIP issues?

Answer. I understand that Burundi's 2021 Trafficking in Persons ranking as Tier 2 Watch List is based on the Burundian Government's overall increasing effort to counter trafficking in persons. This effort included increasing investigations and prosecutions of suspected trafficking offenses, convicting traffickers, and referring victims to assistance. The Government also developed and implemented the country's first-ever national data collection system on law enforcement's efforts to combat human trafficking and trained officials on its use. If confirmed, I will commit to working with Burundi to ensure it continues to prioritize countering trafficking in persons.

*Question.* What additional tools does the United States have at its disposal to encourage a peaceful and enduring resolution to the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon?

Answer. On June 7, 2021, Secretary Blinken announced that the United States was taking steps to impose visa restrictions on certain individuals who are believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Secretary Blinken's decision to restrict the visas of individuals responsible for undermining peace in Cameroon is a concrete example of options the Department of State can exercise to push for peace and dialogue. If confirmed, my focus would be to continue urging all parties to end violence and to engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. I would make clear U.S. support for the Swiss Government's effort to advance mediation between the Government and separatist armed group leaders and encourage the Government to take concrete steps to move this effort forward. I will also review the different tools we have to hold human rights violators accountable, including sanctions, and continue the practice of reviewing security assistance on a case-by-case basis. I will continue to pursue engagement with France, other likeminded partners, and U.N. Security Council member states to find ways to promote a peaceful resolution of the ongoing violence.

*Question.* How can the United States more effectively encourage France to use its significant leverage in Cameroon to encourage the Government to engage in meaningful dialogue and end the conflict?

Answer. The United States and France share an interest in stability and prosperity in Sub-Saharan Africa and meet regularly to discuss how to advance those priorities, including the critical effort to press the parties in Cameroon to pursue an inclusive and constructive path toward peace and stability. Secretary Blinken regularly consults with his counterpart French Foreign Minister Jean Yves Le Drian. If confirmed, I will support ongoing U.S. engagement with France, a key partner in Cameroon, as well as with the UK, the EU, Canada, Switzerland, Germany and other allies, to align our efforts in support of dialogue to resolve the Anglophone conflict.

*Question.* How is the Department mobilizing other partners to assist Cameroon to find peace and justice, and how do you plan to lead such an effort once in-country?

Answer. The United States regularly engages allies and U.N. Security Council member states at the highest level regarding the need to resolve the Anglophone conflict. If confirmed, I will continue to strongly engage with France, which is key in this process, the UK, the EU, Canada, Switzerland, Germany and other key allies both bilaterally and in multilateral fora to find ways to work together to achieve tangible progress towards peace.

If confirmed, I will also make clear U.S. support for the Swiss Government's efforts to advance mediation between the Government and separatist armed group leaders and encourage the Government to take concrete steps to move this effort forward. The Department of State can support the likeminded countries' effort to support the Swiss Process through coordinated actions and messaging. The process of working with our allies and NGO partners is a regular on-going effort, which I will continue with focus and vigor.

*Question.* What is your perspective on the performance of the Tshisekedi administration to date?

*Answer.* The United States supports President Tshisekedi's goal of building a more peaceful and prosperous DRC. Since President Tshisekedi took office in 2019, the U.S.-DRC partnership has contributed to the freeing of individuals who have been unlawfully or arbitrarily detained; establishment of an anti-trafficking agency; the highest-level corruption conviction in DRC history; and related steps that merited the reinstatement of DRC's AGOA eligibility.

The recent inauguration of a new cabinet in the DRC opened an historic new chapter in the country's political history. If confirmed, I will emphasize to DRC leaders the early imperative of undertaking the legal, financial, and technical preparations necessary for free and fair elections in 2023, including reform of the Independent National Electoral Commission. To be credible, those elections must be inclusive, conducted transparently and impartially, and held in accordance with constitutional deadlines. I will also urge DRC leaders to heed the calls of the Congolese people for reforms in the mining sector and security apparatus.

*Question.* Is it your assessment that the Tshisekedi administration is in a position to continue to advance reforms, including in the areas of anti-corruption and in the security and mining sectors?

*Answer.* The United States supports President Tshisekedi's and the Government's goal of building a more peaceful and prosperous DRC. Since President Tshisekedi took office in 2019, the U.S.-DRC partnership has contributed to the freeing of individuals who have been unlawfully or arbitrarily detained; establishment of an anti-trafficking agency; the highest-level corruption conviction in DRC history; and related steps that merited the reinstatement of DRC's AGOA eligibility. The recent inauguration of a new cabinet in the DRC opened an historic new chapter in the country's political history. If confirmed, I will work with our partners in the DRC to counter pervasive corruption that undermines the country's institutions and will pursue accountability for corrupt actors with all tools at our disposal. I will also urge DRC leaders to heed the calls of the Congolese people for reforms in the mining sector and security apparatus.

The United States supports the Congolese Government's efforts to stabilize eastern DRC by addressing the drivers of escalating violence, including holding those in the military responsible for corruption and human rights abuses and violations to account. If confirmed, I will urge the Congolese Government to continue to work with the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) in support of the peacekeeping mission's efforts to protect civilians, reduce intercommunal tensions, and strengthen state institutions.

*Question.* In your view, how can the United States continue to support democratic reforms in the DRC, including by enhancing prospects for free, fair, and transparent elections in 2023?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will emphasize to DRC leaders the early imperative of undertaking the legal, financial, and technical preparations necessary for free and fair elections in 2023, including reform of the Independent National Electoral Commission. To be credible, the 2023 elections must be inclusive, conducted transparently and impartially, and held in accordance with constitutional deadlines. Knowing of your longstanding interest in this issue, I will work with you to ensure we take your views on board in advance, and that we have the appropriate resources in place to help our Congolese partners with this important task.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with Congress and USAID to ensure the \$700 million is programmed efficiently and effectively to support Sudan's ongoing transition?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will stress the importance of timely consultations with Congress by the Africa Bureau and our USAID colleagues on the utilization and effective programming of these appropriated funds. I will also ensure we consult closely with Sudan's civilian led transitional government to ensure these new resources will assist the Government to meet the urgent needs of the Sudanese people at this moment in the transition, and to support efforts related to human rights and accountability, conflict mitigation, and democracy and governance, especially in support of marginalized communities long shut out from having a voice in determining Sudan's future.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with Congress to ensure the \$700 million is programmed appropriately?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress on the programming of these funds, working closely with USAID to ensure that funds are used appropriately and effectively in support of Sudan's transition.

*Question.* Given that the United States is a significant stakeholder in ensuring that South Sudan achieves sustainable peace and development, what diplomatic investments would you make as Secretary of State bilaterally, regionally, and with multi-lateral institutions?

*Answer.* Expedited progress on the integration of security forces, anti-corruption, transitional justice, and a permanent constitutional process leading to post-transitional elections is key to achieving sustainable peace and development in South Sudan. If confirmed, I will make clear to South Sudan's leaders our serious concerns about delays in implementation of commitments in these areas and look for opportunities to increase pressure on those officials responsible for such delays. I would also invigorate the use of all available diplomatic and development tools to provide support to South Sudanese civil society and non-governmental organizations seeking positive change. Additionally, I would consult with regional and international partners to review critically and comprehensively our current approach towards South Sudan. I intend to collaborate with U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Linda Thomas-Greenfield to ensure that the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has the necessary resources and mandate to support accelerated implementation of South Sudan's peace process. Finally, I would continue to prioritize diplomatic efforts to press South Sudan's leaders to do more to facilitate the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of South Sudan, to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers in the country, and to hold accountable those responsible for growing violence against humanitarian organizations.

*Question.* What is your perspective on the ongoing U.S. assistance review, announced in 2018, for South Sudan? If confirmed, how would you support a timely conclusion to the assistance review and enable action on its findings?

*Answer.* I understand the Biden-Harris administration continues to evaluate the findings of the assistance review in South Sudan conducted under the last administration to ensure that programs are being implemented efficiently and are consistent with our objectives. If confirmed, I would work to continue this process and ensure that programs are strategic, effective and have adequate oversight. The United States Government continues to work to maximize the impact of our humanitarian assistance in South Sudan and mitigate risks of diversion or obstruction of aid or perpetuation of kleptocratic governance.

*Question.* How would you take a fresh look at U.S. policy in the Horn of Africa as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs?

*Answer.* A stable and prosperous Horn of Africa is critical to U.S. economic and security interests. The external actors who are most engaged in the Horn are U.S. partners in the Persian Gulf. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to employ U.S. influence and leverage to encourage our Gulf partners to engage strategically to foster peace and security in the Horn—a shared goal. I will also consult with the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Jeff Feltman, to review our policy, especially our engagement with regional and international partners, to hone a coherent and integrated U.S. approach.

*Question.* There is broad consensus that U.S. policy toward Somalia needs reconsideration. What is your perspective on U.S. policy toward Somaliland? Do you think the U.S. has missed an important opportunity over the last several years to support and engage more fully with a more stable and democratic entity at the behest of Mogadishu?

*Answer.* The United States recognizes a single Somalia, which includes Somaliland. The United States has maintained a positive relationship with the authorities in Hargeisa and has encouraged the Federal Government of Somalia and Somaliland to cooperate on issues of mutual interest and to engage in constructive dialogue on questions related to Somaliland's status. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing U.S. engagement with Somaliland to ensure it effectively advances U.S. interests, including with respect to our relationship with Mogadishu.

*Question.* From your perspective, what tools (including those currently underutilized) does the United States have at its disposal that are underutilized to encourage democratic and economic reforms in Zimbabwe?

*Answer.* I share the committee's deep concern over the human rights abuses, economic mismanagement, and kleptocratic behavior that we continue to see in Zimbabwe. I appreciate this committee's condemnation of the Government of Zimbabwe's abuse of human rights and repression of its people. The Department of State, Africa Bureau, and U.S. Embassy in Harare regularly issue similar condemnations and publicly voice our support for the courageous Zimbabwean women and men who speak out against government corruption and abuses.

The United States supports democratic governance programs that improve electoral processes, refine citizen advocacy strategies, and enhance public accountability measures. We provide support to those the Zimbabwean Government singles out for abuse, and we impose targeted sanctions to promote accountability for corrupt actors and those who abuse human rights and undermine democratic processes.

But we should continue to look at all options. If confirmed, I will work with this committee, civil society, regional neighbors, and likeminded partners to shine a brighter light on the situation in Zimbabwe so that, together, we can increase the pressure on the Government of Zimbabwe to respect democratic principles and human rights. If confirmed, I will work with our interagency partners to use our sanctions programs to promote accountability for those individuals who are currently active in corruption and human rights abuses.

*Question.* An area of considerable debate has been the value of reincorporating political party programming into the portfolio of U.S. democracy assistance to Zimbabwe. Do you commit to reviewing the Department of State's posture on political party support in Zimbabwe?

*Answer.* Since the 2018 election, the Government of Zimbabwe has systematically weakened the opposition through manipulated court rulings, harassment and incarceration of key figures, and thinly veiled actions to install pliant political figures in parliament.

If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the Department of State's posture on political party support in Zimbabwe.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the appropriateness of Nigeria for this designation?

*Answer.* The Department is reviewing this designation as part of the annual process. That process is underway, and the Department will consider all available information. I take this issue very seriously and do not wish to prejudge the process or the Secretary's decision.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the drivers of conflict in Nigeria? How do the drivers of conflict in Nigeria differ across geographical regions?

*Answer.* Nigeria faces growing insecurity on multiple fronts, including kidnapping and banditry in the North West, insurgency from the Islamic State in West Africa (ISIS-WA) and Boko Haram in the North East, communal violence including herder-farmer conflict in various regions, attacks by Biafran separatists in the South East, and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. The drivers of conflict are numerous and overlapping, and also vary across regions. Experts have cited the proliferation of small arms, increasing competition over land and water resources, lack of accountability and access to justice, as well as politics, ethnicity, and religion among contributing factors. Ineffective state security responses, poor governance and service delivery, endemic corruption, and lack of economic opportunity also create conditions that are ripe for conflict.

The United States is partnering with Nigeria to build more effective and accountable security forces to better respond to the country's security challenges and protect civilians. The U.S. Government also helps Nigerians prevent and mitigate conflict through our diplomacy, police and justice reform programs, peacebuilding programs, early warning and early response programs, dialogue efforts, and development programs.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARY CATHERINE PHEE BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* How can the United States support a peaceful resolution of Cameroon's Anglophone conflict?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about the ongoing violence in Cameroon and the conflict in the Anglophone region. If confirmed, my focus would be to continue urging all parties to end violence and to engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. I would make clear U.S. support for the Swiss Government's efforts to advance mediation between the Government and separatist armed group leaders and encourage the Government to take concrete steps to move this effort forward. I will also review the different tools we have to hold human rights violators accountable, including sanctions. I will continue to pursue engagement with France, key allies, and U.N. Security Council member states, to find ways to promote a peaceful resolution of the ongoing violence.

*Question.* How can the United States balance support for the counterterrorism campaign in the north with efforts to promote a peaceful resolution of the Anglophone conflict?

*Answer.* Cameroon has long played a crucial role in regional stability. With the protracted crisis in the Central African Republic, instability in Nigeria, the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa, and increasing incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Cameroon's role as a partner in securing and maintaining stability in the region is even more important. Since 2018, the Department has significantly reduced security assistance because the Government of Cameroon had not taken appropriate action to investigate credible allegations of gross violations of human rights by its security forces and hold the perpetrators accountable. If confirmed, I commit to continuing the practice of reviewing security assistance on a case-by-case basis to ensure the assistance the United States provides aligns with U.S. interests, including promotion of respect for human rights. I will also ensure the Department vets potential recipients of security assistance, consistent with the Leahy laws, and does not provide assistance to Cameroonian security force units where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights.

*Question.* Would you advocate the use of sanctions on Cameroonian officials and others responsible for hindering a resolution of the Anglophone conflict?

*Answer.* On June 7, 2021, Secretary Blinken announced that the United States was taking steps to impose visa restrictions on certain individuals who are believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. I understand the Department of State continues to work on expanding visa restrictions on individuals on both sides of the conflict. Secretary Blinken's decision to implement a visa restrictions policy on some of those responsible for undermining peace in Cameroon is the first of many possible approaches the Department of State can take to push for peace and dialogue. It has encouraged both the UK and the EU to look at utilizing their new sanctions laws. It is yet another sign of the commitment to back up words with actions. If confirmed, I will consider all the tools at our disposal aimed at promoting a peaceful resolution of the ongoing violence which has resulted in much suffering and threatens to become even more critical day by day.

*Question.* According to the U.N., nearly 5.2 million of the Tigray region's 5.7 million people are in need of emergency food assistance, and more than 2 million have been displaced by violence. U.N. humanitarian agencies have scaled up to meet the needs of civilians in Tigray, distributing food aid to more than 1.4 million people and working to reach people with shelter, clean water, hygiene supplies, and other critical relief items and services. The U.N. is also working to identify and provide support to survivors of gender-based violence, which has been widespread during the conflict. Unfortunately, the U.N. and its partners are only able to help a fraction of the people in need because parties to the conflict—largely the Ethiopian and Eritrean militaries—continue to block humanitarian access to large parts of the region.

- How is the administration working to address this issue?

*Answer.* Intensified conflict in western Tigray and the expansion of conflict into the neighboring Afar region has effectively blocked overland access for humanitarian supplies. In light of these recent developments, the Biden-Harris administration has prioritized the establishment of direct talks between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) with the aim of achieving a negotiated ceasefire. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Jeffrey Feltman is working in close coordination with international partners to create the necessary conditions for such talks to occur. Ending hostilities is an essential component of ensuring that sufficient humanitarian supplies can reach the Tigray region. In addition, the Biden-Harris administration has taken a number of steps to press all parties to provide unhindered humanitarian access. On May 23, we put in place a visa restriction policy under Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act for any current or former Ethiopian or Eritrean Government officials, members of the security forces, or other individuals—to include Amhara regional and irregular forces and members of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)—responsible for, or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis in Tigray. This includes those who have conducted wrongful violence or other abuses against people in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, as well as those who have hindered access of humanitarian assistance to those in the region. If confirmed, I would carefully review the option of implementing additional sanctions against those who are preventing access to humanitarian assistance. It will also be important to continue to encourage our likeminded partners to support such targeted sanctions.

*Question.* What leverage or pressure points do we have with the Ethiopian Government that can be brought to bear to ensure that the U.N. and other humanitarian actors are able to access vulnerable communities?

*Answer.* Sustained diplomatic engagement with all parties to the conflict is essential to press for unhindered humanitarian access. If confirmed, I would work closely with our Ambassador, Special Envoy Feltman, and international partners to continue to make clear to the Ethiopian Government its responsibility in this regard and the impact of interference with humanitarian assistance on our bilateral relationship. The Biden-Harris administration has already ended most non-humanitarian U.S. development and security assistance programming to Ethiopia. The Department of State has established a visa restriction policy including on those who have hindered humanitarian access to those in the Tigray region. If confirmed, I would carefully review the option of implementing additional sanctions against those who are preventing access to humanitarian assistance.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARY CATHERINE PHEE BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Question.* What next-level plans and programs does the United States Government have prepared to increase pressure on those who are responsible for perpetuating violence and instability in the region?

*Answer.* In addition to the visa restriction policy under Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act announced by Secretary Blinken on May 23 with regard to the issuance of visas for any current or former Ethiopian or Eritrean Government officials, members of the security forces, or other individuals-to include Amhara regional and irregular forces and members of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)-responsible for, or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis in Tigray, the Biden-Harris administration has ended most non-humanitarian U.S. development and security assistance programming to Ethiopia. If confirmed, I would carefully review the option of implementing additional sanctions against those who are undermining resolution of the conflict, who are engaging in human rights abuses, violations, or atrocities, or who are preventing access to humanitarian assistance. These could include Global Magnitsky designations under E.O. 13818 and a new Executive Order (E.O.) establishing a Tigray-specific sanctions regime. It will also be important to continue to encourage our likeminded partners to support such targeted sanctions. The goal of these measures is to increase pressure on all the parties to the conflict to agree to an immediate negotiated cessation of hostilities, an end to human rights abuses and violations, and unhindered humanitarian access to the Tigray region.

*Question.* What measures does the State Department intend to take to hold Prime Minister Abiy accountable for ignoring, misleading, and deflecting the international community while civilians were facing grave human rights abuses?

*Answer.* In concert with international partners, the Biden-Harris administration has consistently called out human rights abuses committed by all parties to the conflict, including the Ethiopian Government, and stressed the need for accountability. Because of concern about human rights violations, abuses, and atrocities, the Biden-Harris administration has suspended most non-humanitarian U.S. development and security assistance to Ethiopia and established a visa restriction policy. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the feasibility of additional measures, such as imposition of targeted Global Magnitsky sanctions and a new Executive Order establishing a Tigray-specific sanctions regime. At the United Nations, the United States played a leading role in arranging an open meeting of the Security Council on July 2 on the situation in Tigray and is continuing to press for additional action by the Security Council. The United States also worked with partners on the U.N. Human Rights Council to successfully arrange for the adoption of a Tigray-specific human rights resolution that calls for ongoing joint investigations by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, and mandates reporting on their progress and outcomes. Additionally, the Department of State is exploring support for additional documentation and associated accountability and transitional justice options that could be used to address atrocities and other abuses that have been and continue to be committed by parties to the conflict in Tigray. If confirmed, I am committed to employing U.S. leverage and influence to hold all parties to the conflict to account.

*Question.* What are our like-minded partners in Europe and elsewhere doing to help address these concerns?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department of State is working in close coordination with the G7 and other like-minded partners to increase pressure on all parties to the conflict to agree to an immediate negotiated cessation of hostilities, an end to human rights abuses and violations, and unhindered humanitarian access to the Tigray region.

The Department of State is also collaborating with international partners in an effort to open communication among the parties to the conflict with the goal of achieving an immediate negotiated ceasefire. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Ambassador Feltman and other State Department officials coordinate closely with an Ethiopia contact group of like-minded international partners. Special Envoy Feltman is actively engaging with influential countries such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, and Sudan. At the United Nations, the United States played a leading role in arranging an open meeting of the Security Council on July 2 on the situation in Tigray and is continuing to press for additional action by the Security Council. The United States also worked with partners on the U.N. Human Rights Council to successfully arrange for the adoption of a Tigray-specific human rights resolution that calls for ongoing joint investigations by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and mandates reporting on their progress and outcomes. If confirmed, I commit to sustaining these intensive efforts to work with like-minded partners.

*Question.* What is the Biden administration's policy position on Somalia? What role should the United States play in helping to address armed conflict, terrorism, and political crisis in the country? What changes, if any, would you seek to State Department-administered security assistance programs in Somalia?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration supports efforts to advance peace and security in Somalia by countering the threat from al-Shabaab and ISIS-Somalia operating in the country. This effort addresses the drivers of instability by promoting democratic governance and market-oriented economic reforms that are necessary for lasting stability. It is imperative that the United States continue to coordinate closely with the Somalis and international partners, such as the United Nations, the African Union, Somalia's neighbors, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Gulf states, to tackle the country's considerable security and political challenges. If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing State Department-administered security assistance in Somalia to ensure these programs are effectively and efficiently advancing our policy goals.

*Question.* Two of the largest troop contributing countries to AMISOM, Ethiopia and Uganda, are credibly accused of committing serious human rights violations at home. Has the time come to seek a new configuration and/or new partners for AMISOM?

*Answer.* Somalia continues to require regional and international support to mitigate the threats from al-Shabaab and ISIS-Somalia and address the drivers of instability. While AMISOM has played an important role during the past 10 years in liberating territory from al-Shabaab and stabilizing parts of Somalia, reconfiguring the mission (1) to better respond to the terrorist threats and (2) to transfer increasing security responsibility to Somalia's security forces must be a priority during upcoming negotiations for a new mandate in 2022. I agree that troubling new developments in the region should also be considered in upcoming negotiations. If confirmed, I commit to working with the African Union, the United Nations, and individual AMISOM troop contributing countries to ensure that personnel are properly vetted, follow the rules of armed conflict, and respect human rights. There is a need to engage the AU and the U.N. in a timely and credible process to identify and remove potential troop contributors that may be implicated in human rights abuses.

*Question.* Would we not be better off with partners that will not use the threat of pulling their troops from AMISOM as leverage for getting the United States and others to refrain from taking a hard stance on corruption and human rights abuses in their home countries?

*Answer.* AMISOM troop contributing countries (TCCs) participate in the mission because it serves their interests to mitigate the threat from al-Shabaab to their own countries. I am not aware of a serious threat to withdraw troops from Somalia, despite occasional resistance to U.S. efforts to combat corruption and human rights abuses in TCC capitals.



*Ethiopia/Sudan Border Dispute*

*Question.* A long simmering border dispute between Sudan and Ethiopia in the al-Fashaga region of Sudan appears on the brink of turning hot. The United Arab Emirates had, for a time, taken the lead on mediating this dispute, but their role is no longer clear.

- Who is currently leading the mediation effort in this long-running dispute?

*Answer.* I share your concern about the risk of escalating tension between Sudan and Ethiopia generated by a military buildup and recent violence along the border of Ethiopia and Sudan in the al-Fashaga area. My understanding is that the UAE initiative is currently inactive. If confirmed, I will join the efforts of Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Ambassador Feltman and U.S. embassies in Addis Ababa and Khartoum to encourage both governments to engage in constructive dialogue to de-escalate tensions as part of a U.S. Horn strategy to address the interlinked political, security, and humanitarian crises in the region. I will also engage international and regional partners, including the UAE, to explore ways to persuade the two parties to agree to a mutually acceptable resolution.

*Question.* What is the Department doing to alleviate the pressure on this potential hot spot?

*Answer.* The Department of State continues to engage the two parties to press for a de-escalation of tensions and to call for no further violence. If confirmed, I will join the efforts of Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Ambassador Feltman and the U.S. embassies in Addis Ababa and Khartoum to press the two parties to find a mutually acceptable resolution in coordination with international and regional partners.

*Question.* How confident are you in President Tshisekedi's commitment to advance reforms in the mining sector, state security apparatus, and election process?

*Answer.* The United States supports President Tshisekedi's goal of building a more peaceful and prosperous DRC. Since President Tshisekedi took office in 2019, the U.S.-DRC partnership has contributed to the freeing of individuals who have been unlawfully or arbitrarily detained; establishment of an anti-trafficking agency; the highest-level corruption conviction in DRC history; and related steps that merited the reinstatement of DRC's AGOA eligibility.

The recent inauguration of a new cabinet in the DRC opened an historic new chapter in the country's political history. If confirmed, I will emphasize to DRC leaders the early imperative of undertaking the legal, financial, and technical preparations necessary for free and fair elections in 2023, including reform of the Independent National Electoral Commission. To be credible, those elections must be inclusive, conducted transparently and impartially, and held in accordance with constitutional deadlines. I will also urge DRC leaders to heed the calls of the Congolese people for reforms in the mining sector and security apparatus.

*Question.* The DRC holds over 51 percent of the global cobalt reserves and produces nearly 70 percent of the total cobalt feedstock globally. Underpinned by huge demand for from the battery sector, competition for control over global cobalt feedstock supply chains has intensified in recent years. What is the Department of State doing to support more responsible trade missions and U.S. commercial delegations to the DRC and to assist the DRC's efforts to improve the transparency of its minerals trade, including strong support for implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), beneficial ownership transparency, and the formalization of the artisanal mining sector?

*Answer.* The United States is working with the DRC Government to bolster economic opportunities for all Congolese, including by establishing conditions that attract American companies to the DRC, expand trade, advance gender equality and women's entrepreneurship, and encourage business climate reforms to promote inclusive development. The reinstatement of the DRC's AGOA eligibility on January 1, 2021, affirmed the Tshisekedi Government's positive progress on reform, and bolstered our effort to expand U.S.-DRC commercial ties to benefit workers in both countries.

The United States supports responsible minerals sourcing and trading and works closely with the private sector to support conflict-free minerals supply chains, emphasizing compliance with section 1502 of the U.S. Dodd-Frank Act. The Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals (PPA), forged by the Department of State, USAID, and the Department of Labor and inclusive of U.S. companies and civil society organizations, seeks to improve due diligence and develop the governance systems needed for ethical supply chains of critical minerals in the DRC and Great Lakes region. PPA programming also aims to increase transparency and monitoring

of child labor in artisanal mining in the DRC's cobalt supply chain while building government capacity to do the same.

The United States has been one of the strongest supporters of the EITI since its founding in 2003. In addition to providing financial support, as well as capacity building to improve EITI's financial management and operational effectiveness, the Department of State serves on the EITI International Board. In a related initiative, the Department of State is supporting improvements to the governance of the DRC's mining royalties with a Fiscal Transparent Innovation Fund grant to the Carter Center.

Finally, the Critical Minerals Security Initiative provides the Department of State with a new tool to engage U.S. companies operating in the critical materials and minerals supply chain in countries such as the DRC. If confirmed, I commit to supporting and expanding these efforts to promote responsible minerals sourcing and trade.

*Question.* What are the prospects for regional military operations and the imposition of martial law in eastern DRC to address the security and humanitarian crisis in the region?

*Answer.* The United States remains deeply concerned about continued violence, humanitarian crises, and allegations of human rights abuses and violations in eastern DRC. The expanding role of ISIS-DRC and other armed groups in conducting horrific acts against civilians is of particular concern. To tackle these challenges, the United States has called for an end to the violence, justice and accountability for those responsible, the professionalization of state security services, and inclusion of local communities and the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) in peace and reconciliation efforts.

The United States supports the Congolese Government's efforts to stabilize eastern DRC by addressing the drivers of escalating violence, including holding those in the military responsible for corruption and human rights abuses and violations to account. We have reiterated this message since the Government imposed a "state of siege" in two provinces in eastern DRC most affected by the conflict. If confirmed, I will urge the Congolese Government to continue to work with MONUSCO in support of the peacekeeping mission's efforts to protect civilians, reduce intercommunal tensions, and strengthen state institutions.

We welcome President Tshisekedi's diplomatic outreach to the DRC's neighbors. If confirmed, I will support diplomatic solutions and cross-border cooperation. As appropriate, I will share the U.S. view that any potential regional military cooperation must be conducted in a transparent manner in coordination with the DRC Government and MONUSCO.

*Question.* What changes, if any, would you seek to the U.N. peacekeeping operation in DRC, MONUSCO?

*Answer.* The U.N. plays a critical role in the stabilization of the DRC, particularly in eastern DRC, where armed group violence remains widespread. The MONUSCO mandate, last renewed in December 2020, prioritizes tasks to protect civilians, support stabilization efforts, and strengthen state institutions. MONUSCO has transitioned out of the Kasai provinces due to favorable gains in security and is scheduled to transition out of Tanganyika province by mid-2022 as part of a responsible, conditions-based transition to allow for more resources to focus on North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces.

The Department of State continues to promote reforms to support the offensive operations mandate of the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), including through the addition of new units and improved operational capabilities. If confirmed, I will collaborate with U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield to encourage MONUSCO to improve its ability to protect civilians, conduct effective quick-reaction operations, and build state capacity in support of sustainable peace in this restive region.

*Question.* What is the Department doing in response to the Government of Nigeria's growing levels of intolerance for universal human rights and freedoms?

*Answer.* President Biden has charged us with restoring democracy and human rights to the forefront of U.S. diplomacy. Advocacy for human rights and fundamental freedoms is foundational to our relationship with Nigeria, Africa's largest democracy. The United States is engaging Nigeria's Government at the highest levels to urge Nigerian leaders to uphold their country's constitution and our shared democratic principles. The Department of State spoke clearly when Nigeria recently suspended Twitter operations. If confirmed, I commit to engaging directly about these foundational rights.

The Department of State also supports programs to strengthen the capacity of government institutions and civil society to promote respect for human rights. Of note, the Department of State supported the demands of Nigerian civil society who successfully pressed for the establishment of judicial panels of inquiry in 28 Nigerian states to examine allegations of human rights violations and abuses by Nigeria's now-defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and the Nigerian Police Force.

*Question.* What efforts does the Department have underway and in the planning process to assist journalists and protesters in Nigeria to exercise their rights to freedom of association and freedom of expression?

Answer. The Department of State is committed to partnering with Nigerian journalists and civil society activists who, despite facing many hardships and risks, are highly active and well-established, and in many respects serve as a model for the continent. The Department of State employs a range of foreign policy tools to promote media freedom, including public messaging; sanctions and visa restrictions; and foreign assistance programming. In addition to multi-donor-funded initiatives like the Lifeline Fund for Embattled CSOs, the Department of State has established emergency mechanisms to respond to specific needs of journalists in crisis. If confirmed, I will prioritize support for and engagement with journalists and civil society.

*Question.* What impacts have reported abuses by Nigerian security forces had on U.S.-Nigeria military relations?

Answer. Nigeria faces multiple drivers of instability: a terrorist threat from ISIS-West Africa and Boko Haram, entrenched insurgencies, banditry, pastoralist/farmer conflict, ethnic divisions, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, a rising separatist movement in the South, and widespread criminality. In contending with these challenges, Nigerian security forces have committed incidents of human rights violations and abuses. In response, the U.S. Government has limited—in line with our laws and policies—the provision of certain military training and capabilities that could otherwise be useful to Nigeria in combatting these security challenges. To address the parallel priorities of security and human rights, the Biden-Harris administration is committed to engaging with the Nigerian Government and security services to support the institutional reforms and improved professionalism that will promote conduct that respects human rights. In seeking U.S. military sales that include mandatory training and maintenance programs, the Nigerian Government has shown a commitment to the investments and security sector institutional reforms that will enable the expansion of U.S.-Nigeria military relations and the improvement of Nigerian security capabilities.

If confirmed, I will work with the Nigerian Government to actively promote the professionalization of their security forces to reinforce the importance of civilian protection and respect for human rights. I will urge the Nigerian Government to hold security force elements accountable for human rights abuses and violations.

*Question.* To what extent does China's engagement in Africa threaten U.S. interests? How should the United States respond?

Answer. As Secretary Blinken has said, there are adversarial, competitive, and cooperative aspects of our relationship with China, and this dynamic applies to our respective partnerships in Africa. Our best asset will be a dynamic and affirmative U.S. policy agenda that enlists African partners in building free market democracies that offer liberty and prosperity and realize the continent's full potential.

Africans and Americans alike support democracy, the rule of law, open competition, and human rights. This robust foundation will help us achieve a mutually beneficial relationship.

If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress and interagency partners to mobilize all the tools of the U.S. Government to boost socially responsible and climate-friendly trade and investment that secures good livelihoods for both African and American workers. Following the President's lead, I will liaise with the EU, the G-7 and other likeminded partners to engage African partners in the struggle to uphold the international rules-based order, in line with the guidelines in the Strategic Competition Act.

*Question.* Are there any areas where cooperation with China might advance U.S. goals?

Answer. Where cooperation might advance U.S. goals, such as efforts to promote peace and stability, we will consider collaboration. If confirmed, I am committed to working with you to ensure American values and interests prevail.

*Question.* What is the administration's approach to supporting COVID-19 responses in Africa?

*Answer.* Recognizing the devastating human loss and the debilitating second-order economic impacts of COVID-19, the Biden-Harris administration has committed to providing and supporting the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines across Africa. This commitment includes activities that will support public health and case management interventions to stop transmissions and mitigate the impacts of the pandemic across Africa. In May, President Biden committed to sharing 80 million COVID-19 doses from the U.S. supply with the world. In total 25 million of these doses are being shared with Africa and distribution has been coordinated closely with the African Union and COVAX. Of this allotment, more than one million doses have thus far been donated to Africa, with Djibouti being the first African country to receive vaccine doses on July 17. The President subsequently committed the United States to provide 500 million doses of Pfizer vaccine to Gavi for distribution via COVAX to 92 low- and lower-middle-income economies as defined by Gavi's COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), and to the African Union. Almost half of the COVAX AMC countries are in Africa.

The Biden-Harris administration is also supporting the expansion of vaccine manufacturing capacity in Africa. The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), with international partners, announced on June 30 a financing package for Aspen, Africa's largest manufacturer of pharmaceuticals located in South Africa, to increase production capacity for COVID-19 vaccines, and on July 9 U.S. announced its commitment to support Fondation Institut Pasteur de Dakar (IPD) to boost vaccine production in Senegal.

Finally, since the start of the pandemic, the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development have provided roughly \$541 million in health, humanitarian, and economic support assistance to more than 40 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Biden-Harris administration will also provide additional foreign assistance under the American Rescue Plan Act to Sub-Saharan Africa to support COVID-19 vaccine preparedness and delivery activities to ensure 'shots in the arms' of African people. In addition, this funding will support public health efforts, strengthen case management, and interventions to stop and help mitigate the pandemic's effects on economic growth, food security, education, democracy, and women and girls.

*Question.* The Biden administration just announced that it was sending 25 million vaccines to three African countries—Burkina Faso, Djibouti, and Ethiopia. In your view, what are the key challenges to more effective vaccine distribution?

*Answer.* Over the last two decades, the U.S. Government invested roughly \$100 billion in Africa's public health infrastructure. The result is strong systems that allowed partner countries to prepare for and respond rapidly to COVID-19. Rapid and equitable distribution of novel COVID-19 vaccines, however, is a complex operational challenge with legal, regulatory, logistics and cold chain considerations. Thanks to Congressionally-appropriated funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, the U.S. Government is supporting vaccine preparedness in Sub-Saharan Africa, working with international partners and COVAX to provide technical assistance, logistics support, build cold chain capacity, and enhance vaccine absorptive capacity. To date, U.S.-supplied vaccines have been successfully donated to four African countries, and COVAX has delivered vaccines to over 40 sub-Saharan African countries. As in the United States, vaccine hesitancy in Africa remains a concern. To respond, the United States partners every day with national and local African health ministries and services, as well as international and NGO partners, in support of messaging campaigns to address vaccine hesitancy in African populations as well as to confront COVID-19 vaccine mis- and disinformation.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MS. ANNE A. WITKOWSKY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Stabilization Priorities:*

*Question.* If confirmed, what criteria would you utilize when assessing whether the United States should engage more closely in conflict-affected countries and regions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue CSO's efforts to incorporate data, evidence, and quantitative and qualitative methods into policy-making and prioritization when assessing whether the United States should engage more closely in conflict-

affected countries and regions. CSO's analytical tools, such as the Instability Monitoring and Analysis Platform (IMAP), provide global data analytics on state fragility, instability, and conflict. CSO is monitoring the impacts of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, gender inequality, human rights abuses, and democratic backsliding to understand how these factors impact conflict risk and how targeted interventions might mitigate these trends.

*Question.* With these criteria in mind, are there any countries or regions where conflict is either already evident or at risk of occurring where you believe the United States should consider dedicating more resources and attention?

*Answer.* Several countries, such as those laid out in this year's report to Congress pursuant to the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, including Ethiopia and Burma, warrant increased attention and action, and it will be critical to monitor and address the broader, regional impact of the situations in these countries.

#### *CSO Role in Preventing Conflict and Promoting Stability*

*Question.* In addition to the Department of Defense, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other federal agencies, the State Department's regional bureaus, Office of Foreign Assistance, and Chiefs of Mission are responsible for elements of the U.S. Government's efforts to prevent conflict and promote stability abroad.

- With this in mind, if confirmed, in what areas do you anticipate directing the CSO Bureau to play a leading role in these efforts, including through the work of CSO stabilization advisors in the field?

*Answer.* If confirmed, and in support of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, I will direct CSO to continue its leading role in coordinating the U.S. Government's efforts to implement the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review, and Global Fragility Act (2019) while integrating and advancing the Women, Peace, and Security Act (2017) as a cross-cutting priority. CSO informs key U.S. strategies, policies, and programs on conflict prevention and stabilization by combining quantitative data analytics with the qualitative expertise of its stabilization advisors, particularly in peace process support, security sector stabilization, and strategic prevention. Deployed CSO stabilization advisors provide technical conflict and stabilization expertise to DOD Geographic Combatant Commands and to U.S. embassies in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Western Hemisphere.

*Question.* Similarly, where is the Bureau better positioned to play a complementary role in efforts led by other agencies and State Department bureaus?

*Answer.* Given its unique conflict expertise and advanced analytics tools, CSO complements other U.S. Government efforts to prevent conflict and promote stability by deploying Stabilization Advisors, harnessing data analytics, and leading, informing, and implementing policy and programs on conflict prevention and stabilization. If confirmed, I will continue CSO's close coordination with other State Department bureaus and other agencies, including the J Family Bureaus, the Office of Foreign Assistance, USAID's Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Stabilization (CPS), the Department of Defense Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, and the Department of Treasury.

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):** Many analysts have expressed concern regarding the potential impacts of COVID-19 on fragile states.

*Question.* How would you prioritize addressing COVID-19-related challenges in the context of the many risk factors capable of exacerbating violence and instability in fragile states?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure CSO continues to consider the impact of COVID-19 as a risk factor for instability and the interacting effects of COVID-19 and other drivers of conflict. CSO is currently monitoring the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on countries experiencing fragility, including through disruptions to remittances and tourism revenues and the general capacity of states' ability to deliver medical and other services to their citizens. CSO is also monitoring state repression through exploiting lockdowns, delays in elections, and other warning signs of democratic backsliding. I will ensure this work continues, and I will work across the department and interagency to investigate how targeted outreach and programming may mitigate COVID-19-related challenges.

**Leveraging CSO Data Analytics:** Former CSO officials have identified a need to ensure that CSO data analytics tools are utilized by other State Department officials and bureaus in policy and programming decisions.

*Question.* Please share your understanding of how the State Department is currently leveraging CSO's analytics tools, such as its Instability Monitoring and Analysis Platform? If confirmed, how, if at all, would you work to ensure these tools are used more widely?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would ensure that CSO's analytics capabilities and tools continue to be incorporated into all aspects of CSO's work, including support for the Global Fragility Act (GFA), the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, and the Women, Peace, and Security Act. Since October 2019, CSO's analytics products have been requested and utilized by more than 50 State Department bureaus and embassies. CSO's Instability Monitoring and Analysis Platform (IMAP) provides all State Department employees and select interagency partners with global data analytics on state fragility, instability, and conflict, supporting the administration's policy to make evidence-based decisions guided by the best available data. I am eager to work with Congress to ensure that robust analytics continue to play a key role in CSO's work and to expanding opportunities for analytics to improve policies and programs at all levels.

#### *CSO's Role in Atrocity Prevention*

*Question.* What is CSO's role in interagency efforts related to atrocity prevention? And, what are the specific activities CSO has engaged in related to atrocity prevention?

*Answer.* CSO supports the National Security Council process to coordinate interagency implementation of the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018 (Elie Wiesel Act) and serves as the Secretariat of the White House-led Atrocity Early Warning Task Force. In collaboration with other bureaus and agencies, CSO provides atrocity risk assessments for countries of concern and develops atrocity risk response plans targeted at likely pathways or scenarios to atrocities. CSO produces a classified quarterly Early Warning Assessment that identifies countries at risk of large-scale and deliberate civilian killings, a key indicator of potential atrocity. This assessment is one of three primary risk lists the Task Force uses to guide and prioritize its efforts. CSO funds a small amount of atrocity prevention programming, complementing efforts of other bureaus and agencies. To fulfill the Elie Wiesel Act's mandatory training requirements, CSO worked closely with stakeholders to develop the Department's first virtual atrocity prevention training that has trained over 2,700 Department personnel since its launch in February, 2020.

#### *Role of Women in Conflict Stabilization*

*Question.* If confirmed, how, if at all, will you direct the CSO Bureau to continue implementing the U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security and elements of the Global Fragility Strategy focused on encouraging the meaningful participation of women in processes connected to peace and security?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support CSO's robust Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) efforts. CSO works closely with the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues, among others, to ensure that conflict-sensitive gender analyses, data on gender-based violence, and meaningful consultations with local women and girls will inform the development, implementation, and monitoring of GFA implementation efforts. CSO developed a new Gender Analysis of Conflict Tool to guide more nuanced assessments of how gender norms drive both men and women towards violence or peace.

---

### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO MS. ANNE A. WITKOWSKY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

#### *Mission and Mandate*

*Question.* In your view, what is the Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations' mandate? Is CSO principally charged with policy formulation, program implementation, both, or none of the above?

- If confirmed, how would you work with the relevant regional and functional bureaus within the Department of State and with the relevant regional and functional bureaus at USAID to clarify roles and responsibilities, ensure unity of effort, and reduce duplication and waste?

*Answer.* CSO's mandate is to anticipate, prevent, and respond to conflict that undermines U.S. national interests. CSO is charged with both policy formulation and program implementation. Among CSO's highest policy priorities are coordinating

interagency implementation of the Global Fragility Act (2019), the 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review, and Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018.

It is my understanding that CSO coordinates closely with other bureaus and agencies, and I am committed to ensuring unity of effort and preventing duplication, particularly among State, USAID and the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will reinforce current coordination efforts to implement policy priorities.

*Global Fragility Act*

*Question.* In your view, what role should CSO play in country selection, strategy design, and program implementation under the Global Fragility Act?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with my colleagues in the White House, across the U.S. interagency in Washington and the field, and with multilateral partners and civil society, to ensure full implementation of the Global Fragility Act (GFA), including country selection, strategy design, and program implementation. CSO's expertise and coordination role will be critical to innovative implementation of the GFA and will advance ongoing learning, monitoring, and adaptive management to inform policy and programming decisions.

*Question.* Does CSO have the authority to act as arbiter of disputes between the relevant Federal departments and agencies charged with implementing the Global Fragility Act, to include U.S. embassies in selected partner countries?

*Answer.* CSO does not currently have formal authority to act as arbiter of disputes among the relevant Federal departments and agencies charged with implementing the Global Fragility Act, to include U.S. embassies in selected partner countries. If confirmed, I will work closely with the White House, across the U.S. interagency including embassies and missions in the field, and with multilateral partners and civil society to implement fully the Global Fragility Act. I will work to enhance CSO's coordinating role and build consensus among all involved.

*Data, Analytics, and Early Warning*

*Question.* The White House-led Atrocity Early Warning Task Force (the Task Force) was designed to serve as a focal point for the relevant Federal departments and agencies, policy makers, and civil society working to identify and address the early warning signs of atrocities.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that existing and future data analytics and forecasting tools developed and managed by CSO are relevant and readily available for use within the Department, and by overseas missions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that CSO commits and advocates for the necessary resources to keep its data analytics tools and capabilities freely available to support the Department and its overseas missions. My understanding is that all State Department employees and select interagency partners are able to freely access CSO's Instability Monitoring and Analysis Platform (IMAP) which includes global data analytics on conflict and instability, forecasting tools, and past reports and products. I look forward to engaging with you further on evidence-based policy making.

*Question.* What is the task force's role in identifying security priorities and regional policy?

*Answer.* The Atrocity Early Warning Task Force (AEWTF) coordinates a whole-of-government approach to strengthen the U.S. Government's ability to forecast, prevent, and respond to atrocities. To inform security and regional policy development, the Task Force conducts global atrocity risk forecasting, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and shares early warning signs with policy decision-makers. The Task Force has worked closely with relevant regional directorates to conduct atrocity risk assessments and produce corresponding atrocity risk response plans for at-risk countries. The AEWTF is a functional Interagency Policy Committee, for which close and ongoing partnership with regional directorates and policy processes is critical. If confirmed, I will support CSO's role in atrocity prevention, which President Biden reaffirmed as a core moral obligation and national security priority for the United States.

*Question.* How does the task force define success?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the Atrocity Early Warning Task Force defines success as early warning leading to early action. This process includes early identification and communication of atrocity risk, development of atrocity risk assessments and response plans for countries at-risk, and securing long-term attention through integration of atrocity prevention in existing regional policy processes.

*Question.* What efforts can the task force undertake to amplify public messaging on signs of atrocities and/or other conflict indicators?

*Answer.* Pursuant to recommendations engendered by the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018, the Atrocity Early Warning Task Force has progressed on improving public messaging through civil society, Hill, and public engagements. The 2021 congressional report - released by Secretary Blinken - sent a clear signal that the U.S. Government will publicly call out atrocities that have occurred or are ongoing - a strong risk factor for further atrocities. These efforts can be useful to shed light on, and raise the costs for, perpetrators of potential or ongoing atrocities, but their use must be weighed carefully according to context. If confirmed, I will evaluate where CSO should recommend the Task Force amplify its public messaging.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations address the on-going crisis in Afghanistan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) remains engaged in the Department's efforts to address the on-going crisis in Afghanistan through peace process support, atrocity prevention, and stabilization initiatives. CSO will continue to provide technical support to the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation (SRAR) and others involved in the negotiations. CSO will continue to participate in the interagency processes to mitigate atrocity risks facing women and minorities via planning discussions, recommendations for short- and long-term civilian protection, and atrocity risk analysis.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations address the on-going crisis in Tigray?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that CSO contributes to Department efforts to address the on-going crisis in Tigray by urging Ethiopians to come together to confront growing divisions. CSO currently supports efforts to promote a negotiated ceasefire and inclusive political dialogue to end the conflict in Tigray. CSO stands ready to support preparations to assist Ethiopians to advance post-election dialogue and national reconciliation in Ethiopia.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MS. ANNE A. WITKOWSKY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Ethiopia*

*Question.* As the second most populous country in the African continent and given its recent transition toward democracy in 2018 with the election of Prime Minister Abiy. With the recent June 21 general election and allegations of irregularities in the voting process, conflict and violence are expected to increase. The political violence has proven to have devastating impacts on the country, from disrupting Ethiopia's response to the COVID pandemic to the famine in the Tigray region which is reported to have spawned the most severe hunger crisis the world has seen in more than a decade. CSO's mission includes both conflict-resolution as well as crisis mitigation in regions determined to be vital to American interests.

- Does the current conflict in Ethiopia pose a threat to American interests and if so, in what ways?

*Answer.* Yes. A secure, stable, peaceful, and developing Horn of Africa is critical to U.S. economic and security interests. Conflict and instability in Ethiopia adversely affect the entire Horn of Africa region. The United States has a strong interest in supporting democracy and human rights overseas, and the current conflict undermines these efforts. For that reason, the Biden-Harris administration has urged all parties to end the hostilities, pursue a negotiated ceasefire and inclusive political solution, and hold accountable all those responsible for human rights violations and abuses.

*Question.* What steps could CSO take to ensure a fair and verifiable election to help secure democracy in Ethiopia and prevent further loss of life in the region? Is there a role for the bureau in such a situation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that CSO continues to join Department leadership in supporting Ethiopians who exercised their right to vote on June 21. The Department is calling for the September 6 elections to be free and fair. The September 6 elections will cover several areas that did not participate in the June elections due to logistical and security challenges. While elections alone are not a sufficient mark-



er of democracy or true political reform, these elections are part of a democratic political process that should involve dialogue, cooperation, and compromise among all Ethiopians on the future of their country.

#### *Burma*

*Question.* On February 1, 2021, the military of Burma launched a military coup d'état, endangering their nascent democracy by detaining State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint, and other members of parliament. The situation has been further escalated by gross human rights violations, including the ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya people. The coup has also sought to create "media blackouts" in the region, preventing information from leaving and entering Burma during a political and public health crisis. Senior generals of the Tatmadaw have been sanctioned by the United States Government for perpetrating gross human rights violations and are subject to ongoing investigations into their conduct by the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.

- What steps besides sanctions and investigations could the U.S. Government and its subsidiaries, such as the CSO, be taking to bring about an end to the military coup in Burma, especially considering that, as of today, the coup leaders remain in power and are continuing to persecute the Burmese people and foreign nationals, such as journalists, in what can only be described as authoritarianism in its most severe form?

*Answer.* The United States has led the international community's immediate and forceful response to the military coup in Burma. The United States has galvanized allies and partners to take concrete action and urge the regime to end violence, release all those unjustly detained, and restore Burma's path to democracy. I understand that such efforts include diplomatic outreach to ASEAN members, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and other countries in the region. The administration has worked with international partners to deny the regime access to hundreds of millions of dollars in resources in international financial institutions, and pushed for an arms embargo as well as restrictions on exports of dual use technology. The Department continues to urge all countries to use all available levers to restrict the junta's access to financial institutions. If confirmed, I will work diligently to ensure that CSO continues to add value to State Department efforts to support the people of Burma.

#### *Stabilization Priorities*

*Question.* With many countries in conflicts to keep a close eye on around the world, it is important to assess how the US will engage in specific regions.

- If confirmed, what criteria would you utilize when assessing whether the United States should engage more in conflict-affected countries and regions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen CSO's analytical capacities to incorporate data, evidence, and quantitative and qualitative methods into policy-making and priority setting as the Department assesses its engagement in conflict-affected countries and regions. CSO's analytical tools provide the State Department and interagency partners with a basis for decision making on state fragility, instability, and conflict. I understand that among other factors, CSO is monitoring the impacts of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, gender inequality, human rights abuses, and democratic backsliding, to understand how these factors impact conflict risk, how targeted intervention might mitigate these trends, and what adjustments might be recommended for policy focus and attention.

*Question.* With these criteria in mind, are there any countries or regions where conflict is either already evident or at risk of occurring where you believe the United States should consider dedicating more resources and attention?

*Answer.* It will be critical to monitor and address the broader, regional impact of the situations in those countries laid out in this year's Elie Wiesel Act report to Congress, including Ethiopia and Burma. If confirmed I will ensure CSO provides full analysis of conflict criteria as the Department determines its engagement in countries or regions where conflict is already evident or at risk of occurring.



## **NOMINATIONS**

**TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2021**

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin presiding.

Present: Senators Cardin [residing], Shaheen, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Van Hollen, Young, and Hagerty.

Also present: Senator Graham.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

Senator CARDIN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are convened today to consider four of President Biden's nominations: the Honorable Rufus Gifford of Massachusetts to be the chief of protocol; Ms. Lee Satterfield of South Carolina to be an assistant secretary of state; the Honorable Isobel Coleman to be deputy administrator of the United States Agency for International Development; and the Honorable Christopher Lu to be representative of the United States of America to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform. Senator Hagerty and I both agree that we will defer our opening statements because we have some of our distinguished—have two of our distinguished colleagues that are with us to introduce. And since I might have some judicial nominations before the Judiciary Committee this year, I will recognize Senator Graham.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSEY GRAHAM, U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. I owe you one. Okay. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member. I really appreciate this. It is a big treat for me. Ms. Satterfield is from South Carolina, a University of South Carolina graduate with a degree in journalism. Her father was a legendary football coach at Furman that won a national title, and she is being nominated to be the assistant secretary for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at State. She has been endorsed by the last six assistant secretaries for the position, the Alliance for International Exchange, Public Diplomacy Council, and the Public Diplomacy Association of America, and Trey Gowdy. I do not know how much you care about the last one, but he is a good golfer, for whatever that matters. But the reason Trey is doing this, she is well respected in our State, and we are

proud of the fact that President Biden chose her for this job, and I look forward to helping.

In this position—she has been involved in this space for a long time. She launched the Center for Diplomatic Engagement, the Center for Global Leadership. She has executive branch experience. Prior to this nomination in the Obama administration, she served as acting assistant secretary of state and deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, so she knows what she is talking about. She has also served as deputy chief of staff of protocol of the United States. During the Clinton administration—you must have been a child back then. During the Clinton administration, she served as the chief of staff for the Secretary of Labor, and as special assistant to the President, and staff director for the White House Office of Public Liaison.

I cannot think of a more qualified, decent person to have this job representing our Nation at a critical moment as we engage the world, and I wholeheartedly support this nomination. And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for letting me speak first.

Senator CARDIN. Well, Senator Graham, we very much appreciate you coming to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Thank you. Senator Markey for an introduction.

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. It is my pleasure to introduce Ambassador Rufus Gifford, a native of the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to welcome his husband, Stephen, his mom, Ann, and his father, Chad, all of whom call the Bay State home. Rufus' two golden retrievers are no doubt watching at home on C-SPAN 2 as we gather.

It is not every day this committee considers a nominee with as eclectic a career as Rufus Gifford. His credits include Hollywood producer, reality TV star show, ambassador, congressional candidate, and cookbook co-author. It was an unconventional route to today. After graduating from Brown University in the mid-1990s, he set out for Hollywood to produce the next great American film. He jokes that he wanted to make classics like Chinatown or Ordinary People. Instead, instead he gave American audiences Daddy Care 2 and Dr. Dolittle 2. Jokes aside, after his time in Tinsel Town, Rufus discovered his true calling in politics and public service.

After honing his skills as a—as a staffer on the Kerry Campaign in 2004, he met then Senator Barack Obama in 2007, which began a decade-long professional journey with the 44th President. In 2013, President Obama nominated Rufus to be U.S. Ambassador to Denmark, and he was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate. Shortly after arriving in Copenhagen, Rufus agreed to be the headliner of a reality TV show, I Am the Ambassador. Rufus often reminds people that it is more of a documentary than a reality TV show. I Am the Ambassador may have lacked the cliffhangers and the drama of the Kardashians, but it did earn him the Danish equivalent of an Emmy. The show's innovative approach to public diplomacy gave Danish viewers, particularly young

people, and all-access pass into the life of a U.S. Ambassador and the U.S. diplomatic presence in the country. In a country of just 5 million people, 200,000 Danes tuned in each episode to watch as the Ambassador toured the country to speak at town halls, meet with migrant children, and visit Greenland to witness the effects of climate change. The series also showed the Ambassador advance core U.S. interests, such as lobbying the Danish defense minister to continue his country's steadfast support of the U.S. coalition in Iraq and NATO forces in Afghanistan. One Danish viewer said that "It is the type of show you would watch with your mother-in-law, and she would say, oh, he is a lovely man, that Rufus Gifford."

When it came to a decision of where to exchange marital vows, Rufus and Steven picked Copenhagen Town Hall, the historic venue where the first legal same-sex civil union in the world was issued in 1989. If only Rufus as a teenager in the 1980s could know the acceptance and happiness he would find in 2015 as he married the love of his life surrounded by family and friends, ambassadors, and even Crown Prince Frederick and Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, and that President Biden would later place faith in him to serve in a highly public role as the chief of protocol. What a testament to the progress we have made.

Rufus' effusive personality makes him the perfect choice for this new role. In Copenhagen, Rufus opened the ambassador's residence to thousands of visitors. As chief of protocol, he will once again play host to foreign dignitaries at the White House and Blair House. His hand will be the first outstretched to greet a prime minister, president, or monarch. The position to which Rufus is nominated is, therefore, a reflection of our country to the world, the first impression, and what a first impression it will be. To echo a Danish fan of his, "He is a lovely man, that Rufus Gifford." Congratulations on your nomination, Rufus. I look forward to what I hope will be your swift confirmation.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Markey, for the introduction. As you know, our committee vets all nominees. A lot of times all we do is read a lot of articles. This is going to be much more enjoyable to see your video clips as we review your qualifications. At this point, I will introduce my colleague, Senator Van Hollen, for an introduction.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you and Senator Hagerty, Senator Shaheen, members of the committee. I am grateful for the opportunity to introduce to the committee the President's nominee to serve as the next permanent representative to the United Nations for management and reform, Mr. Christopher Lu. Chris possesses the leadership, the experience, and the dedication and character required for this role, and I am confident that he will serve our country well if confirmed.

While Chris is now a resident of Virginia, he grew up in Senator Cardin's and my State of Maryland. He comes from Rockville, Maryland where his parents settled after arriving in this country from Taiwan. Chris cut his teeth early on the Thomas S. Wootton High School debating team and then went on to pursue his bach-

elor's degree at Princeton University. It was during that time there that our paths first crossed in the summer of 1986, 35 years ago. Chris was an intern in the office of Maryland senator, Mac Mathias, where I at the time was working as the legislative assistant for defense and arms control. Even back then, Chris stood out for his intellect and passion for service. We got to work together on a range of issues and became friends. From this internship in Senator Mathias' office, he went to Harvard Law School before launching his career in public service, a career that would span 2 decades in all three branches of government.

He first worked as a clerk for Judge Robert Cowan of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and gained experience here on Capitol Hill as the deputy chief counsel of the House Oversight and Reform Committee. He later became a key aide to then Senator Barack Obama, a role that would take him from the Capitol to the White House. From 2009 to 2013, he served in the executive branch as the White House Cabinet secretary and as assistant to the President, and during the first term of the Obama administration, Mr. Lu co-chaired the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In 2014, Chris was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate to be deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, a position of key responsibilities, overseeing an agency with 1,700—excuse me—17,000 employees and a \$112 billion budget. He performed his duties with distinction and professionalism. He is currently the Teresa A. Sullivan practitioner senior fellow at the University of Virginia Miller Center.

Members of the committee, I have long appreciated and admired Chris' 20-year career in public service and I am thankful as a citizen for his enduring commitment to serving our country. But despite his very distinguished public service career, Chris never forgot where he started out, as an intern here on Capitol Hill. He always credited that first internship with Senator Mathias for giving him his start in public service, and he also placed special emphasis on the fact that Senator Mathias' office paid its interns even at that time. Without that stipend, without that support, Chris could not have afforded to take that summer internship, which led him on his way. A few years later, Senator Schatz, Senator Murphy, members of this committee, and others sponsored and we passed legislation to enable all congressional interns to be paid, and one of the people I was thinking about at that time was Chris Lu. And when he heard about our efforts, he reached out and we did a video supporting that legislation, which passed.

Chris' commitment to public service and his desire to open the doors of opportunity to others and future generations are what make him such an exceptional leader. And, members of the committee, he is exactly the kind of person we want representing our country in the United Nations. I am pleased to strongly support his nomination, and I urge the committee to do so as well.

Mr. Chairman if I could ask unanimous consent to also enter into the record two letters of support for Chris Lu. One is from over a dozen Asian-American and Pacific-Islander advocacy groups. The other is from former high-ranking officials in Republican administrations who worked with Chris at the University of Virginia.

Thank you, members of the committee, and I urge you to support this fine nomination.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Van Hollen, thank you very much for that introduction. I am sure that my interns who are watching this hearing appreciate the history of why they are receiving some compensation. And let me just also put it—my observations of Senator Mathias. He was an inspiration not only to you and to our nominee, but to many of us in public service in Maryland, an outstanding United States senator.

With that, let me welcome all four of our nominees again, and thank you very much for your willingness to serve during this extremely challenging period in America's history. We recognize it is not easy and it is a family commitment, so we thank you and your families for your willingness to serve our Nation. Each of the positions that you have been nominated for are critically important to United States. The chief of protocol is responsible for advising the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and other high-ranking officials on matters of national and international protocol, creating an environment for successful diplomacy. We have significant challenges today to succeed in diplomacy. The Office of Assistant Secretary of State for Education and Cultural Affairs promotes personal, professional, and institutional ties between private citizens and organizations of in the United States and abroad, and presents U.S. history, society, art, and culture to foreign audiences, international exchange programs, such as the Fulbright, the Humphrey, International Visitor Leadership, and Exchange Visitor Program, provides opportunities for individuals from foreign countries to live, study, and work in the United States, and provides similar opportunities for U.S. citizens abroad.

The deputy administrator of United States Agency for International Development is one of the key leaders in our USAID family, specifically responsible to oversee policy and programming, including relief response and resilience, the Bureau of Development, Democracy, and Innovation, the Bureau for Global Health, which our committee is going to be taking up legislation later this week, and regional bureaus, among others, that are the responsibility of the deputy administrator. And the representative of the United States at the United Nations for management and reform is a critically-important position. It is one of the five positions with the rank of Ambassador at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York. The Ambassador directs the Missions Management and Reform Section, which was established to ensure that a senior official at the United States U.N. focuses on issues of management and reform within U.N. system.

So, we have key positions and we have qualified nominees, and we thank you again for your willingness to serve. And with that, let me turn it over to the ranking member, Senator Hagerty.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Senator Cardin, thank you very much, and I want to thank all the nominees for appearing before this committee today. I want to thank you for your service and for your willingness to step up and serve our great Nation.

First, I would like to start with the nomination of the chief of protocol. This position has the unique responsibility of advancing American foreign policy goals by creating an environment conducive for American diplomacy. As the former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, I recognize that protocol can be incredibly challenging with its own set of complex and intricate issues. It is an essential component of a successful foreign policy, and I look forward to hearing the nominee's views on how he will perform the role of chief of protocol. Next, I would like to turn to the nomination to be the assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs. As authoritarian states, such as China and Russia, look to systematically curb freedom and democracy throughout the world, it is imperative that the United States continue to bolster its people-to-people diplomacy. We should look for opportunities to spread the values and ideals of the United States by facilitating various academic, cultural, sports, and professional exchange programs. I am very interested to hear how the nominee intends to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives through educational and cultural programs.

I would like to turn to the nomination to be deputy administrator for policy and programming at USAID. We know that thoughtfully-targeted and -designed foreign assistance can help advance the national security, the economic security, and the humanitarian interests of the United States. This means that ensuring resources that are properly aligned with the broader strategic objectives the United States will be implemented properly. I look forward to hearing from the nominee on this matter. And now, I would like to turn to the nominee to be representative to the United Nations for U.N. Management and Reform. This is a position that requires keen judgment and an even temperament. As authoritarian states look for ways to increase their influence in the United Nations, the United States will need to exercise its leverage, including its administrative and budgetary leverage, to protect the integrity of the United Nations. At the same time, the United States should look for support from our allies and its partners to shoulder the financial burden of maintaining and funding the United Nations. As these discussions and negotiations over the administrative and budgetary aspects of the U.N. continue, it will be critical for the representative of the United States to maintain a strong position to ensure that the United Nations is properly and efficiently managed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much, Senator Hagerty. We will now proceed to our nominees. Your entire statement will be made part of our record.

And without objection, the two letters of support mentioned by Senator Van Hollen will also be made part of our record.

[The information referred to is located at the end of this hearing transcript]

Senator CARDIN. At this time, let me recognize Ambassador Gifford, who was previously introduced by Senator Markey.



**STATEMENT OF THE HON. RUFUS GIFFORD OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE CHIEF OF PROTOCOL AND TO HAVE THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE**

Ambassador GIFFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for the opportunity appear before you today, and thank you, Senator Markey, for the very kind introduction.

Eight years ago, almost to the day, I sat grateful and humbled before this distinguished committee as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark. Today, I sit before you doubly humbled and grateful to be nominated by President Biden to once again serve the country I love. If confirmed as President Biden's nominee for chief of protocol for the United States, I am eager to showcase the best of America and all of America, while reaching out to our friends, allies, and partners throughout the world. I also wish to extend gratitude to Secretary of State Antony Blinken. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary and the over 50,000 State Department employees made up of civil and Foreign Service professionals, locally-engaged staff, eligible family members, and contractors to continue bringing America back to the table.

I am joined here today by my veterinarian husband, Dr. Stephen DeVincent, who was a fellow at the State Department when we first met and who is joining me for the second time on this great journey. And I am joined by my mom and dad, Ann and Chad Gifford. I want to thank all three of them for supporting me today.

Today, in these unprecedented times, traditional diplomacy, like so much else in our great country, has been challenged by COVID-19. However, the United States has remained strong and resilient through the pandemic and has proven that we can work in new and creative ways. In Denmark, I led our amazing team of Americans and locally-engaged staff to strengthen our bilateral relationship and modernize diplomacy while fully embracing the fact that diplomacy starts and ends with human relationships, face-to-face interactions, shaking hands, and breaking through our differences. These are the fundamental ways to carry out the art of protocol, but I also believe that we now have the ability to leverage new tools and technology to build and strengthen our relationships at home and abroad.

We also have a responsibility to model and represent America's diversity by being more inclusive and equitable at every opportunity. This can begin from the moment protocol engages with each and every visiting delegation. If confirmed, I pledge to support the administration's foreign policy goals and reach new audiences using both traditional and modern diplomatic methods of engagement. To do that, I believe I must fully invest in the people who have been at the core of the Office of Protocol for years, across administrations, empowering them and building a true team, one with clarity of mission to work together and advance American foreign policy interests.

Today, the Office of the Chief of Protocol has seven divisions which focus on elements specific to protocol diplomacy. The Blair House, the presidential guest house, has hosted official delegations since it was sold to the U.S. Government in the mid-1900s. The

Blair House operates similar to a boutique hotel and can serve as a representational venue or provide contingent lodging. The Ceremonials Division executes events for both the White House and the Secretary of State involving the Diplomatic Corps and visiting high-level officials, as well as presidential inaugurations, state funerals, and other ceremonies. Ceremonials officers advise on flag etiquette, forms of address, and event logistics. Diplomatic Affairs is responsible for maintaining the Diplomatic Corps order of precedence and the publication of the Foreign Diplomatic List. It coordinates the accreditation of bilateral chiefs of mission, heads of delegation, charge d'affaires, and deputy chiefs of mission and their dependents. It directs the process for new bilateral chiefs of mission and heads of delegation, including arrivals and presentations of credentials to the President at the White House.

Diplomatic Partnership, a revived division, is responsible for outreach to the Diplomatic Corps domestically and will engage audiences, both through social media and other forum. It has several programs, including Experience America, State of the administration, issues roundtables, and the American Heritage Series. Major Events is responsible for planning and executing multilateral summits, major conferences, and other large-scale events. Most recently, Major Events Division carried out the largest virtual summit, virtual official event, with the April 2021 Leaders Summit on Climate, reaching out to 40 world leaders. The Visits Division assistant accompanies presidential delegations abroad. It works closely with other Federal agencies and takes a role in the logistical planning of bilateral meetings with the President, First Lady, Vice President, and Secretary of State, as well as officials and state visits and large-scale international meetings and summits. Finally, the Management Division keeps all the other divisions running, making sure they have all the needed resources. If confirmed as the chief of protocol, I pledge to lead the team of experienced protocol staff to showcase the very best America has to offer.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the—for the opportunity to appear before you today and for your consideration of my nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to serving the United States and working with Congress to help advance our foreign policy. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Gifford follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RUFUS GIFFORD

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you.

Eight years ago almost to the day, I sat grateful and humbled before this distinguished committee as President Obama's nominee to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark. Today, I sit before you, doubly humbled and grateful to be nominated by President Biden to once again serve the country I love. If confirmed as President Biden's nominee for the Chief of Protocol for the United States, I am eager to showcase the best of America—and all of America—while reaching out to our friends, allies, and partners throughout the world.

I also wish to extend gratitude to Secretary of State Antony Blinken. If confirmed, I look forward to working together with the Secretary and the over 50,000 State Department employees made up of civil and foreign service professionals, locally engaged staff, eligible family members and contractors to continue bringing America back to the table.

I am joined here today by my veterinarian husband Dr. Stephen DeVincent, who was a fellow at the State Department when we first met and who is joining me for

the second time on this great journey. I am also joined (virtually?) by my Mom and Dad and several close friends. I want to thank them for supporting me today.

Today, in these unprecedented times, traditional diplomacy—like so much else in our great country—has been challenged by COVID-19. However, the United States has remained strong and resilient through the pandemic and has proven that we can work in new and creative ways. In Denmark, I led our amazing team of Americans and locally engaged staff to strengthen our bilateral relationship and modernize diplomacy while fully embracing the fact that diplomacy starts and ends with human relationships, face to face interactions, shaking hands and breaking through our differences. These are the fundamental ways to carry out the art of protocol, but I also believe that we now have the ability to leverage new tools and technology to build and strengthen our relationships at home and abroad.

We also have a responsibility to model and represent America's diversity by being more inclusive and equitable at every opportunity. This can begin from the moment protocol engages with each and every visiting delegation.

If confirmed, I pledge to support the administration's foreign policy goals and reach new audiences, using both traditional and modern diplomatic methods of engagement. To do that, I believe I must fully invest in the people who have been at the core of the Office of Protocol for years, across administrations, empowering them and building a true team—one with clarity of mission to work together to advance American foreign policy interests.

Today, the Office of the Chief of Protocol has seven divisions which focus on specific elements of protocol diplomacy.

The Blair House, the Presidential guest house, has hosted official delegations since it was sold to the U.S. Government in the mid 1900s. The Blair House operates similar to a boutique hotel and can serve as a representational venue or provide contingent lodging.

The Ceremonials division executes events for both the White House and the Secretary of State involving the diplomatic corps and visiting high level officials, as well as Presidential inaugurations, state funerals, and other ceremonies.

Ceremonials Officers advise on flag etiquette, forms of address, and event logistics.

Diplomatic Affairs is responsible for maintaining the Diplomatic Corps Order of Precedence and the publication of the foreign Diplomatic List. It coordinates the accreditation of bilateral Chiefs of Mission, Heads of Delegation, Chargés d'affaires and Deputy Chiefs of Mission and their dependents. It directs the agrément process for new bilateral Chiefs of Mission and Heads of Delegation, including arrivals and presentations of credentials to the President at the White House.

Diplomatic Partnership, a revived division, is responsible for outreach to the diplomatic corps domestically and will engage audiences both through social media and through other forums. It has several programs, including Experience America, State of the administration, Issue Roundtables, and American Heritage Series.

Major Events is responsible for planning and executing multi-lateral summits, major conferences, and other large-scale events. Most recently, the Major Events division carried out the largest virtual official event through the April 2021 Leaders Summit on Climate, reaching out to 40 world leaders.

The Visits division assists and accompanies Presidential delegations abroad. It works closely with other federal agencies and takes a lead role in the logistical planning of bilateral meetings with the President, First Lady, Vice President, and Secretary of State, as well as Official and State visits and large-scale international meetings and summits.

Finally, the Management division keeps all the other divisions running, making sure that they have all needed resources.

If confirmed as the Chief of Protocol, I pledge to lead the team of experienced protocol staff to showcase the very best America has to offer.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today and for your consideration of my nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to serving the United States and working with Congress to help advance our foreign policy.

I look forward to your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Ambassador Gifford. We will now hear from Ms. Satterfield, who was previously introduced by Senator Graham.

**STATEMENT OF LEE SATTERFIELD OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS]**

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Sorry. I would like to thank Senator Graham for his introduction. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be assistant secretary of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. I am honored to be considered by the Senate for this important position and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence that they have placed in me. I would like to thank my family—my husband, Patrick, our sons, Jack and Connor—and all of my supportive extended family, friends, and colleagues.

I have worked in various capacities in the consequential field of international engagement for over a decade and dedicated the majority of my almost 30-year career to public service. If confirmed it would be the honor of a lifetime to lead a bureau whose mission is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people around the world through educational, professional, and cultural exchanges. My experience has prepared me to carry on the proud tradition of excellence at the Bureau. As president of Meridian International Center, I led efforts to connect leaders through cultural exchange and collaboration, driving solutions to shared global challenges and fostering international cooperation for the past 6 years.

I am a passionate champion for using U.S. policy priorities through people-to-people exchanges. Having previously served in ECA as deputy assistant secretary and acting assistant secretary, I know these programs of engagement are an integral part of our diplomacy, which President Biden has placed at the center of U.S. foreign policy. And I hold the many dedicated professionals who make these programs successful in the highest regard. Public diplomacy is a strategy, and like foreign policy professionals, public diplomacy practitioners must survey the global terrain to ascertain America's natural competitive advantages in meeting threats and challenges.

Those advantages are numerous. The United States has the highest-quality, most open and diverse system of higher education in the world. We are and must remain the destination of choice for the best and brightest students. We can welcome international students and protect our national interests. The United States economy is infused with an entrepreneurial spirit that attracts, inspires, and innovates. American culture is the most pervasive and influential culture in the world. English is the language of the world, opening doors and minds. American values are the foundation of a world that rejects violence and extremism, and that embraces liberty, individual dignity, and democracy. ECA exchanges are purposefully designed to leverage all of those inherent strengths of our country. Exchanges have an unparalleled ability to convey and share the American experience, ultimately making our country more secure and globally competitive.

As set forth in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, we are engaged in a global competition for influence and power

with authoritarian states, such as Russia and China. To meet this current challenge, our most powerful assets remain those that have guided and strengthened our Nation since the beginning: our democratic principles. If confirmed, I will thoughtfully evaluate conditions for scaling up in-person exchanges, prioritizing health, safety, and welfare, and build on lessons learned from ECA's successful virtual programs. I will ensure ECA programs represent, promote, and support equity, diversity, and inclusion, while also advancing those principles within the workforce. I will demonstrate responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars by measuring and evaluating program performance through a data-driven approach.

As Secretary Blinken stated, among the best investments we make are in our exchange programs. I will continue ECA activities that benefit the American people and the U.S. economy, contributing directly to local economies and fostering business and educational opportunities, and I will promote those opportunities to U.S. citizens. I will build on ECA's robust global alumni network. Successful exchange programs are not one-and-done events, but rather an initial investment in foreign audiences and a community of potential foreign policy allies. One in three current world leaders are part of the over 1.5 million alumni of ECA exchanges. If confirmed, I will aim to strengthen people-to-people ties and advance our country's foreign policy goals under the leadership of Secretary Blinken and in consultation with Congress.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Satterfield follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF LEE SATTERFIELD

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. I am honored to be considered by the Senate for this important position, and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I would like to thank my family: my husband, Patrick, our sons Jack and Conor, and all of my supportive extended family, friends, and colleagues.

I have worked in various capacities in the consequential field of international engagement for over a decade and dedicated the majority of my almost 30-year career to public service.

If confirmed, it would be the honor of a lifetime to lead a Bureau whose mission is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people around the world through educational, professional, and cultural exchanges.

My experience has prepared me to carry on the proud tradition of excellence at the Bureau. As President of Meridian International Center, I have led efforts to connect leaders through cultural exchange and collaboration, driving solutions to shared global challenges and fostering international cooperation for the past six years.

I am a passionate champion of advancing U.S. policy priorities through people-to-people exchanges. Having previously served in ECA as Deputy Assistant Secretary and Acting Assistant Secretary, I know these programs of engagement are an integral part of our diplomacy which President Biden has placed at the center of U.S. foreign policy, and I hold the many dedicated professionals who make these programs successful in the highest regard.

Public diplomacy is a strategy, and like foreign policy professionals, public diplomacy practitioners must survey the global terrain to ascertain America's natural competitive advantages in meeting threats and challenges. Those advantages are numerous.

- The United States has the highest-quality, most open and diverse system of higher education in the world. We are, and must remain, the destination of

choice for the best and brightest students. We can both welcome legitimate international students and protect our national interests from malign influence.

- The United States economy is infused with an entrepreneurial spirit that attracts, inspires, and innovates.
- American culture is the most pervasive and influential popular culture in the world.
- English is the language of the world, opening doors and minds.
- American values are the foundation of a world that rejects violence and extremism and that embraces liberty, individual dignity, and democracy.

ECA exchanges are purposefully designed to leverage all those inherent strengths of our country. Exchanges have an unparalleled ability to convey and share the American experience, ultimately making our country more secure and globally competitive.

As set forth in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, we are engaged in a global competition for influence and power with authoritarian states such as Russia and China. To meet this current challenge, our most powerful assets remain those that have guided and strengthened our nation since the beginning - our democratic principles.

If confirmed, I will:

- First, thoughtfully evaluate conditions for scaling up in-person exchanges prioritizing health, safety, and welfare and continue building on lessons learned from ECA's successful pivot to virtual and hybrid programs during the pandemic.
- I will ensure ECA programs represent promote and support equity, diversity, and inclusion while also advancing those principles within the workforce.
- I will demonstrate responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars by measuring and evaluating program performance through a data-driven approach. As Secretary Blinken stated, "Among the best investments we make are in our exchange programs."
- I will continue ECA activities that benefit the American people and U.S. economy, contributing directly to local economies and fostering business and educational opportunities, and I will promote those opportunities to US citizens.
- I will build on ECA's robust global alumni network and continue upgrading alumni engagement platforms. Successful exchange programs are not one and done events, but rather an initial investment in foreign audiences and a community of potential foreign policy allies. One in three current world leaders are part of the over 1.5 million alumni of ECA exchanges.

If confirmed, I will aim to strengthen people-to-people ties and advance our country's foreign policy goals under the leadership of Secretary Blinken and in consultation with Congress. Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your testimony. We will now hear from the nominee—President Biden's nominee for deputy administrator for policy and programming at USAID, Ambassador Isobel Coleman, who is a foreign policy and global development expert with more than 25 years of experience working in government, the private sector, and nonprofits. Most recently, she served on the Biden transition team, leading the review of the U.S. mission in the United Nations—to the United Nations. From 2014 to 2017, she was the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations for management, reform, and special political affairs. During this time, she represented the United States in the U.N. General Assembly on budgetary matters and the U.N. Security Council on Africa and peacekeeping issues. From 2018 to 2020, she was the chief operating officer of GiveDirectly, an international nonprofit group that deals with poverty by providing unconditional cash transfers to the extreme poor.

It is a pleasure to have Ambassador Coleman before us.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. ISOBEL COLEMAN OF NEW YORK,  
NOMINATED TO BE A DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE  
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOP-  
MENT [POLICY AND PROGRAMMING]**

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Chairman Cardin, and Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be deputy administrator for policy and programming at USAID. I am grateful to President Biden and Administrator Power for their trust in me at this important moment. I would also like to thank the SFRC staff who have so strongly supported the mission of USAID and have been stalwart partners to the Agency.

I would not be appearing before you today without the love and support of my family, who have encouraged me every step. My wonderful husband, Struan, who is here with us today, and my terrific children, Cullen, Struan, Julian, Josie, and Adrian; my siblings, Carolyn, Richard, and Douglas; and my loving parents, Michael and Edie; and mother-in-law, Jenny. I thank you all.

Over the past 20 years, my work as a writer, diplomat, and NGO leader has taken me to trouble spots around the world from Afghanistan and Yemen to South Sudan and Eastern Congo. I have had the privilege of visiting more than a dozen USAID missions, and I have seen up close the incredible work of USAID staff and partners, from programs training young women to provide life-saving maternal care in rural Afghan villages, to democracy programs helping young people understand their newfound political rights in Tunisia. These and other American investments not only improve the lives of millions, but also advance our own interests. We at home are more secure and more prosperous when democracy and economic opportunities expand for others around the world.

Today, the work of USAID is more important than ever. COVID-19 continues to ravage the world's most vulnerable populations. The pandemic's secondary effects, including loss of incomes, food insecurity, and widespread school closings, are exacting a steep toll in many communities. Untethered corruption is destabilizing countries around the world, and conflict is now driving more than 80 percent of humanitarian needs. My career has helped prepare me to lead the Agency to confront the challenges facing our global development efforts at this time.

I have written extensively about economic reform and democratization, and I am probably best known for my decades-long work to underscore the advantages of investing in women and girls globally. My years in the private sector have helped me to hone my management skills. My time as a diplomat at the U.N. exposed me to the benefits and challenges of multilateralism and instilled in me the imperative of leveraging our resources to marshal those of other countries. And as an NGO working across Africa, I gained firsthand appreciation for the acute challenges facing USAID partners in delivering assistance to those devastated by conflict and humanitarian disasters. If confirmed, I will bring these experiences to bear at USAID to ensure that our programming continues to be more innovative and effective, that it is aligned to administration and congressional priorities, and to mobilize other governments,

international organizations, and the private sector to be force multipliers of our work.

I will also lead on ensuring a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the Agency. Meeting today's demands, from helping partner countries adapt to climate change, to countering democratic backsliding, depends on finding innovative ways to do more with less. To that end, I will strive to ensure that the Agency is breaking down programmatic silos to realize the multiplier effect of our work across bureaus and sectors.

I am clear-eyed about the competitive challenges posed by China, Russia, and other authoritarian regimes, and I will make sure that USAID is deploying the best of America, including technical expertise, financing, corporate partnerships, and innovation alongside our generous grants, to provide an alternative to predatory development models that breed and exacerbate corruption. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you and your colleagues to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are being deployed effectively to advance American foreign policy interests while doing the most good for the most people. I will bring to my role the same commitment to transparency, bipartisanship, and collaboration with this committee that I brought to my prior role in government.

I thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Coleman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ISOBEL COLEMAN

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee: I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be Deputy Administrator for Policy and Programming at USAID. I am grateful for President Biden and Administrator Power's trust in me at this important moment. I would also like to thank the SFRC staff who have so strongly supported the mission of USAID and have been stalwart partners to the Agency.

I would not be appearing before you today without the love and support of my family who have encouraged me at every step: my wonderful husband Struan; my terrific children Cullen, Struan, Julian, Josie, and Adrienne; my siblings, my loving parents Michael and Edie, and my mother-in-law Ginnie. I thank you all.

Over the past 20 years, my work as a writer, diplomat, and NGO leader has taken me to troubled spots around the world—from Afghanistan and Yemen, to South Sudan and Eastern Congo. I have had the privilege of visiting more than a dozen USAID missions and I have seen up-close the incredible work of USAID staff and partners—from programs training young women to provide life-saving maternal care in rural Afghan villages; to democracy programs helping young people understand their new-found political rights in Tunisia. These and other American investments not only improve the lives of millions but also advance our own interests. We at home are more secure and prosperous when democracy and economic opportunities expand for others around the world.

Today, the work of USAID is more important than ever. Covid-19 continues to ravage the world's most vulnerable populations. The pandemic's secondary effects, including loss of incomes, food insecurity, and widespread school closings, are exacting a steep toll in many communities. Untethered corruption is destabilizing countries around the world, and conflict is now driving more than 80 percent of humanitarian needs.

My career has helped prepare me to lead the Agency to confront the challenges facing our global development efforts at this time. I have written extensively about economic reform and democratization, and I'm probably best known for my decades-long work to underscore the advantages of investing in women and girls globally. My years in the private sector have helped me to hone my management skills. My time as a diplomat at the U.N. exposed me to the benefits and challenges of multilateralism and instilled in me the imperative of leveraging our resources to marshal those of other countries. And, as an NGO leader working across Africa, I



gained first-hand appreciation for the acute challenges facing USAID partners in delivering assistance to those devastated by conflict and humanitarian disasters.

If confirmed, I will bring these experiences to bear at USAID to ensure that our programming continues to be more innovative and effective, that it is aligned to administration and congressional priorities, and to mobilize other governments, international organizations, and the private sector to be force multipliers of our work. I will also lead on ensuring a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the Agency.

Meeting today's demands—from helping partner countries adapt to climate change, to countering democratic backsliding—depends on finding innovative ways to do more with less. To that end, I will strive to ensure that the Agency is breaking down programmatic silos to realize the multiplier effect of our work across bureaus and sectors. I am clear-eyed about the competitive challenges posed by China, Russia, and other authoritarian regimes, and will make sure that USAID is deploying the best of America—including technical expertise, financing, corporate partnerships and innovation alongside our generous grants—to provide an alternative to predatory development models that breed and exacerbate corruption.

If confirmed, I pledge to work with you and your colleagues to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are being deployed effectively to advance American foreign policy interests while doing the most good for the most people. I will bring to my role the same commitment to transparency, bipartisanship, and collaboration with this committee that I brought to my prior role in government.

I thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your comments. We will now turn to the Honorable Christopher Lu, who was previously introduced by Senator Van Hollen.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. CHRISTOPHER LU OF VIRGINIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N.  
MANAGEMENT AND REFORM, WITH THE RANK OF AMBAS-  
SADOR, AND TO BE THE ALTERNATIVE REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SESSIONS OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HIS  
TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N.  
MANAGEMENT AND REFORM**

Mr. LU. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear today. I would like to thank President Biden, Secretary Blinken, and Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield for their confidence in me. I am grateful to Senator Van Hollen for his kind words and his tireless efforts to create opportunities for future public servants. And, most importantly, I would like to thank my wife, Katie Thompson, who is here today, for her steadfast support.

I am the proud son of immigrants who came to this country more than 60 years to start a new life. Government service is literally in my blood. My father, who was a civilian employee at the Department of Defense, believed that working for the Federal Government was the best way to repay the country that had been so good to him. I have tried to follow my father's example during my 20 years of Federal service where I have focused on improving how government addresses the needs of the American people.

As deputy chief counsel of the House Oversight Committee, I conducted investigations to improve the effectiveness of Federal programs. During my time as legislative director for then Senator Obama, we worked with former senator, Tom Coburn, to pass legislation to improve the transparency of Federal spending and reduce

no-bid contracts. As White House Cabinet secretary, I coordinated dozens of Federal agencies to ensure the effective delivery of services during the Great Recession. And at the Department of Labor, I was the chief operating officer of a \$12 billion agency with 17,000 employees, and I oversaw the budget, personnel, procurement, and IT functions. If confirmed, I look forward to applying my experience to this critical position, representing the United States at the U.N.

Since its founding, the United Nations has been an indispensable force for advancing peace and security and improving the lives of the world's most vulnerable people. The events of the past year have highlighted how interconnected our world is and how complex problems often can only be addressed in collaboration with other countries. A well-managed U.N. is in the best interest of the United States. It is also a smart investment for the American people who are the largest funders of the U.N. budget.

Despite its many successes, the U.N. has struggled at times to live up to its founding ideals. In order to address the complex issues of the 21st century, the U.N. needs to operate more like a 21st century organization. If confirmed, I will push for greater transparency and accountability in how the U.N. spends its funds, makes its decisions, and operates its programs. Waste, fraud, and abuse should be rooted out and eliminated, anti-Israel bias must be rejected wherever it exists, sexual exploitation and abuse by U.N. peacekeepers and staff must end, and constant vigilance is needed towards countries, like China and Russia, that seek to undermine the U.N. and the rules-based international order.

I am well aware of the challenges of driving change in an organization where the United States is just one of 193 members. However, as Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield told this committee in January, we must have the courage to insist on reforms that make the U.N. efficient and effective and the persistence to see the reforms through. Since its founding, the U.N. has endured and prospered because of American leadership. If confirmed, I look forward to utilizing my 2 decades of Federal management experience to ensure that the United Nations moves closer to reaching its full potential.

Thank you for considering me for this position. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lu follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER P. LU

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear today as the nominee to be the Permanent Representative to the United Nations for Management and Reform.

I would like to thank President Biden, Secretary Blinken, and Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield for their confidence in me. Most importantly, I would like to thank my family, especially my remarkable wife Katie Thomson, for their steadfast support.

I am the proud son of immigrants who came to this country more than 60 years ago to start a new life. Government service is literally in my blood. My father was a civilian employee at the Department of Defense because he believed that working for the federal government was the best way to repay the country that had been so good to him.

I have tried to follow my father's example during my 20 years of federal service, where I have focused on improving how the government addresses the needs of the American people.

As the Deputy Chief Counsel of the House Oversight and Reform Committee, I conducted investigations to improve the effectiveness of federal programs. During my tenure as the legislative director for then-Senator Obama, we worked with former Senator Tom Coburn to pass legislation to improve the transparency of federal spending and reduce no-bid contracts. As the White House Cabinet Secretary, I coordinated dozens of federal agencies to ensure the effective delivery of services during the Great Recession.

At the Department of Labor, an agency with 17,000 employees and a \$12 billion budget, I was the chief operating officer and oversaw the budget, personnel, procurement, and IT functions. We utilized an extensive performance management system, incorporated best practices from outside the federal government, and focused on employee morale. In the annual survey of federal employee engagement, the Labor Department rose from 17th place before I arrived to 6th place when I left.

If confirmed for the role of Representative to the United Nations for Management and Reform, I look forward to applying my management experience to this critical position.

Since its founding, the United Nations has been an indispensable force for advancing peace and security, improving the lives of the world's most vulnerable people, and confronting global problems like economic inequality, climate change and human rights. As Secretary Blinken said to the U.N. Security Council in May: "No period in modern history has been more peaceful or prosperous than the one since the United Nations was created."

The events of the past year have highlighted how interconnected our world is and how complex problems often can only be addressed in collaboration with other countries. A well-managed United Nations is in the best interest of the United States. It is also a smart investment for the American people, who are the largest funders of the U.N. budget. Indeed, a 2018 GAO report found that it would cost the United States eight times as much money if we were to undertake unilaterally the U.N.'s peacekeeping missions.

Despite its many successes, the U.N. has struggled at times to live up to its founding ideals. In order to address the complex issues of the 21st century, the U.N. needs to operate more like a 21st century organization. In recent years, Secretary-General Guterres has implemented important operational reforms. But more can and should be done, and U.S. leadership is critical to driving U.N. reform.

If confirmed, I will push for greater transparency and accountability in how the U.N. spends its funds, makes its decisions, and operates its programs. The performance of programs should be evaluated using data. Waste, fraud and abuse should be rooted out and eliminated. Anti-Israel bias must be rejected wherever it exists.

Instances of sexual exploitation and abuse by U.N. peacekeepers and staff must end. And constant vigilance is needed of those nations, such as China and Russia, that seek to undermine the U.N. and the rules-based international order.

I am fully cognizant of the challenges of driving change in an organization where the United States is just one of 193 members. However, as Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield told this committee in January: "We must have the courage to insist on reforms that make the U.N. efficient and effective, and the persistence to see reforms through."

In the 75 years since its founding, the U.N. has endured, expanded its mission, and transformed itself because of American leadership. If confirmed, I look forward to utilizing my two decades of federal management experience to ensure that the United Nations moves closer to reaching its full potential.

Thank you for considering me for this position, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CARDIN. And thank you for your testimony. The committee has four standard questions that we ask all nominees. I will go down the line, ask if you could answer "yes" or "no" to these questions for the record.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Yes.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Yes, I do.

Mr. LU. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. You cannot nod. You have to respond.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Yes, I do.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Yes.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Yes.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Yes, I do.

Mr. LU. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Yes.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Yes.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Yes.

Mr. LU. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Yes.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Yes.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Yes.

Mr. LU. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to each of you on your nominations. I look forward to working with you, and I am sure the rest of the committee feels the same way. Ambassador Coleman, I would like to begin with you because one of the things you said in your opening statement, and you talked a little bit about this in your written testimony, is that you are going to strive to ensure the Agency is breaking down siloes to realize the multiplier effect of work across bureaus and sectors. And in your opening statement, you talked about the importance of investing in women and girls, which I am a big proponent of. Can you talk a little bit about how you could fully integrate women and girls across all aspects of USAID?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen, for that question on a topic near and dear to my heart. Investing in women and girls cannot be a side show, an afterthought. It really has to be the main event. There is so much compelling evidence today that shows that investing in women and girls creates positive cycles for countries, that it improves not only their own lives, the lives of their families, of their communities, but it leads to more prosperous countries and the world as a whole. So, when we look at efforts on food security, humanitarian assistance, global health, whatever it is that USAID is doing—climate change and resilience—women and girls have to be front and center. They are often the most vulnerable in their communities and ones we need to make sure that they are receiving attention. And we know that when efforts and programming is targeted to women and girls, the spillover effects for the whole family are tremendous.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I assume we can feel—rest assured that you will commit to making that a priority, if confirmed.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Absolutely, it will be one of our priorities. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Ms. Satterfield, I totally agree with your comment about cultural exchanges being an initial investment in our foreign allies, and it is the best way for people around the world to learn about the United States and for Americans to learn about others around the world. But one of the challenges that we have had in New Hampshire is with the J-1 Visa Program. I think it is a terrific program, and we have a lot of employers who not only appreciate the ability to learn from the foreign visitors, but who also are able to give them jobs, and that has been an important aspect of our seasonal economy in New Hampshire with tourism. So can you talk about how you would work, if confirmed, with American businesses to address issues that we have had with the J-1 Visa Program over the last year so that we are not facing a winter and a spring next year where we have these same problems where young people are not able to get to the United States because we have embassies closed down and we cannot do the work to ensure that they can arrive in the United States?

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Thank you, Senator, and I agree that the J-1 Visa Program, now called BridgeUSA, is a valuable foreign policy tool and an important public diplomacy program specifically to communities all across the country. I have seen recent reports about the shortage of international visitors in camps that are not being able to continue because of the shortage. And I feel for those parents and families and also those small businesses that affected. The BridgeUSA Program is poised to be stronger than ever. There have been significant improvements in the program over the last couple of years, and now those alumni are included as part of all of the State Department alumni and continuing engagement after they return home, so your point about a critical audience is key.

If I am confirmed, I will work very closely with Consular Affairs to prioritize the J-1 visitors and to communicate with sponsors and communities about the various ways that we can ensure that these participants are able to come to the United States as soon as possible.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. As we continue to struggle with COVID, both here in the United States and around the world, will you also commit to working with State to develop a plan for how we will address this if we continue to have embassies closed around the world?

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Yes, Senator, I will.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen. I would just reinforce what Senator Shaheen said on the—on the J-1's. I think many parts of our country depended upon the J-1's, but also the value of the exchange as well as the need in our country was clearly missed during COVID-19. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. There we go. Thank you. Chairman Cardin, I just want to thank you for your remarks, and, Senator Shaheen, the J-1 issue is also a big issue in my State as well, and I echo your concern and appreciate the fact that, Ms. Satterfield, you will be willing to work with us on this, if confirmed. If I could first turn to Ambassador Gifford, chief of protocol plays a critical diplomatic role. You will be charged with advising not only national, but inter-

national diplomatic protocols. Our Nation will rely upon you. As the former United States Ambassador to Japan, I understand how difficult sometimes the nuances of diplomatic protocol can be, and it will be requiring you to have very keen judgment as you execute your duties, if you are confirmed. Also, I want to remind you that, if confirmed, you will be representing all Americans, and I hope that you will keep that in mind.

And with that in mind, I would like to understand your views, Ambassador, on the importance of bipartisanship in the execution and implementation of U.S. foreign policy, and whether you will commit to work with me and the other members of this committee to make sure that bipartisan representation is critically represented in all of our diplomatic protocol issues.

Ambassador GIFFORD. Thank you, Senator. The answer to that is absolutely, 100 percent. As someone like you, who has served overseas and has seen the real beauty, and strength, and power of American diplomacy globally, as far as I am concerned, partisan politics has absolutely no place at the State Department, that politics famously stops at the water's edge. And then, of course, when we are living and working at the State Department, that holds true as well. The way I think about this is when we—if I am confirmed and I am privileged enough to take that oath of office, I pledge to serve, protect, defend the Constitution of the United States, I do not—no President, no ideology, certainly no political party. And for me, I think I have a record to back that up because that is what I did from 2013 until I left my post in 2017. And I commit to you wholeheartedly to do that once again if I am confirmed in this position.

Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate that, Ambassador. I have been very frustrated myself seeing former diplomats come back and behave in a partisan manner, and I think that that needs to be parked. And just as you say, you will be representing all of us, and I appreciate your wholehearted focus on that. Ambassador Coleman, if I could turn to you, please. I have enjoyed our opportunity to discuss matters related to the charter that you are looking to undertake. I would like to talk to you about two areas: China and Afghanistan. USAID funds a tremendous amount of effort to help ethnic Tibetans to maintain their culture, to maintain their entrepreneurial presence. It is this type of program that I wholeheartedly support, and I would love to hear your views on how you would look at continuing USAID's support for other groups that may be, in some way, oppressed or damaged in some manner by China's malign behavior.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty, for that question, and I thank you for your time last week that we were able to spend to get to know each other a bit. It is a very important question. We have seen an increasing authoritarian turn in China and an erosion of human rights in that country. You mentioned the Tibetans, but, of course, the situation with the Uyghurs is very dire, too. USAID is doing what it can to support the Uyghur people, particularly those who are taking an activist role and those who have been oppressed by the country. Some of them have left the country, and USAID is taking efforts across China to ensure

human rights programming where it can, but often outside the country.

Senator HAGERTY. I hope we can continue this conversation, particularly with the thought of how we can prevent the CCP from diverting or, in some way, frustrating those efforts. I will look forward to having those conversations with you should you be confirmed.

Ambassador COLEMAN. I look forward to it.

Senator HAGERTY. With respect to Afghanistan, I see a very challenging role there because we are making commitments to continue U.S. aid, but the Taliban has taken over half the districts there, putting our presence there under tremendous pressure. Have you had the opportunity to think about how you will deploy USAID resources under the current conditions in Afghanistan, particularly as you see them trending?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator, for that question, too. I have—I have spent a bit of time in Afghanistan. I have been there maybe half a dozen times over the past 20 years and have seen some very good work that USAID has done there. And I recognize that the situation is very fragile right now and rapidly changing. I think USAID has made some strong gains in Afghanistan and will do what it can, both through our own efforts on the ground, but also working through partners there, local partners, international NGOs, and U.N. agencies, to continue some of the good work that we have done. But if confirmed, I will certainly make Afghanistan a priority and to do contingency planning as the situation evolves.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to all of you on your nominations. Ms. Satterfield, if I could begin with you, and thank you for the work you have done at the Meridian House. Let me pick up on that work and something I heard you say, which is that you believe that educational and exchange programs do play an important role in our foreign policy. I agree with you. If you look at the previous administration even before the pandemic hit, there was a big drop off in the number of students coming to the United States. In the very first year of the previous administration, international student enrollment in U.S. universities declined by 6.6 percent in the first academic year. We don't need to go into all the reasons for that, but my question to you is, is it your goal to restore a more robust enrollment of foreign students to the United States and to reinvigorate our exchange programs?

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Thank you, Senator, for that question and bringing up this incredibly important point. The United States remains the number one destination for hosting international students, even though the numbers have dropped. Also, there is growing competition from other countries to recruit students to come there to study, and we cannot rest on laurels. It is absolutely my intent to continue to find ways to message to international students. We need strong outreach with accurate and comprehensive information. Frankly, like the statement that was put out yesterday by the State Department—a joint statement by the State De-

partment and the Department of Education listing the ways that international students can come to the United States to U.S. universities and colleges and participate in a way, we can also network through Education USA, which is ECA's educational advising arm, and through our American Spaces, which are in over 600 places around the world. I absolutely commit, if confirmed, to making that a priority.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, terrific, because, as you say, we have seen a drop off in the number of enrollments even before the pandemic, and obviously we need to take into account health issues, but as you mentioned, we are seeing incredible competition around the world. Other countries see it as in their interest to attract students, and we have a whole lot to offer and also a window into, you know, some of the values that form our country in foreign policy—freedom of speech and other things. So, I really hope and am pleased that you are going to make that a priority.

I also just want to mention to you that there is a very good exchange program with young African leaders, the Young African Leaders Initiative, YALI. You are probably familiar with it. I chair the Africa Subcommittee here and Senator Rounds is the ranking member, and we intend to—shortly to introduce legislation to codify that program. Congresswoman Bass introduced and passed that in the House and look forward to working with you. I hope I will have your commitment to work with us on that.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Absolutely. Thank you, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Ambassador Coleman, if I could—well, first let me start with Sudan. I had a chance to visit Sudan a little while back with Senator Coons, and, as you know, the United States through AID has committed \$700 million to support the transition from dictatorship to democracy. This committee is currently reviewing some of the rough drafts of the proposal. We need to get it done quickly, in my view. Are you familiar with that proposal, and do you commit to working with this committee to make sure that we implement it fully?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator, for bringing up Sudan. It is one of the few bright spots actually on the horizon as it makes its transition from military rule to civilian governance, and if confirmed, I will absolutely make Sudan one of my priorities. I am familiar with the legislation. I do not know the details of it, but I do understand that \$700 million has been committed, and investments in helping the civilian government understand how to govern, and building institutional capacity, and working with civil society so that they can strengthen that democratic governance process there is critically important. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. And my last question relates to what Senator Hagerty brought up with respect to Afghanistan. I do know if you have seen the movie, Charlie Wilson's War, but for those of you who have not, I recommend it to you. It is a story about a House member who was successful in getting all of his colleagues to support the purchase of Stinger missiles to provide to the mujahideen, which did help drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan. But the very end of the movie is a—is a scene of him asking his colleagues to support funding for education and schools in Afghanistan, and he was unsuccessful at doing that. We know what



happened after the Soviet—we pushed the Soviets out, and we sort of, you know, left the scene, and the Taliban filled the vacuum, and they gave—they, of course, gave sanctuary to al-Qaeda. So I—two questions. One is, what is AID's vision for its continued participation in Afghanistan? Number two, how are you going to navigate the security situation there?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator, for the question. You know, USAID, I understand, is looking at the situation very closely in Afghanistan and, as I said earlier, doing contingency planning. It is almost impossible to know what will happen at this point and any time frame. But it has invested \$22 billion in that country over the past 20 years and have some remarkable gains to show for it in terms of significant declines in maternal mortality, more girls in school than ever before in that country's history, and seeking ways to make sure that those gains are not lost, that, in fact, that they are sustained, whether it is through direct interventions or working through partners on the ground through the multilateral system and the U.N. agencies, but also recognizing the possibility for refugee flows and being ready for that.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, I think we all have our hands full there with respect to what will unfold, but I appreciate your determination to stay engaged, security allowing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Madam Chair and Ranking Member Hagerty, thank you, and congratulations to the panel. This is a very highly-qualified panel. Ambassador Gifford, it is good to see you again, and I want to start with you. I would have asked exactly the question that Senator Hagerty did. Looking at the background of a Rufus Gifford that I did not know and seeing so much political activity, I would have asked, can you, you know, take an oath and be even handed in your work. I have had the virtue of working with Rufus significantly in the past, and I couldn't say this about everybody I have worked in a political capacity, but I can say it about Rufus Gifford that he is going to be very, very even handed in his approach to the job, which is what he did when he was Ambassador to Denmark. Your success there was very, very notable.

Let me ask you this, Ambassador Gifford. You talked about the many external-facing roles of the protocol chief, but there is also this internal-facing role. You talked about the Management Division within the Office. In the past, there have been some controversies about internal management issues. Tell us what you would do, should you be confirmed, to foster a very professional and inclusive and even-handed environment in the office?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Thank you, Senator, and this is a—this is an issue that is near and dear to my heart. I am certainly aware of the ongoing challenges. There are issues with morale, et cetera. And listen, I think that from a management standpoint, and I think this is—one important thing to note here is that service overseas, understanding the culture of the State Department, understand the expertise that I am walking into, if I am confirmed for this job, is where you start, I think. General respect for the civil servants who have been doing this work for years, understanding that if I am confirmed in this position, that I have a lot to learn

still, that they are the career professionals, and I am coming in to lead, of course, but I still—but I need to be building that team and fostering that sense—that sense of just that word “team.”

And I have to say that over the—with the various teams that I have managed roughly the same size, diverse staffs in a variety of different ways, I like to say that I, at the beginning of any job like this, I take the bull by the horns and ensure that we change the tone and that we create an environment that is equitable, diverse, and empowering because, honestly, if we are going to accomplish the mission, that is what we have got to do. That is where were you got to start.

Senator KAINE. Excellent. Thank you for that. Ms. Satterfield, your Bureau is very important, and it is very important to Virginia because we have a significant number of people who work on programs. For example, in Fulbright, we have 53 Virginians doing Fulbrights during 2020 and 2021 Peace Corps, 114 Virginians in the 2020 Peace Corps Program. We have also hosted critical programs, including the Young African Leaders Conference that Senator Van Hollen asked you about at UVA in 2014 and at Virginia Commonwealth University in 2016. So, there is a lot I would like to ask, but I am just going to ask you about this. Talk to us about the challenges of the Fulbright Program during the time of COVID and how you intend to keep this program vibrant and active, even as the State Department is issuing new guidance and other agencies are issuing new guidance every day about travel restrictions that may need to be continued with some of the nations where we have Fulbright scholars.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Thank you, Senator. It is important to continue to provide ways that we can connect with people around the world and Americans, particularly through Fulbright. It happens to be the 75th anniversary of that program this year, and it is a strong and vibrant way that we reach out to other communities across the world. I remember recently I was speaking with some college students and talking about the role, I am confirmed, that I will play in the United States. As soon as I mentioned “Fulbright,” their eyes lit up. It has a—it resonates, not only here in the United States, but in all places around the world.

The pandemic has created a challenge for doing in-person programming, but I think that—we hope that we will be able to continue in-person programs where possible, and continuing Fulbright and other public diplomacy programs will critical. And if I am confirmed, I will look forward to determining ways we can do that safely.

Senator KAINE. Excellent. Well, I am going to—I am going to include Ambassador Coleman and Mr. Lu in a last comment or question. So, Mr. Lu, you are a wonderful public servant. Since you are nominated for a position that Ambassador Coleman has had, I hope you guys have lunch right after this and let her give you a lot of good advice about how to do it. Ambassador Coleman, here is something I am just interested in, and I just want to put it on your radar screen. There is a program at USAID called the New Partnerships Initiative, which is designed to invest in NGOs—small NGOs and local partners in the USAID humanitarian contracting space. There was a Foreign Policy article in May, just recently, that

criticized USAID for distributing the NPI awards largely through large contractors, kind of undercutting the whole goal of the program, which is to focus on small contractors and local partners. Senators Rubio and I are going to introduce a bill this week called the New Partners—New Partnerships Initiative Authorization Act to really try to make sure that we are building capacity among creative and innovative new partners, and not just legacy partners, who do great work. But we want to create more innovation and more opportunity. And I hope that will be an area that you will focus on, should you be confirmed, and we will look forward to working with you on that.

Senator CARDIN. Ambassador Coleman, if I might start with a question in regards to how you intend to set priorities within USAID. And I mention this with President Biden making it clear that our foreign policy is going to be wrapped in our values, something that, I think, every member of this committee strongly supports. He has also indicated corruption is a core national security concern. If you look at what the trends are around the world, decline of democratic states, the rise of corruption in many countries, including some of our allies where we see a rise in corruption, good governance and the role USAID plays in anti-corruption becomes critically important. Later this week, our committee will be considering legislation to expand our role and USAID's role in global health, something we desperately need to do. My question is, we have a limited amount of resources today under USAID that is devoted to good governance and anti-corruption. How do you intend to prioritize good governance and anti-corruption to protect and expand the capacity of USAID to deal with this critical issue for our country?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin, for that terrific question. And also let me just start by thanking you for your leadership on this issue. Whether it is the Global Magnitsky Act or the Combatting Global Corruption Act, you have truly shown tremendous leadership on bringing corruption to the forefront of what needs to be a whole-of-government approach to combating this scourge around the world, so thank you.

If confirmed, I know that corruption—anti-corruption efforts will be very central to a whole range of efforts. Not only has President Biden made this one of his priorities, but Administrator Power also created an anti-corruption task force and is really focused on this issue because it is such a challenging topic in so many parts of the world. And, you know, if confirmed, I would really dig into the programs that exist, look at what has been effective, look at new areas that we could invest more in, but really make this something that is mainstreamed throughout all of our work that we are doing because it is so important.

Senator CARDIN. I would just underscore that one of the areas that we really need to strengthen is the capacity of our embassies to deal with understanding the problems in their country and how we can best interact to deal with anti-corruption measures. So, one of the areas that could help USAID is if there was stronger capacity within missions to be able to provide that type of knowledge and help. I would just urge you to make that part of your priority

selections to strengthen the State Department's ability to deal with anti-corruption.

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator. If confirmed, I will absolutely work with my State Department colleagues on that.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Mr. Lu, I want to talk about a serious issue we have had at the United Nations. We have United Nations peacekeepers. As part of the way that the administratives are handled, there are a lot of countries that lobby to become peacekeepers, and yet we have seen sexual exploitations too often in regard to peacekeepers. So, I want to get your commitment and your response to how you will use your position at the United Nations to make sure that we protect the safety of the people on which the United Nations is operating with peacekeepers, and that safety will be the top concern, not just the politics of which countries are selected for peacekeeping.

Mr. LU. Senator, thank you for that question. The United States has a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to sexual exploitation and abuse. There have been improvements, I understand, in recent years under the Secretary-General's leadership in terms of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, increasing transparency of allegations, suspending troops engaged in wrongdoing, often repatriating them and sometimes even withholding payments. All of that being said, far more needs to be done, and the progress that has been made in recent years, including under Ambassador Coleman's leadership, happens when the U.S. is actively engaged in the United Nations. So, you have my commitment, Senator, that if confirmed, this will be a top priority of mine, and I know it is of Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield as well.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Ambassador Gifford, I want to ask you about diplomatic immunity. It is something that is absolutely essential for diplomats to be able to carry out their responsibilities, but we know the pressure that develops particularly when there is a particular incident. So how do you intend to provide guidance in regards to U.S. position globally on defending diplomatic immunity?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Well, I think—thank you for the question, Senator, and it is—it is critically important. I think one of the roles of the chief of protocol here is understanding that when issues of diplomatic immunity arise, and they will inevitably arise, that we have to manage what could become the significant frictions in a bilateral relationship. And how do you do that? This is so much, for me, about communication, that we are not policymakers in the chief of protocol, if I am confirmed. So, what I think needs to be prioritized is heightened communication between whatever Bureau, understanding the issue that has come up and dealing with it collectively. And I think in an issue like these involving incredibly-sensitive issues, that has got to be prioritized above and beyond all else.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Markey?

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. Ms. Satterfield, your position at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will allow you to establish import restrictions on cultural goods from foreign countries through the authorization of memorandums of understanding. Cultural property MOUs have the

power to impact the cultural heritage of ethnic and religious minority populations, which the United States should aim to protect. If confirmed, will you urge the administration to appoint an advocate for religious and ethnic minorities as a public representative to the Cultural Property Advisory Committee to ensure that minority populations are properly represented?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator. ECA is very proud of the work of the Cultural Heritage Center to protect and preserve global heritage. It is critically-important work, as you said. ECA can and should play a strong role, particularly in cooperating with law enforcement to prevent the financing of transnational terrorism through looting and trafficking of antiquities. If I am confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress, other parts of the Department, and private entities, particularly through the advisory committee, to ensure a diversity of perspective when continuing the important work as it was laid out originally by Congress.

Senator MARKEY. Okay. Thank you. Ms. Coleman, the United Nations Development Program and the World Health Organization recently reported that if low-income countries had similar COVID-19 vaccination rates as high-income countries, they could have added \$38 billion to their collective GDPs in 2021. Through the G7, we have announced ambitious plans to share 1 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses with low-income countries. Global vaccine inequity still remains a very serious challenge. With the rise of the Delta variant, addressing the vaccine equity issues are more urgent than ever. If confirmed, will you commit to prioritizing the push for increased vaccine manufacturing and equitable vaccine distribution in your role at USAID?

Ambassador COLEMAN. Thank you, Senator. Absolutely. There is perhaps no greater challenge today than the global pandemic and its secondary effects, and how it is ravaging countries around the world. And I would like to thank this committee and Congress for its generosity on providing the 500 million vaccines and the \$4 billion to Gavi. So, it is incredibly important to get the rest of the world vaccinated, and I echo President Biden's comment to be—that the United States should be the arsenal of vaccination, and I will do everything I can to make that happen.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you. And, Mr. Lu, climate change is an existential threat that continues to harm the quality of life for people all around the world. For that reason, our efforts to combat climate change must be closely aligned with efforts playing out in multilateral institutions like the United Nations. We also have to oversee any multilateral commitments to ensure they come to actionable fruition. How can we work to reform the U.N. system to ensure that climate commitments are monitored and measured so that they don't simply remain empty statements or words?

Mr. LU. Senator, thank you for that question. I certainly share your concerns. The Biden administration believes that we can be the most effective in multilateral organizations when we actively participate in them, and we have the greatest credibility in these organizations when we pay our dues in full and on time, so being an active player gives us that leverage. Climate change, in particular, is an important policy issue, as you well know, not only to the President, but to Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield. This is an

issue that she has raised in the U.N. Security Council, but it is, frankly, an issue that cuts across so many different parts of the multilateral system. So, if confirmed to this position, I will use my position in terms of managing programs to ensure that those that relate to climate change are effectively managed and well funded.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you so much. And, Mr. Gifford, in your role, you are welcoming the rest of the world to the State Department, to the White House. We have gone through a turbulent time over a 4-year period, and now we are trying to re-stabilize all of our relationships. Could you just step back for a second and just lay out why you think that is important that we respect each nation in the world and that we treat them in a way that ensures ultimately that we will be able to elicit from them the kind of response the United States is looking for on policy issues all across the spectrum?

Ambassador GIFFORD. Thank you, Senator. This is, again, something very near and dear to my heart. There are two words over—during the time that I have been preparing for this hearing and whatnot that keep coming up, and those two words are “dignity” and “respect.” And I pledge to you that when I think about this job, when I think about how we interact with world leaders and partners—partner countries around the world, I will lead with dignity and respect. And I think that the soft power of diplomacy cannot be overstated, and, as you mentioned, you are the first hand that folks shake when they are walking down from their plane at Andrews or at Dulles or whatever it may be. And I think as Senator Hagerty said in his introduction that we create the environment conducive to diplomacy. And as far as I am concerned, that is the way you create that environment in which diplomacy can thrive. You do that with dignity and respect.

Senator MARKEY. Thank you. Thank you, and thank each and every one of you for your willingness to serve. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Chairman Cardin. I wanted to just follow up with a few additional questions. You are very kind to let me do that. First, if I could turn to you, Ms. Satterfield. It is wonderful to see you here. In your opening testimony, you commented about the global competition for influence that we find ourselves in with authorization countries, such as China and Russia. I would like to compliment your Department on the wonderful work that they have done with human exchanges, particularly the Fulbright Program and other exchange programs, that I have seen firsthand have an enormous impact. I would also like to make a comment, that there is an alumni network there that I see as immensely valuable, and I would look forward to working with you to driving value from that alumni network, because I think it could make a real difference for the United States’ interests around the globe.

Another thing you mentioned, and I compliment you for your operational experience. You talked about implementing standards and metrics to basically be a good steward of U.S. taxpayer dollars. As you look at this program and take a data-driven approach to how you measure and evaluate what happens, could you talk a bit about how you might use that approach to evaluate how we are

doing versus China and Russia, two authoritarian countries that are trying to exert their influence, when you look at our programs relative to what they are doing?

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Thank you, senator. As it relates to measurement and evaluation, it is a critically-important point and one that the Bureau has been working very hard to come up with a way to have parity across the various programs. They are also different, and that is a good thing. We want a variety of opportunity because what works in one community might not work in another, but that has proven to be challenging for M&E. And the Bureau has done a really wonderful job, in my opinion, based on the information that I have received in preparing for this hearing, to create a program that is a new framework that will ECA to have more data at its fingertips so that we can make good data-driven decisions. And that will be rolled out Bureau-wide at the end of next year.

Senator HAGERTY. As a businessperson, I have always focused on competition. I think we should acknowledge what our competition is and measure our performance according to that competition, so I encourage you to continue to proceed in that fashion. Thank you.

Ms. SATTERFIELD. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HAGERTY. Mr. Lu, if I could turn to you for a moment. I would like to talk with you about the Human Rights Council. The Biden administration has announced its intent to run for a seat on the Council this fall, and Secretary of State Blinken has also acknowledged that the Council is flawed, and he has promised to seek reform. In fact, in 2011, the Obama administration stated that the mandatory review of the Council failed to yield even minimally positive results. So, Mr. Lu, if you are confirmed, I would like to understand the type of reforms that you would like to seek as you look at improving the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Mr. LU. Thank you, Senator Hagerty. I agree, the United Nations Human Rights Council is a flawed organization, but we also need to recognize the important work that it has done in terms of shining a spotlight on abuses in Syria, Iran, North Korea, its promotion of women, LGBTQ individuals, but it has a persistent anti-Israel bias based on a permanent agenda item at its meetings. The Biden administration believes, as I said to Senator Markey, that the best way to reform these organizations is by engaging with them, and that is what we intend to do. It is also a flawed organization because of the membership. We have some of the most egregious human rights abusers who are members of the Human Rights Council.

When Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield has addressed this issue, she said, yes, it is uncomfortable sitting side by side with these people, but it is as uncomfortable for them to be sitting next to us and for us to be calling them out. And I understand that the record has shown that when the U.S. actively engaged in the Human Rights Council, that the number of anti-Israel resolutions decreases, but you are 100-percent right, this will be a challenge.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank all of our nominees today for their appearance. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Let me again thank all of our witnesses for—nominees for your testimony today and, again, your willingness to serve.

The committee record will remain open through Thursday for questions for the record, and we would ask that you respond to those questions as promptly as possible. We know that we have a backlog in the nomination process and confirmation process, so your cooperation will be deeply appreciated.

[The information referred to follows:]

Senator CARDIN. And once again, we thank you very much for your willingness to serve.

With that, the committee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RUFUS GIFFORD BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

#### *Morale in the Office of the Chief of Protocol*

*Question.* Leadership and morale-building are important parts of any management position within the State Department. If confirmed, how would you lead the Office of the Chief of Protocol? What specific steps would you take to improve morale?

*Answer.* There is nothing more important to me than the well-being of my team. Morale of our employees is also directly related to recruitment and retention. Drawing upon my experiences as the former ambassador to Denmark and from the private sector, leadership must model tenets that align mission goals with integrity, professionalism, and transparency.

If confirmed, I plan to consult current leadership to understand where the Office of the Chief of Protocol has come from and where it still needs to go. I will make it clear that any type of partisan political influence or bias is unacceptable. I will assess personnel management and the current staffing situation. I will determine whether we need to address additional resource requirements. Finally, I will promote a collaborative environment where all of us can gel as a team and execute programs in a seamless fashion.

There is no doubt that improving and maintaining morale will be difficult during the pandemic. However, I will ensure that we fully engage within the Department of State's "Future of Work" policy to build a more mobile and agile workforce, and direct appropriate resources for our office space and technology needs. These tools and resilience building resources will help me lead towards great morale.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO LEE SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *J1 Programs*

*Question.* J1 programs are some of the most effective and cost efficient public diplomacy programs the United States has. However, as you know, the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought on severe visa processing delays and challenges has deeply negatively impacted not only U.S. public diplomacy efforts but also small businesses, schools, and families across the United States who rely on these programs.

- The backlog of Summer Work Travel visas negatively impacted many small businesses in New Jersey and other tourist destinations. How will you, alongside the Bureau of Consular Affairs, work to utilize technology and security to prevent such a backlog in the future? Do you believe there is more can we be doing? Do you have the resources you need to do so?

*Answer.* I recognize the important contributions that exchange visitors make to New Jersey businesses, and the positive impact they have on states and communities across the nation. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to severely affect con-



sular operations at our embassies and consulates. I am informed that as the global situation continues to evolve, the Department is seeking ways to process visa applications efficiently around the world, consistent with both guidance from health authorities and with the U.S. travel restrictions currently in place. I understand ECA and Consular Affairs continue to work together on these issues, and I will continue that engagement and communication if confirmed.

*Question.* Teacher exchange programs were also severely impacted by a backlog of visa processing and other challenges. Many K-12 classrooms are reliant upon these educational exchange programs. Will you commit to working to get the program back to pre-pandemic levels and look to scaling up these programs in the future?

*Answer.* Yes. I recognize the important contributions the BridgeUSA Teacher program makes to K-12 classrooms. The Department is committed to ensuring as many visa applicants can be interviewed as health restrictions allow and has provided updates to sponsoring organizations to advise them on operational changes. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our consular colleagues and keep teacher category sponsors and prospective teacher participants informed.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO LEE SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Meridian Recusal*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you pledge to recuse yourself from any funding or contracting decisions related to your previous employer, Meridian International Center?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, per my ethics agreement with the Department of State and the Office of Government Ethics, I would not participate in funding or contracting decisions related to Meridian International Center.

*Au Pair Program*

*Question.* Recently, several U.S. states have sought to regulate the au pair programs, despite the fact that it is a federal program. This has been accomplished in at least one state, to fairly disastrous effect for au pair families and participants there. In response, the Department of State has attempted to unify the program and clarify that federal au pair regulations preempt state and local laws. This clarifying regulation is essential to the program's continued viability. If confirmed, will you commit to supporting this clarifying regulation?

*Answer.* The Au Pair program has for many years been an effective public diplomacy program, fostering the mutual understanding between people of the United States and other countries through in-person exchanges.

The nature of the Au Pair program, fostering such exchange by placing young people in American homes and caring for young children, makes it unique and special. I am committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all participants.

I am aware there is an effort underway to strengthen the Au Pair program through regulations, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working through that process with stakeholders and keeping Congress informed.

*Question.* The issue of undue influence by foreign countries—particularly China—has become a central U.S. foreign policy issue in recent years. In addition to increased reporting by think tanks, the State Department has engaged directly with U.S. universities on these matters.

- If confirmed, do you plan to continue State Department engagement with the educational community on these issues?

*Answer.* Yes. A clear understanding of the organizations and entities that Beijing uses to attempt to undermine U.S. policy is important. Of particular concern are activities that lack transparency and attempt to hide or downplay their affiliations and objectives. If confirmed, I would continue to work with State Department officials promoting transparency on this topic so that the educational community can make more informed decisions. For example, I understand that ECA issued an updated public guidance directive to Exchange Visitor Program (BridgeUSA) sponsors on Confucius Institutes (CI) in November 2020. The objective of this Guidance Directive was to provide sponsors more clarity regarding the possible regulatory violations presented in some CI operations so they can make informed choices about sponsoring exchange visitors coming on programs in support of CIs. I understand

that this clarity of CI operations is one of several reasons for why a growing number of universities have decided to end their Confucius Institute affiliations.

*Question.* The issue of undue influence by foreign countries—particularly China—has become a central U.S. foreign policy issue in recent years. In addition to increased reporting by think tanks, the State Department has engaged directly with U.S. universities on these matters.

- If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to highlight the risks of undue influence by foreign governments and other actors in U.S. universities and colleges?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to support the Department’s outreach work with interagency partners to increase transparency of foreign government actions and promote sharing of best practices so U.S. colleges and universities are well informed and can protect themselves and their students from undue foreign influence.

*Question.* I introduced legislation designed to enhance State Department and congressional oversight of Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act (MECEA) programs with the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

- Does the Biden administration plan to reinstate these programs in the future?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support the Secretary’s re-examination of the decision to terminate approval of the MECEA Section 108a programs operated by China, with vigilance to potential counterintelligence and propaganda risks.

*Question.* If so, and if confirmed, do you commit to consulting with Congress in advance of making such a decision?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the Secretary’s goal of working with this committee and Congress to ensure this administration meets the China challenge. As I committed at my nominations hearing, I will engage in meaningful consultation with Congress while policies are being developed.

*Question.* How should the Department exercise greater scrutiny of these programs given potential counterintelligence risks and their use as propaganda tools for the Chinese Communist Party?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support the Secretary’s re-examination of the decision to terminate approval of the MECEA Section 108a programs operated by China, with vigilance to potential counterintelligence and propaganda risks.

*Question.* The United States has suspended permission of any PRC national on an “F” or “J” visa to study or conduct research in the United States where the individual’s academic or research activities are likely to support a PRC entity implement or supporting the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) “military-civil fusion” strategy. This policy prevents U.S. research and technological innovation from falling into the hands of our most serious military competitor. Do you commit to retaining this policy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the Secretary’s continuous review to ensure our policies protect the integrity of U.S. research and innovation along with our academic and research institutions.

*Question.* What are your views on current measures in place to apply sufficient scrutiny to donations and contracts between U.S. universities and foreign entities?

*Answer.* I am supportive of measures to ensure that donations and contracts between U.S. universities and foreign entities benefit the United States and are not subject to undue foreign influence. If confirmed, I will encourage efforts to educate and inform educational institutions about their possible exposure to undue foreign influence through such arrangements.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO LEE SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Effect of the COVID–19 Pandemic*

*Question.* The pandemic significantly hampered the normal operation of most ECA-administered international exchanges, with many participants returning home to the U.S. and foreign participants having to be repatriated to their home countries before their programs were complete. ECA is now conducting exchange activity online in a virtual format as it proves feasible to do so.

- What are the lessons learned from ECA’s pivot to virtual during the pandemic?

*Answer.* When the COVID–19 pandemic temporarily halted most USG-funded in-person exchanges, ECA’s innovation and flexible management of international ex-

changes powered a transition to new strategies, sustaining advancement of foreign policy objectives and achieving lasting benefits even amid the pandemic. Most ECA programs pivoted rapidly to virtual and hybrid models providing, or virtually replicating, the in-person exchange experience. This pivot was possible because ECA could leverage the relationships with stakeholders that were developed with previous in-person exchanges. ECA was also able to reach new audiences with some innovative virtual elements and will look to continue some of those elements after the pandemic recedes.

In addition, with careful management by ECA staff and the monitoring and health protocols in place at U.S. host campuses, many foreign Fulbright participants were able to remain at their U.S. host colleges and universities and new foreign Fulbrighters and other academic exchange participants were able to participate in in-person programs, thanks to the flexibility and resilience of U.S. higher education institutions. As recognized by the Inspector's General review of ECA's response to the pandemic, the experience showed the strength of ECA's program management practices, as well as the high level of commitment and capacity by U.S. higher education to safely host and educate students.

I understand ECA is evaluating how it can continue to use virtual engagement or hybrid models to expand the impact of exchange programs and help the Bureau reach new audiences. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and other stakeholders to apply the lessons learned during the pandemic.

#### *American Spaces*

*Question.* There are more than 600 American Spaces around the world, which serve as virtual and in-person platforms to engage foreign nationals through a wide variety of U.S. State Department-sponsored programs and resources on important topics such as studying in the U.S., English language learning, and U.S. culture. This program, managed by the Office of American Spaces, moved to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in May of 2019.

- How have American Spaces (or the American Spaces program) furthered U.S. foreign policy goals under the ECA Bureau?

*Answer.* Through American Spaces, the U.S. Government is present in more than 610 programming venues worldwide, with over 14 million people participating in virtual programs in FY 2020. Since the Office of American Spaces joined the ECA bureau in 2019, the Department has been able to enhance its work in public diplomacy and integrate ECA programming in the areas of English language teaching, EducationUSA advising, alumni engagement, cultural programs, and sharing information about the United States to further U.S. foreign policy goals. As a result of American Spaces and the Regional Public Engagement Specialist (REPS) Foreign Service corps coming under ECA, the Bureau has also fostered increased cooperation between REPS and Regional English Language Officers, as well as the EducationUSA advising program, to achieve mission and Department goals.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO LEE SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

#### *Visa Processing*

*Question.* One of the issues that has been taking up much of my staff's time is the delay our constituents are facing in being able to reunited with family overseas or having family members visit them. Similarly, many businesses in New Jersey rely on seasonal workers and exchange visitors from all over the world. The Alliance for International Exchange is reporting a 75% decrease overall in visa processing for education and cultural exchange programs, which of course has major economic consequences.

- Can you share how you will address these capacity limitations?

*Answer.* I recognize the important contributions that exchange visitors make to New Jersey businesses, and the positive impact they have on states and communities across the nation. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to severely affect consular operations at our embassies and consulates. The Department is committed to ensuring as many visa applicants can be interviewed as health restrictions allow, and has provided updates to sponsoring organizations to advise them on operational changes. I understand ECA and Consular Affairs continue to work together on these issues, and I will continue that engagement and communication if confirmed.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. ISOBEL COLEMAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Global Health*

*Question.* Should the United States engage in highly risky public health research—such as gain-of-function research—in cooperation with countries that do not have adequate biosecurity standards, that have violated or failed to uphold the International Health Regulations, or where the United States cannot certify that such country is in compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID does not fund Gain of Function Research, and that USAID does not fund work anywhere in the world that would make viruses more lethal or transmissible in humans.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you ensure USAID's research and development grants are fully vetted and do not flow to partners or sub-grantees engaged in such research?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that USAID funds do not support gain-of-function research, i.e. research that makes a virus more transmissible or pathogenic, through either the prime or subpartners.

*Question.* The budget proposes a substantial increase for Family Planning and Reproductive Health (FP/RH), through both bilateral aid programs and contributions to the U.N. Population Fund. If confirmed, how will you ensure USAID compliance with current law, which prohibits the use of U.S. foreign assistance to perform or promote abortion, support involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion overseas?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will follow the law and ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including those related to family planning and abortion.

The administration takes seriously the legislative requirements related to voluntarism and informed choice in family planning activities and those related to abortion. I understand that the Agency has worked for decades to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, including the Helms and Siljander amendments.

It is important that USAID continue to work closely with field missions and implementing partners to ensure awareness of statutory and policy requirements applicable to their programs.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to provide to this committee a complete, detailed spend plan for the funds received through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for the international COVID-19 response, to include all aspects of the response, from vaccine sharing to second order impacts?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will ensure compliance with Congressionally-mandated reporting on COVID funding, including obligations and disbursements by operating unit, that the State Department and USAID submit every 60 days and I commit to regular briefings and consultations with the committee on the use of funds, which I understand is guided by the U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Plan.

*Question.* How would you assess the performance of COVAX to date?

*Answer.* COVAX has performed as well as could be expected in light of ongoing constraints to the global vaccine supply. It is my understanding that while COVAX is below its original delivery projections, as a result of shortfalls in global vaccine production and disruption to its planned supplies, actions such as the G7 vaccine commitment to finance and provide more than two billion doses from the United States and G7 partners by the end of 2022 are critical to enabling the success of COVAX. If confirmed, I will support efforts to expand the availability of safe and effective vaccines globally to bring this pandemic to an end.

*Question.* How can USAID ensure that COVAX is working expeditiously to get shots in arms while guarding against waste, fraud, and abuse?

*Answer.* I have learned that USAID's \$4 billion in contributions to Gavi/COVAX in 2021 were provided in tranches, which allowed USAID to ensure Gavi/COVAX obtained the funding needed from other donors to scale up global vaccine access, while closely monitoring COVAX's performance. USAID also participates in Gavi's Audit and Finance Committee, and, as a part of that, regularly reviews the risks involved in procuring and delivering COVID-19 vaccines. It is my understanding that Gavi/COVAX has established multiple methods for receiving reports of fraud, and all allegations are handled by Gavi's SAID to strengthen and reinforce existing systems related to fraud awareness and reporting to mitigate these threats to multi-lateral and bilateral vaccine campaigns.

*Question.* How can USAID ensure that U.S. financial contributions to COVAX are not used to underwrite the purchase and distribution of substandard Chinese COVID-19 vaccines, particularly following the recent announcement that COVAX would, in fact, begin making major purchases of Chinese vaccines?

*Answer.* I understand that the generous U.S. contribution to COVAX was not used to purchase vaccines made in China, and that the full U.S.-provided \$4 billion had been allocated by COVAX prior to the facility's decision to purchase Sinopharm and Sinovac. I am not aware of any additional U.S. contributions planned for COVAX at this time. If confirmed, I will join my colleagues in continuing to forcefully raise concerns about procurement of lower-efficacy vaccines, and to urge the People's Republic of China to pick up its fair share of the global burden on vaccine access.

*Question.* Under what circumstances would U.S. bilateral vaccine contributions be more appropriate than contributions via COVAX?

*Answer.* I believe that the U.S. Government (USG) is most effective when both bilateral and multilateral efforts are able to support responsible and accountable partners. Multilateral funding allows the USG to leverage the financial commitments, technical expertise, and diplomatic engagement of many other partners, often achieving economies of scale and burden-sharing with other donors. Bilateral funding enables USAID field teams and ongoing local assistance efforts to address priorities that may not be effectively or efficiently covered through multilateral channels.

#### *Humanitarian Assistance*

*Question.* The U.N.'s Global Humanitarian Appeal of \$36.1 billion for 2021 is the largest in history. What can USAID do to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. humanitarian assistance, so we can spread our aid dollars farther, while also leveraging other donor support to meet historic humanitarian needs?

*Answer.* With humanitarian needs throughout the world at an all time-high, USAID's ability to reach people in need and improve the efficiency of our programs is of utmost importance. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of USAID to be responsible stewards of American taxpayers' dollars. That's why I believe that measuring and analyzing results—and adapting and innovating when programs fall short—is part of the day-to-day management of USAID's operations, including humanitarian assistance programs. I will also ensure, if confirmed, that USAID engages with other donors to leverage our assistance and help as many people in need.

*Question.* The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has released a memo which, among other things, directs the new OMB Made in America Office to “review how best to ensure agency compliance with cargo preference requirements to maximize the utilization of U.S.-flag vessels, in excess of any applicable statutory minimum, to the greatest extent practicable.” This is likely to increase pressure upon USAID to exceed existing cargo preference requirements for food aid under the Food for Peace Act, notwithstanding the fact that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) repeatedly has found that such requirements significantly increase the cost of food aid while failing to advance the purposes of the Cargo Preference Act of 1954.

- Do you agree that U.S. cargo preference requirements for food aid have outlived their statutory purpose?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to make USAID's programming to combat rising food insecurity and build the resilience of vulnerable communities as effective and efficient as possible. Each of the food assistance modalities—U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming—should complement the others in addressing food insecurity efficiently and effectively. At this time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, USAID's ability to reach hungry people and improve the efficiency of our programs is of utmost importance. Cargo preference requirements increase the cost of programming U.S. in-kind commodities in humanitarian programs. If confirmed, I will look closely at every opportunity to stretch our food aid as far as possible.

*Question.* In your view, how would an increase of cargo preference requirements impact the ability of USAID to meet historic levels of need for food aid?

*Answer.* At a time of unprecedented humanitarian need globally, an increase in cargo preference would compromise USAID's ability to reach hungry people, as well as our ability to reduce logistical and cost efficiency in our programs. USAID pays almost 50 percent more per metric ton to ship commodities on U.S.-flag vessels than foreign-flag vessels. An increase in cargo preference requirements would directly re-

sult in increased transportation costs for food assistance programs, which would reduce the amount of resources USAID can dedicate to purchasing commodities and reaching beneficiaries with life-saving assistance.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working with OMB to mitigate the deleterious impact of U.S. cargo preference requirements on food aid?

*Answer.* I am committed to working with Congress and the interagency, including OMB, to make USAID's food assistance programming as effective and efficient as possible. The COVID-19 pandemic and mitigation measures have compounded the effects of climate-related disasters and complex emergencies, creating unprecedented global humanitarian needs.

For example, an estimated 23 million additional people will require emergency food assistance compared to 2019. Each food assistance modality (U.S. in-kind food, locally and regionally procured food, and cash-based programming) is critical to USAID's ability to respond appropriately to each crisis.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working with Congress to reform U.S. international food aid programs and bolster the Global Food Security Strategy in a manner that saves lives, supports early recovery, stimulates agriculture-led economic growth, and ultimately promotes self-reliance?

*Answer.* Yes. The pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition worldwide, with the most vulnerable bearing the brunt of its impact. I understand that Feed the Future is leveraging its existing global portfolio to respond to the crisis in the following ways: (1) engaging governments on trade and inclusive economic growth policies; (2) engaging government and private sector partners to safeguard and increase access to nutritious food; (3) working with small and medium sized enterprises across the food system and unlocking private sector funds to accelerate economic recovery, growth and employment; (4) transitioning households and communities off of assistance through economic inclusion models; and (5) supporting governments to create and strengthen their existing social protection systems, including shock-responsive safety nets and risk financing. It will be critical to further leverage Feed the Future as countries rebuild economically in the long wake of the pandemic, and I understand that USAID is currently looking at ways to do this.

#### *Power Africa*

*Question.* In the face of growing Chinese influence and investment, and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there arguably has never been a more important time to advance U.S. strategic programs to reduce energy poverty, support transformative energy development, and stimulate economic recovery in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, the President's FY 2022 budget request proposes to reduce by 26 percent funding for one of the most important instruments the USG has in its arsenal to accomplish these goals—Power Africa—while simultaneously imposing carbon caps and renewable energy mandates that inevitably will push developing economies in sub-Saharan Africa closer to China.

- Should reducing energy poverty in sub-Saharan Africa be a priority for USAID?

*Answer.* Absolutely. It is my understanding that Power Africa is well positioned to address energy poverty, bolster human development, and mitigate climate change impacts through private sector-led energy development that delivers reliable, uninterrupted energy and inclusive, catalytic and sustainable economic growth. I understand that Power Africa funds will promote mutual economic prosperity between the US and African partners, as well as promote two-way trade and investment to counter malign influences by advancing universal energy access through 30,000 milliwatts in new clean energy generation and connecting 60 million homes and businesses to electricity by 2030.

*Question.* If so, how can that reasonably be accomplished while the administration redirects funding for Power Africa to undefined climate change objectives and abandons the bipartisan, bicameral agreement on an "all-of-the-above" approach under the historic Electrify Africa Act?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that Power Africa is expected to play a leading role in the administration's climate change agenda while maintaining its focus on addressing energy poverty in Africa. If confirmed, I look forward to discussing how we can continue to advance Power Africa's goals and expand energy development in Africa.

#### *Venezuela*

*Question.* The authoritarian regime in Cuba reportedly has developed its own COVID-19 vaccine.

- If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that USAID will not provide any direct or indirect support to a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in which the Cuban state-owned vaccine is used?

Answer. It is my understanding that USAID will only support procurement and delivery of vaccines that meet rigorous quality standards, are safe and efficacious, and have been approved or authorized for emergency use by a stringent regulatory authority, such as the U.S. FDA or the World Health Organization. I understand that USAID has not provided, and has no plans to provide, direct or indirect support to a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in which any Cuban vaccine is used. Cuba has not published its trial data for its vaccines, nor has the vaccine received an emergency use listing or authorization from the World Health Organization.

*Question.* Will you also commit to ensuring that USAID will not provide direct or indirect support to a vaccination campaign in Venezuela that is non-transparent and discriminatory?

Answer. I understand that USAID has no plans at this time to provide direct or indirect support to a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Venezuela, where current vaccination efforts are non-transparent and discriminatory. Venezuela is a self-financing participant in COVAX, which means that it does not receive donor-supported vaccines or other assistance. USAID would only provide COVID-19 vaccination support if Venezuela established a credible, impartial, and transparent national vaccination plan, implemented in partnership with, or under the auspices of, international partners.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you ensure that USAID's support for the World Food Program in Venezuela will not strengthen the ability of the Maduro regime to exert control over the Venezuelan people?

Answer. USAID support for the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) in Venezuela is intended to address the emergency food needs of vulnerable Venezuelan children impacted by the crisis. It is my understanding that WFP's programs are operationally independent from any Maduro regime programs and hence, will not strengthen the Maduro regime. I understand that WFP is maintaining its own independent supply chains and food distributions and WFP has indicated no instance of interference by the Maduro regime or attempt by the Maduro regime to gain reputational benefits during this pilot food assistance program.

#### *Afghanistan*

*Question.* While the Department works to inject hundreds of millions in foreign aid into Afghanistan—a reflection of its purported desire to recalibrate the bilateral relationship by investing more in development and assistance lines of effort—USAID OIG plans to scale back its presence in-country, reducing staffing and closing its sub-office in Kabul. All of this is occurring as the Taliban continues to make rapid advances on the ground. According to open source reporting, the U.S. intelligence community assesses that the Government in Kabul may fall in as little as six-to-twelve months after the U.S. and NATO military withdrawal, potentially triggering a humanitarian and security crisis.

- In light of the deteriorating security climate, how can USAID sustain the development gains made in Afghanistan over the past 20 years, particularly as pertains to the hard earned rights of women and minorities?
- As we look to recalibrate our bilateral relationship with Afghanistan, what more can be done to support health, education, empowerment of women and girls, and government transparency?
- How can USAID conduct effective oversight of U.S. foreign assistance programs in Afghanistan, given its diminished presence on the ground?

Answer. With support from the United States Government, the Government and people of Afghanistan—particularly women and girls—have made enormous gains over the last 20 years. Afghans are healthier, better educated, more prosperous, and enjoy greater freedoms than two decades ago. However, we must acknowledge that women and development gains are now under significantly increasing threats and the security environment is deteriorating. I understand that USAID's gender program in Afghanistan is robust and broad, with programming that extends across the entire country and includes education and political and economic participation. I understand that USAID intends to continue to work with women leaders, the private sector, and civil society organizations to adjust programs and approaches in order to continue supporting the rights and safety of women and girls. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues across government to ensure that USAID is doing every-

thing it can to protect the safety of our local partners and the brave civil society leaders who continue to strive for a better life.

I understand that USAID provides on-going and strategic program oversight despite security restrictions in Afghanistan, and that monitoring and oversight measures taken in Afghanistan include: vetting of implementing partners (IPs), multi-tiered monitoring efforts, and financial controls. I also understand that USAID will continue to use third-party monitoring to provide programmatic oversight where our partners and programs operate. These third-party monitors are local to each region and have been capable of accessing USAID programs across the country. If the security environment affects USAID partners' and programs' ability to operate, third-party monitoring efforts will correspondingly adjust.

#### *West Bank & Gaza*

*Question.* Since January 2021, the Biden administration has re-established relations with the Palestinian Authority (PA) and announced nearly \$360 million in planned U.S. assistance. This move has occurred despite the lack of progress in PA reforms, including its toxic so-called "pay to slay program." If confirmed, will you commit to working with this committee to ensure that any U.S. assistance for "reconstruction" efforts in Gaza are allocated in a manner that is consistent with U.S. national security interests and does not in any way benefit Hamas, politically or otherwise?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will work with this committee to allocate USAID's humanitarian and development assistance in a manner that is consistent with U.S. national security interests. I understand that the Department of State and the USAID Mission in the West Bank and Gaza (WBG) have a robust, 15-year-old, partner vetting process to mitigate the risk that U.S. Government resources could inadvertently support Hamas or other terrorist groups. I also understand that USAID implementing partners in the WBG have aggressive risk-mitigation systems in place aimed at ensuring U.S. taxpayer-funded assistance is reaching those for whom it is intended and that assistance is closely coordinated with the Government of Israel, who approves all materials that enter Gaza. If confirmed, I will abide by all legislation, including the Taylor Force Act, that governs how assistance can be deployed in the WBG.

#### *Syria*

*Question.* There is no replacement for cross-border mechanisms to deliver humanitarian assistance in Syria, particularly as cross-line assistance is costly, ineffective, and prone to manipulation. If confirmed, how will you ensure that U.S. assistance is not routed through Damascus and is instead delivered directly to those in need?

*Answer.* Rising humanitarian needs and an increasingly complex operating environment continue to pose significant challenges for humanitarian actors throughout Syria who continue to reach the most vulnerable at great risk to themselves. The July 9 reauthorization of cross-border assistance through UNSC Resolution 2585 provided crucial relief for the Syrian people, but it does not completely fill the vast needs on the ground. That is why it is vital for the United States to continue to advocate for unimpeded humanitarian access through all possible means—including continued authorization and expansion of U.N. cross-border access and unhindered cross-line assistance. I understand that no U.S. assistance is routed through the Syrian Arab Republic Government. I also understand that all USAID humanitarian assistance is implemented through independent humanitarian organizations—such as U.N. agencies and NGOs—to reach those most in need in line with humanitarian principles.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. ISOBEL COLEMAN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

#### *Policy Framework*

*Question.* Administrator Power, in her confirmation hearing, emphasized that she would place special emphasis on four core challenges: the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, conflict and state collapse, and democratic backsliding. The previous administrator, Mark Green, had sought to deemphasize such global priorities and focus on country-specific challenges in response to some complaints of "initiative fatigue" due to what some described as the proliferation of competing priorities and presidential initiatives during the Obama administration. The USAID Policy Framework, issued in 2019, reflects Administrator Green's country-tailored approach and



focuses on the broad goal of “ending the need for foreign assistance” by promoting self-reliance among aid recipients.

- As you work to develop the next Policy Framework, what do you view as the chief cross-cutting themes that are likely to emerge? Or do you agree with Ambassador Green that a country-by-country focus makes more sense?
- How do you see Administrator Power’s four big challenges as fitting into USAID’s next Policy Framework, particularly as they relate to other priorities set by Congress in recent years, such as basic education and food security?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with the Administrator Power, interagency colleagues, Congress and external stakeholders to develop an updated Policy Framework, if required. In my view, an emphasis on global priorities that meet the needs of the moment, evidence-based development practice and attention to country needs and regional trends are important and consistent with one another.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* A key priority for me is ensuring that supporting democracy and promoting human rights is at the forefront of our foreign policy. But as a lethal pandemic, economic and physical insecurity, and violent conflict ravaged the world in 2020, democracy and human rights defenders sustained heavy losses in their struggle against authoritarian regimes, shifting the international balance in favor of tyranny.

- What more can we do to further these efforts with our European partners?
- How can we better work within the OSCE to address these issues?

Answer. I agree that a unified transatlantic alliance that acts from common principles of human rights protection and rule of law is the strongest bulwark against authoritarianism. I understand that USAID engages frequently with E.U. officials to seek to align policy and to increase burden sharing on key issues such as the COVID-19 global response, human rights, and democracy and governance. For example, I understand that two of USAID’s flagship civil society programs are now leveraging significant funding from the U.K. Foreign Commonwealth Office and the European Union Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring new opportunities to expand upon our partnership with our European partners to support civil society and democracy across Europe and Eurasia. The E.U.’s new seven-year budget articulates a commitment to human development and rule of law. This presents an additional opportunity for greater cooperation. As we see autocratization begin to spread within Europe, USAID can support our European counterparts in identifying concrete ways to re-engage citizens who feel they have been left behind, to bolster the structure and ability to serve of democratic institutions, and to investigate and shut down opportunities for kleptocracy. As you note, foreign malign influence continues to challenge democratic progress around the world. In Brussels, Secretary Blinken and E.U. leaders recently discussed challenges that the People’s Republic of China presents to the rules-based order and agreed to resume U.S.-EU dialogue to coordinate approaches.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Ambassador Carpenter and the U.S. delegation to the OSCE to identify new opportunities to engage with human rights defenders in increasingly restrictive countries to gather information, identify regional trends, and track unmet needs in dynamic environments.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. ISOBEL COLEMAN BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

#### *Humanitarian Access in Ethiopia*

*Question.* As you know, the humanitarian situation in Tigray is dire. Despite improvements in physical access, the restrictive operating space for humanitarian actors to enter the region, move freely, communicate, access fuel and banking services necessary to implement assistance, and the blockage of vital supplies are creating the conditions for a humanitarian disaster, including widespread famine.

Aid workers have been targeted and the aid operation politicized by parties to the conflict. Humanitarian experts have indicated that unless the operating environment improves in the next few weeks, it will be too late to prevent catastrophe.

Access challenges and impediments to effective principled response are not new, but humanitarian need is higher than ever, and coordinated and effective U.S. government advocacy to facilitate respect for international humanitarian law and re-

duce barriers that prevent U.S. assistance from getting to those who need it most is critical.

- If confirmed, how would you elevate and address the urgent challenges facing aid delivery in Tigray within the interagency and in your external engagements?
- How can the agency leverage evidence and learning from conflict contexts like Tigray to create effective policy and strategies to reduce political and operational barriers to humanitarian aid delivery in future crises?

Answer. The loss of life and mass displacement resulting from the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region is profoundly disturbing and unacceptable. I understand the administration, with support from Members of Congress and U.N. representatives, has undertaken numerous diplomatic efforts to end the violence and facilitate humanitarian access. If confirmed, I would ensure USAID works in close conjunction with the interagency and the international community to push for a constructive political dialogue and a negotiated ceasefire between parties. I would also work to identify strategic pressure points to ensure unhindered humanitarian access to those in need and would advocate for all parties to cease hostilities and respect international humanitarian law.

To learn from past conflict contexts, we must draw lessons from the Agency's past experiences and apply them to future work for greater impact. By capturing, organizing and disseminating evidence, and by engaging with peer interagency and other partners, we can build better humanitarian and peacebuilding programs, policies and strategies.

#### *Protecting Women in Afghanistan*

*Question.* This committee has been deeply concerned about the safety of women following the U.S.'s withdrawal. We are even more concerned about the safety of women that have worked on USAID cooperative grants. Currently, these partners are not eligible for the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program.

- What protections should be considered for them in light of the danger they may be facing for their work with the United States?

Answer. I share your concerns about the additional challenges facing Afghan women in this increased environment of insecurity within Afghanistan, and I understand that USAID is committed to working with our partners who represent the women of Afghanistan and the interagency to explore short and long-term opportunities for increased protection including through refugee programs in coordination with the Department of State. A sustained deteriorating security environment will make the Agency's ability to provide development and humanitarian assistance more difficult. If confirmed, I commit to working with the administrator and experts at the Agency to conduct robust contingency planning for different scenarios so that USAID can continue its assistance. I commit to engaging at the highest levels to explore every possible opportunity for supporting the Afghans at particular risk for their work alongside USAID and our partners.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO CHRISTOPHER LU BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Do you believe that any country, including the United States, should pay more than 25 percent of the peacekeeping budget?

Answer. I believe all countries should pay their fair share of the peacekeeping budget. If confirmed, I will work to reach an agreement to lower the U.S. assessment rate as close to 25 percent as possible and ensure that other countries pay their fair share.

*Question.* Do you support going beyond the 25 percent cap as imposed by Congress and signed into U.S. law which bears the current President's name?

Answer. The President's FY 2022 budget requests a waiver of the 25 percent peacekeeping cap to allow the United States to pay our full assessment. If confirmed, I will not undertake any action that contravenes U.S. law. I welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to meet our financial obligations, including addressing the substantial level of arrears that have accumulated over the past four years, and the cap on peacekeeping funding.

*Question.* What is your position on repayment of current U.S. peacekeeping arrears?

*Answer.* The President's FY 2022 budget requests a partial repayment of U.S. peacekeeping arrears. If confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to meet our financial obligations, including addressing the substantial level of arrears that have accumulated over the past four years.

*Question.* Are there any specific steps you believe the U.N. should take to reduce the overall size of the U.N. peacekeeping budget? If so, what are they?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to reviewing and assessing all existing U.N. peacekeeping missions to ensure they are still necessary for the promotion of international peace and security. If confirmed, I will provide active U.S. engagement in Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budget) negotiations to ensure missions are appropriately resourced. For missions that we deem in the U.S. interest to maintain, I will ensure they are as effective and efficient as possible, while also providing the resources to fully implement their mandates, including well-trained and well-equipped troops and police and necessary assets.

*Question.* Are there any specific U.N. peacekeeping missions you would support reducing or terminating? If so, what missions do you believe should be reduced or terminated?

*Answer.* At this point, I do not have sufficient information to make a determination regarding the reduction or termination of any existing U.N. peacekeeping mission. If confirmed, I will work with State Department colleagues to assess the effectiveness of these missions to ensure they are still necessary for the promotion of international peace and security.

U.N. peacekeeping operations are among the most effective mechanisms of burden-sharing in addressing the global challenges to international peace and security. The Department of State and USUN regularly work within the U.N. system, through the United States' permanent seat on the Security Council, engagement with the U.N. Secretariat, and the General Assembly, to ensure that missions are addressing evolving conditions on the ground and fulfilling mandated tasks. If a new mission is proposed, the Security Council's standard practice is to review its mandate annually before determining whether to extend it. This allows the United States to regularly assess progress toward mandated tasks and performance benchmarks and to use our leverage as a permanent member to adjust mandates as necessary.

In recent years, U.N. peacekeeping missions have closed in Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti and Liberia, and the peacekeeping mission in Darfur is in the process of closing now. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of U.N. peacekeeping operations, while providing missions with realistic and achievable mandates, as well as the necessary resources to fully implement those mandates.

*Question.* The U.N. maintains several particular bodies and departments that focus on the Palestinians. These including the Division on Palestinian Rights (DPR), the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People (CEIRPP), and U.N. Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL).

- Will you work to challenge the existence and funding of these departments?

*Answer.* The United States will continue the tradition of maintaining its role as an honest broker in the Middle East, both as a staunch supporter and defender of Israel, and as a promoter of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. The United States remains firmly and consistently committed to achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians based on a two-state solution. If confirmed, I will assess the mandates of these particular U.N. bodies and departments, and make recommendations on them. I will support organizations and efforts that contribute to these goals.

*Question.* China has focused intensely on securing leadership roles in various U.N. agencies, particularly those overseeing technical standards that will shape the future. In many cases, these leaders have overtly advanced Chinese Communist Party goals, rather than acting independently to advance the global good. It is clear the United States has had mixed success with elections for heads of International Organizations (IO) in the past and, as a result, is taking more robust and coordinated steps to advocate for qualified and independent candidates in U.N. bodies.

- If confirmed, will you prioritize robust strategies to secure qualified and independent candidates to lead U.N./IO bodies, especially highly specialized agencies?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize increasing U.S. efforts to identify and support qualified and independent candidates to lead U.N./IO bodies, including specialized and technical agencies. Such organizations and agencies play an important role

in standard-setting across a broad range of issues that have an impact on our national security, including civil aviation and maritime safety; nuclear safeguards, safety, and security; internet freedom; digital and emerging technologies; intellectual property; and narcotics control and criminal justice.

If confirmed, I will work with the rest of the Bureau of International Organization Affairs to identify qualified and independent candidates who are committed to advancing priorities including transparency and accountability in the U.N. system, engage with key U.N. leadership to communicate our personnel and elections priorities, coordinate with our partners to support likeminded individuals, and support efforts to strengthen the pipeline of talented American citizens interested in serving with the United Nations at all levels. I will also work with Congress, other federal agencies, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations to build support for these candidates so that the United States can compete effectively with other countries, including the People's Republic of China, to uphold the foundational values and principles of the U.N. system.

*Question.* Countering malign influence within the U.N. system will require a robust whole-of-government approach as well as orchestrated cooperation between the U.S. and likeminded partners.

- If confirmed, please describe how you will bolster these efforts within our Government and between governments to identify, recruit, and elect qualified, independent candidates to lead U.N. agencies?

*Answer.* The Department has established a new office in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs—the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (IO/MSP)—focused on supporting qualified candidates for U.N. elections, multilateral appointments, and competitive positions, as part of a broader effort to strengthen the foundational principles and values of the U.N. and multilateral system. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the rest of the U.S. Government, including Congress and other federal agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and our allies and partners, to expand our recruitment networks and attract qualified and independent U.S. citizens and likeminded candidates with broader, more diverse backgrounds and support their election efforts from New York and across the globe. These efforts will include dynamic campaign strategies that leverage the whole of the U.S. Government's resources and influence to support U.S. citizen candidates and likeminded partners.

*Question.* Additionally, please describe your intended efforts to bolster U.S. talent recruitment for more junior positions, such as those in the Junior Professional Officer program, in the U.N. and other International Organizations.

*Answer.* Successfully increasing the number of U.S. citizens employed in the U.N. system requires a multifaceted approach that will involve identifying and advocating for qualified candidates for positions at all levels, including in junior roles. The Junior Professional Officer program is one of the key opportunities offered by the U.N. to encourage young professionals interested in serving in international organizations, and it provides them with hands-on experience across various U.N. agencies. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my colleagues in the International Organization Affairs Bureau and other stakeholder bureaus and agencies and consult with Congress to ensure we have sufficient resources, tools, and staffing to support more positions for American citizen JPOs in the U.N. system. With these resources, we can work strategically to increase the number of JPO opportunities funded by the U.S. Government at key agencies and bodies that work on U.S. priorities, expand our recruitment and outreach activities to ensure these opportunities are widely known and available to interested U.S. citizens, and provide tools and services to strengthen our competitiveness in placing qualified American citizens into the U.N. system. If confirmed, I also look forward to using my public statements and travel to champion the need for more young American professionals to work in the U.N. system.

*Question.* Before fiscal year 2021, there was a 15 percent withholding requirement of U.S.-assessed contributions to the U.N. designed to enhance whistleblower protections. This is now gone.

- Do you support re-instating the 15 percent withholding until these certifications were made? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I am a strong believer in whistleblower protections. If confirmed, I welcome the opportunity to examine the benefits and leverage that the conditional withholding of funds provides. Experience shows that temporarily withholding funds can sometimes be of use in advancing reform, except in those cases where with-

holding will negatively impact an important program that the United States specifically supports.

My understanding is, because of the extraordinary nature of withholding funds, the withholding of funds from the World Intellectual Property Organization and International Civil Aviation Organization was a factor that the missions of other countries to those organizations took into account when deciding whether to support reforms that the U.S. missions to those organizations were advancing. In both instances, the support of other countries was essential to getting eventual agreement on needed reforms, especially in the areas of ethics and whistleblower protections.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to address barriers to advance U.N. management reforms, especially those created by the different priorities among member states?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with allies and likeminded member states that strongly support U.N. management reform. Recognizing that all member states will have their priorities, if confirmed, I will work to maximize the areas of agreement to advance our highest priority reforms. If confirmed, I will work closely with reform-oriented leaders and agents of change within the U.N. system to lend our support to their efforts, particularly within the General Assembly's Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budget). I also welcome the engagement of members of Congress in advocating for U.N. management reforms.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you measure success in implementing management reforms at the U.N.?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that international organizations within the U.N. system are accountable and responsible for the U.S. taxpayer resources they receive. This includes continuing the longstanding U.S. policy of promoting budget discipline and transparency, as well as continuing efforts to ensure that other countries pay their fair share. I also will work to ensure that the U.N. prioritizes program effectiveness, operational efficiency, and results-based budgeting.

*Question.* What policies need to be implemented to maintain fiscal responsibility and accountability within the U.N. system?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure international organizations in the U.N. system adhere to best management and oversight practices in ensuring financial and managerial transparency. This transparency is achieved, in part, through annual in-depth reviews of the 34 regular budget sections that the U.N. Secretary-General submits to the General Assembly and Fifth Committee each spring and summer, along with accompanying reports that the Advisory Body on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) provides. These reports contain hundreds of pages of financial and programmatic details on each aspect of the U.N. regular budget. The U.S. Mission similarly conducts in-depth annual reviews of proposed budgets for U.N. peacekeeping missions in the fall. Additionally, the reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the reports of the U.N. Board of Auditors, which contain the audited financial statements for the U.N. regular budget and each peacekeeping mission budget, are valuable in analyzing budget requests.

The IO Bureau and U.S. Missions to U.N. System organizations in New York, Geneva, Rome, and Vienna similarly scrutinize the budgets and financial statements of the U.N. funds and programs and each of the U.N. specialized agencies. The U.S. Mission will also continue to support strong U.S. candidates for U.N. technical, budgetary, and oversight bodies. Our membership and leadership on these bodies enable us to promote fiscal discipline and accountability.

*Question.* While the U.N. has taken steps to improve its efficiency, operational effectiveness, and accountability, the continuing need for reform is obvious to most observers, including strong supporters of the institution. The U.N. Secretary-General has committed to an agenda of reform. The U.S. push for reform is one of the main drivers behind the progress to date.

- In your opinion, what are the top three reforms that the U.N. could undertake in the coming two years that will have the greatest impact?

Answer. During my two decades of federal service, much of my work has focused on improving the functioning of government organizations. If confirmed, I will work to advance reforms that make the U.N. more efficient and effective, including in its achievement of the goals U.N. member states have set for it, and ensure that the Secretary-General communicates the tangible benefits of implemented reforms to all stakeholders. The Biden-Harris administration will continue to hold the U.N. accountable to its mission and its member states.

In particular, I believe we must do all we can to ensure the U.N. is (1) implementing the reform program that has been set out by the Secretary General, particularly to improve the U.N.'s capacity for conflict prevention (this includes strengthening the Resident Coordinator program, which will improve U.N. operations and coordination across the entire United Nations System through efficiencies and economies among the U.N. Secretariat and the United Nations Funds and Programs); (2) enhancing accountability in the use of resources through the elimination of waste and fraud and strengthened protections for whistleblowers; and (3) enhancing the standards for peacekeeper performance and improved accountability in combatting sexual exploitation abuse accompanied by strengthening prevention measures and protection for victims.

If confirmed, my work will be guided by three principles:

- Working to ensure that all countries pay their fair share to the United Nations and that the U.N. exercises greater budget discipline. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging on the assessment negotiations which are scheduled to begin this fall.
- Supporting initiatives to transform the U.N. into an organization that can better meet the challenges of the 21st century. If confirmed, I will advocate for a greater prioritization of performance metrics that demonstrate tangible outcomes resulting from the delivery of mandated programs
- Countering the negative impact of countries like China and Russia that push ideologies that undermine the U.N.'s mission and the rules-based international order.

If confirmed, I will consult with Congress about where we see the U.N. making satisfactory progress in these areas, and where additional efforts are needed.

*Question.* How will you explain to the Secretary-General and the member states that continued reform is a precondition for full U.S. support of the U.N.?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States asserts its leadership role across the U.N. system. This will include paying our dues in full and on time, subject to the required Congressional appropriations and authorizations, to maximize our influence, and exerting that influence to continue advancing reforms and uphold the foundational values of the international rules-based order. I also welcome the engagement of members of Congress in advocating for U.N. reform in their discussions with the Secretary-General and member states.

*Question.* What tactics would you use if reform efforts falter or lack urgency?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with allies and likeminded member states who strongly support U.N. management reform. Recognizing that all member states will have their priorities, if confirmed, I will work to maximize the areas of agreement to advance our highest priority reforms. I will regularly consult with other parts of the U.S. Government, including Congress, as to other possible levers for achieving reform.

*Question.* With an increase of the use of telework by the United Nations system, how will you work to create cost savings? In particular, will you explore closing or selling U.N. facilities which are not being used?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to achieve agreement by U.N. member states to make the most economic use of U.N. facilities, including analyzing lessons learned during the COVID-19 shutdowns that may help improve workplace flexibility and efficiency, while realizing cost savings through measures to reduce the U.N.'s footprint in headquarters locations. In New York, the U.N. has already ended two leases for office space, and measures are also being implemented in Geneva as part of the renovation project there, such as through the sale and leasing of space to other occupants.

With the greater use of technology to conduct meetings, I also believe the U.N. needs to re-examine its overall approach to staff travel, in particular for conferences.

*Question.* Over the years, some experts have questioned the ability of the U.N. Office of International Oversight to effectively monitor U.N. programs in part because the office is largely dependent on funding from the U.N. programs that it audits. Some governments, including the United States, maintain that this could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest.

- What is your view on this issue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Office of Internal Oversight Services continues to receive its funding from the General Assembly, and thus the U.N. member states, so that it can freely audit the U.N. Secretariat. In general, the U.N. funds and programs have their own, internal audit offices, as do the U.N. spe-

cialized agencies. These internal audit offices are generally funded through the regular (assessed) budgets of the specialized agencies and the core (unearmarked) budgets of the U.N. funds and programs. The internal audit offices are ultimately accountable to the member states, not the secretariats, of these entities.

Similarly, the U.N. Board of Auditors, which audits the financial statements and makes recommendations related to internal controls and other financial management practices of the U.N. and the U.N. funds and programs, is funded through the U.N. regular budget and reports to the U.N. General Assembly. The external auditors of the U.N. specialized agencies, which are usually the highly capable and independent national audit offices of countries such as the United Kingdom, India, and the Philippines, are also funded through the regular (assessed) budgets of the specialized agencies and report to each agency's member states.

*Question.* Do you think U.N. internal oversight is sufficiently independent?

*Answer.* I believe that any organization, including the United Nations, can do more to improve the effectiveness and independence of its internal oversight mechanism. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) maintains maximum independence from the U.N. Secretariat while ensuring accountability to the United States and other U.N. member states. The Management and Reform Section at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations has been at the forefront of pressing for maximum independence of OIOS since its creation in 1994, with the goal of having OIOS operate like an Inspector General in the U.S. Government. A key opportunity to advance the independence and effectiveness of OIOS is in the negotiations each fall on General Assembly resolutions that define OIOS's mandate and responsibilities. The most recent resolution, A/Res/75/247 adopted on December 31, 2020, contains five paragraphs on operational independence, the most prominent of which is paragraph 6:

*6. Reaffirms the operational independence of the Office, stresses that its independence and objectivity are vital in ensuring that its internal oversight functions are carried out in a credible, factual and unbiased manner, and reaffirms the authority of the Office to initiate, carry out and report on any action to fulfil its responsibilities with regard to internal audit, inspection and evaluation, and investigations;*

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO CHRISTOPHER LU BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* If confirmed, will you be a strong advocate for us paying our dues to the U.N. in full and on time?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States reasserts its leadership role across the U.N. system. This will include paying our dues in full and on time in order to maximize our influence and exerting that influence to advance reforms and uphold the foundational values of the international rules-based order.

*Question.* What is your strategy for the upcoming triennial 2022–2024 scales of assessments negotiations to ensure that all countries pay their fair share?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration is currently reviewing options to try to reach an agreement in the U.N. General Assembly to potentially lower future U.S. assessment rates. If confirmed, I will work to reach an agreement in the U.N. General Assembly to try to lower the U.S. assessment rates and ensure that other countries pay their fair share. I welcome the opportunity to work with Congress to take the steps necessary to allow the United States to meet our financial obligations.

---

LETTER FROM AAPI (ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER)  
ORGANIZATIONS IN SUPPORT OF CHRISTOPHER LU'S NOMINATION

July 22, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
The Honorable James Risch  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

We are writing to provide our full support and endorsement to Chris Lu for the position of U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations for Management and Reform.

We represent a coalition of national Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) organizations engaged in business, legal, civil rights, and healthcare advocacy. Our members worked closely with Chris during the Obama Administration in his roles at the White House and the Department of Labor.

Chris has devoted his career to public service and is one of the AAPI community's most important thought leaders. Through his two decades of work in the legislative and executive branches, he has worked tirelessly to ensure that the federal government better serves the American people. When Chris was the White House Cabinet Secretary, he oversaw one of the most stable and effective Cabinets in history. When he became the Deputy Secretary of Labor, he spearheaded initiatives to expand employment opportunities and protect the health, safety, and financial security of workers. As the co-chair of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Chris championed governmental efforts to disaggregate data and expand the delivery of services to marginalized communities. And earlier in his career, he served as Deputy Chief Counsel of the House Oversight Committee where he spearheaded investigations to improve the functioning of government programs.

In all of his government roles, Chris Lu did his job with the highest standard of ethics and integrity. Chris has the right policy background, management experience, and diplomatic skills to represent the U.S. in the United Nations, and we respectfully request that you swiftly approve his nomination. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS)  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)  
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy, and Leadership (APPEAL)  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC



Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)  
Korean Americans for Political Action (KAPA)  
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates  
National Asian Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce & Entrepreneurs  
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific Americans Community Development  
National Asian American Pacific Islander Business Leaders Finance Council  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Taiwanese Americans for Progress  
Texas Asian American Pacific Islander Business Leaders Coalition

LETTER FROM FORMER SENIOR MEMBERS OF REPUBLICAN  
ADMINISTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF CHRISTOPHER LU'S NOMINATION

July 26, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
The Honorable James Risch  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

All of us have held senior-level positions in Republican administrations, and we are writing to support the nomination of Chris Lu to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations for Management and Reform.

We have worked with Chris at the University of Virginia Miller Center and have seen up-close his deep commitment to public service. Drawing on his two decades of federal experience, Chris has made significant contributions to the public's understanding of the inner workings of government, as well as current policy issues. Chris approaches his work in a balanced manner, always with great thought and integrity. Even when he disagrees with someone else's views, he does so respectfully and in a way that fosters collaboration.

We believe that Chris Lu has the right temperament, experience, and intellect to represent the United States at the United Nations, and we hope he will be promptly confirmed for this position. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John M. Bridgeland  
Director  
White House Domestic Policy Council (George W. Bush)

Mary Kate Cary  
Speechwriter, White House (George H.W. Bush)

Eric S. Edelman  
Ambassador to Finland and Turkey  
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (George W. Bush)

Philip D. Zelikow  
Executive Director, 9/11 Commission  
Counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

LETTER FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC AND AMERICAN  
CAUCUS (CAPAC) IN SUPPORT OF CHRISTOPHER LU'S NOMINATION

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 28, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
The Honorable James Risch  
US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

As Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific and American Caucus (CAPAC), which is comprised of 76 members of Congress, I write to express strong support for Chris Lu, who has been nominated to be the U.S. Representative to the United Nations for UN Management and Reform. His 20 years of public service at the highest levels of government make him well-qualified for this position.

During the Obama Administration, CAPAC members worked closely with Chris on issues of importance to the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. I have seen up-close his skill in crafting innovative policy and communications strategies, managing large organizations, and bringing diverse interests together to solve problems. Chris is also a trailblazer in the Asian American community. He was one of the highest-ranking AAPIs in the Obama Administration, and only the second Asian American in history to become a deputy secretary of a Cabinet department. His work as co-chair of the White House Initiative on AAPIs led to important policy changes regarding data disaggregation and language translation. After leaving government, Chris has used his public voice to raise awareness about the pandemic's economic impact on AAPIs and the need to address the troubling rise in anti-AAPI hate crimes.

Chris Lu is a proven, knowledgeable, and experienced leader who will deliver results for our nation at the United Nations. I am proud to support him and urge his prompt confirmation.

Sincerely,



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress  
CAPAC Chair

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:11 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Kaine, Van Hollen, Risch, Young, and Cruz.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing on nominations of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider nominations for four very important positions. Secretary, former Senator, Ken Salazar to be Ambassador to Mexico, Ms. Jessica Lewis to be Assistant Secretary of State for Political and Military Affairs, Ambassador Donald Lu to be the Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, and Ms. Marcella Escobari to be an Assistant Administrator for the United States Agency for International Development for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Congratulations on all your nominations. I know all of you have a distinguished history of public service. We appreciate your willingness to continue to serve your country, and those members of your family.

I understand that Senator Bennet and Senator Hickenlooper, our colleagues from Colorado, will be introducing Secretary Salazar this morning. So we will go to them.

Senior Senator from Colorado, Senator Bennet?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL BENNET, U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO**

Senator BENNET. Thank you, Chairman Menendez for having me, the Ranking Member as well, for allowing Senator Hickenlooper and me to introduce Ken Salazar, President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Mexico.

Ken is no stranger to this body where he served with distinction, and Colorado is honored to call him our own. And I am grateful to call him a mentor and a brother. In my view, President Biden could not have made a better choice.

The American Southwest embodies our braided history with Mexico, and I cannot think of anyone with a deeper connection to the region than Ken.

Our history goes back over 400 years when Ken's family settled in New Mexico before America was even a country. Later, the family journeyed to Colorado, San Luis Valley, where they have farmed for five generations.

If you drive down to the Valley and visit San Luis, which is Colorado's oldest town, there is a stone marker identifying the state's first irrigation ditch, The People's Ditch, etched into the stone or the names of farmers and ranchers who were entitled to draw water from that ditch, because they were the ones who dug it, and the name Salazar is among them.

The Valley is a sparse, beautiful part of our state, but it was not an easy place to grow up. The Salazar family ranch in Los Rincones did not have electricity until 1982.

Ken and his siblings grew up reading with oil lamps. They did not have phones, or television, but they did have the example of their parents, both incredible patriots. Ken's father, Henry, served in World War II and became a staff sergeant. He was so proud of his service to America, that he asked the family to bury him in uniform, which they did.

When the war broke out, Ken's mother, Emma, also wanted to do her part. So she traveled to Washington by herself, when she was only 19, to work at the Pentagon. Neither of his parents had a college education, but they worked hard to provide their family with opportunities they never had, all eight of their children, including Ken, became first-time college graduates.

They were so proud of everything Ken went on to achieve, from working as a lawyer at top western firms, to breaking barriers as the first Hispanic-American elected to statewide office, as Colorado's Attorney General, to become the first Mexican-American elected to the U.S. Senate outside of New Mexico, to joining President Obama's historic Cabinet as Secretary of the Interior.

Ken is exactly who we need to strengthen our vitally important relationship with Mexico, which is critical to the stability and prosperity of our entire hemisphere. But as this committee appreciates, the relationship faces no shortage of challenges, from immigration, to trade, energy, resource management, public health, and the rule of law.

Ken has worked and lived virtually all of these issues. As Colorado's Attorney General, Ken negotiated several extradition arrangements with Mexico, many of which remain in place today. In the Senate he led important immigration reform with Ted Kennedy and John McCain. He shaped major provisions of the Farm Bill. He helped craft by partisan energy bills. When he left to serve in the administration, Harry Reid and Mitch McConnell praised his leadership on the floor, and the Senate confirmed his nomination unanimously.

As Interior secretary, Ken negotiated water-sharing agreements between the U.S. and Mexico, and strengthened bilateral cooperation around conservation to protect Big Bend National Park along the Rio Grande.

I could go on, Mr. Chairman, but it comes down to this, you would struggle mightily to find someone more qualified than Ken. He has the experience and substance to hit the ground running, and a life story that represents America at our best.

I urge the committee to advance his nomination with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. When I am up for a nomination, I want you introducing me, Senator Bennet.

Senator Hickenlooper?

Senator BENNET. I will be there.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN HICKENLOOPER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO**

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Well, good morning, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member, and members of the committee.

I am also equally honored to introduce Secretary Ken Salazar, President Biden's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the United Mexican States. I have known Ken for over 30 years, from when we first had a jazz club in the basement of my restaurant, and he was raising money for a campaign to protect open lands in Southern Colorado called La Tierra. We got John Nichols to come speak, and raised—I think we raised 16 or \$1,800.

His older brother, John, who some of you remember, from serving in the House, was my Secretary of Agriculture, my first term as governor. Ken has been beside me on every campaign, and every major issue, every political battle I fought. And I have tried to be by his side as well.

As Michael said, his family story is emblematic of the relationship between the U.S. and Mexico. His family settled in Southwest, United States was then New Spain in the 16th century. His ancestors helped found the City of Santa Fe. Michael described him growing up on Los Rincones without electricity. He did not mention that Los Rincones is a scrabble of about six buildings. The big city, Manassa, which is four miles away, almost has a population of a thousand.

Again, the ranch down there is one of the most beautiful places in Colorado. My son, Teddy, learned to ride, ride a horse on this ranch when he was 11 years old. And of those eight children that Ken's parents, Emma and Henry raised, all eight graduated from college.

And I was also—well, you ought to get him to tell the story at some point, but children six, seven, and eight were all born on the same long night, which is a story only he can tell. He served Governor Romer, both as chief counsel and as secretary of Natural Resources, and both in those roles, and as a U.S. Senator, and as the secretary of Interior, he never shied away from tough issues.

He understands the importance of collaboration, and bipartisan-ship, pragmatism. He is a world-class negotiator, which I think he got from his mother, Emma. She was about 5 feet 2 inches, and yet one of the strongest, most potent political forces in Colorado. She blessed two generations of candidates, and they were not always Democrats, but she blessed to two generations, she blessed me on my reelection in 2014 when she was 91 years old.

When he came to the Senate, Ken designated and chose Senator John McCain as his mentor, as a freshman senator, and the two worked together on immigration reform, both working with Republicans and Democrats, he convened ranchers and environmentalists throughout his term as secretary—as Interior secretary, on water issues, conservation issues, et cetera.

From a ranch in Conejos County, Colorado, to the hallways of this chamber, Ken has had a package of experiences that make him uniquely qualified to be a remarkable Ambassador to Mexico. Mexico is an important ally and trading partner. Nuevo Laredo now is our largest port of entry, and in many—in so many cases, the United States and Mexico share priorities. And I think that it is a delicate point in the relationship now, a point that demands someone with the skills of Ken Salazar.

All of us in Colorado are so grateful for all of his contributions, the things that he has done. He created something called Great Outdoors Colorado that, to this day, is perhaps the greatest public-private partnership around land conservation in the history of this country. In everything that he has done, he has been able to bring people together, resolve conflict, and create progress.

And that is exactly what we need now. We are all fortunate to his, once again, answering the call to service, to take on this crucial role at this crucial time.

I wholeheartedly support his nomination, and I hope that he gets widespread support from every single person on this committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Senator Hickenlooper. I did not think there was much that could be added after Senator Bennet, but you did a fantastic job of filling out the total, the total picture. So we know that both of you have very busy agendas and you are welcome to excuse yourselves at any time.

With that, let me take a moment to introduce Ms. Jessica Lewis. It is with a mixture of deep pride and wistfulness that we are here today considering the nomination of Ms. Lewis to be the next Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Political Military Affairs.

I, like many others in both the Senate and the House, have had the good fortune of working closely with Ms. Lewis and benefiting from her exceptional wisdom, drive, and judgment. Ms. Lewis is recognized across party lines as one of the most effective and respected leaders on Capitol Hill, she is a trailblazer for women in national security. Indeed, if approved by the Senate, she will be the first woman confirmed to hold this position.

You all know her as the majority staff director of this committee, and prior to that, as a senior national security and foreign policy advisor for then Majority Leader Harry Reid. What you may not know is that she came to Capitol Hill almost two decades ago to work for me as a foreign policy advisor and staff director of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee in the House of Representatives. So we are proud of all of Jessica's accomplishments since then.

And while it would be impossible to catalogue all of these accomplishments here, I do want to highlight her leadership, her steady hand during this past year in particular, leading the staff to an incredibly productive year, while also providing invaluable advice on



the committee's foreign policy priorities. I have been deeply impressed, and that is not an easy thing to do, but not at all surprised.

I would like to highlight that Ms. Lewis' tireless dedication over her entire career to mentoring young professionals as well, elevating her colleagues, and empowering those who have not been traditionally represented in the field, are exemplary. And I have no doubt she will apply herself in the same way, and with equal success at the State Department.

Secretary Salazar is a friend of mine, and of this committee, and I am deeply gratified by your nomination to be Ambassador to Mexico. It is a Testament to the Biden administration's seriousness about restoring a productive and respectful relationship with the people and Government of Mexico. One of the most important, expansive bilateral relationships we have.

The task ahead of you is great. You will need to continue engaging on the critical issues of trade and migration that have been central in our bilateral relationship, while also engaging on the, often uncomfortable, issues that face both our nations, including the trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people, environmental threats, and issues of democracy, governance, and rule of law, including with respect to human rights and labor rights.

I have no doubt that your vast experience in government, your personal ties to Mexico, and your commitment to bipartisan solutions will make you an excellent ambassador upon your confirmation.

Of the Office of Political Military Affairs, for which Ms. Lewis has been nominated, are of vital importance to U.S. foreign and national security policy, and to this committee. It is a position with immense impact for safeguarding U.S. national security and promoting and accomplishing vital U.S. foreign policy objectives.

In recent years, the Bureau's relationship and credibility with this committee has been strained, though it has been improving. I expect that with Ms. Lewis at the helm, the Bureau's level of cooperation with the oversight activities of, and consultation with this committee will improve considerably. And I will put that expectation to the test.

Ambassador Lu, I am pleased to see you back again before this committee, this time to be the next Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs, a region of critical importance and significant challenges. Indeed, the rapidly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan will require sustained Senate oversight for how the administration plans to mitigate the effects of the withdrawal.

I, along with many members of this committee are especially concerned about the plight of women, and the minorities as the Taliban continues to gain military strength.

In addition, as the administration evacuates the first group of Afghan SIV applicants, I continue to be concerned about the thousands of remaining Afghan SIV applicants and our Afghan human rights and democracy partners whose lives remain in grave danger from the Taliban.

And as you know, any peaceful resolution to this conflict must be regional in nature, and will require the Assistant Secretary to be deeply engaged.

Our relationship with India is growing, bolstered by a vibrant Indian-American community here in the United States, I expect our diplomats to deepen this relationship while remaining true to our core values, and raising concerns as necessary.

In Bangladesh, I continue to advocate for labor rights in the establishment of unions to ensure that workers in every sector can work in safe conditions. There will be no shortage of challenges, but I am confident that your knowledge and experience in the region will serve you well as you take on this role.

Ms. Escobari, your extensive experience helping countries in our hemisphere chart a path towards prosperity, including in your previous service as USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau, which make you exceptionally qualified for this position. As you know, the challenges we face in the region are growing by the day. Democratic backsliding has accelerated in many countries aggravating by the ongoing socioeconomic impact of COVID-19.

With the recent assassination in Haiti, widespread protests and regime violence in Cuba, and authoritarian crackdown in Nicaragua, humanitarian emergency in Venezuela, and numerous challenges related to irregular migration, the Western Hemisphere today is less secure, less prosperous, and less stable than it had been in many years.

We look forward to hearing how you will work to address those challenges, if confirmed.

In closing, the four of you have immense challenges ahead, I am confident that your rich experiences will serve you well as you take on your new responsibilities upon confirmation. We look forward to your testimonies. And this is normally a little longer than we would in introducing, nominees, but you are coming into critical positions.

So let me turn to the distinguished ranking member for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks to our witnesses for joining us today, and your willingness to serve, and of course your families who will share in that sacrifice.

I want to start with the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Central Affairs. Personally, my top two foreign policy priorities are China and global health. And India is a major player in both of these priorities.

So I look forward to hearing your views on how we can work with India to maintain a favorable balance of power in the Indian Ocean, and continued to partner in the fight against COVID, and other global health concerns, including vaccine development and manufacturing in India.

It is also becoming clear that a hasty U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan threatens to squander our hard-fought gains there. Ambassador Lu, we welcome your thoughts on the way ahead.

Next, we have the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs. Our security partnerships are essential to protecting our vital national interests. They are also critical aspect

of competition with China and Russia. We will often hear from our allies and partners over the problems and the speed of our security cooperation process. And often state is at the forefront of these problems.

I look forward to hearing how you plan to strengthen our relationships with partners, and allies, and keep the U.S., the security partner of choice around the world. I have no doubt you have great qualifications for that task in as much as your service on this committee has shown that to be such.

On the nomination of Assistant Administrator of USAID for Latin America and the Caribbean, if confirmed, you will have no shortage of challenges, especially the political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, the growing violence and poverty in Haiti surrounding the recent assassination of President Moyes, democracy in Cuba and Nicaragua, and holding governments in Central America accountable for addressing the drivers of irregular immigration.

And for the nomination of a U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, Senator Salazar, Secretary Salazar, it is good to see you again. As neighbors, Mexico and the United States share an enduring interest in maintaining robust security and economic cooperation. I look forward to hearing your thoughts, especially on how to address the growing role of Mexican transnational criminal organization in the production and trafficking of fentanyl into the United States.

I think all of us have been shocked by the state of politics in Mexico, with the huge number of assassinations that have taken place of people that are running for public office, and the current state of affairs there. It is staggering how many people have been killed.

Ambassador—excuse me—Senator Salazar, your ability to handle these things, I have absolutely no question about. It has been a pleasure working with you on issues that were parochial to my state while you were Secretary of the Interior. I enjoyed serving with you briefly in this chamber.

And with that I will yield back my time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

All right, we will turn to our nominees. We will start with Secretary Salazar, and moved down the dais. We ask you to summarize your statement in about five minutes, so we can have a conversation with you. Your full statements will be included in the record without objection.

And with that, we recognize Secretary Salazar.

**STATEMENT OF HON. KENNETH LEE SALAZAR, OF COLORADO,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES**

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, and Ranking Member Risch, and all the members of this committee, for the time this morning. I appreciate your service and your leadership on this committee.

I also want to acknowledge and thank my good friends, Senator Michael Bennet, and Senator John Hickenlooper for their long jour-

ney with me together, working on issues that we so much care about for Colorado and the United States of America.

And I want to acknowledge my family back in Colorado, and the San Luis Valley, and in Denver. My wonderful wife, Esperanza, watching this hearing this morning with Melinda, Andrea, Mireya, and Selena, and Blake, and all of my family in the valley, thank you so much for being the wind beneath my wings for all of the journey that I have had in this wonderful life of mine.

Let me also acknowledge my guests here today. Former colleagues from the U.S. Senate, as well as friends, Stephanie Valencia, Felicia Escobar and Dan Restrepo, I thank them for their help in my own—in my journey.

So let me also say, this is a very proud moment for me, proud because President Joe Biden is a person who cares a lot about Mexico, Central America and Latin America, his many trips, even as Vice President trying to deal with these issues that have been around for—the United States for a very long time, are a testament to his attention to the North-South relationship and to the Western hemisphere.

And so I am very proud to be able to work with him, to have the opportunity, if confirmed by this committee and the Senate, to be able to work on the issues that he so much cares about.

And likewise, Vice President Kamala Harris, she and I knew each other back in her days as attorney general. And I know her interest in dealing with the issues, including the root causes in the relationship between the U.S., Mexico, Central America, and Latin America.

So I very much look forward to being a part of their team, but I can only do that work effectively if I also work closely with the members of this committee, and that includes both the majority and the minority staff, it includes a you, Senator Menendez, Senator Risch, and each of the members of this committee. We may not always agree, but what I will make sure I do is that I have the opportunity to hear your voices and to work with you, to deal with these solutions, or these challenges, and create solutions that we have all been looking for.

So let me just say a word about how I see the issues for the United States and Mexico. Our futures are inextricably bound together as two nations, as people that have a very common heritage.

We are inextricably bound together because of the demographics of our two nations. We are inextricably bound together because of the migration patterns of the history of our two nations. We are inextricably bound together with our economic and jobs, dreams, and the prosperity for both nations. And we are inextricably bound together with the dream of security, and freedom from the fear of violence that we currently see on the border, on both sides of the border, and on the southern border of Mexico, as well as in other places in Latin America. And we are bound together by our history and by our heritage.

I will not spend a long time talking about those issues, but very quickly on the demographics, we have about 170 million Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in both countries. It is interesting that of those 170 million more than one-fourth of the population resides here in the United States. And they come from families like mine

that have been around, through our heritage, for 400, 700 years with our Native American, Mexican, and Spanish backgrounds, through the Mexican-American War in 1848, and then for the last 170 years as American citizens.

We are bound together because the issues of migration have brought us together historically through the push and pull of the history of migration into this country. It is an issue which still be-devils this country in terms of how we deal with a sustainable, orderly migration system, and in order to get to that point, we have to work closely with the Mexican Government to share our interest in dealing with those issues.

We are bound together because of our economy and jobs. You know, they say that the Latino population is the mainstream economy in the United States, some 60 million strong, Cuban Americans, and Puerto Ricans, and Dominicans, and 60 million strong contributing greatly to the economy United States and to the future, political, and demographics of this country. So we need to make sure that we are integrating that community.

And on security, we cannot deal with the security issues without having the Mexican Government working with us. It is incumbent upon them because it is a shared responsibility that we have to deal with the violence issues, both on that side of the border, as well as on this side of the border.

So let me just conclude by saying, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member Risch. This is a very proud moment for me, it is a very proud moment because of our history, but it is also a very proud moment, as I look forward to the future, yes, full of challenges, but full of opportunities. It is a proud moment for us to bring the two nations closer together and to deal with a kind of reality that creates prosperity, security, and peace for the peoples of both the United States and Mexico.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Salazar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. KENNETH LEE SALAZAR

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member and members of the committee, I am proud and humbled to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to Mexico.

My history is deeply rooted in Mexico and the United States. My forebearers came from Mexico and Spain in the early 1600s and settled along the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte near Santa Fe, New Mexico. Following the end of the Mexican-American War, they migrated north and established the settlement of Los Rincones in the San Luis Valley. Today, we still ranch and farm the same lands along the tributaries of the Rio Grande.

My father was a proud soldier in World War II. My mother helped open the Pentagon as a public servant. After the war, they returned home. At home, our native language was Spanish. We were poor and worked in the fields and home alongside our parents. We were taught to dream big dreams and the timeless values of faith, hard work and education. All eight of their children became first generation college graduates.

Like my parents, I am a proud American. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance the interests of the United States and to strengthen the common bonds between the United States and Mexico. I recognize the difficult and enormous challenges ahead. I also am optimistic about the opportunities ahead for our two nations.

In my view, it is time to create transformative change in the United States-Mexico relationship by ushering in a new era of partnership with our southern neighbor.

That partnership must:

- address jobs and economic opportunity for the people of the United States and Mexico through trade, infrastructure, tourism, and investment;
- secure our shared borders and create an orderly, safe, and humane framework for migration;
- identify partnerships that address the scourge of violence and respects the rule of law; and
- engage in a global sustainability transformation for a viable planet while respecting the sovereignty of both nations.

If confirmed, I will seek the advice and guidance of this committee and its members in my service to the United States. I look forward to working with President Biden and Vice President Harris and the United States Congress to advance the interests of the United States in Mexico. I also look forward to working with the Mexican Government to advance our shared interests in Mexico and here in the United States.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Secretary Salazar.  
Ms. Lewis?

**STATEMENT OF MS. JESSICA LEWIS, OF OHIO, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS]**

Ms. LEWIS. Chairman Menendez. Thank you, first of all, for your kind words. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, I am honored and humbled to be here as the Biden-Harris administration's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs.

I would like to thank President Biden for nominating me, and Secretary Blinken for his support. I was lucky enough to start my career on this committee, under then Chairman Biden when Secretary Blinken was the staff director on the committee.

I would like to thank my father, Robert Lewis, for raising my sister and me; his strength and love after my mother, Molly Lewis, passed away when I was a child, made me who I am today. I am also lucky to have the love and support of my stepmother, who is truly my second mother, Patricia Lewis. And I am joined by my sister, Kaitlynn Griffith, who has been with me every step of the way.

My greatest joy in life has been as a mother, and I would like to thank my 9-year-old son, Matthew, who is wisely enjoying a day of summer camp today instead of sitting through a hearing. And to my incredible community of friends, thank you for being my second family.

I would like to personally thank Chairman Menendez, who hired me nearly 20 years ago as a staffer on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and who trained me to be a staffer. The Chairman has the sharpest mind I have encountered, and has taught me to stand up for what I believe. I would not be here before the committee today if it were not for Senator Menendez.

I would like to thank former Senator Harry Reid, who taught me the ways of the Senate during my nine years working for him, and Senator Cardin, who brought me on as staff director of this committee.

And finally, I would like to thank the outstanding bipartisan staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to my team, you are simply the best.

To my Republican colleagues, working with you has taught me when we can come together, as we recently did on the China Bill

which passed this committee with overwhelming support, we are at our very best.

I have spent my entire career in public service, if confirmed I would be honored to continue that path at the State Department. I began my career teaching third grade in public schools, and believe my work as a teacher serves as the foundation for all I do today.

I then worked at the Organization of American States running education, training, and technology programs in Latin America. Since then, I have spent nearly 20 years on The Hill and have worked on some of the most critical national security legislation of our time. I staffed the Conference Committee for the legislation that implemented the 9/11 Commission recommendations in the early-2000s, and recently negotiated passage of the Countering American Adversaries Through Sanctions Act only a few years ago.

And, as Senator Reid's National Security advisor, I worked directly with the Armed Services and Intelligence Committees, the Defense Department, and our Intelligence Agency.

The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs manages our arms sales, and security assistance, negotiates international security agreements, and manages our security relationships with other countries. The Bureau is also in charge of U.S. programs to help countries cope with the after effects of war through conventional weapons destruction programs.

If confirmed, I would focus on four areas. First, as President Biden promised, a plan to enhance the consideration of human rights in our decision-making to ensure our arms sales are in our foreign policy interest, and in line with American values.

Second, I am committed to reinvigorating the Bureau's relationship with this committee and with Congress.

Third, I want to focus on strengthening the workforce at the Bureau, and specifically its efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Fourth, I believe the judicious provision of U.S. defense equipment can deepen our relationships with our allies and partners, and support our foreign policy and national security. I believe if government can help to keep the global playing field level, our defense companies can continue to out-compete any rival while upholding our values.

In conclusion, if confirmed, I am committed to leveraging the tools of the Political-Military Affairs Bureau in the service of U.S. foreign policy and American values.

Thank you. And I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lewis follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF JESSICA LEWIS

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, I am honored and humbled to be here as the Biden-Harris administration's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs.

I would like to thank President Biden for nominating me, and Secretary Blinken for his support.

I would like to thank my father Robert Lewis for raising my sister and me. His strength and love after my mother, Molly Lewis, passed away when I was a child, made me who I am. I am also lucky to have the love and support of my step-mother—who is truly my second mother—Patricia Lewis. I am joined by my sister Kaitlynn Griffith, who has been with me every step of my life. My greatest joy in

life has been as a mother, and I would like to thank my 9-year-old son Matthew, who is wisely enjoying a day of summer camp today instead of sitting through a hearing. And to my incredible community of friends—thank you for being my second family.

I would like to personally thank Chairman Menendez, who hired me nearly 20 years ago as a staffer on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and who trained me to be a staffer. The Chairman has the sharpest mind I have encountered and has taught me to stand up for what you believe in. I would not be here before the committee today if it were not for Senator Menendez.

I would like to thank former Senator Harry Reid, who taught me the ways of the Senate during my 9 years working for him, and Senator Cardin, who brought me on as staff director of this committee.

Finally, I would like to thank the outstanding bipartisan staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. To my team, you are simply the best. To my Republican colleagues, working with you has taught me when we can come together—as we recently did on the China bill which passed this committee with overwhelming support—we are at our best.

I have spent my entire career in public service; if confirmed, I would be honored to continue that path at the State Department. I began my career teaching third grade in public schools and believe my work as a teacher serves a foundation for all I do.

I then worked at the Organization of American States running education, training, and technology programs in Latin America.

Since then, I have spent nearly 20 years on the Hill and have worked on some of the most critical national security legislation of our time. I staffed the conference committee for the legislation that implemented the 9-11 Commission recommendations in the early 2000s and negotiated passage of the Countering Americas Adversaries Through Sanctions Act only a few years ago.

And, as Senator Reid's national security advisor, I worked directly with the Armed Services and Intelligence Committees, the Defense Department, and our Intelligence Agencies.

The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs manages our arms sales and security assistance, negotiates international security agreements, and manages our security relationships with other countries. The Bureau is also in charge of U.S. programs to help countries cope with the aftereffects of war through conventional weapons destruction programs.

The Bureau is also unique because of its dedicated workforce. They have a well-deserved reputation for professionalism, and they have performed the challenging work of the Bureau across administrations.

If confirmed, I would focus on four areas.

- First, as President Biden promised, I plan to enhance the consideration of human rights in our decision-making to ensure our arms sales are in our foreign policy interest and in line with American values.
- Second, I am committed to reinvigorating the Bureau's relationship with this committee and Congress.
- Third, I want to focus on strengthening the workforce at the Bureau, and specifically its efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Fourth, I believe the judicious provision of U.S. defense equipment can deepen our relationships with our allies and partners and support our foreign policy and national security. I believe if government can help to keep the global playing field level, our defense companies can continue to outcompete any rival while upholding our values.

In conclusion, if confirmed, I am committed to leveraging the tools of the Political-Military Affairs Bureau in the service of U.S. foreign policy and American values.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And as a good staffer, you came in under five minutes. So it is just amazing.

Ambassador Lu, please go ahead?



**STATEMENT OF THE HON. DONALD LU, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS**

Ambassaador LU. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of this committee, I am honored and humbled to be here today as President Biden's nominee to be the next Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs.

I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have shown in me. I would not be here today without the love and support of my family. I am joined today by wife and best friend, Ariel. And we have two wonderful teenagers at home, Kip and Aliya. Unlike Security Salazar's kids, they are not watching, they are sleeping soundly at the moment.

As the son of an immigrant to the United States, I am particularly proud to have served my country in the U.S. Foreign Service in the Peace Corps. During my 30 years at the State Department, I have worked in India, Pakistan, and Central Asia, advancing our agenda on counterterrorism, democracy, and anti-corruption.

As someone who believes that the Foreign Service and the Civil Service should look like the face of America, I am committed to implementing the President's vision on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Mr. Chairman, with the President's decision to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan by September 11, we are faced with new risks and new opportunities. And in particular, we have an historic opportunity to rebalance our relations with the countries of this region to better reflect our long-term strategic priorities.

First, it is in our national interest to continue to strengthen our fast-growing strategic, economic, and people-to-people ties with India, while also speaking forthrightly about human rights and our democratic values. As two great Indo-Pacific powers, we must strive to ensure that our Asian partners remain sovereign and free, and not dominated by a single power.

As two great democracies, we must demonstrate through our example why democracy promotes peace, stability, and personal freedoms. And as two great free-market economies, we can build a more stable and inclusive global economy.

As the producer of 60 percent of the world's vaccines, India is critical to the global fight against COVID-19, and if confirmed, I would work with India to end this devastating pandemic. And I commit to working with India and our partners to tackle the climate crisis.

Second, on Pakistan: We have for more than 20 years defined our relations with this important partner primarily through the prism of counterterrorism and security. If confirmed, I will build on our long history of friendship with Pakistan to advance human rights, religious freedom, counterterrorism cooperation, and an improved business climate for American investors.

Third, Afghanistan: I started my career working on the Afghan border in the Pakistani City of Peshawar. I saw then, first-hand, the desperate plight of Afghan refugees. I have a deep commitment to encouraging peace, security, human rights, and the rights of

women and girls. If confirmed, I will work to advance our objectives in Afghanistan.

Finally, in the other countries of South and Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and the Maldives, we face competition from China and Russia like never before. We must recommit ourselves to robust engagement with these countries to support their sovereignty and independence in the face of many challenges.

Critical new tools have been authorized in this effort, from the creation of the Development Finance Corporation, to this committee's important work on the Strategic Competition Act.

If confirmed, I will work to make the United States a reliable international partner for the Governments and peoples of these countries, one who is willing to call out malign influence, and stand up for human rights and democracy.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will take seriously my role as a steward of the public trust. I will safeguard our precious resources, our people, our embassies, and the strong reputation of the United States.

I believe in the importance of our voice in support of human rights, religious freedom, and democracy, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the Congress to build robust relations between the United States and the nations of South and Central Asia. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Lu follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD LU

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear here today as President Biden's nominee to be the next Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

As the son of an immigrant to the United States, I am particularly proud to have served my country in the U.S. Foreign Service and the Peace Corps. During my 30 years in the State Department, I have worked in India, Pakistan, and Central Asia advancing our agenda on counterterrorism, democracy, and anti-corruption. And as someone who believes that the Foreign Service and the Civil Service should look like the face of America, I am committed to implementing the President's vision on diversity, equity and inclusion.

Mr. Chairman, with the President's decision to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan by September 11, we are faced with new risks and new opportunities. In particular, we have an historic opportunity to rebalance our relations with the countries in the region to better reflect our long-term strategic priorities.

First, it is in our national interest to continue to strengthen our fast-growing strategic, economic, and people-to-people ties with India, while also speaking forthrightly about human rights and our democratic values. As two great Indo-Pacific powers, we must strive to ensure that our Asian partners remain sovereign and free, and not dominated by a single power. As two great democracies, we should demonstrate through our example why democracy promotes peace, stability, and personal freedoms. And as two great free-market economies, we can build a more stable and inclusive global economy. As the producer of 60 percent of the world's vaccines, India is critical to the global fight against COVID-19, and if confirmed, I would work with India to end this devastating pandemic. And I commit to working with India and our partners to tackle the climate crisis.

Second, on Pakistan, we have for more than 20 years defined our relations with this important partner primarily through the prism of counterterrorism and security. If confirmed, I will build on our long history of friendship with Pakistan to advance human rights, religious freedom, counterterrorism cooperation, and an improved business environment for American investors.

Third, on Afghanistan, I started my career working on the Afghan border in the Pakistani city of Peshawar and saw first-hand the desperate plight of Afghan refugees. I have a deep commitment to encouraging peace, security, human rights, and the rights of women and girls. If confirmed, I will work to advance our objectives in Afghanistan.

Finally, in the other countries of South and Central Asia—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and the Maldives—we face competition from China and Russia like never before. We must recommit ourselves to robust engagement with these countries to support their sovereignty and independence in the face of many challenges. Critical new tools have been authorized in that effort, from the creation of the Development Finance Corporation, to this committee's important work on the Strategic Competition Act. If confirmed, I will work to make the United States a reliable international partner to the Governments and peoples of these countries, one who is willing to call out malign influence and stand up for human rights and democracy.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will take seriously my role as a steward of the public trust. I will safeguard our precious resources—our people, our embassies, and the strong reputation of the United States. I believe in the importance of our voice in support of human rights, religious freedom, and democracy. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Congress to build robust relations between the United States and the nations of South and Central Asia.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.  
Ms. Escobari?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI, OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT [LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN]**

Ms. ESCOBARI. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for opportunity to testify before you today.

It is an honor to be nominated by President Biden to serve as Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean at USAID.

My passion for development was sparked by growing up in Bolivia, one of the poorest countries in our hemisphere, the daughter of two pediatricians who worked in the country's public hospitals.

They brought home a passion for making a difference one child at a time, but also the frustrations of seeing kids die more from disease than poverty. They wanted to prevent disease, not just treat it. My father started the first blood bank in our city, and my mother tried to change culture, implementing practices of hand-washing in maternity wards.

My parents inspired me to tackle the root causes, not just the symptoms of poverty. So I want to thank those watching this today, my husband, Beran, our sons Nico and Lucas, and our friends and family, whose support and love are the reasons I can sit before you today.

When I had the honor to serve in this role for the last year of the Obama administration, the region faced acute threats. Venezuela's economy had contracted by 60 percent, and 300,000 people had fled the country. Hurricane Mathew had hit an already-battered Haiti, and Colombia was embarking on a fragile peace process.

Now the stakes are even higher. The pandemic has hit Latin America harder than any other region in the world. 5.6 million people have fled Venezuela, a humanitarian crisis created by an op-

pressive and inept regime. The people of Cuba and Nicaragua are seeing renewed crackdowns on their most fundamental rights. And one of the strongest democracies in the region, Colombia, is being shaken by economic and social unrest.

Our ability to extend a hand urgently and wholeheartedly, in partnership with our southern neighbors will largely determine the course of the region's recovery.

I believe that the stakes are profound, nothing less than the faith of the region's citizens that liberal democracy, rule of law, and market-based economies can deliver on their most pressing needs.

The inability, and in a few cases unwillingness of national governments to respond to these needs, have led to political instability that threatens the future of the region, as well as the security of the United States.

So I sit before you with a sense of urgency. If confirmed, I will focus on these pressing issues: combating COVID-19, confronting the security and migration crisis in Central America, and strengthening governance across the region.

My passion and conviction come from my parents, but my optimism that we can make a difference, is grounded in a career studying and implementing development. My early experiences in the private sector taught me the importance of creating conditions for investment and growth. In academia, I learned the value of good ideas, and while there are no silver bullets, there is a lot we know about what works and what does not.

If confirmed, I will bring a focus on data and evidence, as well as the ability to iterate quickly on lessons learned. During my time at USAID, I had the privilege to work with dedicated and knowledgeable professionals, who regularly go above and beyond the call of duty.

If confirmed, I will empower their efforts and contribute to a culture where respect, equity, diversity, and inclusion are part of our values and the way that we operate, both here and abroad.

Since leaving the Obama administration, I have worked on the barriers to inclusion and opportunities faced by workers here in the United States. We often draw lines between so-called "developed" and "developing", between Global North and Global South. But in truth, there is no bright line when it comes to the crippling effects of poverty.

The need for inclusive, sustained growth is as real in Appalachia as it is in Antigua. I hope to bring that humility to this job, the sense that every nation is a work in progress, and given the cross-border nature of our challenges, climate change, pandemics, cyber threats, our fates are linked, and our ability to work together, even more urgent.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. And I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Escobari follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for considering my nomination.

It is an honor to be nominated by President Biden to serve as Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean at USAID.

My passion for development was sparked during my childhood in Bolivia, one of the poorest countries on the continent, as the daughter of two pediatricians who practiced in the country's public hospitals.

They brought home a passion for making a difference one child at a time, but also the frustration of seeing children die more often from poverty than disease.

They wanted to prevent disease, not just treat it. My father started the first blood bank in our city, and my mother tried to change culture—with simple things like handwashing practices, or promoting the use of breast milk.

My parents inspired me to tackle the root causes—not simply the symptoms—of poverty.

I want to thank them (who are watching this today), my husband, Beran, our sons Nico and Lucas, and our friends and family, whose support and love are the reasons I can sit before you today.

When I had the honor to serve in this role for the last year of the Obama Administration, the region faced acute threats. Venezuela's economy had contracted by 60 percent, 300,000 people had fled the country. Hurricane Mathew had hit an already battered Haiti, and Colombia was embarking on a fragile peace process.

Now the stakes are even higher. 5.6 million people have fled Venezuela—a humanitarian crisis created by an oppressive and incompetent regime. The people of Cuba and Nicaragua are seeing renewed crackdowns on their most fundamental rights. And one of the strongest democracies in the region, Colombia, is being shaken by economic and social unrest. The pandemic has struck Latin America harder than any other region in the world.

Our ability to extend a hand—urgently and wholeheartedly—in partnership with our southern neighbors will largely determine the course of the region's recovery.

I believe that the stakes are profound—nothing less than the faith of the region's citizens that liberal democracy, rule of law, and market-based economies can deliver on their most basic needs.

Inequitable, and lackluster growth have left citizens frustrated and demanding better. And the inability or, in a few cases, unwillingness, of national governments to respond adequately has led to political instability that threatens the future of the region as well as the security of the United States.

I sit before you with a sense of urgency.

If confirmed, I will focus on these pressing issues: combating COVID-19, confronting the security and migration challenges in Central America, and strengthening governance across the region.

This means empowering civil society to stand up to authoritarian regimes, while also helping democratic governments improve their capacity to deliver basic goods and services—from water to electricity to health.

My passion and conviction come from my parents, but my optimism is grounded in a career studying and implementing international development.

My early experiences in the private sector taught me the importance of creating conditions for investment and growth. In academia, I learned the value of good ideas, and while there are no silver bullets, there is a lot we know about what works and what doesn't in development. If confirmed I will bring a focus on data and evidence, as well as the ability to iterate quickly on lessons learned.

During my time at USAID, I had the privilege to work with dedicated and knowledgeable professionals, who regularly go above and beyond the call of duty. If confirmed, I will empower their efforts and contribute to a culture where respect, equity, diversity and inclusion are part of our values and the way that we operate, both here and abroad.

Since leaving the Obama administration, I've worked on the barriers to inclusion and opportunity faced by workers here in the United States.

We often draw lines between so-called developed and developing, between the Global North and Global South, but in truth, there is no bright line when it comes to the crippling effects of poverty.

The need for inclusive, sustainable growth is as real in Appalachia as it is in Antigua.

I hope to bring that humility to this job—the sense that every nation is a work in progress, and given the cross-border nature of our challenges—climate change, pandemics, and cyber threats—our fates are linked, and our ability to work together, even more urgent.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you, all. Let me start with a series of questions on behalf of the full committee. And a simple yes or no from each of you, but would suffice. I have these ques-

tions that speak to the importance of—that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the Executive Branch, and that we expect and will be seeking from you. So I would ask each of you to provide just a yes or no answer.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Mr. SALAZAR. Yes.

Ms. ESCOBARI. Yes.

Ambassaador LU. Yes.

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Mr. SALAZAR. Yes.

Ms. ESCOBARI. Yes.

Ambassador Lu:

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing a notification after the fact?

Ambassaador LU. Yes.

Ms. ESCOBARI. Yes.

Mr. SALAZAR. Yes:

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to request for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Mr. SALAZAR. Yes.

Ms. ESCOBARI. Yes.

Ambassaador LU. Yes.

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. All right, thank you. All right, let me start off then, a round of five minutes.

Secretary Salazar, in the last four years, there were serious problems in the U.S. cooperation with Mexico on migration issues, and previous administration threatened Mexico with sanctions over migration, implemented policies that forced asylum seekers to remain in dangerous Mexican border communities during their application process, and signed a series of agreements whose contents have never been provided in full to Congress.

Some of these policies, in my view, were morally reprehensible as well as potentially on lawful. And while the Biden administration has taken steps to put things on a better path, we need a holistic strategy to strengthen bilateral cooperation on migration issues, and ensure that the United States upholds its international obligations and domestic laws.

So can you take a moment? You referenced it somewhat in your own personal history, but to lay out the vision of how you view the United States and Mexico working together to have a productive and respectful manner to address the challenges related to irregular migration?

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We need to find the synergy with Mexico to deal with a shared set of challenges. For Mexico there is displacement underway with people

leaving Mexico and coming into this country because of a lack of opportunity there. The Mexican Government has an interest in making sure that their people stay there. No one would want to be going away from their home to a country far away unless they were fleeing poverty, or violence, or other forms of distress.

And so what we need to do is to have a high-level dialogue with Mexico to address both the short-term issues that currently deal with issue of irregular migration, but also as the President and the Vice President have said, dealing with the longer-term issues of the root causes, and so working with my colleagues, hopefully if I get confirmed in the State Department, including the panel who is here today, so Secretary Blinken, and the President, and the Vice President, we hope to bring about that kind of dialogue that creates a holistic strategy to deal with the issues of migration.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me turn to the question of violence and crime, violence and the influence of organized crime in Mexico have reached highly concerning levels. In the lead up to the June mid-term elections, over 100 politicians were murdered, 36 of whom were running for office. These trend lines and the serious implications for our national security mandate that we find ways to strengthen U.S.-Mexico security cooperation.

There are areas for easy—there are areas for easy consensus, such as strengthening efforts to address financial crimes tied to the drug trade, and expanding bilateral efforts to combat arms trafficking from the U.S. to Mexico.

However, in other areas, we face potential obstacles to improving security cooperation, including a new Mexican law approved in December that appears to threaten bilateral cooperation and the linkages between drug traffickers and senior Mexican officials, as evidenced in the arrest of General Cienfuegos last year. I trust that upon your confirmation, you will give these issues your full attention, and keep the committee informed.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Chairman, yes, I will. This is an area where the administration is already engaged in high-level dialogues with Mexico on how we deal with these shared issues. And it is something that this committee obviously will be involved in. So I very much look forward to working with the administration and you to find the solutions.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, there is new data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, showing that in 2020 over 93,000 Americans died of drug overdoses in the United States, making it the most lethal year for overdoses on record, opioids, and fentanyl in particular pose highly lethal risk to our citizens, and the U.S. Government has to undertake every effort possible to address this tragedy.

We have to improve domestic to address illicit drug consumption, and we must expand efforts to combat the scourge of illicit production and trafficking of fentanyl and other opioids.

Data indicates that drug traffickers are increasingly shipping fentanyl precursors from China to Mexico, where drug trafficking organizations are producing fentanyl and trafficking it to the United States. Given the threat to U.S. citizens posed by illicit fentanyl trafficking, I also trust you will raise this issue at the highest levels with Mexican officials upon your confirmation.

Mr. SALAZAR. I will do, Mr. Chairman.

All right, Ms. Lewis, just a quick question for you, I have several, but I want to go to the ranking member. The informal review process for arm sales has existed for decades, and is a vital consultative relationship between this committee and the Bureau of Political Military Affairs to work through questions, issues, and concerns about proposed arm sales before they are formally notified to Congress.

That relationship suffered under the last administration, but it has improved dramatically under Secretary Blinken. Do I have your commitment to continue and deepen this consultation process with this committee?

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. The last administration infamously attempted to evade congressional oversight on multiple arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates by abusing authorities intended only for emergency. There was no serious argument that these sales qualified as emergencies under the law. And this episode I would expect should never be repeated.

Do you commit to only recommend using the emergency authorities under the Arms Export Control Act in true emergency situations, and not in an effort to evade Congress?

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Salazar, as you transition into this I am wondering if you are familiar with the backlog of U.S. extradition requests that the United States has out to Mexico. My state in particular has one unique case, but others also. We are struggling a bit with this, and certainly you can blame part of it on COVID, but they also seem to drag their feet.

Are you familiar with this issue? And if not, I assume you will commit to get on board with it and see if we cannot move this along a little better.

Mr. SALAZAR. Yes, Senator Risch. I am generally familiar with the issue. I will say that, as Colorado attorney general, I worked closely with your attorney general, now Attorney General Wasden, to develop among the attorneys general the—at the state level with our counterparts in Mexico, the Article 4 prosecution units, which now exist in many of the attorneys Generals' offices around the country.

And so I would look forward to bringing that experience in terms of the bilateral relationship to make sure that the extradition process as under the Constitution, actually are implemented.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that. And certainly, that work that you did is one of the things that is driving all of this, and that is that it is streamlining the process, but it is still not moving as fast as we would like to see it. So appreciate your thoughts on that. And I hope you will move forward.

Do you have any thoughts on the—the chairman made reference to this, a number of—I understand this is an internal issue within Mexico, but I think Americans were stunned to hear that in this electoral season, which they had their elections, I believe, on June 6th, and on the run-up to that there were 88 candidates assas-



sinated who were running. I mean this is—this is not a hallmark of a democracy by any stretch of the imagination. What are your thoughts on that?

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you, Senator Risch. We need to make sure that we have a strong democracy here at home in the United States, and also that in Mexico, they are a sovereign, and we respect their sovereignty, but they, too, have a shared interest in making sure that the violence, including the assassinations of the last—that occurred during the last election are something that does not happen.

And so it is something that I am certain we will be able to work with the Mexican Government as we enter into the dialogues between the United States and Mexico to address the issues of violence.

Senator RISCH. Thank you.

Ambassador Lu, I want to talk for a minute about our withdrawal from Afghanistan. I noted this just within the last 24, 48 hours, the Taliban met with the Chinese, a delegation from China. And I do not know what was on the agenda. I can about assure you what was not on the agenda was human rights, or treatment of the Uyghurs. What are your thoughts as far as China is now moving into that vacuum?

Ambassaador LU. Senator Risch, first thank you for your attention and interest in this important issue. I read with concern the same press articles about the Chinese meeting with the Taliban. I know that the countries surrounding Afghanistan, including China, share many of the same concerns we have about the deteriorating situation there.

I can assure you, if confirmed, I will do everything in my power to encourage those countries to be messaging directly to the Taliban that any recognition, any assistance, any support is contingent upon the Taliban's participation in a peace process that results in a negotiated political settlement, as well as respect for the progress that has been made over the last years in respecting minority rights, the rights of women and girls, and counterterrorism.

We do face the challenge of independent countries with different views in that region. But I firmly believe we share a common goal of having stability and peace in Afghanistan.

Senator RISCH. Thank you for your thoughts on that. My personal view, I think it is going to be a heavy lift trying to convince the Taliban that they will respect the gains that have been made in that country for women's rights. But it is our duty to press on with that. And I am encouraged to hear your words in that regard. I expect that that is what you will do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, Ranking Member Risch, and congratulations to the nominees. What a wonderful panel.

I am particularly happy to see my longtime friend, Senator Salazar, and also Ms. Lewis, who is just a stellar part of the Senate family, it is always nice to see you, and a member of the Senate family on the other side of the dais, being nominated for a position for which their work entitles them. So congratulations to all of you.

Senator Salazar, let me start with you, with respect to one particular challenging aspect of the U.S.-Mexico relationship right now, and that is the targeting of the press and journalists in Mexico. I place a real high emphasis on protecting freedom of the press. Senator Graham and I introduced a bill in May, the International Press Freedom Bill to help make journalists safer overseas, and even create a special visa category to enable threatened journalists to find safe Haven in the United States.

I am really concerned about attacks on journalists. And for years Mexico has been the deadliest country in the world for journalists. Eight journalists were killed in 2020. Three have been killed so far this year. I took a CODEL recently with six members, bipartisan, in Mexico at the beginning of July. And we met with civil society groups and groups of journalists, and they really laid out their concerns about this.

Often the attacks are unsolved. They do not necessarily believe the attacks are by the Government, but they are often by criminal groups who are not then investigated. And they feel like there is a sort of impunity when it comes to analyses, and investigation, and certainly prosecution of these attacks.

There is a unit within the—equivalent of the Attorney General's Office in Mexico that is supposed to focus on these attacks, but it is widely criticized for solving one or two high-profile cases, and then letting others go unaddressed.

Should you be confirmed, and I will do all I can to make sure that you are, how might you address this particular issue to try to promote more safety for those journalists in Mexico?

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you, Senator Kaine, and thank you as well for your long-time service, and friendship, and guidance over the years on so many issues. You raise an issue that is of a very serious nature. Here in this country we all celebrate the fact that we have a First Amendment, and that we have freedom of the press. And it is something that is one of the most enshrined values of our society, and of democratic societies.

And so when those who are moving forward with the reporting of the news, the journalists that you speak about have to live under threat and are in a position where their reporting ends up getting trampled upon in some way, by whoever it does it. We have a shared interest with Mexico, and Mexico, from my point of view, does not want to tolerate what is happening now with some of the violence against journalists.

So I would commit to you, Senator Kaine, that I would work with the Mexican Government, at all levels to address this issue, and work closely with you to make sure that we are addressing this issue, not only in Mexico, but around the world.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Senator Salazar. And here is a question for both Ms. Escobari and Senator Salazar, and maybe, Ms. Escobari, I will start with you.

The U.S. is going to host the Summit for the Americas which, it happens every three or four years, the timing is a little bit variable now as to whether it will be late '21 or early '22. The U.S. has not hosted it since 1994. I think it is a particularly important time to have the Summit for the Americas because of COVID, and vaccine

diplomacy, and backsliding democracies, and street unrests in many nations, so it is a really important time.

Mr. Chair, I really look forward to taking up the Brian Nichols nomination soon. I know it was held over today at Senator Cruz's request, but for the U.S. to host the Summit for the Americas without a confirmed State Department Head over the Western Hemisphere Division would be a challenge.

But as you think about participating, either from the USAID space or from—as Ambassador of Mexico and a Summit for the Americas, what would be the kinds of things that you would like to see on the agenda in that summit?

Ms. ESCOBARI. Thank you, Senator. And for your commitment to development through many years, and there are many priorities in the region. I think just to start I would say that COVID at times feels like priority one, two, and three, just because it has ravaged the region. The reasons are structural reasons why that has been the case, high urbanization, you know, informality, poor health systems, but really it has had not only the highest rates of deaths, but also the highest contractions of GDP anywhere in the world.

So the ability together with the region, with our help, with other allies internationally, to help in the procurement of vaccines, and in the distribution of vaccines, and eventually in the manufacturing of vaccines, and their safe and equitable distribution, I think would be at the top of that list.

Senator KAINE. I will submit the second half of the question to Senator Salazar, for the record, since I am over my time. But I appreciate the opportunity to visit with you all. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Chairman, might I just make a quick response to his question since I think it is relevant to most of the committee members?

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, of course.

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator Kaine.

The Summit of the Americas to me represents a great opportunity for Canada, the United States and Mexico to really stand up for the North American Continent. So as I participate in that process, if I am confirmed by the Senate, expected on the agenda, we will be talking about economic issues, jobs, trade, economic opportunity, migration and how we deal with those issues, both from Canada and from Mexico, the borders.

I imagine we should be talking and we will be talking about security, given the high level dialogues that are going on. But in addition to that, the whole issue of conservation and environment. The shared borders are political borders, but the environment, and the ecology, transborder into Canada, transborder into Mexico are also very important. And so how we deal with that issue, in my view, should be a part of what we focus on, on the Summit for North America.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand we have Senator Young with us, virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, chairman. And welcome to our nominees.

Senator Salazar, when I served along our Southern Border as a Marine Corps officer in the mid-1990s, I saw first-hand the impact of the border crisis on our own country, and on those who were crossing our southern border.

Sadly, the scale of the crisis has become much greater today. This has indeed become what you might characterize as a 50-state border crisis. The vast majority of migrants I understand are not coming from Mexico, but from other countries further south. And that means that our neighbor, Mexico, is suffering from a migration crisis of its own, including securing its own southern border, addressing humanitarian issues, just like we are, and dealing with the economic stresses of a surging migration across their southern states.

The task is made even more challenging for that government, by the presence of predatory criminal trafficking groups in the region. How do you view Mexico's responsibility, Mr. Senator, inactions to secure its southern border? And if you can speak to the largest enforcement gaps where Mexico needs to focus to gain greater supervision over its southern border, I would really appreciate that.

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you very much, Senator Young. And thank you as well for your service.

You start from a reality that we are facing with—facing in this country and have faced for a very long time, you described the situation at the border back in the 1990s, when you were serving around the border. And the reality of it is that these issues have been with us for a very long time. And that really underscores an important role of this committee, and a very important priority for the President and for the Vice President.

And that is, long term, looking at the root causes of what is creating this problem. We have had these challenges for a very long time. And as you say, a very much affecting Mexico in terms of the migrant trail that we now see going across Mexico. So how we work with Mexico to develop a strategy that is effective both for the short term and the long term will be one of the highest priorities that I will take on as Ambassador to Mexico.

The Mexican Government has said clearly that—and are providing significant resources into securing their own Southern border. They have said, and are working on trying to help their—the Central American countries to the south. And so we need to succeed on that mission in a collaborative way with Mexico, so that we can address the problem for the long term.

And I commit, Senator Young, to working with you and the members of this committee to make sure we get that done.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you for that commitment. And I am appreciative of that. I know other members of the committee are as well.

Let me dive into a couple of specifics. There are networks of spotters, guides, informants all within Mexico that are so severely degrading efforts of the U.S. Border Patrol to try and secure that border, which I think is in the interest of course just not—not just of the United States, but also of our Mexican neighbor.

So if confirmed, what will you do to improve coordination and cooperation between the U.S. and Mexican Border Patrol authorities?

Mr. SALAZAR. Senator Young, that underscores the importance of what the Biden administration is doing with Secretary Blinken and others, engaging in the high-level dialogue around security and violence issues. And we expect that we will spend a good amount of our time working on those issues. If I am fortunate enough to get confirmed by the United States Senate, I commit to you that that will be one of the highest priority issues.

Senator YOUNG. If you look at the surge that has occurred, really since earlier this year, I do understand this is an ongoing, long-standing problem, as I acknowledged from the beginning, but there has been a surge from the beginning of this year. Why does it appear that Mexico has been less willing to work with the Biden administration on this immigration, unauthorized, than the Trump administration?

Mr. SALAZAR. Senator Young, I think as Chairman Risch said a few minutes ago, we need to have a holistic approach to the issues in Mexico. It is more than just the issue of securing the border. We need to have a safe, secure, and efficient border. And Mexico shares that interest with us, we share that interest, the administration is working hard to develop a northerly and fair and humane system of migration into this country. And we need to make sure that we are working together with Mexico and with the U.S. Senate to address that challenge that has been around for a very long time.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. I thank you for your time. I thank you for your service. You did not answer my final question about why it appears that Mexico has been less willing to work with the Biden administration, apparently, on this issue than the Trump administration. So perhaps if you want to weave that into your future comments, you can. Thank you so much.

Mr. SALAZAR. I am happy to elaborate, Senator. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator van Hollen.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch; and congratulations to all of you on your nominations.

Senator Salazar, great to see you back, thanks for stepping up again. We have just five minutes. I am going to concentrate my time on situation in South and Central Asia.

Ambassador Lu, thank you for your terrific service as a member of the Foreign Service. You have made us proud.

I see that Secretary Blinken is now in India to discuss a wide range of issues that are important to the United States-Indian relationship, and to discuss our common interests in the Quad. And I support that initiative.

I would like to focus on the situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan. And I welcome your statement that our relationship with Pakistan should be beyond the one-dimensional security lens. And you indicate that, if confirmed, you will build on our long history of friendship with Pakistan to advance human rights, religious freedom, counterterrorism cooperation, and an improved business environment for American investors.

And I look forward to working with you to achieve those goals. Of course, a key issue that impacts the United States, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the surrounding area, is the U.S. withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. And what that means. We had Ambassador Khalilzad before this committee in late April. And I just

want to see if you are on the same page with him as to the situation here. So I have a couple of very, yes/no questions.

First, do you agree that if Afghanistan descends into total chaos, even more than the conflict we see today, that that could mean an influx of thousands of refugees into Pakistan?

Ambassaador LU. Yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Okay. And do you agree that it is in Pakistan's interest to achieve stability and a political settlement in Afghanistan?

Ambassaador LU. Yes, absolutely.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And do you agree with Ambassador Khalilzad that in the Doha talks, Pakistan has facilitated the discussions between the Afghan Government and the Taliban?

Ambassaador LU. Yes. The African Government and the—certainly the Taliban and the United States, and I think we would like to see Pakistan do even more to facilitate Taliban's involvement in talks with other Afghan leaders. Yeah.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And would you agree that a political settlement is the only viable long-term path forward?

Ambassaador LU. A hundred percent, yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. So, one of the things that some of us were proposed on a bipartisan basis, Senator Young from Indiana, Senator Cantwell, myself, and others, is the idea to give all parties some kind of hope and a better economic future. People in Afghanistan, people in those border regions of Pakistan. And the idea is to establish what we call Reconstruction Opportunity Zones.

And the idea is that textiles and certain other goods that are produced and manufactured in those areas would have duty-free access to the United States. In order to establish the potential of a peace dividend and a good future for people in the region.

Ambassador Khalilzad said he supported the concept. I know the administration has been looking at it, had interest in pursuing this with you and the administration. Have you had a chance to look at their proposal, and what you think it could mean in terms of, you know, building a better future?

Ambassaador LU. Senator Van Hollen, first let me say huge thanks on behalf of my colleagues at the State Department. It is wonderful to have such a strong supporter of our relations with South Asia sitting in the U.S. Senate.

I believe strongly that enhanced economic integration is one of the keys to a durable peace in Afghanistan and throughout the region. I support a deepening of economic ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan. And if confirmed, I will work to expand trade and investment between these two countries and the United States. I believe we should be exploring all of the options on the table.

I am personally very interested in the legislation that you and other members of the Senate have proposed. And I look forward, if confirmed, to be providing technical feedback and dialogue to you and other members of the committee, from State Department, Department of Congress, and the USTR.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Do we have your commitment that you and the State Department would provide our staff with technical feedback on the legislation?

Ambassaador LU. Absolutely.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Now, just in closing, you know, I think we have established the important role Pakistan can play in trying to facilitate some kind of negotiated settlement in Afghanistan. I think all of us hope for the best, although we all understand that there are huge risks that we are witnessing right now. But I cannot understand why, given that importance, President Biden has not yet contacted directly and called the Prime Minister Khan. Can you explain that? It is a mystery to me.

Ambassaador LU. Senator, I completely agree with you, the dialogue is essential between the United States and Pakistan at a high level. As you know, there have been several high-level administration discussions with Pakistan to include multiple engagements by Secretary Blinken with the Pakistani Foreign Minister. These talks have focused on critical issues.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Ambassador, I do not—I am aware of all that but, as you know, the President has reached out to lots of foreign leaders. Given the importance of the future developments in Afghanistan to us, given the importance of the relationship with Pakistan, it seems to me a totally unforced error that the President of the United States has not made that phone call. There is no need for you to comment. I appreciate your service.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Ms. Chairman. Congratulations to each of the nominees. Senator Salazar, good to see you. I enjoyed visiting with you yesterday in my office.

As you know, I am increasingly concerned about what appears to be a deliberate and a systematic campaign by the Mexican Government to undermine American companies and especially American energy companies. Just a few weeks ago the Mexican Government gave its state oil firm, Pemex, a major-shared oil find, over a private consortium led by Houston-based, Talos Energy, which had first discovered the crude and had already invested nearly \$350 million in the project.

This decision was just one of a series of moves that the Mexican Government has pursued to roll back Mexico's historic 2013 energy sector liberalization reforms, which benefited both them and us. It goes without saying that these moves are in significant tension with both the Mexican Constitution and the USMCA.

On July 29th, I joined Senator Cornyn, Senator Inhofe, and sent a letter to President Biden highlighting these concerns. The next morning President Lopez Obrador dismissed the letter saying quote, "There is really no problem, and that the concerns are insignificant".

Let me start by asking you, do you agree with the Mexican President that the concerns about Mexico's tilt away from U.S. companies towards Mexican Government control of the energy sector towards open hostility to American companies, do you agree with the Mexican President that those concerns are insignificant?

Mr. SALAZAR. Senator Cruz, the rule of law is important, obviously important to us here in the United States, and to interests here that are investing in Mexico, and my understanding is the ambassador, the U.S. Trade Representative for the United States

has said that energy is covered under the United States-Canada-Mexico Agreements. So I think what we need to do is to raise these issues and make sure that we are protecting American investment in Mexico.

Senator CRUZ. So I am deeply concerned that right now the Mexican Government is feeling no meaningful pressure from the Biden administration to reverse its campaign, to undermine American energy firms, and so what I would like to ask you, is first of all, to what degree do you assess that the Mexican Government's moves in the energy sector are harmful both to them and us?

Mr. SALAZAR. Senator Cruz, I intend to work on these issues, if confirmed, and if I get your support, coming out of this committee, and on the floor of the Senate. You know, I was very involved in the negotiation of the Gulf of Mexico Transboundary Agreement with Secretary Clinton and with the support of President Obama. It was because of those Transboundary Agreements which, frankly, had resolved an issue that had been outstanding for some 50 years, that we have had the investment of the movement that we have had in the energy sector.

It is a complicated issue, but I intend to give it everything that I have to see how we can work with the Mexican Government that are sovereign, I respect their sovereignty, but we will work together to see whether we can find some solution to this challenge.

Senator CRUZ. So if you are confirmed as Ambassador, what specific steps do you expect to take to halt and reverse the Mexican Government's targeting of and discrimination against American energy firms?

Mr. SALAZAR. Yeah, we will work closely with my colleagues in the Biden administration, both in the White House, as well as within USDR, and the State Department, the Commerce Department, to see how we can address these issues.

Senator CRUZ. Do you think it is a problem?

Mr. SALAZAR. It is a problem, sir.

Senator CRUZ. Why is it that the Mexican Government seems to be moving away from American interest, and American priorities, and seems to be moving rapidly away from them in the last six months, during the Biden administration?

Mr. SALAZAR. Senator Cruz, there is a reality that I do not believe that the United States has engaged in the kind of bilateral relationship with Mexico during the last four years under the former administration, or even before that. And so what we need to do is we need to engage in the kinds of dialogues that will make sure that we are developing sustainable issues and a sustainable framework between the United States and Mexico.

We cannot afford to have our relationship with Mexico go into an abyss of dysfunction. And that is in the shared interest of both the United States and Mexico. And I commit to working not only with the President, and the Vice President, my colleagues in the State Department, Secretary Blinken, but with you, to see how we can come up with a kind of framework that will address the issues that this committee, both on the Democratic side, through Senator Menendez, and on the Republican side through Senator Risch, has an interest in dealing with, because if we do not deal with these issues in this very difficult time in the relationship between the



U.S. and Mexico, we will be facing some very significant issues on down the road.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And congratulations to each of you on your nominations, we appreciate your willingness to continue in public service.

I am going to give Senator Salazar a little rest for a minute, and start with you, Ms. Lewis. And again, we will miss you with the committee, but are delighted that you are going to be continuing to do your good work.

I think you were with the committee when we passed the Women Peace and Security Act, which I am very proud of. It has been a bipartisan effort. We have seen it starting to be implemented in the Department of Defense, I think less so in the Department of State.

And so can you talk about how you might be able to promote WPS goals and your strategy, if confirmed, to make sure that it is incorporated into global peace operations, and into international military education, conventional weapons, and how you would work with DOD?

Ms. LEWIS. Absolutely. First of all, Senator, thank you so much for your leadership on this issue. You really have been a guiding light for all of us.

In the Bureau of Political Military Affairs, there already has been a focus on this issue. One of the changes they have implemented is to make sure that in the training that we provide that as we look at working with individual militaries, we make sure that the representation of women is equal to the representation of women in their services when we train them. And I was pleased to learn about that. That would be something I would want to continue and grow moving forward.

I also think, as you look at all of the pieces of the work that the Bureau does, other issues such as the great work that the Bureau does demining, making sure that our civilians—civilians are protected from some of these landmines also has a great impact on local communities, but also specifically on women. And I know that is something that they take into consideration.

And then finally, as I said, in my opening statement, I know that really looking at the workforce inside the Bureau would also be something that would be a priority for me. If confirmed, I believe I would be the first woman in this position, but I also am aware that the Bureau has an incredibly talented pool already. And it would be my job to look closely at the unique makeup of this Bureau, which includes civil service, foreign service, also a number of people in uniform who come over, to make sure that we are also looking at the issue of women moving forward and really using the talents of women inside the Bureau.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I appreciate that. And look forward to working with you. And as you know, the importance of this initiative is that when women are at the table we are more successful, in conflict areas, in ensuring that success is spread to all elements of the community. So thank you.

Ms. LEWIS. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Senator Salazar, now that you have caught your breath. As you may be aware, New Hampshire has a real challenge with substance misuse. It has been an issue, not just in our state, but throughout the country. And we saw in 2020 that we had more overdose deaths, drug deaths than we have had any time in our history.

And one of the things that we know in New Hampshire is that many of the illegal substances that come into the United States come in through Mexico. And as I understand, there have been some tensions in recent years with Mexico in terms of how we can best work together to intercept and interdict those drugs. So can you talk a little bit about what your approach would be to addressing that with Mexico?

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you very much, Senator Shaheen, for the question. The issue of drugs north is something that has been around for a very, very long time. And that issue is exacerbated in part by what China is doing in Mexico with fentanyl.

Senator SHAHEEN. Right.

Mr. SALAZAR. And all of those issues that are affecting the people of New Hampshire, and throughout the United States of America. It is a shared problem between the United States and Mexico, and I commit to working with the Mexican Government, and United States authorities to look for solutions to the problem.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I hope you will come back to this committee and let us know what resources we can help you with in order to continue to address that in a successful way.

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you. I will.

Senator SHAHEEN. And Ambassador Lu, I have been very concerned about what is happening in Afghanistan now, as I am sure you are, as we look at the gains made by the Taliban. And one of my biggest areas of concern is what happens to the women and girls in Afghanistan. It has been one of the greatest successes of our efforts there, not only of the United States but the international community.

So tell me what you think, what more you think we can do as the United States to raise concerns about what is happening there in the international community? How can we support ensuring that the freedoms that women and girls, and other ethnic minorities in the country enjoy now, are not totally erased as the Taliban continue to make gains?

Ambassador LU. Senator Shaheen, I was really moved by your tribute to Afghan women who were killed by the telephone in the hearing in May with Ambassador Khalilzad. I actually knew one of those young women. Fatima Khalil was a senior at the American University of Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan, the posting I just left. I spoke at her graduation, one of the brightest, most capable and self-confident people I have ever met in my life.

She had an American education, spoke fluent English, a worldview that was unlike anyone else. And she could have gone anywhere, done anything. And she decided what she really wanted to do is go back to her home country to work on human rights, and the rights of women and girls, and the Taliban killed her for that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Right.

Ambassaador LU. So it is personal for me, as I know it is for many of us who have worked in and around this region, I share your deep concern about what is happening now in Afghanistan, and the women and girls who are now at risk. I think it is critical that we continue our robust assistance to the programs that we have been running for years in Afghanistan that have promoted such progress over 20 years, training, education, legal services.

But now we have to expand that. We need to look at how we are caring for those who are at risk. And as we know, we are good at doing that all over the world, including in very difficult places, in Cuba, and Russia, and Iran, and North Korea, we need to up our game. And I know there are very smart people in the interagency right now, putting together plans about how we would use the U.S. refugee admissions process, or emergency humanitarian relief to try to mitigate some of these risks. And we look forward, if confirmed, to working with you and other members of Congress to put together that plan.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I look forward to that. My time is up, but I just want to relay to you what I heard from some of the women leaders in Afghanistan who were urging us in the United States to have our President, our Vice President, all of our high-level officials speak out in the international community about what the Taliban are doing and raise international awareness and condemnation for what is happening there. So I hope you will agree to do that if confirmed.

Ambassaador LU. Absolutely.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen. And thank you for your leadership in this disregard. We appreciate your clarity and voice on this all the time.

Some final questions, there is a vote going on.

So, Ms. Lewis, I do not think you would get away that easy. When the Department of Defense through existing authorities, and seeking new ones, has assumed an outside role in providing security assistance to foreign countries, providing foreign assistance is, and in my view, always should be the purview of the Secretary of State and the State Department conferred by diplomats in the service of our foreign policy.

I want to ask you. Will you use all means at your disposal, if confirmed, to conduct oversight on U.S. security assistance for foreign countries, and foreign persons, regardless of which U.S. agency is providing it?

Ms. LEWIS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And if confirmed, will you work closely with the committee to prevent any further loss or duplication of state security assistance authorities?

Ms. LEWIS. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. All right, one last question. You fully support the Taiwan's Relations Act, is that correct?

Ms. LEWIS. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And U.S. support for Taiwan self-defense?

Ms. LEWIS. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to treating Taiwan the same as every other state in the Arms Process Sale?

Ms. LEWIS. Yes, sir, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Lu, let me ask you. At this point as the security environment grows more precarious in Afghanistan, what leverage, what efforts can we realistically take to support members of civil society? Senator Shaheen just talked about Afghan women and girls, and I echo that, but also civil society. And what measures can we take to take care of those partners who worked for the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, CIPI, Internews and IFAS, they do not qualify for special immigrant visas, but they created extraordinary service at all times?

Ambassaador LU. Absolutely. Mr. Chairman, in my first job in the State Department, I worked in the American Consulate in Peshawar, Pakistan. In one of my jobs, I was an admin officer, was to support our staff of our embassy in Kabul, our local staff. And they had long since stopped working in the embassy. The embassy had been closed for three years at that point.

But we maintained the commitment to our people. And that commitment went on for 12 years until we reopened our embassy, we paid their salaries, we took care of them. It is critical that we take care of the people who have shown loyalty, and service to us. Whether that is our own employees, people who have been interpreters and translators for the Military and the State Department, or it is folks that have worked in civil society supporting our programs. These were dangerous jobs even then, and they are even more at risk today.

I hear you on, the fact that they would not qualify for special immigrant visas. I do think there is a discussion within the inter-agency and with the Congress about how to safeguard these people at risk. It is a broad category, and we are looking at the full range of possibilities. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Process, humanitarian parole, humanitarian emergency assistance.

I welcome, if you, sir, or your staff have ideas about how we can make sure we are showing loyalty to those people, who have risked their own safety and their lives to support our common goals. I think it is not something we are going to get done alone as an administration. It will take the administration, plus Congress, and international partners to safeguard all of these people.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I appreciate that. We do, and we will share them. But, you know, these entities that are promoting the core values through the different roles they play, are important to be able to preserve, not only in this case, but send a global message that when you do this work, whatever it is in the world, however dangerous it is, that you in fact will be backed up. And I think that that is incredibly important.

One last question for you, Ambassador, I have been very involved in supporting labor rights in Bangladesh. I appreciate the efforts since the Rana Plaza disaster, but there is a lot of work that remains to make sure, that Made in Bangladesh does not mean made in the blood of Bangladeshi workers.

Do I have your commitment to press the Bangladeshi Government to allow unions to register and function without repression?

Ambassaador LU. Yes, you do, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

And then finally, Ms. Escobari, I do not want you to think nobody cares about what you are doing. We do a great deal. I think you have extraordinary experience in the development aside of the role that you are going to play and you even referenced it in your remarks. And so I will not dwell on that, but I do want to say that part of what USAID is, it has to do with, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, is the democracy side of it. And sometimes at AID, not under Samantha Power, but in the past I have feared that we have lost the democracy side of the USAID mission.

When I see protests in Cuba, when I see what is happening in Haiti, when I see what is happening in Nicaragua, and elsewhere, I see a tremendous backsliding on the question of democratic governance and human rights. Can you speak a little bit as to how you will see your mission at AID in that regard?

Ms. ESCOBARI. Senator, thank you for your question, and for always speaking very forcefully on behalf of democratic rights and accountability in the region.

I do see good governance as a prerequisite to progress on everything else. Corruption is corrosive for many reasons, but in particular because it undermines citizens' beliefs that governments can deliver for them. USAID's efforts have focused on the—you know, in supporting civil society, human rights defenders, free press, all of these efforts reinforce citizens' demand for democracy.

And on the supply side, as you know, there are also great efforts on just improving the rule of law and making it more available. And if confirmed, I will double down on those efforts, and also pursue other new approaches that that can address the recent backsliding. That is very particular in key—in key countries that you mentioned.

The CHAIRMAN. As I said to Administrator Power, I am keen on this issue, and I have both put in language support to help the Agency as well as in the appropriations process, so we look forward to working with you with that.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And let me thank all four of our nominees for their willingness to serve and continue to serve our country. And I thank your families.

I wanted, particularly, to acknowledge and thank Jessica Lewis for her extraordinary help to me and to our committee. You have the diplomatic skills to take on this new assignment. If you can handle the egos of the members of this committee, you can handle any challenge that you might confront in the State Department. So we wish you only the best.

It is good to see my former colleague, Ken Salazar, before us. We always enjoyed his company in the Senate, and look forward to his service to our Nation in Mexico.

I am going to ask one question to Mr. Salazar and Ms. Ms. Escobari. And that is to deal with corruption.

Mexico is a great neighbor of ours. They have a serious problem on protection of human rights, particularly journalists, they have a corruption issue. Our hemisphere, unfortunately, has a systemic corruption issue in many democratic states. And I know the President has identified corruption as a national security core interest.

We have in this committee passed additional resources to deal with corruption.

I just really want to underscore the importance of this subject in your portfolios. I had a chance to talk to Mr. Salazar yesterday, or the day before, and we had a, I think, a good conversation on this subject.

So, Ms. Escobari, if you could just share with us your strategies for how you are going to deal with countries that have free elections, but have elected—have not been able to deal with systemic corruption, which has led to significant erosion of human rights and stability in these nations.

Ms. ESCOBARI. You know, as I mentioned in my last comments, I do think good governance is a prerequisite for progress on everything else. In the last quarter of the 20th century, Latin America actually saw the greatest gains in liberal democracy, but these gains were not accompanied with the investments in human capital, physical capital to really create a middle class. And now we have political and economic elites that remain entrenched, corruption permeates everyday transactions. And unequal growth has left citizens frustrated. And this has become really fertile ground for authoritarian and populous leaders.

So I think that focusing on the ability of these states to deliver the goods and services, but also to support civil society, to hold those governments accountable to deliver is the kind of ingredients that we need to strengthen rule of law at a time that all the pressures on these economies make them increasingly fragile.

Senator CARDIN. One of the areas that we really need to improve upon, is to build a capacity in our embassies, in each of these countries, to be able to identify the weaknesses of the countries in which they are representing the United States in, and to be able to work with our different agencies as to how we can work with the country to make significant progress on any corruption issues.

It seems to me that is one of the areas that should be a priority of the position you have been nominated for. And just again, we welcome your commitment to really work to make a major difference in our capacity in each of these countries.

Ms. ESCOBARI. Yes. You have my commitment. And I think it is really beneficial that USAID has a presence and has had a presence in these countries for many years, and can add that perspective to regional embassies.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

That brings this nominations hearing to a close. The record for the hearing will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, July 29th, which is tomorrow, I would urge members to get their questions in for the record today.

I would urge the nominees, if you are in receipt of questions for the record that you answer them fully and expeditiously so that the committee can consider your nominations before a business meeting.

With the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. KENNETH LEE SALAZAR BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *Violence and Crime in Mexico*

*Question.* Violence and the influence of organized crime in Mexico have reached highly concerning levels. In the lead up to the June midterm elections, over 100 politicians were murdered, 36 of whom were running for office. These trend lines and the serious implications for our national security mandate that we must find ways to strengthen U.S.-Mexico security cooperation.

- Would you please lay out your priorities for strengthening our security cooperation with Mexico?

*Answer.* I understand U.S.-Mexico security cooperation remains a top national security priority, and neither country can successfully confront transnational organized crime alone. It is critical that efforts to dismantle transnational criminal organizations, address illicit drug production and trafficking, reduce impunity and corruption, and strengthen the rule of law receive the full cooperation of the Mexican Government. If confirmed, I look forward to comprehensive conversations with the Mexican Government on how we can best align our security and law enforcement efforts, so this cooperation deepens and works for the benefit of both our nations. I will also not hesitate to raise any concerns that I believe to be obstacles to our bilateral cooperation.

If confirmed, I also look forward to engaging in a review with appropriate U.S. and Mexican officials to ensure specific programs are effective in addressing our shared challenges, and will look for opportunities with Mexico to make additional adjustments to our programming where necessary and appropriate to reflect changes in conditions and priorities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. KENNETH LEE SALAZAR BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In April, the Supreme Court of Mexico unanimously ruled in favor of the U.S. position concerning a long running trade dispute with Mexico involving fresh potato exports. If confirmed, would you make it a priority to ensure that the regulatory process in Mexico reinstates and maintain market access for U.S. fresh potato exports and U.S. potato growers in general?

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my top priorities as U.S. Ambassador to Mexico will be securing and maintaining fair market access for U.S. businesses in Mexico. Agricultural trade between the United States and Mexico is an important component to our overall trade relationship, and as Ambassador, I would work with the U.S. Trade Representative and the Department of Agriculture to ensure U.S. agricultural products are not disadvantaged.

*Question.* American investors in Mexico are experiencing significant and growing regulatory challenges under the administration President Lopez Obrador, including increasing difficulties in getting permits for a range of activities. These actions are contrary to Mexico's obligations under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement. If confirmed, would you make it a priority to ensure that Mexico abides by its obligations under the USMCA?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the U.S. Trade Representative and other U.S. agencies to ensure Mexico fully adheres to its commitments under the USMCA. Mexico is one of the United States' most important trading partners and represents a crucial market for U.S. businesses. As Ambassador, one of my top priorities would be ensuring the full implementation of the USMCA.

*Question.* Mexico has a broader definition of refugee than the United States and the 1951 U.N. Refugee Convention. For example, Mexico recognizes a right to asylum based on "generalized violence; foreign aggression; internal conflicts; massive violations of human rights; and other circumstances leading to a serious disturbance of public order." As a result, many would-be asylum seekers arriving in Mexico from Central America could qualify as refugees in Mexico. If confirmed, do you commit to ensure the Government of Mexico enforces its own legal obligations towards would-be asylum seekers arriving in Mexico?

*Answer.* If confirmed as Ambassador to Mexico, I will work with colleagues at the State Department and international organization partners to continue to support ef-

forts to improve access to protection, humanitarian relief, and local integration opportunities for displaced persons and vulnerable migrants in Mexico. I understand that, through its international organization (IO) partners, the Department supports humanitarian assistance for refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants. This assistance includes support for local integration for refugees and asylum seekers, as well as helping Mexico to strengthen the capacity of its asylum system.

*Question.* In June 2020, the Treasury Department designated a number of Mexico-based individuals and entities that were part of a sanctions evasion network supporting the corrupt regime of Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela. Earlier this year, there were reports that at least three Cuban-flagged oil tankers designated by the Treasury Department for transporting Venezuelan oil to Cuba have been serviced in the Mexican port of Veracruz, in apparent violation of U.S. sanctions. If confirmed, do you commit to ensure robust understanding and enforcement of U.S. sanctions policy in Mexico?

*Answer.* Mexico can play a critical role in helping to address some of the most complex issues in the region pertaining to democracy, governance, human rights, and the rule of law. Building an effective U.S.-Mexico partnership requires ensuring Mexico has a fulsome understanding of all U.S. policies, including those related to sanctioning authorities. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Government of Mexico fully understands U.S. sanctioning authorities and policies. I will also commit to working with Mexico to advance democratic and human rights priorities throughout the region.

*Question.* Mexican transnational criminal organizations are producing increased quantities of fentanyl and cartels, such as the Sinaloa and the New Generation Jalisco Cartel, are the primary trafficking groups responsible for smuggling fentanyl into the U.S. from Mexico. If confirmed, do you commit to encourage Mexico take meaningful actions to tackle transnational criminal activities throughout its territory, including the production and trafficking of fentanyl and other illicit narcotics? Do you commit to periodically review International Narcotics and Law Enforcement programs in Mexico to ensure they are focusing on meaningfully reducing the flow of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids to the U.S.?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to encourage Mexico to take meaningful actions to tackle transnational criminal activities throughout its territory, including the production and trafficking of fentanyl and other illicit narcotics.

If confirmed, I also commit to periodically reviewing INL programs, and all U.S. Government interagency counterdrug efforts in Mexico, to ensure they are focused on meaningfully reducing the flow of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids to the United States.

*Question.* In December 2020, Mexico approved reforms to its national security law, limiting the power of foreign law enforcement agents in the country and restricting their ability to operate. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring effective law enforcement cooperation with Mexico?

*Answer.* Yes. I understand U.S.-Mexico security cooperation remains a top national security priority. It is critical that efforts to dismantle transnational criminal organizations, reduce impunity and corruption, and strengthen the rule of law in Mexico receive the full cooperation of the Mexican Government. If confirmed, I look forward to comprehensive conversations with the Mexican Government to ensure our law enforcement cooperation deepens and works for the benefit of the United States and Mexico.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Mexico was identified as Tier 2 due to its overall increasing efforts but still not fully meeting the minimal standards for eliminating trafficking. What steps would you take as Ambassador, if confirmed, to engage with the host government and civil society organizations on bolstering efforts to improve prosecution and protection efforts?

*Answer.* Trafficking in persons (TIP) is a heinous crime perpetuated throughout the region that must be addressed through a holistic approach. The Department of State supports various programs that help develop the capacity of investigators and prosecutors at the state and federal levels to combat this crime. The State Department also supports efforts to prevent human trafficking and assist victims through support for shelters.

If confirmed, I pledge to support the administration's policy to counter TIP in Mexico, including the implementation of the Operations Group on Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking that Vice President Harris announced during her June visit to Mexico, and the recommendations from the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report. I will work with my staff to identify areas where we can make headway in



state- and federal-level prosecutions, including prosecutions of forced labor crimes and complicit officials, and in significantly enhancing comprehensive protection services for trafficking victims. I plan to discuss bilateral cooperation on the issue in high-level discussions and under a potential Bilateral Human Rights Dialogue. I will also engage Mexico on its commitments under USMCA's labor chapters, particularly as they pertain to forced labor.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Mexico was described as having instances of intolerant behavior towards religious minorities. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* I understand there were some instances of intolerance towards religious minorities highlighted in the 2020 Religious Freedom Report; however, Mexico has been a strong partner in promoting religious freedom in its own country and the region. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Office of International Religious Freedom to promote and protect religious freedom in Mexico. I pledge to work with the Mexican Government, religious leaders and communities, and civil society to ensure the country maintains momentum on assuring religious freedoms and address the instances where those freedoms may be threatened.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Mexico was identified as having committed severe human rights abuses, including impunity for government and military employees, corruption, torture by security forces, violence against journalists and human rights defenders, and more. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* The promotion of human rights is central to U.S. national security and prosperity. The United States uses a wide range of diplomatic tools to advance respect for human rights, including working directly with the Mexican Government and civil society. USAID and the Department of State have implemented projects to address various human rights concerns, including forced disappearances, violence against human rights defenders and journalists, and impunity, as well as public diplomacy programs to support and train human rights defenders.

The Department promotes accountability for human rights violations and abuses by implementing human rights-related sanctions and visa ineligibilities, and Leahy Law assistance restrictions. Consistent with U.S. law and Department policy, prior to furnishing assistance to security force units and individuals, all candidates are subject to Leahy vetting to assess if there is credible information of gross violations of human rights. The Department also submits reports consistent with the requirements of the relevant annual appropriations act.

If confirmed, I plan to utilize all the available tools at my disposal to promote human rights in Mexico and support all programs being implemented. I will seek to work with the Government of Mexico to ensure human rights is a central tenet in high-level security discussions, as well as look to relaunch the annual Bilateral Human Rights Dialogue, which last met in December 2017.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* Respect for human rights is fundamental, and a free and active press is an integral part of a healthy democracy. The killing of journalists and human rights activist undermines freedoms of expression and association, as well as regional security.

I am committed to supporting efforts to promote respect for human rights and press freedom. Through USAID, the U.S. currently supports Mexico's National Protection Mechanism for Journalists and Human Rights Defenders, and works with state-level counterparts to expand the protection measures available for these groups. USAID also supports the Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Crimes Against Freedom of Expression to investigate and sanction aggressions against journalists and defenders. My understanding is that we also build and support professional networks and provide training to equip journalists to face challenges and professional risks specific to Mexico. Working with the Committee to Protect Journalists, we support training on journalist safety, investigative journalism guidelines, and best practices to increase transparency and accountability.

If confirmed, I will work to promote respect for human rights and the rule of law and reduce impunity. I will continue calls for Mexican authorities to investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes against journalists and human rights defend-

ers wherever they occur, and will actively engage with civil society organizations working these issues.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. KENNETH LEE SALAZAR BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you address human rights concerns with the López Obrador administration and ensure that U.S. funds are not supporting policies or entities that are committing abuses?

*Answer.* The promotion of human rights is central to U.S. national security and prosperity. The United States uses a wide range of diplomatic tools to advance respect for human rights, including working directly with the Mexican Government and civil society. USAID and the Department of State have implemented projects to address various human rights concerns, including forced disappearances, violence against human rights defenders and journalists, and impunity, as well as public diplomacy programs to support and train human rights defenders.

The Department promotes accountability for human rights violations and abuses by implementing human rights-related sanctions and visa ineligibilities, and Leahy Law assistance restrictions. It is my understanding that, prior to furnishing assistance to security force units and individuals, the Department conducts Leahy vetting to assess if there is credible information that such units committed gross violations of human rights. The Department also submits reports consistent with the requirements of the relevant annual appropriations act.

If confirmed, I plan to utilize all the available tools at my disposal to promote human rights in Mexico and support all programs being implemented. I will seek to work with the Government of Mexico to ensure human rights are a central tenet in high-level engagement, as well as look to relaunch the annual Bilateral Human Rights Dialogue, which last met in December 2017.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you engage with civil society groups, independent journalists, and human rights defenders that have been targeted by the Government?

*Answer.* Respect for human rights is fundamental, and a free and active press is an integral part of a healthy democracy. The killing of journalists and human rights activist undermines freedoms of expression and association, as well as regional security.

The Department is committed to supporting efforts to increase respect for human rights and press freedom. Through USAID, we currently support Mexico's National Protection Mechanism for Journalists and Human Rights Defenders and work with state-level counterparts to expand the protection measures available for these groups. USAID also supports the Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Crimes Against Freedom of Expression to investigate and sanction aggressions against journalists and defenders. We also build and support professional networks and provide training to equip journalists to face challenges and professional risks specific to Mexico. Working with the Committee to Protect Journalists, we support training on journalist safety, investigative journalism guidelines, and best practices to increase transparency and accountability.

If confirmed, I will work to promote respect for human rights and the rule of law and end impunity. I will work with the Department to continue calling on Mexican authorities to investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes against journalists and human rights defenders wherever they occur, and actively engage with civil society organizations working these issues.

*Question.* How can Congress help advance human rights concerns, including violence against journalists?

*Answer.* Respect for human rights is fundamental, and a free and active press is an integral part of a healthy democracy. Congress can help advance administration priorities on human rights in Mexico by ensuring the Department and USAID maintain appropriate resource levels for security and development assistance, which include programming on human rights, the protection of journalists, and development of Mexico's capacity to investigate and prosecute aggressions against journalists and human rights defenders.

I would also recommend Congressional members engage with Mexican authorities whenever possible to discuss human rights issues. If confirmed, I would invite Congressional delegations to come to Mexico to observe the human rights situation on the ground.

*Question.* Will you commit to working with me to advance the Combating Global Corruption Act and to raising the profile of efforts to fight international corruption as a U.S. national security priority, particularly in Mexico?

*Answer.* I understand Department of State priorities include supporting Mexico in addressing public corruption, transparency, and the rule of law. U.S. assistance programs train justice sector operators; establish, improve, and certify internal affairs departments; increase transparency and accountability through culture of lawfulness and ethics programs; and promote civil society and media participation. I understand all Mexican security officials receiving training or other assistance are subject to Leahy Law human rights vetting. I am also aware that the Department considers human rights, ties to organized crime, and corruption when implementing foreign assistance programs, as well as assesses the applicability of visa ineligibility authorities to target officials involved in significant corruption or gross violations of human rights.

If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress to assess all potential tools that can be deployed to help in the fight against international corruption, as well as discuss potential areas of cooperation on anti-corruption in high-level engagements.

*Question.* Do you see opportunities to work with the Organization of American States to further our anti-corruption agenda?

*Answer.* The OAS has a unique and vital role and mandate in the Americas: to promote a hemispheric commitment to representative democracy, human rights, and development and security organization. More than any other multilateral organization, the OAS today is the premier forum through which the member states can work together to improve the lives of our citizens and bring to life the democratic principles articulated in the OAS Charter and the landmark Inter-American Democratic Charter.

I understand the OAS's Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACC) adopts a comprehensive approach in which 34 member states work together to fight corruption. There are also opportunities in the OAS to work with countries to review legal frameworks and institutions through the Follow-up Mechanism for the Implementation of the IACC (MESICIC).

With the Lopez Obrador administration having made anti-corruption a central tenet of his administration, if confirmed, I will work to engage with Mexico to ensure we use every available tool at the bilateral and multilateral levels to address corruption.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you address corruption concerns with the Lopez Obrador administration and ensure that U.S. funds are not ending up with corrupt entities and individuals?

*Answer.* The United States supports Mexico's efforts to address corruption, transparency, and the rule of law. President Lopez Obrador has made anticorruption a focal point of his presidency. If confirmed, I will work with the Mexican Government to further discussions on anticorruption efforts and will continue to support U.S. anticorruption programming that assists Mexican Government and civil society efforts to counter corruption at federal, state, and local levels. If confirmed, I, and the Department, will continue to ensure all Mexican security officials receiving training or other assistance are subject to Leahy Law human rights vetting. Furthermore, I will continue to ensure we assess and mitigate the risk of corruption before providing assistance.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. KENNETH LEE SALAZAR BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* What is your view of the current situation in Cuba?

*Answer.* I have been watching the historic protests in Cuba and the Cuban Government's troubling response very closely. I can assure you that Cuba is among this administration's highest priorities. If confirmed, I will carry out the administration's aims to support peaceful protesters; to denounce human rights abuses, including violence, detentions, and Internet shutdowns and censorship; and to urge countries—even those opposed to U.S. sanctions—to support the Cuban protestors' demands for human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These are universal values every country should support.

*Answer.* If confirmed, will you press the Mexican Government to support the bipartisan U.S. policy on Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will carry out the administration’s aims to denounce human rights abuses, including violence, detentions, and Internet shutdowns and censorship; and to urge countries—even those strongly opposed to U.S. sanctions—to support Cuban protestors’ demands for human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

*Question.* In your opinion, how has implementation of the USCMA been affected by the COVID–19 pandemic?

*Answer.* While the COVID–19 pandemic limited the possibility of in-person collaboration, I commend our interagency colleagues and their counterparts in Mexico and Canada for finding ways to advance the USMCA implementation process despite the challenges. For example, Mexico took significant steps to undertake its herculean task of labor reform. While the recent report shows there is still work to be done, what was accomplished in establishing the labor courts, especially under the circumstances, is laudable. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will work with the interagency and our Mexican counterparts to continue the implementation process and address the areas where COVID–19 has complicated our joint efforts.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take as Ambassador to ensure that economic cooperation with Mexico under USMCA supports the growth of American businesses?

*Answer.* Since the USMCA entered into force July 1, 2020, I understand it has proven a valuable tool for improving trade relations between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. As Ambassador to Mexico, I will work with the State Department, the U.S. Trade Representative, and other U.S. Government agencies to continue building areas for cooperation and ensure full regulatory compliance with the agreement. I will also prioritize engagement on labor issues and support USTR’s efforts through the Rapid Response Mechanism to ensure U.S. businesses are on an equal footing.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JESSICA LEWIS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* How do you see the relationship between making the United States “the security partner of choice” and ensuring that U.S. security partners respect human rights and international humanitarian law, especially when using U.S.-origin defense equipment?

*Answer.* The President and Secretary Blinken have stated that human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy and have made it clear that the United States will cooperate with allies and partners where our priorities align and not shy away from defending U.S. interests and American values where they do not. Strong U.S. security partnerships around the world come with a multitude of benefits, including the opportunity to positively influence a country’s human rights practices. These relationships allow us to work closely with partners, set an example for human rights standards, and, when appropriate, provide training and education to enhance professionalism and adherence to human rights standards.

If confirmed, I will support assistance to help ensure our partner forces are taking steps to comply with international law and protect human rights. Additionally, I will work to ensure human rights concerns are given full weight in arms transfer decisions.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that human rights concerns are given equal weight as other considerations when assessing potential arms sales?

*Answer.* I understand the Administration is working to develop a new Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy to ensure arms transfer decisions reflect the Administration’s foreign policy priorities, including the respect for human rights and the rule of law. Promoting the protection of human rights in our arms transfer process bolsters our own national security, as well as that of our partners. If confirmed, I will review the arms transfer decision-making process to ensure human rights concerns are given full weight in arms transfer decisions, in accordance with the CAT Policy. I will also seek to assist partner forces in taking steps to comply with international law, build security sector governance capacity, and protect human rights.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JESSICA LEWIS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Does the current global amount, allocation, and geographical distribution of State Department security assistance sufficiently account for the strategic challenges facing the United States and its allies and partners?

*Answer.* State ensures that its security assistance strategically advances U.S. diplomatic and defense relationships, and that investments in foreign security forces advance U.S. foreign policy and national security interests, within the parameters set by the law and Congress. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that State's security assistance investments continue to focus on addressing strategic challenges facing the United States and its allies and partners, to ensuring our assistance and diplomatic efforts are the foreign policy tool of first resort, and to continuing to engage with Congress on this important issue.

*Question.* Does the Department have sufficient visibility into Department of Defense security cooperation activities so that State can guide planning for those activities, not just concur or object prior to implementation?

*Answer.* As I understand it, there is a coordination process that has been developed between the Departments of State and Defense, including State's participation in fora hosted by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and combatant commands, as well as the annual State-Defense Joint Security Sector Assistance Review. This process provides key State stakeholders the opportunity to participate in planning for security assistance activities prior to receipt of formal concurrence requests in order to ensure both departments' programs are complementary and mutually supportive. If confirmed, I commit to work to improve mechanisms that allow State to ensure that Defense's security assistance supports U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives.

*Question.* Do you commit to maintaining the tiered review process, and ensuring that this committee retains its role as the body in the Senate charged with reviewing the policy implications of potential arms sales?

*Answer.* I commit to maintaining the tiered review process, and I will work with the Committee in its role as the body in the Senate reviewing potential arms sales.

*Question.* Does the Department and its interagency partners sufficiently prioritize and expedite sales essential to the vital national interests of the U.S. and its most critical allies?

*Answer.* I understand the Department's top priority, working together with the interagency, is to advance vital national interests, including those shared by our allies, within the framework of existing laws. If confirmed, I will continue to seek efficiencies to improve the interagency process and work closely with our partners and allies to streamline vital capabilities for our critical partners that support U.S. foreign policy and security interests, and commit to continuing to engage with you and your office on this important issue.

*Question.* Does the Department spend sufficient time and attention in working with critical allies to develop requirements together to address those capabilities most needed for our shared interests? Does the Department have the personnel, especially at posts, to build and maintain the relationships required to jointly develop requirements?

*Answer.* The Department, working with colleagues at the Department of Defense, staffs embassies with Security Cooperation Officers (SCOs) who serve under Chief of Mission authority as well as their respective Combatant Command. These SCOs form the "first line" as key interlocutors with foreign Defense Ministries and services and are responsible for the development and maintenance of professional working relationships to advance U.S. strategic objectives and jointly develop requirements. If confirmed, I will work with the Department and DoD to ensure these vital positions are adequately trained and staffed to meet our foreign policy objectives.

*Question.* Do you support changing the arms sales process to require a resolution of approval for sales? Why or why not?

*Answer.* It is my sense that arms transfers are a key part of our security cooperation with allies and partners—and it is our relationship with allies and partners around the world that gives the United States a critical edge over our competitors and adversaries. If confirmed, I will examine this matter and consult with the Committee.

*Question.* Do you support restricting the arms sales emergency authority to those articles and services that can be delivered within 60 days?

*Answer.* I understand Congress's concern that the emergency authorities within the Arms Export Control Act be used to respond only to genuine emergencies. If confirmed, I would consult with subject matter experts in the Department of State and Department of Defense to identify whether there would be any negative policy or logistical implications to such limitations before giving any specific proposal my full support.

*Question.* Should the United States seek the return of U.S.-origin defense articles if issues emerge with end use by the foreign country or international organization customer?

*Answer.* I understand that there are many legal issues and other more practical matters of logistics and finance involved in such an option. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that our foreign partners only use U.S.-origin defense articles and services for the purposes for which they were provided, and that the Department considers the full range of consequences if a partner cannot or will not protect U.S.-origin defense articles; if confirmed, as well, I commit to continuing to engage with Congress on this important issue.

*Question.* Do you support imposing a new requirement for Leahy-like vetting for all U.S. arms sales?

*Answer.* The President has made it clear that respect for human rights must be at the center of U.S. foreign policy, which includes policy decisions on arms transfers.

If confirmed, I will review the arms transfer decision process to ensure it adequately considers human rights and the risk of civilian casualties when making such decisions, including preventing U.S. origin items from being transferred to foreign security force units that have committed gross violations of human rights. I will also insist on adherence to our agreements on the use of U.S.-origin defense equipment by our allies and partners, compliance with both the laws of armed conflict and respect for human rights, and will consider the full range of consequences should violations occur. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with Congress on this important question.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you balance vital U.S. national interests when we have values-based disagreements or human rights concerns with partners? In your opinion, do security partnerships give us more influence when we have human rights disagreements with partners, not less?

*Answer.* The President and Secretary Blinken have stated that human rights must be at the center of U.S. foreign policy. If disagreements with our partners arise, I believe we must address them openly and have frank conversations when necessary. The United States will cooperate with allies and partners where our priorities align and not shy away from defending U.S. interests and American values where they do not.

*Answer.* Among the many benefits of U.S. security partnerships around the world is an opportunity for us to influence the training, doctrine, and professionalism of partner armed forces in ways that enhance adherence to human rights standards and build security sector governance capacity. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure we take every opportunity to leverage our security relationships to enhance human rights around the world.

*Question.* Should the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) have a veto over arms sales?

*Answer.* DRL plays an integral role in the arms transfer decision process, and their input is essential to ensuring human rights are considered.

If confirmed, I will review the arms transfer decision process and work closely with DRL to ensure human rights concerns are given full weight in arms transfer decisions.

*Question.* Do you support reversing the Obama Administration's Export Control Reform initiative, and making large categories of articles FMS-only once again?

*Answer.* As you are aware, the export control reforms initiated under the Obama Administration were completed, and the categories of items from the munitions list moved to Department of Commerce control are now being regulated under the Export Administration Regulations. Separately, if confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to work closely with our DoD colleagues to maintain an appropriate FMS-Only list that guarantees the successful development of partner capabilities and the protection of U.S. technology. If confirmed, I would be glad to continue to engage with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* Many Americans believe U.S. allies free-ride off of U.S. military commitments. If confirmed, how would you plan to ensure sufficient burden-sharing by our allies?

*Answer.* I support President Biden's call to reinvigorate our alliances. Security simply costs more in today's complex environment, and, if confirmed, I will work to reframe the burden sharing conversation at NATO to increase focus on capabilities, readiness, and force generation, in addition to defense spending. In that same spirit, when appropriate, I believe the United States should seek fair and equitable cost-sharing arrangements with our partners. We saw how this diplomatic approach secured quick results in the new multiyear cost sharing agreement with the Republic of Korea that was signed in April. If confirmed, the PM bureau, under my guidance, will continue to impress upon our allies that only with greater mutual investment in defense can we ensure our alliances are able to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness.

*Question.* Is being a signatory to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons consistent with being a U.S. ally?

*Answer.* While the United States understands and shares the desire to advance nuclear disarmament goals, we do not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). I believe the TPNW is incompatible with U.S. extended deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security, and it may reinforce divisions that hinder the international community's ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. All NATO Allies share our opposition to the TPNW, and the U.S. position on this issue has spanned administrations. Seeking to ban nuclear weapons through a treaty that does not include any States Parties that possess nuclear weapons will not reduce nuclear arsenals.

*Question.* What is the Department doing to expedite delivery of critical capabilities to those priority allies and partners most in danger from growing threats from the People's Liberation Army?

*Answer.* There is no doubt that the People's Liberation Army's growing capabilities pose significant challenges to our allies and partners in the region. PM prioritizes security cooperation activities, including arms sales and security assistance to bolster our allies' and partners' capabilities to secure their land and maritime borders and increase Maritime Domain Awareness, security, the rule of law, and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will support efforts to increase interoperability with partners, and force projection and posture in the region. Empowering our partners and allies in these ways serves to deter more aggressive PRC military behavior in the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to encourage Taiwan to invest in its own defense, and to acquire capabilities most suitable for defense against the Peoples Liberation Army?

*Answer.* The United States has sold nearly \$30 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but arms sales alone cannot ensure Taiwan's ability to defend itself, nor should the impact of arms sales be judged on total value alone. Taiwan should focus on an asymmetric defense concept and prioritize modern, resilient, and cost-effective approaches. As I understand it, our expanding security cooperation, which is calibrated to meet the threat from the PRC, seeks to encourage and support Taiwan in developing those capabilities. As part of that cooperation, if confirmed, I will encourage Taiwan to spend on defense an amount commensurate with the growing threat it faces and to prioritize the appropriate capabilities.

*Question.* How can we best capitalize on Japan's increasing focus on Taiwan, and its efforts to improve its own defensive capabilities?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to working closely with allies to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values in the Indo-Pacific region. I believe Japan can be a critical partner in that respect. For the first time since 1969, a U.S.-Japan Leaders' statement referenced the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait; in addition, Japan's annual defense white paper stressed this year that "stability of the situation around Taiwan is important, not only for the security of our country, but for the stability of the international community." If confirmed, I will commit to exploring opportunities to collaborate with Japan to reinforce peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you ensure that the U.S. Department of State consults with Congress before taking action on issues that could jeopardize U.S. access to or

create significant tensions in our relationships with key defense partners in the Indo-Pacific, especially those in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* Advancing defense cooperation in Southeast Asia and supporting our defense partners throughout the Indo-Pacific remains critical to ensuring our national interests in safeguarding the rules-based international order and global peace and prosperity. If confirmed, and as I committed at my nominations hearing, I look forward to consulting extensively and meaningfully with Congress as we advance U.S. objectives in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* Do you consider the Philippines to be a strategically important ally of the United States? Please explain your position.

*Answer.* The U.S.–Philippine alliance is a relationship founded on shared strategic interests, shared history, culture, and strong connections between our nations. As Secretary Blinken has stated, the United States stands with the Philippines in the face of the PRC’s provocations, pressure and unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea. I understand that we share the Philippines’ concerns regarding the PRC’s problematic and coercive activity in the South China Sea, and that we will continue to work with our Philippine counterparts through bilateral and multilateral cooperation to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific. At the same time, I take seriously the matter of human rights abuses in the Philippines and, if confirmed, will work with State to consistently raise this as an issue of great concern with their government.

*Question.* The United States military currently cooperates with the Armed Forces of the Philippines on counterterrorism and maritime security. Multiple members of Congress have proposed limiting or cutting off U.S. security assistance to the Philippine military because of concerns over human rights abuses. Do you believe that taking such a step is in U.S. interests?

*Answer.* A longstanding treaty ally, the Philippines continues to be a critical partner in the Indo-Pacific on an array of issues. I take seriously the matter of human rights abuses in the Philippines, and my understanding is that we consistently raise this as an issue of great concern with their government. When violations have occurred, the United States works with the Armed Forces of the Philippines to promote accountability for violators. My understanding is that PM does not provide assistance to the Philippine National Police. If confirmed, I will ensure that any provision of security assistance is closely aligned with the Administration’s bilateral and regional foreign policy objectives, remains in compliance with the Leahy Law and maximizes human rights training in military-to-military security cooperation activities.

*Question.* The United States military currently cooperates with the Armed Forces of the Philippines on counterterrorism and maritime security. Multiple members of Congress have proposed limiting or cutting off U.S. security assistance to the Philippine military because of concerns over human rights abuses. Do you believe that taking such a step would improve human rights conditions in the Philippines?

*Answer.* I understand State consistently underscores the importance of respect for human rights and accountability for any violations to all levels of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and civilian leadership. Maintaining our security assistance relationship can be an important way the United States can continue to engage on the human rights agenda. If confirmed, I will ensure the provision of security assistance is closely aligned with the Administration’s bilateral and regional goals, remains in compliance with applicable law, including the Leahy Law, and maximizes human rights training in military-to-military security cooperation activities.

*Question.* Do you agree that it is in our national interest to strengthen our security cooperation with Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand? If so, please elaborate specifically on the U.S. interests it serves.

- If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to advance security partnerships with these nations, including your views on continuing arms sales, engaging in capacity-building, and cooperating on advanced technology with South and Southeast Asian partner countries facing China’s coercion and growing military power?

*Answer.* It is absolutely in the national interest of the United States to strengthen security cooperation with allies and partners to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region, build interoperability, bolster U.S. force projection, ensure freedom of navigation and overflight, uphold rule of law, counter transnational crime and terror organizations, respond to natural and humanitarian crises, and reassure our allies and partners of U.S. commitment to the region, empowering them against coercion



and malign influence and enabling them to play an effective role in global peacekeeping. Security cooperation can provide opportunities to instill U.S. values in support of preserving the rules-based international order.

If confirmed, I will work to expand engagement with these nations at all levels, including by promoting the United States as the region's preferred security partner and helping to ensure they can protect and advance shared interests in the region. I will also seek to deepen and expand our overall defense cooperation with these nations by advancing key foundational defense agreements, which will help enable the transfer of defense articles and establish mechanisms that allow for greater overall defense cooperation.

*Question.* Does the TPNW present a threat to the integrity of the NATO alliance, and the security of NATO member states?

Answer. All NATO Allies share our view that the TPNW is inconsistent with the Alliance's nuclear deterrence policy, is at odds with the existing non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, risks undermining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and does not take into account the current security environment. NATO has made several statements opposing the TPNW, most recently in its June 2021 Summit Communiqué. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our Allies carefully consider the impact on their security and the Alliance prior to making any decisions relating to the TPNW.

*Question.* If Egypt takes receipt of Russian Su-35s, what impact do you anticipate it will have on U.S. security sector assistance to Egypt?

Answer. If confirmed, I will join my colleagues at the Department in urging the Government of Egypt to refrain from new major Russian arms purchases, including Su-35 fighter aircraft, which risk triggering Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) Section 231 sanctions and would damage our bilateral security sector cooperation and assistance. While it is too early to prejudice the Administration's response to the scenario you outlined, if confirmed, I will work with my State colleagues to fully implement CAATSA, and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on this matter.

*Question.* Can you commit to advocating for strong U.S. support to the Multinational Forces and Observers (MFO) in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula?

Answer. As I understand it, the Multinational Forces and Observers (MFO) plays an integral role in maintaining security and provides a framework for an enduring military-to-military relationship between Egypt and Israel. So long as that is necessary and cooperation continues between the two partners, if confirmed, I will advocate for strong U.S. support for the MFO.

*Question.* The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) was founded in 2005 and over the last 15 fiscal years, has received almost \$1.3 billion in funding. This funding has accomplished several objectives, including building self-sufficient peace operations training, supporting partner country development, enhancing partner country operational readiness, and expanded the participation, integration, and leadership women in peace operations, to name a few. GPOI has improved the capacity and operations of U.N. peacekeeping forces in Africa and globally. Please describe the efforts you will take, if confirmed, to continue to integrate women into GPOI's work in both peacekeeping troops and in leadership positions in peacekeeping missions.

- GPOI provides critical training to partner countries looking to deploy peacekeepers, which includes topics like preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), violence against women, as well as technical training. Given the high number of instances of SEA committed by peacekeeping troops globally, how would you direct GPOI to enhance trainings to counter these occurrences?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support PM's work through GPOI to increase the meaningful participation of women in peace operations by promoting efforts to: encourage partners to increase recruitment, training, and deployment of women at all levels of peace operations—including in leadership and decision-making positions; incorporate gender topics into training for all peacekeepers; and invest in gender-responsive upgrades at partner training centers.

Moreover, if confirmed, I will direct PM to pursue activities through GPOI that enhance and expand upon existing SEA prevention and accountability training incorporated into pre-deployment training, as well as National Investigation Officers training.

*Question.* Do you commit to ensuring the State Department advertises the GPOI programming as part of our assistance to U.N. peacekeeping efforts?

Answer. Yes, I do. In fact, I understand there will be a particularly valuable and timely opportunity to do so as we approach the U.N. Peacekeeping Ministerial in December.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JESSICA LEWIS BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* How do you see the relationship between making the United States the security partner of choice and ensuring that U.S. security partners respect human rights and international humanitarian law, especially when using U.S.-origin defense equipment?

Answer. The President and Secretary Blinken have stated that human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy and have made it clear that the United States will cooperate with allies and partners where our priorities align and not shy away from defending U.S. interests and American values where they do not. Strong U.S. security partnerships around the world come with a multitude of benefits, including the opportunity to positively influence a country's human rights practices. These relationships allow us to work closely with partners, set an example for human rights standards, and, when appropriate, provide training and education to enhance professionalism and adherence to human rights standards.

If confirmed, I will support assistance to help ensure our partners' forces are taking steps to comply with international law and protect human rights. Additionally, I will work to ensure human rights concerns are given full weight in arms transfer decisions.

*Congressional Review of Arms Sales*

*Question.* During the previous administration, I have been concerned that congressional review periods have been bypassed for certain arms sales and the administration refused to respond to congressional inquiries regarding those sales.

- What steps will you take to address these concerns?

Answer. Given my experience on the committee, I very much understand the importance of Congressional oversight, whether in terms of the need to respond to inquiries, to respect and maintain both the formal and informal Congressional review processes, as well as the value that Congressional perspectives bring to the Executive Branch's own policy deliberations. If confirmed, I will respect the role of Congress in the arms transfer process, will adhere to all statutory requirements, and will ensure the Bureau is responsive to Congressional requests for information.

*Question.* In your experience working in Congress, what observations have you made about factors that may hinder Congress from effectively exercising its oversight role over the arms sales process?

Answer. In addition to the absolute prerequisite of Executive Branch cooperation with Congress on these matters, I would note that arms sales are authorized under different sections of U.S. law and may involve equities under the jurisdiction of the Senate's Foreign Relations, Armed Services, Appropriations, and even Banking Committees.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JESSICA LEWIS BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* Recent protests against the Government in Colombia have resulted in more than 40 reported deaths and thousands of injuries. In some cases, protests had turned violent and erected blockades to prevent the distribution of food and medicine to communities in need. Colombian military personnel and law enforcement had been deployed for crowd control and have broken up these blockades. The Colombian Government has been proactive in investigating instances of alleged human rights abuses committed by security personnel.

- In your opinion, to what degree will the human rights conditions on Colombia's FMF program evolve based on state security forces' response to the mass demonstrations that began in late April 2021?

Answer. I understand that Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Colombia supports efforts to strengthen the appropriate role of the Colombian military, including to provide aviation, riverine, and maritime security, in a democratic society. All

FMF for Colombia is provided consistent with the Leahy Law, and therefore human rights are taken under consideration. If confirmed, I will continually review the impact and effectiveness of our foreign assistance programs, as well as opportunities to augment and reinforce human rights-related components.

From 2008 to 2017, previous administrations had bundled Taiwan arms sales notifications together, announcing multiple notifications on a single day, which led to extended periods of time between arms sales announcements. Since September 2018, this approach changed, with the administration announcing one or two Taiwan arms sales packages at a time, with shorter gaps between notifications.

*Question.* Do you agree that the former approach had significant downsides, particularly with regard to strategic planning and signaling U.S. support for Taiwan?

Answer. I understand the concern with previous approaches, and commit to moving requests for transfers of defense articles upon receipt of each request. If confirmed, my overriding goal will be to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable it to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our “one China” policy. U.S. security cooperation with Taiwan is calibrated to meet the threat from the PRC and ensure we fulfill our commitments to Taiwan, as reflected in the Taiwan Relations Act.

From 2008 to 2017, previous administrations had bundled Taiwan arms sales notifications together, announcing multiple notifications on a single day, which led to extended periods of time between arms sales announcements. Since September 2018, this approach changed, with the administration announcing one or two Taiwan arms sales packages at a time, with shorter gaps between notifications.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to further improve upon the approach developed since 2018, and ensure that the United States maintains a regularized and robust arms sales process that addresses Taiwan’s defense needs as expeditiously as possible?

Answer. I recognize the serious and growing threat that the PRC poses to Taiwan, and the urgency of Taiwan improving its self-defense capabilities. If confirmed, I will support moving requests for transfers of defense articles upon receipt of each request. This is identical to the arms sales process used for other partners.

The United States sold nearly \$30 billion worth of arms to Taiwan since 2009, but arms sales alone cannot ensure Taiwan’s ability to defend itself, nor should the impact of arms sales be judged on total value alone. Taiwan should focus on an asymmetric defense concept and prioritize modern, resilient, and cost-effective approaches. Our expanding security cooperation seeks to encourage and support Taiwan in developing those capabilities.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. DONALD LU BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* How many Afghan allies who have or are now applying for SIVs will the U.S. relocate?

Answer. The Department of State remains committed to Afghan partners who assisted the United States over the past two decades in Afghanistan. On July 29, 2021, the first relocation flight arrived in the United States with 221 Afghan special immigrant applicants, including 70 minors. A second flight arrived on August 2, 2021 with 181 SIV applicants. The Department is leading a worldwide effort to continue relocating eligible applicants and their families over the course of the next several weeks. There are approximately 20,000 Afghan principal applicants at some stage of the SIV application process, but about half of these applicants need to take action and provide legally-required documentation before the U.S. Government can begin processing their case and determine their eligibility for consideration for an SIV. It is my understanding that the U.S. Government intends to support all SIV applicants who are determined to be eligible for the program.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to press the Bangladeshi Government to allow unions to register and function without repression?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to press the Bangladeshi Government to allow unions to register and function without repression, so that they may continue their important work to try and improve working conditions in Bangladesh.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensure that a labor attaché is sent to our embassy in Dhaka this year?

*Answer.* Knowing the importance of having a labor attaché and how one can support the improvement of labor conditions in country, I commit to ensuring that a labor attaché is sent to Embassy Dhaka as soon as possible. The Department is working with the Department of Labor to establish and fill this important position.

*Question.* If confirmed, do I have your commitment that USG assistance for labor unions will not diminish under your leadership?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to work with interagency stakeholders to support labor unions. Their work has been vital to improvements to strengthening safety improvements in the ready-made garment sector, and we will need to continue to support their work so that labor conditions can improve in all industrial sectors in Bangladesh.

*Question.* What are the prospects for the Indian Government to further diminish arms sales from Russia?

*Answer.* In recent years, India has taken significant steps to reduce its defense cooperation with Russia and increase cooperation with other partners, especially the United States, through increasingly sophisticated joint military exercises, increasing defense purchases, and deepening implementation of interoperability agreements. If confirmed, I will urge India to continue to turn away from major defense equipment purchases from Russia, and continually convey our concerns that Russia does not share the common strategic interests and values underpinning the U.S.-India partnership.

*Question.* Beyond the purchase of the S400, are you concerned that the Indian Government will seek to make further significant purchases of Russian arms?

*Answer.* In recent years India has increasingly diversified its defense purchases away from Russia. I will continue to support and encourage U.S. defense sales with India and urge all of our allies and partners to avoid purchasing new major defense equipment from Russia.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to engage with the Indian Government on the challenges faced by the Sikh farmers community in Punjab and their ability to peacefully protest now and in the future?

*Answer.* The farm laws themselves are an issue for the people and Government of India. However, peaceful protests are a hallmark of any thriving democracy as the Indian Supreme Court described on a case regarding the farm protests. If confirmed, I will underscore our strong support for the right to peacefully protest with the Indian Government.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you have a plan to advocate for effective accountability in Sri Lanka?

*Answer.* Accountability and impunity for human rights abusers continues to be an issue of great concern in Sri Lanka. If confirmed, I will continue to seek a commitment from the Sri Lankan Government to credibly address longstanding human rights cases and respect civil society, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, and human rights defenders. Additionally, I will seek to utilize available tools to promote accountability, including, as applicable, Section 7031(c) visa restrictions and/or Global Magnitsky sanctions, in a targeted manner, to advance our human rights goals.

*Question.* Given the concerns that several Senators have raised on security cooperation with Sri Lankan officials who have been implicated in human rights abuses during the war, do you commit to consult closely with this committee and staff on any arms sale or future security cooperation effort with Sri Lanka?

*Answer.* The Biden administration takes very seriously the need to incorporate human rights into our engagements with Sri Lanka, including our security and law enforcement cooperation objectives. Our long-term strategic interests are best served by a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Sri Lanka. If confirmed, I commit to closely consult with the committee to ensure that in any engagement with or equipment transfer to the military, law enforcement, counterterrorism or security officials, we continue to emphasize respect for democratic governance, human rights, accountability, and rule of law.

#### *U.S. Businesses in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan*

*Question.* Several U.S. businesses have expressed concerns about the rule of law their ability to operate in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Do I have your commitment to work with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on these cases as they happen to ensure that U.S. businesses are not treated unfairly?

Answer. Promoting United States investment in Central Asia is a key pillar of the U.S. Central Asia Strategy, and facilitating U.S. exports and investments supports the G7 Build Back Better World initiative. If confirmed, I will work with our host government partners to improve the business and investment climate in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and I will work with those in federal agencies and private industry to address issues when they arise. I will also work closely with the committee to ensure you are apprised of key developments.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. DONALD LU BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In your view, has India taken significant steps to reduce its defense cooperation with Russia? What are some of the most notable steps? Other than the S-400 purchase, what else concerns you about the Indian-Russian relationship?

Answer. In recent years, India has taken steps to reduce its defense cooperation with Russia and increase cooperation with other partners, especially the United States, through ever more sophisticated joint military exercises, increasing U.S. defense purchases, and concluding defense enabling agreements, such as COMCASA. If confirmed, I will urge India to continue to diversify away from Russian arms and reiterate Russia does not share the common strategic interests and values underpinning the U.S.-India partnership.

*Question.* What specifically can we do to strengthen our security relationship with India in the short-term? What about the longer-term?

Answer. U.S.-India defense ties have expanded significantly over the past two decades, as evidenced by the conclusion of five major defense enabling agreements and over \$20 billion in bilateral defense trade.

In the coming years, the United States will look to increase the interoperability of our forces through additional logistics cooperation, expanded defense information sharing, increasingly complex multi-service exercises with like-minded partners, maritime domain awareness, peacekeeping, and joint development of defense technologies in line with India's status as a Major Defense Partner of the United States. In addition, the United States will look to deepen defense cooperation in important domains such as emerging technologies, space, and cyber.

*Question.* What will you do to work with the Indians on boosting COVID vaccine manufacturing in the region and ensuring these vaccines are available for export to support dire global vaccine needs?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Indian Government to expand COVID-19 vaccine production to make vaccines globally available and affordable both through the Quad Vaccine Partnership and bilaterally. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the Indian Government to address global medical supply chain constraints that limit necessary inputs for vaccine production.

*Question.* What role do you see India playing in the Indo-Pacific region in light of the growing challenges from China?

Answer. The United States and India share a vision of a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific. The United States welcomes India's emergence as a leading global power and its role as a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues and the interagency to encourage India to continue its important contributions toward capacity building, maritime security, economic development, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* What will be your main priorities in cooperating with India through the Quad and cooperating with India in Southeast Asia?

Answer. The Quad aims to build relationships with partners that share our values, perspectives, and approaches to regional and global challenges on a range of political, economic, and security issues. If confirmed, I plan to work with my counterpart in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and interagency to encourage Quad partners, including India, to expand our robust cooperation on priorities including maritime security, counterterrorism, COVID-19 vaccine production, and climate change. If confirmed, I will work with the Indian Government to reaffirm our strong support for ASEAN's unity and centrality, enhance our coordination in the East Asia Summit and ASEAN Regional Forum, and look forward to exploring ways of working with India in the Mekong sub-region and across the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* Do you commit to making the resolution of the Lincoln House issue a priority with India, and to directing the U.S. Ambassador to India to do the same?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will also consult closely with Members of Congress on this issue.

*Question.* The Indian Ministry of Defense is also involved in this issue. Do you commit to ensuring relevant U.S. Department of Defense officials are briefed on the issue, and to ensuring they raise it with their own counterparts as well?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* In 2016, the Obama administration labeled India a “major defense partner,” a designation supported by Congress in the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. Some have called for an amendment to the Arms Export Control Act to facilitate more defense sales to India and help solidify it as a Major Defense Partner. Does the Biden administration support such a step?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to consult closely with the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, the Department of Defense, and Congress on this and other steps to advance our defense and security partnership with India.

*Question.* The Obama administration launched the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative with India to promote joint co-development and production of defense systems. Thus far, that objective has not been realized. To what do you attribute this?

*Answer.* The U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) has been a valuable mechanism in building linkages between the U.S. and Indian defense establishments. While some DTTI working groups have faced challenges, many, such as the Aircraft Carrier Technologies Working Group, have resulted in productive technical exchanges. In 2019, the United States and India concluded a DTTI Industry-to-Industry Framework to promote greater collaboration with the private sector.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department of Defense to advance progress under the DTTI.

*Question.* Will the Biden administration pursue greater cooperation under DTTI with India? If so, what will be the administration’s key priorities?

*Answer.* The U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) has catalyzed exchanges on a range of technologies, including related to aircraft carriers and small unmanned aerial vehicles. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with my Department of Defense counterparts to further deepen cooperation with India through DTTI.

*Question.* Will the Biden administration advocate for India’s membership on the U.N. Security Council and in the Nuclear Suppliers Group?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work closely with my counterparts. The administration will review reform proposals and work closely with Allies and partners at the U.N. to ensure that UNSC reforms are undertaken in such a way as to enhance the efficiency of the Council, promote U.S. values, and leave unaltered the veto power. Moreover, I intend to work across the interagency to continue U.S. support for India’s membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

*Question.* How will the Biden administration cooperate with India on 5G, digital security, and other emerging technology issues? Please be specific.

*Answer.* The Biden administration has prioritized cooperation with India on a host of emerging technologies issues, both bilaterally and through the Quad Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group. The United States and India, along with other Quad partners, intend to focus on the coordination of technology standards development and the joint efforts to maintain the integrity of standards-setting bodies, cooperation on telecommunications development, including the diversification of equipment suppliers, and convening dialogues on the security of technology supply chains, especially microelectronics and critical minerals.

*Question.* Pakistan played a positive role in bringing the Taliban to the table, but has publicly refused to host U.S. CT [Counter-Terrorism] assets and has been unable to force the Taliban back to the table. What is an appropriate role for Pakistan in Afghanistan? Is it time for a change in U.S.-Pakistan policy?

*Answer.* I believe Pakistan has an important role in Afghan peace negotiations. I understand the Department continues to make clear that progress toward a political settlement in Afghanistan, and collaboration on regional stability efforts, including against terrorist groups, are vital elements of an expanded U.S.-Pakistan relationship. If confirmed, I will also encourage Pakistan and Afghanistan to improve economic ties and expand trade, which will help build incentives to reap the divi-

dends of peace. Further, if confirmed, I will also work to expand trade and investment between the United States and these two countries to help enhance broader regional economic integration.

*Question.* The Taliban continues to seize more territory and threaten population centers while our embassy footprint is increasingly confined to Kabul. How do we provide adequate oversight of taxpayer dollars in Afghanistan? Absent issuing OFAC waivers, what should the policy be about assistance to Taliban-held areas?

*Answer.* The Department continues to monitor U.S. Embassy Kabul's staffing to ensure the necessary flexibility and sufficient resources to advance U.S. interests, including supporting efforts to reach a political settlement and supporting Afghanistan's stability. Maintaining an appropriate diplomatic presence is essential to ensure that we can support our Afghan partners and that we have the staff to monitor our assistance and programming. Both the Department and USAID have been developing scenario-based contingency plans to adjust U.S. assistance programming as the operating environment warrants, including to ensure it continues to advance U.S. interests and is consistent with U.S. law and policy.

*Question.* What is the administration's strategy for processing the large volume of pending SIV applications from Afghanistan given the deteriorating situation on the ground?

*Answer.* The Department of State remains committed to Afghan partners who assisted the United States over the past two decades in Afghanistan. For that reason, the Department has taken steps to address the large volume of pending Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) applications from Afghanistan. The Department is currently working to relocate SIV applicants who are in the advanced stages of processing to either the United States or other third country locations while we complete their special immigrant applications. We began relocating SIVs and their families to Fort Lee in Virginia in late July and appreciate Congress' generous support in this regard. We have also increased our consular staffing levels to augment our processing capacity across all stages of the SIV application process, and we are currently examining ways to make the application process more efficient. The Department looks forward to working with Congress on this issue and appreciates your attention to this matter.

*Question.* Efforts to combat trafficking in persons vary country to country in the South and Central Asian region. Some made significant progress during the 2020 reporting period. How can you, if confirmed, bolster these efforts?

*Answer.* Trafficking in persons is a serious crime which affects all countries. If confirmed, I will press South and Central Asian states at the highest levels of government to build on foundational improvements to prevent vulnerability of populations to trafficking, including marginalized individuals; increase prosecution of traffickers; and protect victims of trafficking. I will continue to seek opportunities for collaboration between the United States and regional partners to increase government anti-trafficking capacity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly increased vulnerability to trafficking around the world. I will continue to prioritize close collaboration with other key Bureaus within the Department of State and the international and local NGO community to address this important concern.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report and the 2021 U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Annual Report, some countries in the South and Central Asian region were identified as intolerant of religious freedom or having a significant hand in repressing religious minorities. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom regionally?

*Answer.* Respect for religious freedom and equal treatment under the law are fundamental principles of the United States. Intolerance of religious freedom and the repression of religious minorities anywhere is deeply concerning and counter to U.S. values, including in the South and Central Asian region. If confirmed, I will work with the Office of International Freedom and other relevant Bureaus in the Department of State and the larger interagency community to bolster religious freedom in South and Central Asia through work with the NGO community, direct engagement with governments and other avenues as appropriate.

*Question.* The protection of fundamental human rights remains a priority in the region. If confirmed, how will you direct the bureau to engage with civil society to bolster these rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I will press our partners at the highest levels to recognize the valuable role of civil society in building open, inclusive, and just societies by protecting fundamental freedoms. Civil society—particularly women-led civil society organizations and human rights defenders. Civil society, when respected and allowed operational space, can be a positive force in addressing many of the most pressing issues in the region, particularly those that affect vulnerable communities, and we will continue to seek opportunities through diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance to support their work, develop their capacities, and strengthen their role in their communities. We will press our partners to engage in the legal reforms needed to protect free speech, assembly, association, and religion as vital components of a free society.

*Question.* How will U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan affect our interaction with Central Asia nations?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to bilaterally engage our Central Asian partners on counterterrorism and security priorities, including as related to Afghanistan, in support of their independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. I would also continue to utilize the C5+1 regional diplomatic platform for the United States and the Central Asian states to expand regional security cooperation and increase connectivity between Central Asia and Afghanistan.

*Question.* Do you believe that the nations of Central Asia will prove to be useful partners in helping to stabilize Afghanistan? If so, how would you expect to see these nations act to maintain peace and security in the region?

Answer. The nations of Central Asia have been supportive partners of the United States in reducing terrorist threats in the region and working to support stability in Afghanistan. If I am confirmed, I intend to continue working with the five Central Asian nations to improve security and stability in the region through such as efforts as improving border security, countering the flow of narcotics, sharing information across borders, as well as assisting refugee populations and increasing economic connectivity.

*Question.* As the U.S. leaves Afghanistan, do believe that the U.S. should begin to interact with the Central Asian nations differently? If so, how?

Answer. For 30 years, the United States and the five Central Asian nations have built shared commitments to peace, prosperity, and security in the region. I believe our consistent engagements to strengthen those commitments should continue as the United States maintains its support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

*Question.* How can we counteract Chinese attempts to gain a foothold in the region's economy?

Answer. While most South and Central Asian countries seek to maintain positive relationships with the PRC and look towards Beijing for development financing and trade, they do not view their relationships as zero sum and actively seek to diversify their economic relationships to avoid becoming too dependent on Beijing. In Central Asia, for example, the C5+1 regional diplomatic platform strengthens countries' independence, sovereignty, and economic connectivity, in turn increasing their negotiating power in relations with the PRC and other regional actors. Investments in exchanges and increasing capacity in higher education are also mechanisms that allow the United States to maintain influence with South and Central Asian Governments and society, and positively shape their economic development and empower local communities. I will work intensively with U.S. Government investment institutions such as the Development Finance Corporation, our representatives to multilateral development institutions such as the World Bank, IFC and, and like-minded 3rd country bilateral partners, and U.S. private sector partners to develop creative options to enable the economies in the region to develop in a healthy, balanced manner.

*Question.* To what extent does the BRI lead to the expansion of China's institutions and legal norms in Central Asia? How can and should the U.S. work to counter that growth?

Answer. From its inception, the land-based "Belt" portion of BRI prioritized developing China's economic and logistical linkages to its western neighbors in Central Asia and it continues to be a region of focus for the initiative. In addition to rail infrastructure investments, BRI projects have since expanded to include energy projects, port developments along the Indian Ocean, and information communications technology (ICT). While countries in the region look to BRI to meet their devel-



opment financing needs, the opaque nature of BRI financing leads to increased corruption and elite capture, creates unsustainable debt, and limits countries' flexibility in their bilateral relationship with Beijing. In cooperation with our international partners, the private sector, and the interagency, we are promoting alternatives to PRC financing and advancing regional economic development, including through the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), and also working to improve transparency.

*Question.* In Central Asia, China has already begun funding and building the Digital Silk Road. Telecommunications infrastructure, surveillance networks, and other modernizing technologies are being lent and sold to Central Asian Governments. These give China a foothold in the Governments and societies which will be a platform for Beijing to spread influence. How can the United States compete and counter Chinese influence in the Central Asian tech space?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage our Central Asian partners to work with trustworthy vendors for their Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure and services. As part of a long-term approach that sets Central Asia on a path toward working with trusted partners, we will continue looking for opportunities to promote global and regional programs, such as the World Bank's Digital Central Asia and South Asia (CASA); ways to further bilateral cooperation in the tech space; and programs to foster greater ICT transparency. I will work with the Development Finance Corporation and other USG partners to develop creative approaches to the challenge, and collaborate closely with the Congress on the matter.

*Question.* To what extent do you believe that there is an emerging Russia-China axis? Some suggest that the U.S. should try to drive wedges between the two nations to destroy any emerging axis. Do you agree with that analysis? Could such a thing be accomplished in Central Asia?

*Answer.* We face competition from China and Russia like never before, and must recommit ourselves to robust engagement with the countries of Central Asia to support their sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity in the face of many challenges. Over the past two decades, China has supplanted Russia as the region's largest trade and investment partner, though Russia remains an important security partner for many of the countries in the region, and there are signs that Moscow is wary of losing influence. Through our own bilateral and multilateral engagement within the region, we are working to build Central Asian countries' resilience and independence from malign influence from any and all external actors of concern.

*Question.* President Biden and his administration have repeatedly made commitments to upholding universal rights at home and abroad. In Turkey, authorities are abusing people's human rights and attacking peaceful dissidents at an alarming rate. Turkey's abuses have spilled into Central Asia, where the Governments have been pressured to scrutinize and close down Gulenist schools. The most recent abuse involved Turkey's kidnapping and illegal extradition of a Turkish-born Gulenist teacher in Kyrgyzstan. How can the U.S. better use its influence to prevent protect Central Asian nations from undue Turkish influence and work to protect those who may be subject to persecution once back in Turkey?

*Answer.* U.S. diplomacy in Central Asia, including through the C5+1 diplomatic platform, balances against regional over-reliance on foreign powers and addresses a core objective of our Central Asia strategy: protecting the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Central Asian states. If confirmed, I will work in concert with colleagues from EUR and the rest of the Department of State to continue efforts to promote the rule of law and respect for human rights in Central Asia bilaterally, regionally through the C5+1 platform, and multilaterally through the OSCE and other fora. I will remind Central Asian partners at the highest levels that requests for extraditions or transfer of individuals across international borders must happen transparently and with respect for the legal process. I will also continue to remind Central Asian partners of their non-refoulement obligations to prevent individuals from facing the threat of torture or mistreatment abroad. The Department of State is in direct contact with the spouse of the missing Turkish schools director and is working to ascertain what happened to him.

*Question.* What do you believe the role of sanctions should be in the creation and execution of U.S. foreign policy?

*Answer.* I believe the sanctions tools provided by the various sanctions authorities are critical for the creation and execution of U.S. foreign policy. I have seen firsthand the powerful impact our sanctions have when formulating policies and diplomatic strategies. When used thoughtfully to further U.S. and like-minded countries' democratic and human rights goals, these tools can dissuade, deter or even stop the

behaviors they were designed to address. Well-developed sanctions advance our bilateral relationships and help our regional partners.

*Question.* With respect to Russia, how do you believe the sanctions imposed on that country since 2014 have affected the Russia's economy and foreign policy decision making?

*Answer.* I believe the sanctions imposed on Russia since 2014 were effective in raising the economic cost for Russia to pursue aggressive and hostile activities. These sanctions also deterred many of Russia's traditional trading partners from continuing to do business as usual.

*Question.* What secondary impacts do you believe U.S. sanctions on Russia have had on Central Asian economies and politics?

*Answer.* Most countries in Central Asia have longstanding trade relationships with Russia and have faced secondary economic impacts from U.S. sanctions on Russia, including effects related to Russia's devaluation of its currency.

*Question.* The Jackson-Vanik Amendment was passed in 1974 and mandated sanctions on the Soviet Union until it allowed Soviet Jews the option to leave the USSR. Despite the fact that all Jews who wish have long since left the post-Soviet Central Asian nations, they all still remain cursorily sanctioned under Jackson-Vanik. Practically, what effect has the continued existence of Jackson-Vanik sanctions (waived though they may be) have on the nations who remain thus labeled?

*Answer.* The Jackson Vanik (JV) Amendment imposes trade penalties on non-market economies that restrict emigration. When the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, the amendment was applied to all of the newly independent states. However, since 1998, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan have received and maintained Presidential Waivers to the JV restrictions, based on the Department of State's semi-annual certification that they are fully compliant with the Amendment's requirements for free and open emigration; in other words, they are granted Normal Trade Relations (NTR) status, but it is not permanent (PNTR).

Given their longstanding compliance with the law, JV is no longer relevant for these countries. PNTR status would allow Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan to compete fairly with the rest of the world when forming trade relationships.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Jackson-Vanik sanctions on the Central Asian nations should be repealed without condition? Should they only be repealed when the nations in question make further human rights concessions?

*Answer.* The denial of PNTR under Jackson-Vanik is an ongoing bilateral irritant, and one that limits our trade potential in the region. Trade discrimination under laws such as JV is technically prohibited under the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), of which both Kazakhstan and Tajikistan are members. Uzbekistan is in the process of joining the WTO in 2021. The Kyrgyz Republic was granted PNTR in 2001 when it acceded to the WTO. Restoring PNTR to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan now would reassure them that the United States supports peace and economic development in the region. Ending the applicability of the Jackson-Vanik amendment to these countries would allow the United States to grant them PNTR and would advance our goals of promoting economic growth and regional connectivity. The Department's position is that it should be repealed based on the countries' compliance with the terms of the original legislation.

With regards to human rights concessions, the Department of State uses more effective and targeted tools—such as the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, the Human Rights Report, and the Religious Freedom Report, to apply leverage and motivate reform. Withholding PNTR would not be as effective as these existing mechanisms.

#### *Trafficking in Persons in Central Asia*

*Question.* The State Department just released the 2021 Trafficking in Person's Report, and while some Central Asian nations showed improvement in the past year, there are still serious issues with the fight against trafficking. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan were removed from the Tier 2 watch list, however Tajikistan and Turkmenistan remain at Tier 3.

- Please outline what steps you will take to address this issue with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to help them make improvements.

*Answer.* Tajikistan demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period and was ranked Tier 2 in the 2021 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, but many improvements in anti-trafficking remain to be seen. If confirmed, I will work with the Office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons

to press the Government to increase efforts to combat trafficking, including by adopting and implementing standard operating procedures for identifying trafficking victims and referring them to care. I will also encourage the Government to train law enforcement to screen for signs of trafficking among vulnerable groups.

While some progress has been made, trafficking in Turkmenistan remains a serious concern. If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Turkmenistan to implement its new National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking, as well as continue to press for further action to end government policies or actions that compel or create pressure for the mobilization of forced labor, to include eliminating the cotton and silk production quotas and mandatory participation in public works. I will work with regional partners, including international organizations, to encourage the Government of Turkmenistan to grant independent observers full access to monitor cotton cultivation and cease the harassment, detention, and abuse of individuals for documenting labor conditions.

*Question.* As Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan have all recently made key improvements in fighting the trafficking of persons, what steps do you believe the U.S. can and should take to help those nations maintain that success and make further improvements?

*Answer.* Though the tier ranking upgrades in Central Asia are promising, human trafficking must be fought tirelessly and efforts must always increase. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the positive trajectory of efforts in the Central Asian region by increasing coordination among states on anti-trafficking efforts, including through the C5+1 platform and partnering with international and regional partners to increase government capacity to protect victims, prevent trafficking among vulnerable populations, and increase prosecution of traffickers across all states. However, many countries risk overemphasizing a multilateral approach out of a misconception that trafficking requires cross-border movement. In reality, all these countries could do more to prevent, detect, and address trafficking within their own borders. I will therefore work to ensure Central Asian countries do not pursue multilateral approaches to the exclusion of their own urgently needed policy reforms and improvements, particularly in regards to legislation, steps to eliminate state-sponsored forced labor, and the identification and protection of victims among vulnerable or marginalized groups and those subjected to forms of trafficking that do not involve cross-border movement.

*Question.* In Central Asia, media freedom is still severely limited due to both the active efforts of governments to silence dissent, and the lack of legal protections afforded to independent journalists. Abuse, imprisonment, torture, and killings of reporters are not uncommon. Free media is all but eliminated in some of these countries. If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, how will you address this problem in Central Asia and make clear that we will not allow the abuse and imprisonment of journalists anywhere in the world?

*Answer.* Central Asia must take tangible steps to enshrine fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and the press, into laws that enable an environment of political pluralism. If confirmed, we will encourage the region to allow space for peaceful dissent and non-violent speech, both online and offline—it is more important than ever that the press be allowed to continue to report freely on events as they develop. We will continue to support democratic principles, rule of law, and protection of human rights for all in Central Asia, as they are key elements to the development of any society, and will help unlock the full potential of the region.

#### *Anti-Corruption / Rule of Law*

*Question.* Several high-profile scandals have exposed the Western financial system's inability to prevent corruption. In the FY2021 NDAA, the U.S. Congress updated its anti-money laundering laws to shift the burden of disclosure from the banks to the corporations and beneficial owners. And the EU has been working on a rule-of-law mechanism to link EU funds to good governance, as well as cracking down on "golden visas." This corruption hurts both the citizens of the countries where the money was stolen and stored. Many of the high-profile cases have involved Central Asian rulers, their families, and oligarchs.

- What concrete actions will you take as Assistant Secretary for SCA to push countries to reform their systems and crack down on corruption?

*Answer.* As President Biden said last month in establishing the fight against corruption as a core national security interest, "corruption attacks the foundations of democratic institutions, drives and intensifies extremism, and makes it easier for authoritarian regimes to corrode democratic governance." The Department currently works to combat corruption through development and promotion of internationally

recognized standards, commitments, and obligations, such as those enshrined in the U.N. Convention against Corruption. Further, the Department uses diplomacy to promote reform, foreign assistance to strengthen institutions, and visa restrictions to promote accountability for corrupt actors. If confirmed, I will work to push countries to reform their systems and crack down on corruption, including through the use of the FY 2021 NDAA anti-money laundering provisions and other tools in U.S. law. Recognizing the fight against corruption cannot be won by governments alone, I will also take steps to strengthen the ability of civil society and media to reveal corruption, foster public demand for change, and address weak governance and poor human rights conditions that cultivate corruption.

*Question.* How important is it that the United States and its European allies take steps to make our own systems less friendly to kleptocracy and less penetrable by dirty money?

*Answer.* It is key that the United States leads by example with our partners and allies to make our own systems less friendly to kleptocracy and less penetrable by dirty money, to increase coordination, and share lessons learned in the fight against corruption globally. By undertaking measures to protect our financial system from dirty money, we protect our own institutions and make it harder for authoritarians and corrupt authorities to syphon away their countries' economic resources. If confirmed, I will work closely with the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Treasury Department and other relevant interagency partners on this important effort.

*Question.* Will the administration make a concerted push on anti-corruption in the EU and its periphery with the dual purpose of benefitting European citizens and making it more difficult for malign actors like Russia and China to gain a foothold?

*Answer.* Yes. The administration has established countering corruption as a core U.S. national security interest. The Department will develop plans for increasing efforts to combat corruption by December 2021 under the National Security Study Memorandum process, and will continue to work closely with allies and partners to prevent and expose the PRC's and Russia's efforts to export corruption as a tool of influence, sow instability, and gain market access. We must also continue efforts to foster government transparency and, separately, protect the enabling environment for civil society and journalists as part of our efforts, given their crucial role in combatting corruption.

*Question.* Since the change of Government in Uzbekistan in 2016, there have been many positive changes, but they have come at a slow pace. International organizations have only slowly been allowed to register to work in the country. If confirmed, do you commit to working to help more international NGOs register in Uzbekistan?

*Answer.* The United States supports Uzbekistan's political and economic reforms. Civil society is a crucial component to any functioning democracy and is necessary to continue these reforms. If confirmed, I will continue our work with Uzbekistani partners to ensure local and international NGOs can easily register and operate freely to serve all persons of Uzbekistan, including those from vulnerable communities.

*Question.* The U.S. Peace Corps has not been able to operate in Uzbekistan since 2005. They have been working to try and restart operations in Uzbekistan, but the process has been very slow, both because of bureaucratic inertia in Uzbekistan and the problems posed by the Coronavirus pandemic. If confirmed, do you commit to working to facilitate the reentry of the U.S. Peace Corps into Uzbekistan?

*Answer.* I understand the Uzbekistani Government has invited the Peace Corps to return to Uzbekistan, and that the Peace Corps has begun a virtual assessment of conditions in Uzbekistan for possible re-entry. I understand that once pandemic conditions allow the Peace Corps to visit Uzbekistan, the Peace Corps will make a final determination of whether or not it can establish a program in Uzbekistan. If confirmed, I commit to supporting the Peace Corps in the re-entry process.

*Question.* What spheres do you consider as most ripe for future reform and positive changes in Uzbekistan? If confirmed, are there specific areas in which you will push Uzbek authorities to make progress? Please specify which.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to lead U.S. support for Uzbekistan's political and economic reforms, including strengthening human rights and democracy, and improving healthcare, education, agriculture, and rule of law. I will also continue to work with the Government of Uzbekistan to support improvements to the business and investment climate, including privatization of state-owned enterprises, and to strengthen climate ambition. I also look forward to working with our Uzbekistani partners, including through the C5+1 diplomatic platform, to support

greater regional engagement, building on Uzbekistan's initiatives to improve relations within Central Asia and foster connectivity with Afghanistan.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. DONALD LU BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Central Asia*

*Question.* The five “Stans” are all under increasing pressure from both China and Russia—neither of which is encouraging the development of market economies or rule-of-law. As co-chair of the Helsinki Commission, I have noted that these governments, and civil society groups from them, are active participants in OSCE proceedings, including the annual Human Dimension gathering in Warsaw. They seem very interested in staying connected to Europe and North America. Based on your time in Kyrgyzstan, what are your thoughts on whether OSCE could provide a bridge to the democratic West for these five countries?

*Answer.* The OSCE, particularly through its field operations in each Central Asian country, plays an invaluable role by increasing cooperation between Western and Central Asian countries on key issues—including countering terrorism, promoting democratization and human rights, water and energy management, border control, and migration. It also provides a forum to raise concerns about regional security and violations of OSCE commitments, including human rights, and has been a main platform for the United States to challenge Russia directly for its actions. The OSCE Academy in Bishkek provides master's level education for students from Central Asia and Afghanistan and is a model for the region. I fully support further OSCE engagement in Central Asia.

*Question.* How do we ensure that human rights are more prominent in our engagement with India? What is your response to myriad assessments that see India's democracy and human rights record trending negatively?

*Answer.* As the Secretary mentioned during his recent visit to India, every democracy, including our own, is a work in progress. The U.S.-India relationship is underpinned by a commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will regularly raise our human rights concerns with the Indian Government in the spirit of our close strategic partnership. I will also ensure that our support for civil society and media in India is robust.

*Question.* No one group has made more significant strides since 2001 than Afghan women. In terms of the economy, women have come a long way since the fall of the Taliban regime. They have returned to work by the hundreds of thousands, many becoming business owners and entrepreneurs. Afghanistan has rebuilt an education system that had basically stopped functioning. In 2001, only 900,000 students were in primary school—all of them male. Today, more than 9 million students are in school, and nearly 40 percent of them are girls.

- What do you think the implications of the military withdrawal will be for Afghan women and girls?

*Answer.* While it is difficult to overstate the significant gains made by Afghan women and girls over the last 20 years, I recognize how much remains to be done. Rising insecurity, the COVID-19 pandemic, decades of conflict, widespread poverty, humanitarian crises, and cultural barriers continue to threaten progress made in women and girls' rights in Afghanistan. Even though U.S. military troops are withdrawing, I understand the United States will continue to support the rights of Afghan women and girls through diplomacy and by maintaining significant humanitarian and development assistance.

*Question.* How can the administration hold the Taliban and Afghan Government to account in preserving the rights and gains of Afghan women without the support the U.S. military provided to Afghan forces and the check it served as on the Taliban?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will closely monitor the status of women and girls in Afghanistan and will consult with Afghan and international partners and civil society on how best to promote accountability. While the future of Afghanistan is for Afghans themselves to decide, the United States has made clear that future development assistance and international legitimacy depend on the actions of the Afghan Government with respect to rights and fundamental freedoms, especially those of women, children, and members of minority groups.

*Question.* What can we do to preserve the rights and gains of Afghan women and girls?

*Answer.* I believe continued high-level diplomatic engagement and programmatic support by the United States and international community is required to help maintain and build upon the gains made by Afghan women and girls in the last 20 years. I am committed to using the full force of our diplomatic, economic, and development toolkit to support the Afghan people, particularly women and girls. U.S. and international development and humanitarian assistance has been instrumental in providing Afghan women and girls with access to the resources, expertise, and tools necessary for achieving the gains of the last two decades.

*Question.* Pakistan has been accused of numerous reported human rights abuses, some of them even perpetrated by the Government. Watchdog groups often rank Pakistan among the world's most dangerous countries for journalists and women. How do we hold the Pakistani Government accountable for human rights abuses?

*Answer.* In addition to documenting human rights abuses in Pakistan through the Human Rights Report and International Religious Freedom report, the Department regularly raises concerns about issues of human rights and individual freedoms during engagements with Pakistani officials, including at the senior-most levels. Such issues include media freedom, the rights of women and girls, sexual and gender-based violence, and protection of minority groups, among others. If confirmed, I will strongly and consistently urge Pakistan to uphold the rule of law and respect human rights and freedoms in accordance with its constitution and international obligations. I will also encourage the Pakistani Government to protect press and media freedoms for all and will emphasize in engagements with Pakistani counterparts that a vibrant press and informed citizenry are key for any free nation.

*Question.* How do we elevate the voices of targeted communities in Pakistan, including journalists and others critical of the Government?

*Answer.* The U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Pakistan engage regularly to hear the concerns of civil society organizations, activists, religious leaders, journalists, and businesses, including those from underserved and at-risk communities. If confirmed, I will maintain our robust engagement with these constituencies to continue listening to their concerns and raising these issues with senior Pakistani officials. These communities are also often represented by civil society organizations that do important work to address these concerns and advocate for change with the Pakistani Government, but these organizations are often hampered by overly burdensome restrictions on their operations. If confirmed, I will continue to stress to the Pakistani Government the imperative of a vibrant civil society to any democracy, and the value of allowing civil society organizations to help deliver vital assistance to Pakistan's most vulnerable communities, including women, children, and members of religious minority groups.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON DONALD LU BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In your opinion, how will the U.S. withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan impact future security in Central Asia?

*Answer.* Our Central Asian partners are deeply concerned about the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. Each of the Central Asian republics are taking steps to reinforce their border security. In general, they share our counterterrorism and security priorities in Afghanistan and are interested in enhancing cooperation. Per the President's instructions, we are working to maintain significant counterterrorism assets in the region. If confirmed, I will continue to engage partners, allies, and key stakeholders in Central Asia on how best to monitor and counter terrorist threats in the region.

*Question.* What effect might it [the U.S. withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan] have on the longstanding U.S. policy goal of fostering intraregional connectivity within Central Asia?

*Answer.* Connectivity remains a key element of United States policy across Central and South Asia. My vision of regional connectivity includes stable and secure infrastructure that meets the highest international standards; open markets operating on a fair and competitive playing field; and a sustainable and healthy environment. It also includes Afghanistan's greater integration with its neighbors, and realizing its potential as a regional transit, trade, and energy hub. Regional connectivity

is critical to long-term peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region. Peace and regional integration are mutually reinforcing.

We will continue to foster cooperation to build Central Asian connectivity with Afghanistan through the C5+1 diplomatic platform, bilateral dialogues, trilateral discussions with Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbors, and a planned quadrilateral format including the United States, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to encourage the Central Asian states to work with the Afghan Government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue strategic efforts to encourage the Central Asian states to develop closer ties with the Afghan Government across energy, economic, cultural, trade, and security sectors, which directly contribute to regional stability. This effort would include utilizing the C5+1 regional diplomatic platform for the United States and the Central Asian states to expand security cooperation and increase connectivity between Central Asia and Afghanistan.

*Question.* The main logic behind the U.S. Government's negotiations with the Taliban is that the promise of U.S. assistance to them is enough incentive to change its policies or behavior. Do you believe this, especially given recent reports of Taliban activity that suggest otherwise?

*Answer.* I remain concerned about the Taliban's recent military operations in Afghanistan. The group's public position remains to find a solution to the conflict through a negotiated political settlement. I understand the Taliban and Islamic Republic negotiating teams continue to meet and discuss the parameters of a settlement, and I hope both sides can accelerate those negotiations. The Taliban also have routinely expressed their desire for diplomatic and economic relations with the rest of the world, including the United States. I am committed to using our full diplomatic, economic, and development toolkit, as well as working alongside the international community and Afghanistan's neighbors, to support efforts to establish peace and promote the future that Afghans are seeking.

*Question.* What can you tell me of the Taliban's views on the participation of women in the political system and the role of religion in society? Have these views really moderated since 2001?

*Answer.* In public statements, Taliban leaders have emphasized their commitment to upholding and guaranteeing all the rights afforded to women under Islamic law, but they have not followed through on these statements with visible reforms regarding the social and political inclusion of women in the areas they control. In a joint declaration released after the July 2019 Intra-Afghan Peace Conference in Doha, the Taliban agreed to assure "women rights in political, social, economic, educational, cultural affairs within the Islamic framework of Islamic values." Taliban leaders have also said that women can hold political office, except as head of state or chief justice. However, women do not play an active role within the Taliban's shadow administration or structures, and Taliban officials sanction repressive behavior in Taliban controlled or influenced communities. If confirmed, I will promote women's full, meaningful, and equal inclusion in Afghan society.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to step up cooperation with India in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* The United States and India share a comprehensive, global strategic partnership and a vision of a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will continue to expand cooperation with the Indian Government bilaterally, regionally, and multilaterally on the global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, mutual prosperity, Quad engagement, climate change, defense and security issues, and shared values.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to promote India's role in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and more generally, to strengthen this important platform?

*Answer.* The Quad aims to build relationships with partners that share our values, perspectives, and approaches to regional and global challenges on a range of political, economic, and security issues. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the interagency to encourage Quad partners to expand cooperation on maritime security, counterterrorism, COVID-19 vaccine production, democratic principles, and climate change, among other priorities.

*Question.* If confirmed, what needs to happen to encourage India to take a more constructive approach to its neighbors that China is actively seeking to influence?

*Answer.* The United States welcomes India's emergence as a leading global power and its role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean region, underpinned by our shared commitment to the rule of law, freedom of navigation, democratic values, and regional connectivity. If confirmed, I will encourage the Indian Government to continue its important contributions toward capacity building, economic development and connectivity, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and numerous other areas of cooperation with its neighbors.

*Question.* How will you support South Asian states who have territorial disputes with Beijing, such as India and Bhutan?

*Answer.* The United States strongly opposes unilateral attempts to advance territorial claims by incursions or encroachments, military or civilian. Parties to territorial disputes must adhere to international law and resolve differences through dialogue. If confirmed, I will engage closely with the Indian Government to understand how the United States can best support India including through defense technologies, intelligence sharing, and diplomatic support. If confirmed, I will also work to further advance our friendship with Bhutan and reaffirm our support for its sovereignty.

*Question.* How do you plan to counter Chinese malign influence in smaller South Asian states, such as Sri Lanka and Nepal?

*Answer.* I am very concerned by the People's Republic of China's activities contrary to international norms of behavior, such as promoting disinformation or excessive debt in South Asia. If confirmed, I will seek to counter the PRC's application of economic pressure through assistance and help countries manage existing debt loads, evaluate contracts for transparency and equity, and combat corruption. Economic pressure through assistance has been a key tool of manipulation used by the PRC. We will also lead with our most powerful tool—our values—which most clearly demonstrate the value of democratic leadership in the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to working with New Delhi to coordinate and strengthen U.S. and Indian support of the Tibetans in exile in India?

*Answer.* I commend India's hosting of Tibetan refugees over many decades. India's continued support is crucial to ensuring that a large part of the Tibetan diaspora can freely practice their language, culture, and religion. If confirmed, I'll work with the Indian Government to ensure that Tibetans in exile in India, including the Dalai Lama, can continue to promote peace and understanding around the world without external influence.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. DONALD LU BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Question.* The State Department's 2020 Country Report on Human Rights and Practices for India notes, among other significant human rights issues, the Government of India places "restrictions on freedom of expression and the press, including violence, threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecutions against journalists, use of criminal libel laws to prosecute social media speech, censorship, and site blocking." If confirmed, what steps do you intend to take to promote freedom of speech and freedom of expression in India?

*Answer.* Freedom of speech and freedom of expression are fundamental rights enshrined in the Indian constitution and as fellow democracies, the United States and India have a shared interest to engage on these issues, as the Secretary did in his recent travel to New Delhi. If confirmed, I intend to follow the Secretary's principled leadership on the matter and work closely with U.S. Mission India and colleagues across the Department to continue our robust engagement with Indian journalists and media, to raise concerns with the Indian Government, and to consult faithfully with Congress.

*Question.* The State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom expressed concern about the implications of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) when it was passed by the Indian parliament in 2019. Also citing the CAA and other significant downward trends in religious freedom conditions, the U.S. Commission on International Freedom (USCIRF) recommended in its 2020 Annual Report that the State Department designate India as a Country of Particular Concern in its next annual report on International Religious Freedom. What is the State Department's policy regarding the CAA?



Answer. Respect for religious freedom and equal treatment under the law are fundamental principles of both the United States and India. While the Indian Government has not yet actively implemented the Citizenship Amendment Act, the Department continues to call on India to protect the rights of its religious minorities in keeping with India's constitution and history of diversity.

*Question.* How does the Department factor USCIRF recommendations into its own deliberations when determining whether a country is included as a Country of Particular Concern in the International Religious Freedom report?

Answer. USCIRF is an independent commission established under the 1998 International Religious Freedom (IRF) Act to provide policy recommendations to the President, Secretary of State, and Congress with respect to matters involving international religious freedom. The Secretary considers a wide variety of factors, including USCIRF findings as required by the IRF Act, when making the annual religious freedom designations.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to hold frank conversations with your counterparts in the Indian Government regarding its obligation to commit to freedom, democratic principles, equal treatment of all citizens, human rights, and the rule of law for all?

Answer. Yes.

#### *Diplomatic Vision for Afghanistan After U.S. Troop Withdrawal*

*Question.* U.S. policymakers and foreign policy experts had initially expected the withdrawal of U.S. military forces to be accompanied by a diplomatic surge. Yet the security situation in Afghanistan may preclude the possibility of such a surge.

- Given the security challenges in Afghanistan, what is your vision for U.S. diplomatic engagement and presence in Afghanistan after the U.S. troop withdrawal is complete?
- If the State Department is unable to lead a diplomatic surge, how can the United States best secure the gains that we have made in human rights, education and empowerment of girls, and other important issues in Afghanistan? In other words, how can the United States best help the Afghan people and promote U.S. interests in Afghanistan?

Answer. I understand all the agencies at our Embassy will continue their important work, as long as security conditions permit, consistent with the administration's commitment to stay fully engaged on behalf of U.S. interests in Afghanistan. This will include our consular support to U.S. citizens and fulfilling our commitment to Afghans who have worked alongside us through adjudication of Special Immigrant Visas. I will remain in frequent communication with our Embassy in Kabul and the interagency to continuously evaluate information pertaining to the security of U.S. citizens and U.S. Government personnel, facilities, and interests in Afghanistan in order to mitigate any emerging threats. I will also consult with stakeholders on creative approaches, such as off-shoring, that can advance U.S. interests while keeping our mission safe.

I am committed to using our full diplomatic, economic, and development toolkit to support efforts to establish peace and promote the future that Afghans are seeking. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to sustain and further advance the gains achieved by Afghan society, particularly those made by Afghan women, girls, and minorities over the last 20 years. I am committed to using our diplomatic and assistance resources to continue to advocate for women's rights, support their meaningful participation in peace negotiations, work to create quality educational opportunities, assist women to join the workforce, combat gender-based violence, and expand access to quality healthcare.

*Question.* In your testimony, you noted that for the past 20 years, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship has been defined by the war in Afghanistan and related U.S. counterterrorism efforts in the region. With U.S. troops leaving Afghanistan, there is an opportunity to redefine the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. Issues such as climate change, strategic competition with China, economic development, and others may be on the table.

Despite many shared interests and priorities, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship has been beset by years of distrust and unaligned policies. What will it take for the United States and Pakistan to move beyond the persistent challenges in our bilateral relationship to cooperate on our shared priorities?

Answer. The Department continues to make clear it seeks further assistance from Pakistan for progress toward a political settlement in Afghanistan and collaboration on regional stability efforts, including against terrorist groups. Such actions would

contribute importantly to an expanded U.S.-Pakistan relationship. If confirmed, I will push for more bilateral cooperation based on shared priorities, including securing a responsible end to the conflict in Afghanistan, advancing regional security and fighting terrorism, expanding both bilateral and regional commercial and trade opportunities, promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development, and ad

*Chinese Territorial Aggression in Bhutan*

*Question.* China reportedly claims as many as eight areas inside Bhutan as being Chinese territory. In 2015, China announced that it had built an entirely new village called Gyalaphug inside a 232-square-mile area claimed by China since the early 1980s, but internationally understood as part of Lhuntse district in northern Bhutan.

China's efforts to fortify the Tibetan borderlands, expand its maritime control in the South China Sea, and conduct other provocative measures are nothing new. Yet building a new village inside the territory of another country is different. According to at least one report, China does not need the land it is settling in Bhutan. Its aim, rather, is to force the Bhutanese Government to cede territory that China wants elsewhere in Bhutan to give Beijing a military advantage in its struggle with New Delhi.

- What is the Department's policy on Chinese efforts to expand its borders by building towns and villages in disputed territories?
- If confirmed, what efforts will you lead to protect Bhutan's sovereignty and prevent it from becoming a pawn in China's attempts to gain an advantage over India?

*Answer.* The Department is very concerned with the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s construction of towns and villages in disputed territories. Parties to territorial disputes must adhere to international law and resolve differences through dialogue. If confirmed, I will work to advance our friendship with Bhutan, reaffirm our commitment to its sovereignty, and coordinate with our partners, including India, to address the PRC's buildup in the Tibetan borderlands and to support a free and open region capable of resolving differences through dialogue. I also pledge to work closely with Congress to address this concerning trend.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. DONALD LU BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* What are the limits of cooperation that we can expect to see from India given their history of non-alignment?

*Answer.* Over the last two decades, the United States and India have made tremendous strides across all aspects of our strategic partnership. Our cooperation encompasses a wide range of issues, including regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific; the Quad; trade and investment; defense and security; climate change remediation; clean energy; higher education and people-to-people; shared values, and science and space. India has a unique foreign policy outlook given its history, but given our growing strategic convergence the Indo-Pacific, I am confident U.S.-India ties will continue to mature and deepen.

*Question.* China is aggressively pushing on India's border and is now claiming areas in which they have never had a historic assertion. Do you believe China is trying to find an "off-ramp" for this issue or is it looking to escalate the dispute with India?

*Answer.* The United States is concerned by Beijing's pattern of ongoing attempts to intimidate its neighbors, including India. We're closely following updates of any troop disengagement, and we welcome ongoing efforts to de-escalate the situation. We continue to monitor closely as both sides work toward a peaceful resolution. We urge direct dialogue and a peaceful resolution to border disputes.

*Question.* What message is China trying to send with its actions? Do you believe it is pushing this issue specifically to discredit India with regional allies?

*Answer.* The United States is deeply concerned by a pattern of territorial encroachment and failure to abide by the previous status quo along China's disputed terrestrial and maritime borders. We will stand with friends, partners, and allies in the face of the PRC's most assertive policies and for the good of the region.

*Question.* Do you believe these escalations will push India into a more robust and long-term security agreement with the U.S.?

Answer. India will seek partnerships based on its interests, but our shared vision for the Indo-Pacific portends greater regional and bilateral cooperation.

*Question.* India is the biggest donor to the Afghan National Government and 5th globally. What are India's interests in Afghanistan? Or is this more just another front in the long running competition with their neighbor Pakistan?

Answer. The United States and India have a shared interest in a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. India does not wish to see Afghanistan turn into a terrorist safe haven that undermines its security. We welcome India's support for the peace process and its long-running development assistance program.

*Question.* What does India stand to lose if security situation in Afghanistan worsens?

Answer. India has expressed concern about potential terrorist attacks against Indian interests in Afghanistan, as well as the impact on regional stability should the security situation deteriorate further. In the immediate term, India is also concerned about the threat to India's personnel and nationals working in Afghanistan.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Cuba*

*Question.* As part of USAID's work in defense of human rights, it is my understanding that USAID carries out programming focused on addressing the forced labor practices of Cuba's foreign medical missions.

- What is your assessment of these medical missions and, if confirmed, will you continue USAID's current programs?

Answer. I believe that Cuba's foreign medical missions, as noted in the Department of State's 2021 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, represent a form of labor trafficking. As noted by the TIP report, the Cuban Government "failed to inform participants of the terms of their contracts, confiscated their documents and salaries, and threatened medical professionals and their family members if participants left the program."

I understand that USAID has programs in place currently to support the human rights of Cuban workers, including medical personnel.

Support for democracy and human rights is at the core of this administration's Cuba policy. We must be vocal in our support for the journalists, human rights defenders, and democracy activists seeking to challenge the repressiveness of Cuban authorities, who maintain a tight grip on all aspects of life on the island and are ruthless in seeking to stifle dissent. If confirmed, I will continue to promote all types of programming to support human rights and fundamental freedoms for the Cuban population and look forward to consulting with you on this issue.

*COVID-19 and Economic Recovery*

*Question.* COVID-19 has had a particularly devastating impact on Latin America and the Caribbean, claiming at least 1.2 million lives. Today, only one in ten individuals in the region is fully vaccinated.

- If confirmed, what strategies will you implement to increase access to and distribution of vaccines in the region?

Answer. To date, I understand that the United States Government has delivered over 33 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to 15 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Furthermore, it is my understanding that USAID is also preparing countries to safely and effectively distribute COVID-19 vaccines. To date, I understand USAID has provided more than \$75 million globally, including \$13.5 million for the Latin America and Caribbean region, to assist countries to develop their national COVID-19 vaccine distribution plans, address misinformation and vaccine hesitancy to improve trust and confidence, strengthen supply chain and logistics to distribute vaccines with speed, equity, and safety, train health professionals to administer vaccines, and manage health information systems for better data tracking. If confirmed, I commit to supporting the Agency's efforts to increase access to vaccines in the region.

*Question.* How would you balance addressing the multiple consequences of COVID-19 on public health, economies, social development, and women and children in the region?

Answer. It is my understanding that USAID continues to monitor and address the evolving and varied second-order impacts of the pandemic on the region, and will leverage existing and new programs to address the most critical challenges. COVID-19 has hurt economies throughout the region, disproportionately impacting the poor and vulnerable. COVID-19 has also contributed to a humanitarian crisis in the region, increased gender-based violence, and lack of access to income-generating opportunities. The response today also needs to address the millions of children not receiving routine vaccinations and the millions displaced from school. To date, I understand that USAID has responded to such impacts with programming to support microcredit and job training for small businesses and entrepreneurs; the expansion of social protection, psycho-social and educational support in vulnerable communities; job opportunities for likely migrants; and the adoption of e-commerce strategies and tools to respond to COVID-19 economic restrictions. If confirmed, I will prioritize addressing the second-order impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Central America*

*Question.* Successive U.S. strategies have failed to make any discernable progress in achieving or advancing the goal of reducing mass illegal migration from Central America. If confirmed, what actions would you recommend taking to build and maintain political will among the political leadership in the countries of Northern Central America to tackle the push factors of illegal migration? What specific reforms should individual governments adopt to effectively reduce illegal migration from the region?

Answer. If confirmed, my priorities in Central America will include expeditiously strengthening programs that seek to improve conditions in the region and tackle the major drivers of migration. While the specific drivers of irregular migration cannot be generalized across countries or even communities, they are generally tied to insecurity, lack of economic opportunity, and the effects of poor governance and corruption, and I will work with other U.S. Government agencies to build the political will of partner nations to address these drivers. COVID-19 has exacerbated these conditions, as have major natural disasters (including hurricanes) recently hitting the region.

If confirmed, I will continue USAID's current approach of tailoring and adapting programs to the unique needs of each country and community. I will also continue the Agency's practice of using migration data to focus resources geographically in response to specific, local drivers of migration. USAID will work with a wide range of stakeholders from civil society and the private sector to increase the impact of our efforts. I will also commit to working closely with our partners in the region. I understand that USAID works closely with multiple stakeholders in the region both in the public and private sectors as well as with civil society organizations and international non-governmental organizations. And I look forward to further consultations with Congress on how to further improve the effectiveness of these programs.

*Nicaragua*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to prioritize programs and activities designed to improve the capacity of the democratic forces in Nicaragua to be a credible political challenge to the Ortega regime?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring USAID supports viable, democratic processes, institutions and forces in Nicaragua. USAID is focused on the November 2021 national elections in Nicaragua and on restoring democratic processes and respect for human rights through expanding opportunities for coalition building and supporting electoral integrity and an active civil society.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to channel any humanitarian assistance that USAID may provide in Nicaragua solely through independent non-governmental organizations?

Answer. Yes, I commit to channeling any USAID-provided humanitarian assistance solely through independent NGOs and Public International Organizations (PIOs). U.S. humanitarian assistance is provided through impartial international

and local organizations and U.N. agencies, who are on the ground working with vulnerable populations, for the sole purpose of helping people in need.

#### *Cuba*

*Question.* The Government of Cuba maintains an estimated 50,000 medical personnel in more than 60 countries under conditions that meet the definition of human trafficking. The United States, the United Nations, independent media outlets, and non-governmental organizations have all documented and called out the Cuban regime's exploitative and coercive practices toward doctors participating in its overseas medical programs. Do you agree that the Cuban regime's overseas medical missions amount to human trafficking? If confirmed, do you commit to ensure USAID Missions in U.S. Embassies in countries that accept Cuban medical missions help communicate the realities of the forced labor practices employed by the Cuban regime?

*Answer.* I believe that Cuba's foreign medical missions, as noted in the Department of State's 2021 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, represent a form of labor trafficking. As noted by the TIP report, the Cuban Government "failed to inform participants of the terms of their contracts, confiscated their documents and salaries, and threatened medical professionals and their family members if participants left the program."

I understand that USAID has programs in place currently to support the human rights of Cuban workers, including medical personnel.

Support for democracy and human rights is at the core of this administration's Cuba policy. We must be vocal in our support for the journalists, human rights defenders, and democracy activists seeking to challenge the repressiveness of Cuban authorities. If confirmed, I will continue to promote programming to support human rights and fundamental freedoms for the Cuban population and look forward to consulting with you on this issue.

*Question.* Do you commit to maintain a robust USAID democracy program focused on advancing respect for basic human rights in Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue USAID's work to support democratic activists and human rights defenders in Cuba. The role of a vibrant civil society continues to be essential to Cuban democracy. I gather that USAID has a portfolio in place to continue supporting a diverse sector of independent activists in Cuba who will push for democratic freedoms, including religious freedom. The Agency will also continue providing basic needs assistance to political prisoners, persecuted activists, and their families. NGOs are poised to continue defending the human rights of those who are abused and even jailed for their political beliefs.

#### *Haiti*

*Question.* Haiti is facing a complex and worsening crisis of governance. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring USAID plays an effective role in promoting economic self-reliance and meaningful dialogue among the different political forces? If confirmed, do you commit to dedicate resources to strengthening Haiti's technical capacity to hold elections?

*Answer.* The Haitian people deserve democracy and prosperity. Haiti has been without a functioning government for too long, and in the meantime, conditions continue to deteriorate. The political parties need to come together to end the misery, corruption and insecurity wreaking havoc for the Haitian people. While Haiti is facing a complex emergency that USAID assistance alone cannot resolve, USAID does have an important role to play in helping to promote democracy, human rights, and governance. With respect to the upcoming legislative elections, I understand that USAID's current activities aim to promote credible elections, increase political party competition, and expand civic participation in electoral processes to help end the ongoing political crisis of rule by decree. If confirmed, I will advocate for a strong whole-of-government and multi-donor approach for targeted democracy, human rights, governance and humanitarian assistance to promote democratic political reform, peace and stability.

#### *Venezuela*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring USAID-supported humanitarian efforts in Venezuela do not bring reputational benefits to the Maduro regime and individuals or entities aligned with the regime? Do you commit to ensuring USAID does not provide direct or indirect support to a COVID vaccination campaign in Venezuela that uses vaccines developed by the Cuban regime?

Answer. I understand that USAID has no plans at this time to provide direct or indirect support to a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Venezuela, where current vaccination efforts are non-transparent and discriminatory. Venezuela is a self-financing participant in COVAX, which means that it does not receive donor-supported vaccines or other assistance. USAID would only provide COVID-19 vaccination support if Venezuela established a credible, impartial, and transparent national vaccination plan, implemented in partnership with, or under the auspices of, international partners. In addition, it is my understanding that USAID has not provided, and has no plans to provide, direct or indirect support to a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in which any Cuban vaccine is used. Cuba has not published its trial data for its vaccines, nor has the vaccine received an emergency use listing or authorization from the World Health Organization.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Addressing Corruption*

*Question.* President Biden has taken an important step toward enhancing the ability of the United States Government to combat corruption and criminal actors worldwide with the release of the National Security Study Memorandum on fighting corruption. Defining the fight against corruption as a “core U.S. national security interest” sets a standard for how our government, our partners, and others can work together to combat such illicit, corrosive activity. I’ve reintroduced the Combating Global Corruption Act which is now in front of the full Senate and has been introduced in the House. The bill obliges the Executive to identify corruption in countries and rank them in a public, tiered system with respect to levels of corruption in their governments; establishes minimum standards for combating corruption; and evaluates foreign persons engaged in grand corruption for consideration under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

- Will you commit to working with me to advance the Combating Global Corruption Act and to raising the profile of efforts to fight international corruption as a U.S. national security priority, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean?

Answer. I agree that fighting corruption is a U.S. national security priority and I look forward to discussing the Combating Global Corruption bill with you, if confirmed. I agree that anti-corruption efforts must be a focus of our efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean. The President has articulated a comprehensive \$4 billion, four-year plan to confront corruption, enhance security, and foster prosperity to address the root causes of migration from Central America. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to most effectively implement President Biden’s plan in Central America, and to working with interagency colleagues to utilize all possible tools to increase pressure on those not doing enough to confront corruption and impunity across the region. I also will seek to deepen current investments in democracy, human rights, and governance, including by supporting civil society organizations and promoting independent media and protection for journalists critical to combating corruption in the region.

*Question.* Where do you see the biggest opportunities to make real strides in eliminating corruption in the Americas over the next two or three years?

Answer. I understand that the USAID institutes robust anti-corruption programming by helping host countries to strengthen controls and transparency in their procurement systems and enhance their capacity to prosecute and adjudicate cases through the courts system. Corruption is corrosive for many reasons, and in particular because it undermines citizen’s belief that government can deliver for them. Corruption also contributes to weak democratic institutions and widespread impunity in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. As a result, crime and violence flourish, which is linked to people’s intentions to migrate. If confirmed, among my priorities for USAID’s Latin America and Caribbean Bureau will include helping institutions deliver basic services with transparency and efficiency, and supporting civil society organizations and independent journalists carrying out oversight of government institutions. I also would seek to work with interagency colleagues to ensure that all possible tools are used to combat corruption in the region.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* As Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean at USAID, you will oversee 17 regional missions, 900+ people and over \$1 billion of development funds focused on promoting inclusive growth, human rights, democracy and governance, and citizen security. Your biography mentions that during your last tenure at USAID, you focused on the administration's priorities, including: "reinforced U.S. support for Peace Colombia, established a long-term development plan for Haiti, and prepared a proactive strategy to confront the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela." It says also that in response to Congress' doubling of funding to Central America, you led changes in strategy, organization and execution to combat root causes of poverty and migration in the region.

- Can you provide the committee with the major concrete steps of your strategy to confront the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support Interim President Juan Guaidó, the democratically elected National Assembly, and the people of Venezuela to determine their own future through free and fair elections. I commit to working with non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to advance democracy and a pathway to democratic elections in Venezuela. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you about how we might strengthen those efforts, given the devastating costs of Maduro's repression, and that of USAID's continued work to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to vulnerable Venezuelans in Venezuela as well as Venezuelan migrants and refugees across the region.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the status of current USAID programs in Haiti?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID is committed to working with the Haitian people in their efforts to build a healthy, prosperous, and peaceful Haiti. Given recent developments, it is a critical time to learn from the past and smartly engage foreign assistance resources in Haiti. If confirmed, I commit to supporting COVID relief, humanitarian assistance, and resilience building in Haiti. While humanitarian assistance will help alleviate some urgent humanitarian needs, it will not and cannot address the root causes of the current economic and political situation in Haiti, which will only be sustainably addressed by engaging Haitian actors with the political will to take-on much needed Haitian-driven reforms.

*Question.* Earlier this year, I re-introduced my bipartisan legislation, the Central American Women and Children Protection Act. This bill authorizes appropriations to provide assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras through bilateral compacts to increase protection of women and children in their homes and communities and reduce female homicides, domestic violence, and sexual assault.

- In your opinion, is this legislation something that USAID should support?

*Answer.* Thank you for your commitment to protecting women and children in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, a goal that I wholeheartedly share. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on this legislation and will ensure that USAID continues to support gender-based violence (GBV) survivors and women at risk of GBV in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and welcome continued support for programming in this area. I understand that in the Northern Triangle, USAID supports civil society and independent watchdog institutions to deter human rights abuses, respond to human rights violations, and support vulnerable populations. This includes forcibly displaced persons, women, children, and youth affected by violence and insecurity.

*Question.* In a recent letter to President Biden, I asked that the United States to be prepared to provide COVID-19 vaccines, and other humanitarian assistance, to the people of Cuba, but only if it is delivered to, and distributed by, trustworthy and independent international organizations. We must not allow the regime to take possession of such relief and use it as a weapon to force the people of Cuba into compliance with their demands.

- Are you being briefed on any discussions with regard to providing humanitarian assistance to Cuba?
- What do you see as the priorities in this space?

*Answer.* While I am not privy to any internal U.S. Government discussions, I have been following recent developments and the U.S. Government's announcements to facilitate the shipment of humanitarian assistance to Cuba. I understand that USAID has been providing assistance, including food, medicine, and hygiene products to victims of repression, including political prisoners, their family members,

and other individuals who are persecuted because of their political or religious beliefs. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize support for these populations, which remain under even greater threat following the July 11 protests. Accordingly, I will do my utmost to ensure that assistance is delivered to, and distributed by, trustworthy and independent organizations.

FOLLOW-UP TO SENATOR RUBIO'S INITIAL QUESTIONS

*Question.* In your response to my question for the record (“Can you provide the committee with the major concrete steps of your strategy to confront the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela?”) you responded with a description of the steps you would take to address the crisis, if confirmed. While we appreciate your wholehearted support for Interim President Guaidó and the democratic aspirations of the Venezuelan people, the intent of my question was to receive a summary of the concrete steps you helped to develop to confront the crisis during the Obama administration.

- Please provide a description of your strategy to confront the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela during your last tenure at USAID, including the outcomes of those actions.

*Answer.* In 2016, in my capacity as Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), I worked with the Bureau and USAID and its partners to assess the worsening humanitarian conditions in the country to understand who the crisis was affecting most severely and in which parts of the country. Our ongoing analysis led to the inclusion of Venezuela in a watchlist at Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau, the Bureau that was then in charge of humanitarian response, stabilization, and democracy.

The political opposition controlled the National Assembly, but the regime was blocking them from performing their democratic functions. As a result of the ongoing situation on the ground, USAID/LAC programming focused on monitoring and reporting on human rights, electoral conditions, and living conditions in the country. USAID also worked to support independent media, and I supported providing robust assistance to the National Assembly.

Under my direction, USAID/LAC assessed what possible outcomes could evolve on the ground, and what response would be adequate. This included continuing USAID programming to defend and promote democratic rights, initiating delivery of socioeconomic relief and commodities, particularly medical supplies, through local independent partners, and expanding humanitarian assistance through local independent partners to avoid politicization by the Maduro regime. We also anticipated programming that would be needed should a political transition to democracy transpire. This assessment process continued in an iterative manner through the end of the administration.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will your actions to address the current political and humanitarian crises in Venezuela differ from this strategy you prepared during the Obama administration?

*Answer.* In 2016, the opportunity to work with an interim government was not yet a possibility—this is a difference. If confirmed, I will support Interim President Juan Guaidó, the democratically elected National Assembly, and the people of Venezuela to determine their own future through free and fair elections. I commit to working with non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations to advance democracy and a pathway to democratic elections in Venezuela. This is my priority.

USAID’s engagement on health and food security also has the potential to help alleviate the humanitarian crisis and contribute to conditions for a democratic transition. With increasing access inside Venezuela by USAID’s implementing partners, I would pursue creative solutions that bring respite to the Venezuelan people outside of the Maduro regime’s control and I commit to engaging with you and your staff, if confirmed.

*Question.* Can you clarify your role in developing this strategy? Did you personally author this strategy?

*Answer.* Given the ongoing humanitarian and political situation in Venezuela, as previously stated, USAID/LAC engaged in assessing possible outcomes under my direction while Assistant Administrator for the Bureau. We analyzed the economic decline and its ramifications, summarized FEWS NET food security assessments, the worsening of the medical and security situation, and ways to circumvent the regime’s politicization of essential goods should the situation on the ground shift. This iterative process was managed, in response to my direction and under my guidance,



by the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean's Office of South American Affairs.

*Question.* In your response to my question for the record ("In your opinion, is this legislation something that USAID should support?"), you responded, "Thank you for your commitment to protecting women and children in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, a goal that I wholeheartedly share. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on this legislation and will ensure that USAID continues to support gender-based violence (GBV) survivors and women at risk of GBV in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and welcome continued support for programming in this area. I understand that in the Northern Triangle, USAID supports civil society and independent watchdog institutions to deter human rights abuses, respond to human rights violations, and support vulnerable populations. This includes forcibly displaced persons, women, children, and youth affected by violence and insecurity."

- The intent of this legislation is to authorize the United States to enter into Women and Children Compacts with the countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, modelled off of those the United States has entered into with Ghana, The Philippines, Peru and Jamaica. Do you believe that these compacts will contribute to USAID's efforts to address support women and children at risk of GBV?

*Answer.* When conditions on the ground are right, I believe compacts with partner governments on important issues like countering GBV can be extremely important. I understand that the Child Protection Compact Partnerships the U.S. has developed jointly with governments, for instance with Jamaica and Peru, have aimed to build on existing efforts to prosecute and punish perpetrators of child trafficking, identify child trafficking victims, coordinate and strengthen protective services, and prevent child trafficking. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Committee on this legislation, and with the State Department to establish such agreements, in appropriate countries.

To help create the conditions for such compacts, I will ensure that USAID continues to prioritize efforts to counter GBV. The "U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America" and the "Collaborative Migration Management Strategy," released on July 29, provide further details to guide USAID's strategic efforts for the region, including protection efforts for at-risk groups and addressing gender-based violence. Pillar V of the Root Causes Strategy focuses on "combating sexual, gender-based, and domestic violence," with objectives including: governments and civil society take steps to prevent sexual, gender-based, and domestic violence; hold perpetrators accountable; and protect and provide services for victims. I commit to working with your office to ensure that our mutual priority of protecting vulnerable populations, most specifically women and girls in Central America, is embedded in future programming.

*Question.* In your response to my question for the record on your awareness of the administration's discussions regarding humanitarian assistance to Cuba, you responded, "While I am not privy to any internal U.S. Government discussions, I have been following recent developments and the U.S. Government's announcements to facilitate the shipment of humanitarian assistance to Cuba. I understand that USAID has been providing assistance, including food, medicine, and hygiene products to victims of repression, including political prisoners, their family members, and other individuals who are persecuted because of their political or religious beliefs. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize support for these populations, which remain under even greater threat following the July 11 protests. Accordingly, I will do my utmost to ensure that assistance is delivered to, and distributed by, trustworthy and independent organizations."

- If confirmed, please provide what steps and actions will you take to ensure that humanitarian assistance is delivered to, and distributed by, trustworthy independent organizations inside Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will verify that existing basic needs assistance benefiting political prisoners, dissidents, and their families, is implemented by U.S.-based or internationally recognized independent NGOs. If confirmed, I will ensure that my team requires that each of these organizations provide USAID with their delivery and distribution protocols, and that they be verified and monitored frequently to ensure assistance does not benefit members of the regime.

*Question.* Please be specific on how will you ensure that this humanitarian assistance does not benefit members of the Castro/Diaz-Canel Regime?

*Answer.* As USAID designs new solicitations for additional basic needs assistance instruments, I will ensure that all necessary safeguards are in place for such work

to be carried out only by independent organizations and to prevent the regime from benefiting from them in any way.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to provide regular briefings to my office, and other interested Senate offices, on USAID's provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to regular briefings with your office and other interested Senate offices on USAID's provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Cuba.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARCELA ESCOBARI BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*China, COVID-19, and Economic Development*

*Question.* The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the region, and countries are struggling with record levels of debt and an anemic economic recovery. Latin America faced the sharpest economic contraction in 2020 of any region in the entire world. Unfortunately, many of these countries were struggling even before the pandemic due to weak rule of law, low investment, and poor governance.

Relatedly, I am worried by China's rising influence in the region. In 2019, Chinese companies invested \$12.8 billion in Latin America, up 16.5 percent from 2018, concentrating investments on regional infrastructure such as ports, roads, dams and railways.

I'll note that China's investments are not just making a difference in infrastructure but in the past four years, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Panama have each switched their recognition from Taiwan to China. Clearly, China is using this investment to achieve their geopolitical goals as well.

- If confirmed, how would you work through USAID to counter what China is doing in the region to ensure that the United States remains the partner of choice for our neighbors?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration's approach to countering PRC's influence is to provide tangible support that promotes sustainable opportunities for economic growth coupled with democratic governance, transparency, and local ownership of development work. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S International Development Finance Corporation to provide countries with choices and opportunities, rather than debt traps, digital surveillance, and development projects that are often opaque, extractive and coercive. It is important to me to work with allies and partners in the region to better leverage resources and exert influence. I will be a visible advocate for cooperative economic development and trade, human rights, democratic governance, and environmental, social, and labor standards, if confirmed.

---

## NOMINATIONS

---

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in Room SH-216, Hon. Chris Van Hollen presiding.

Present: Senators Van Hollen [presiding], Kaine, Young, and Rounds.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Good morning, everybody. The nominations hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

I want to welcome all of you here and thank my colleague, Senator Rounds, who is the ranking member of the Africa Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on Global Health Policy. I look forward to continuing our work together.

I am very pleased to welcome our three nominees this morning, Ambassador Michael Raynor to be Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Mr. Marc Ostfield to be Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay, and Mr. Troy Fitrill to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea.

Again, welcome all of you here. Congratulations on your nominations and thank you for your ongoing service to the country as members of the Foreign Service, and I also want to thank and salute your family members who have joined with us today.

Before we hear from our nominees, I would like to outline several key topics of relevance for today's panel before turning it over to the ranking member for his opening statement.

Ambassador Raynor, I am pleased to welcome you back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and glad that President Biden has selected you to represent the United States in two nations that hold great promise and great potential for enhancing our diplomatic presence in West Africa, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

As you know, Senegal has been a democratic stronghold in the region and a long-standing friend of the United States, and I hope that should you be confirmed you will work in partnership with this committee and regional stakeholders in Senegal to deepen the bonds that link our two nations.

In contrast, Guinea-Bissau has undergone significant political upheaval in recent years, and those political challenges are paired with serious development challenges.

The World Bank estimates that 70 percent of the population in Guinea-Bissau lives on \$1.90 per day or less, and that hardship has only been compounded by the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic.

I look forward to discussing with you your potential avenues and your ideas for engagement in Guinea-Bissau as we work to promote development, both in that country and across West Africa.

Mr. Fitrill, you have been selected by the president to serve in Guinea, another country that presents many challenges and also opportunities for engagement.

I was pleased to see the State Department's determination from last year that Guinea has, quote, "great potential," unquote, for the programs of the new International Development Finance Corporation, especially in the areas of banking, agriculture, IT, energy, and infrastructure.

In addition, the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives recently launched a \$15 million regional program seeking to bolster stability in coastal West African nations, including Guinea.

At the same time, we must be clear eyed about the challenges we face in Guinea from last year's violent and controversial reelection of President Condé. Also, to look at the impact of China's deepening influence in the country.

I look forward to discussing measures the United States can take to leverage the tools at our disposal for the benefit of our interests and those of the people of Guinea.

We all recognize that Africa is not a monolith. It is essential that we work with community partners and local leaders to address specific challenges facing each of these African nations, and as we work to strengthen our bilateral relationships also to impact our broader effort to enlarge prosperity that is mutually beneficial to African nations and the United States in West Africa and throughout the continent.

That larger mission must include finding ways to broaden our development efforts through initiatives like USAID and DFC, and enhance trade by making full use of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, and other trade tools. We look forward to discussing those ideas with you as well.

Finally, we come to Mr. Ostfield, who has been selected to serve on the other side of the Atlantic, in Paraguay, which is a long-time friend and partner to the United States, and I have been pleased to see the Biden administration make a concerted effort to strengthen our already warm relations with Paraguay.

On March 14th, Secretary Blinken spoke on the phone with President Benítez and reiterated the United States support for the Paraguayan people, and in June, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland, traveled to Paraguay to participate in the second U.S.-Paraguay Strategic Partnership Dialogue, a forum that has been vital in advancing discussions between our countries on trade, security, democracy, and collaboration.

Mr. Ostfield, we look forward to exploring with you the current state of U.S.-Paraguay relations and looking at areas where we can further strengthen that relationship.

Let me just end where I started by congratulating all of you on your nominations. I look forward to our discussion during this hearing.

And with that, let me turn it over to my colleague, Senator Rounds.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROUNDS,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me just begin by saying that I am very pleased to see this well-qualified panel of nominees before us today with one previously confirmed twice by this committee to serve in two ambassadorial posts, as well as two other very experienced State Department personnel with great records of service. I want to thank you and your families for your service to our country.

Ambassador Raynor, your background with Africa to include two tours as an ambassador will serve you well if you are confirmed to be our next ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how you will apply lessons learned from your most recent tour in Ethiopia, particularly regarding how the COVID-19 pandemic and recent unrest in Senegal is affecting Senegal stability and economic prospects.

I would also like to hear how you will approach our relationship with Guinea-Bissau and your views on the prospects for greater political stability under President Embal?.

Dr. Ostfield, if confirmed, your experience in global health security and managing other global issues will make you well placed to serve as our Ambassador to Paraguay.

I am interested in your thoughts on what additional assistance from the U.S. or other international partners Paraguay might need in order to overcome the health and economic effects of the pandemic.

We would also welcome your ideas on improved governance and rule of law, increasing security cooperation, and advancing U.S. business interests.

Mr. Fitrill, if you are confirmed, I would be very pleased that we would be sending a diplomat to Guinea who has held a number of senior positions in the Bureau of African Affairs, including most recently as director of the Office of West African Affairs.

Now, this oversees the U.S. engagement with Guinea. I am interested in your thoughts on how Guinea might overcome its deep political divisions and recommit to regular democratic transfers of power.

With that, Mr. Chairman, thank you, and it is back to you, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Ranking Member Rounds.

I want to recognize that we have been joined by Senator Kaine, who, among other things, oversees the Western Hemisphere.

Welcome.

And before I turn it over to all of you for your testimony, let me just expand a little bit on your backgrounds, and Senator Rounds mentioned some of your experiences.

But I do think it is worth emphasizing the deep experience that all of you have and I must say, as someone who grew up in a Foreign Service family, I am grateful for your service and it always

serves our country's interests well when we nominate and send people who have deep knowledge of the issue areas they are jumping into.

Ambassador Michael Raynor, known affectionately by friends and colleagues here and abroad as Ambassador Mike, is a long-term member of the Foreign Service. Over the course of his extensive career, Ambassador Raynor has worked in all African sub-regions.

He most recently served as the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia and was previously our Ambassador to Benin. Earlier in his career, Ambassador Raynor was director of the Office of Career Development and Assignments in the State Department's Bureau of Human Resources where he oversaw career development for over 14,000 members of the Foreign Service.

He has also served as the Africa Bureau's Executive Director where he led management and crisis support efforts for the Bureau's 53 U.S. embassies and consulates.

In addition, his previous service includes tours as management officer at U.S. Embassies in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Guinea, and Djibouti. He earned an MA in international affairs from Columbia University and a BA from Lafayette College.

He is the recipient of numerous State Department awards, including the Leamon R. Hunt Award for management excellence. He is fluent in French and, as an extra bonus, at least for me, he is a resident of the state of Maryland. Welcome.

Mr. Marc Ostfield is a career member of the Senior Executive Service with over 40 years of experience in international affairs and national security.

He is the current ombudsman of the United States State Department, and also has served the department as Acting Director of the Foreign Service Institute, Director of the Office of Policy and Global Issues in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Senior Foreign Affairs officer at the Office of Science and Technology Cooperation, and Senior Advisor for Bioterrorism, Biodefense, and Health Security in the Office of International Health and Biodefense.

Mr. Ostfield earned his BA, MS, and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He is the recipient of a Presidential Rank Award, numerous Senior State Department awards, and a range of other honors including a prestigious diplomacy fellowship from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He speaks Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Arabic. Welcome to you.

Mr. Troy Damian Fitrill is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and current Director of the Office of West African Affairs at the State Department.

He has previously served as deputy chief of mission at U.S. Embassies in Ethiopia and Mauritius, and as Deputy Director of the Department's Office of Southern African Affairs.

In addition, he served as Senior Advisor to the United States Special Envoy for the Great Lakes of Africa. Mr. Fitrill has also spent time on Capitol Hill as a Pearson Fellow.

We will not hold it against you, you worked on the House side instead of the Senate side. But you worked on the House Foreign

Affairs Committee where your portfolio included a suite of issues relevant to Asia, the Pacific, and Africa.

I am also proud to know that Mr. Fitrill earned his BA in my home state at the University of Maryland and an MS at the National War College. He speaks French, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, and Danish, and let me just welcome you as well.

So it is wonderful to have a group of three very qualified nominees to be ambassadors to these important posts.

Now, let me turn it over to each of you for your opening statements.

Let us begin with Ambassador Raynor.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. MICHAEL RAYNOR OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU**

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

I am grateful to the president and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence in me, and I am deeply indebted to my wife, Kate, my son, Bradley, and my daughter, Emma, for their sacrifices and support throughout my Foreign Service career.

During more than 31 years as a Foreign Service officer, I have developed substantial policy and managerial experience and a record of inclusive leadership fostering interagency collaboration, strong performance by diverse teams, and high morale in challenging environments.

As Ambassador to Ethiopia, I advanced our bilateral priorities at the time, which included supporting the country's transition toward democratic governance and free market economics, launching new programs to bolster human rights and counter ethnic strife, strengthening peacekeeping and counterterrorism efforts, and facilitating major growth in U.S. commercial investments. I am devastated by the current situation there.

As Ambassador to Benin, I elicited strong security cooperation, helped improve the country's business climate and U.S. commercial prospects, and strengthened the country's democratic trajectory.

As Assistant Chief of Mission in Afghanistan, I led some of the United States' largest foreign assistance and justice sector programs, as well as the embassy's large and complex management, consular, and security operations, while regularly engaging Afghan leaders on governance and security concerns.

As Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs, I led the State Department's management and crisis support for more than 50 posts in Africa.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to Senegal and to Guinea-Bissau, my highest priority will be the welfare interests and security of American citizens, whether ensuring responsive consular services, advocating for U.S. businesses, or strengthening partnerships to confront regional instability.

This priority will guide every embassy objective and activity. If confirmed, I will also do everything I can to ensure that the dedicated women and men serving at the U.S. embassy are secure, healthy, and provided every opportunity for success.

Our close partnership with Senegal spans more than 60 years and is rooted in our shared values of democracy and human rights, peace and security, economic opportunity, and prosperity.

Senegal's long democratic tradition of peaceful transitions of power, free and fair elections, a robust private press, and a strong civil society is unique in West Africa and serves as a model for the region.

Senegal's dynamic economy has achieved impressive growth while creating new opportunities for U.S. investment. While the pandemic has hampered this progress and worsened the economic strains felt by Senegal's large youth population, U.S. public and private investments can play a key role in reigniting the country's growth.

Embassy Dakar and Washington counterparts are pursuing a number of possibilities for U.S. investment to strengthen Senegal's economy and its long-term security and democratic governance.

Senegal is a key security partner in West Africa and a critical ally in the United States' efforts to promote stability and counter violent extremism. It is a major contributor to peacekeeping missions across Africa and regularly hosts regional military exercises in partnership with the United States and France.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the United States' essential democratic, commercial development, and security partnerships with Senegal.

In Guinea-Bissau, the United States has sustained its programs in partnership despite pandemic-related challenges, and there is scope to expand the bilateral relationship further in the days ahead.

If confirmed, I will seek to advance our two countries' shared interests in bolstering democracy and human rights, promoting stable and responsive civilian governance, advancing development and economic opportunity, and countering drug trafficking.

Senegal and Guinea-Bissau are dynamic nations with extraordinary histories and extraordinary potential. I am honored by your consideration of me to serve in such an important posting.

If confirmed, I will welcome advice and input from you and your staff on any aspect of the United States' multifaceted relationships with Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

I will also be pleased, if confirmed, to welcome you and your staff in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, and to keep you up to date on the activities of the U.S. embassy in Dakar.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

[Prepared statement of Ambassador Raynor follows:]



## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL RAYNOR

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence in me, and am deeply indebted to my wife Kate, my son Bradley, and my daughter Emma for their sacrifices and support throughout my Foreign Service career.

During more than 31 years as a Foreign Service Officer, I have developed substantial policy and managerial experience and a record of inclusive leadership fostering interagency collaboration, strong performance by diverse teams, and high morale in challenging environments. As Ambassador to Ethiopia, I advanced our bilateral priorities at the time, which included supporting the country's transition toward democratic governance and free-market economics, launching new programs to bolster human rights and counter ethnic strife, strengthening peacekeeping and counter-terrorism efforts, and facilitating major growth in U.S. commercial investments. I am devastated by the current situation there. As Ambassador to Benin, I elicited strong security cooperation, helped improve the country's business climate and U.S. commercial prospects, and strengthened the country's democratic trajectory. As Assistant Chief of Mission in Afghanistan, I led some of the United States' largest foreign assistance and justice sector programs as well as the embassy's large and complex management and security operations, while regularly engaging Afghan leaders on governance and security concerns. As Executive Director of the Bureau of African Affairs, I led the State Department's management and crisis support for more than 50 African posts.

If confirmed as the next U.S. Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, my highest priority will be the interests, welfare, and security of American citizens. Whether ensuring responsive consular services, advocating for U.S. businesses, or strengthening partnerships to confront regional instability, this priority will guide every Embassy objective and activity. If confirmed, I will also do everything I can to ensure that the dedicated women and men serving at the U.S. Embassy in Dakar are secure, healthy, and provided every opportunity for success.

Our close partnership with Senegal spans more than 60 years and is rooted in our shared values of democracy and human rights; peace and security; and economic opportunity and prosperity. Senegal's long democratic tradition of peaceful transitions of power, free and fair elections, a robust private press, and a strong civil society is unique in West Africa and serves as a model for the region.

Senegal's dynamic economy has achieved impressive growth while creating new opportunities for U.S. investment. While the pandemic has hampered this progress and worsened the economic strains felt by Senegal's large youth population, U.S. public and private investments can play a key role in reigniting the country's growth. Embassy Dakar and Washington counterparts are pursuing a number of possibilities for U.S. investment that will strengthen Senegal's economy and its long-term democratic governance and security.

Senegal is a key security partner in West Africa and a critical ally in the United States' efforts to promote stability and counter violent extremism. It is a major contributor to peacekeeping missions across Africa and regularly hosts regional military exercises in partnership with the United States and France.

If confirmed, I will work to strengthen the United States' essential democratic, commercial, developmental, and security partnerships with Senegal.

In Guinea-Bissau, the United States has sustained its programs and partnership despite pandemic-related challenges, and there is scope to expand our bilateral relationship further in the days ahead. If confirmed, I will seek to advance our two countries' shared interests in bolstering democracy, promoting stable and responsive civilian governance, advancing development and economic opportunity, and countering drug trafficking.

Senegal and Guinea-Bissau are dynamic nations with extraordinary histories and extraordinary potential. I am honored by your consideration of me to serve in such an important posting. If confirmed, I will welcome advice and input from you and your staff on any aspect of the United States' multi-faceted relationships with Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. I will also be pleased, if confirmed, to welcome you and your staff in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau and to keep you up to date on the activities of the U.S. Embassy in Dakar.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.  
Mr. Ostfield?

**STATEMENT OF MARC OSTFIELD OF PENNSYLVANIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY**

Mr. OSTFIELD. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the president's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay.

I am grateful for the trust and confidence President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me. I appear today with the support of my husband of 32 years, Michael, who has encouraged me throughout my career of public service.

Over the course of the past 35 years, my work has always been about making the world a healthier, safer, more just, and more equitable place.

Whether on the frontlines of AIDS prevention, developing global health campaigns in Latin America and worldwide, or in the Department of State shaping policy on issues ranging from bioterrorism to human rights to human trafficking to anti-corruption, my professional experience has demonstrated the power of diverse teams that reflect the country we serve and the ability to build coalitions in challenging environments.

My experience as a volunteer firefighter has reinforced the importance of mutual aid and decision making in high-pressure situations. If confirmed, I will draw upon this experience to advance U.S. goals in Paraguay by working to strengthen governance, increase security, and promote U.S. business interests.

Mr. Chairman, Paraguay has proven to be a reliable partner and ardent defender of democracy in the region, calling for an end to undemocratic practices in Venezuela and Nicaragua, and supporting Cubans' right to peaceful protest.

Paraguay's steadfast support for Taiwan is another indicator of its commitment to democracy. Like all democracies, Paraguay has its challenges, particularly the need for stronger rule of law and democratic governance.

Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Paraguay 137 out of 180 countries, near the bottom for Latin America.

In order to deliver prosperity for all its citizens and foster greater economic opportunities with the U.S., Paraguay must continue its efforts to root out corruption and impunity, increase transparency, and repair judicial integrity.

If confirmed, I will prioritize anti-corruption and leverage tools such as Section 7031(c) of the 2019 Appropriations Act, which Secretaries Blinken and Pompeo have used to designate corrupt Paraguayan officials.

The global pandemic created outsized risks for Paraguay, with the world's highest daily per capita death rate in June of this year. The U.S. proudly donated 2 million vaccine doses to Paraguay in July, which promptly began its mass vaccination campaign.

Additional U.S. support this year will bring U.S. funding for vaccine assistance to over \$9 million since the start of the pandemic.

Paraguay's long-standing bond with like-minded democratic partner Taiwan has made it a target of pressure tactics by the People's Republic of China to push Paraguay into switching diplomatic relations to Beijing.

If confirmed, I will work to support Paraguay's economic and political sovereignty and its commitment to Taiwan.

U.S. security goals center on helping Paraguay counter illicit networks, which threaten the safety of U.S. citizens and the region through money laundering, counterfeiting, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and links to terrorist organizations.

If confirmed, I will prioritize helping Paraguayan regional partners strengthen border security and address transnational crime.

The United States is Paraguay's number-one investor and U.S. exports to Paraguay support an estimated 7,000 American jobs. To protect and expand U.S. business opportunities, I will engage Paraguayan authorities on investment disputes, procurement tenders, and intellectual property rights.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, if confirmed, I will consult with this committee as we work for the safety, freedom, and prosperity of the U.S. and Paraguayan people.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Ostfield follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARC OSTFIELD

It is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay. I am grateful for the trust and confidence President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me.

I appear before you today with the support of my husband of 32 years, Michael, who has encouraged me throughout my career of public service.

Over the course of a career spanning 35 years, my work has always been about making the world a healthier, safer, more just, and more equitable place. I spent 15 years on the front lines of HIV/AIDS prevention, developing global health campaigns in Latin America and worldwide. For the past almost 20 years, I've been honored to serve in the Department of State—creating initiatives to combat bioterrorism; shaping policy on issues ranging from human rights to human trafficking to anti-corruption and the environment; leading the Foreign Service Institute in delivering essential training for the U.S. diplomatic workforce; and supporting that workforce to address conflict as Ombudsman. My experience as a professional has demonstrated the power of diverse teams that reflect the country we serve, and the ability to build coalitions in the most challenging environments. My experience as a volunteer firefighter has reinforced the importance of mutual aid, and the ability to make decisions in high pressure situations. If confirmed, I will draw upon this experience to advance U.S. foreign policy goals in Paraguay by working to strengthen governance, increase security, and promote U.S. business interests.

Mr. Chairman, Paraguay has proven to be a reliable partner and ardent defender of democracy in the Western Hemisphere, voting consistently in multilateral fora to call for an end to undemocratic practices in Venezuela and Nicaragua, and supporting Cuban citizens' right to freedom of expression and peaceful protest. Paraguay's steadfast support for Taiwan is another indicator of its commitment to democracy.

Like all democracies, Paraguay's has its challenges—particularly the need for stronger rule of law and democratic governance. Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Paraguay 137 out of 180 countries, near the bottom for Latin America. In order to deliver prosperity for all its citizens and foster greater economic opportunities with the United States, Paraguay must continue its efforts to root out corruption and impunity, increase transparency, and repair judicial integrity. The United States is supporting these goals with \$44 million in USAID funding over five years. If confirmed, I will prioritize anti-corruption and leverage tools such as Section 7031(c) of the 2019 Appropriations Act, which Secretaries Blinken and Pompeo have used to designate corrupt Paraguayan officials.

The global pandemic created outsized risks for Paraguay which has endured one of the world's deadliest – surges, with the world's highest daily, per-capita death rate in June 2021. The United States proudly donated two million vaccine doses to Paraguay, which promptly began an effective mass vaccination campaign. Additional U.S. support this year will bring U.S. funding for non-vaccine assistance—including technical assistance, medicines, respirators, oxygen, and field hospitals—to over \$9 million since the start of the pandemic.

Paraguay's long-standing bond with like-minded democratic partner Taiwan has made it a target of pressure tactics by the People's Republic of China to push Paraguay into switching diplomatic relations to Beijing, including through quid pro quo vaccine diplomacy. If confirmed, I will work to support Paraguay's economic and political sovereignty and its commitment to Taiwan. U.S. security goals center on helping Paraguay counter illicit networks, which threaten the safety of U.S. citizens and the region. Paraguay's Tri-Border Area (TBA) with Argentina and Brazil is one of the principal routes for multi-billion-dollar money laundering, counterfeiting, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and other smuggling operations. Some TBA criminal organizations have known or suspected links to terrorist organizations. To address these threats, U.S. programs build Paraguayan capacity to combat money laundering, financing of terrorism, and criminal gangs—along with programs to strengthen judicial and prosecutorial capacity. U.S. military assistance to Paraguay correspondingly strengthens cooperative crisis response capabilities. If confirmed, I will prioritize helping the TBA countries reinvigorate the Regional Security Mechanism, which coordinates efforts to enhance border security, dismantle transnational criminal organizations, and prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The United States is Paraguay's number one investor, and the Department of Commerce reports that U.S. exports to Paraguay support an estimated 7,000 American jobs. To protect and expand U.S. business opportunities in Paraguay, I will continue to ensure our Embassy engages Paraguayan authorities on investment disputes, procurement tenders, and Intellectual Property Rights.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, if confirmed, I will consult with this committee as we work for the safety, freedom, and prosperity of the U.S. and Paraguayan people. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ostfield.  
Now we will turn to Mr. Fitrill.

**STATEMENT OF TROY DAMIAN FITRILL OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA**

Mr. FITRILL. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea.

I am proud to have my family here today, my wife, Kathryn, a fellow Foreign Service officer, and my children, Madeleine and Sam, who have spent their lives immersed in the Foreign Service themselves.

Although my career has taken us all to several continents, we are drawn to and always thrilled to be in sub-Saharan Africa, where we have spent the majority of our assignments.

My last assignment as Director for West African Affairs was, like everyone's, shaken up by the pandemic. But the one and only trip I was able to take before the pandemic struck began in Guinea, where I had the pleasure of traveling up country with my friend and colleague, Ambassador Simon Henshaw, whose passing was a shock to all who knew him. It would be a signal honor, if confirmed, to try to build upon his work.

The relationship between the United States and Guinea has passed through various stages during Guinea's 63 years of independence.

But we have always extended our hand in partnership through support for nascent democratic institutions, productive economic initiatives, and supporting the Guinean people directly through effective education and health programs, including in response to the Ebola epidemic in 2014.

Indeed, in this current pandemic, American investments in health systems paid off as Guinea sought to mitigate the ravages of COVID-19.

In the midst of this crisis, however, Ebola raised its ugly head again earlier this year, and those American-supported institutions reacted swiftly and effectively, halting it this time in a matter of months and with minimal loss of life.

Economically, Guinea is growing faster than anticipated, sustained mostly by strong mining activity, construction, and agriculture. U.S. companies have been in Guinea since the days of independence and more are joining them every year.

Recent investments in energy infrastructure, mining, and banking show that when given a fair chance, the United States is the preferred partner.

I do not minimize the challenges. There are opportunities in infrastructure precisely because so little infrastructure exists. The challenges to doing business in Guinea are well documented, and recent political tensions only increase the level of difficulty.

As we partner with the Guinean people, we advocate for fundamental freedoms, we advocate for open political participation, and we advocate for justice and dignity.

Guinea was born a nation of peace and leadership, and the citizens of that country, the region, and the world need a Guinea that builds upon that history.

Right now, Guineans rightfully express concern about peace and security both at home and in the region. If confirmed, I will encourage dialogue among the parties to strengthen political pluralism. Such dialogue can only succeed if all sides feel confident that there can be a positive outcome.

We support efforts to reform Guinea's security institutions with capacity-building efforts to bolster civilian protection, rule of law, and accountability. Guinea's troops have performed well in Mali, the most dangerous peacekeeping mission on Earth, and we recognize Guinea for that contribution.

If confirmed as the twenty-third U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea, I will support and encourage the ongoing democratic process, I will promote economic development, including advocacy for U.S. exports, support for U.S. investment and helping diversify Guinea's economy, and I will work to improve public health institutions, enhance Guinea's efforts against trafficking in persons, and strengthen our security partnership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee for the opportunity to address you today. My wife and I are both former Hill staffers, and so I would also like to thank your staffs for all they do to support you and your constituents every day.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you in representing the interests of the American people in Guinea, and I hope very much to welcome you there on a visit one day soon.

And with that, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Fitrill follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TROY DAMIAN FITRELL

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today, and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea. I am proud to have my family here today: my wife Kathryn, a fellow Foreign Service Officer, and my children Madeleine and Sam, who have spent their lives immersed in the Foreign Service themselves.

Although my career has taken us all to several continents, we are drawn to and always thrilled to be in sub-Saharan Africa, where we have spent the majority of our assignments. My last assignment, as Director for West African Affairs was, like everyone's, shaken up by the pandemic, but the one and only trip I was able to take before the pandemic struck began in Guinea, where I had the pleasure of traveling up-country with my friend and colleague, Ambassador Simon Henshaw, whose passing was a shock to all who knew him. It would be a signal honor, if confirmed, to try to build on his work.

The relationship between the United States and Guinea has passed through various stages during Guinea's 63 years of independence, but we have always extended our hand in partnership, through support for nascent democratic institutions, productive economic initiatives, and supporting the Guinean people directly through effective education and health programs, including in response to the Ebola epidemic in 2014. Indeed, in this current pandemic, American investments in health systems paid off as Guinea sought to mitigate the ravages of COVID-19. In the midst of this crisis, however, Ebola raised its ugly head again earlier this year, and those American-supported institutions reacted swiftly and effectively, halting it this time in a matter of months and with minimal deaths.

Economically, Guinea is growing faster than anticipated, sustained mostly by strong mining activity, construction, and agriculture. U.S. companies have been in Guinea since the days of independence, and more are joining them every year. Recent investments in energy, infrastructure, mining, and banking show that when given a fair chance, the United States is the preferred partner. I do not minimize the challenges; there are opportunities in infrastructure precisely because so little infrastructure exists. The challenges to doing business in Guinea are well-documented and recent political tensions only increase the level of difficulty.

As we partner with the Guinean people, we advocate for fundamental freedoms, we advocate for open political participation, and we advocate for justice and dignity. Guinea was born a nation of peace and leadership and the citizens of that country, the region, and the world need a Guinea that builds upon that history. Right now, Guineans rightfully express concern about peace and security both at home and in the region. If confirmed, I will encourage dialogue among the parties to strengthen political pluralism. Such dialogue can only succeed if all sides feel confident that there can be a positive outcome. We support efforts to reform Guinea's security institutions, with capacity-building efforts to bolster civilian protection, rule of law, and accountability. Guinea's troops have performed well in Mali, the most dangerous peacekeeping mission on earth, and we recognize Guinea for that contribution.

If confirmed as the 23rd U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea, I will support and encourage the ongoing democratic process. I will promote economic development, including advocacy for U.S. exports, support for U.S. investment, and helping diversify Guinea's economy. And I will work to improve public health institutions, enhance Guinea's efforts against trafficking in persons, and strengthen our security partnership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to address you today. My wife and I are both former Hill staffers and so I would also like to thank your staffs for all they do to support you and your constituents every day. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you in representing the interests of the American people in Guinea and I hope very much to welcome you there on a visit one day soon. I am happy to answer any questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Fitrill, and I thank all of you again, and welcome to all the family members who are with us, and I want to reinforce your statement of appreciation for all our staffs as well.

Ambassador Raynor, if you were to pick the top challenge that you will face in each of the two countries that you would go to, if confirmed, can you just identify those very quickly?

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you, Senator. Absolutely.

In Guinea-Bissau, the top challenge is to create a sense of partnership that reflects shared values of democracy and governance, and creates opportunity to bring U.S. influence to bear on the development of that country, the economic opportunities of that country, and the political opportunities for the people of that country so that it can build its governance, it can reinforce its stability, and it can become more integrated into regional and international community of nations.

Senegal, if I may, I will give a one-part question, a three-part answer. Politically, it is a, as we both have noted, sir, a very long-standing democracy.

But all democracies incur strains, and paying attention to maintaining political space to respecting citizens' rights and opportunities of expression and participation remains important for all of our democracies, and I would very much want to reinforce our partnership with Senegal in that regard.

Senegal plays an enormously important security role, both as a bulwark against terrorism in the Sahel and its peacekeeping mission.

I would very much want to reinforce its capacity to play both of those roles while also continuing to support its efforts to inculcate its security and military institutions with a high respect for democratic norms.

Economically, enormous potential for U.S. firms. I would very much want to support and broaden those opportunities and bring deals to fruition while also, through private sector and public engagement, building up Senegal's economy, its capacity to create jobs for its large youth population both to create economic opportunity for all of us but also to contribute to Senegal's ongoing stability and democracy as well.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

And just staying with West Africa for now, Mr. Fitrill, we talked about the relative democratic stability in Senegal. We have a different situation, of course, in Guinea.

How concerned are you about political space and democracy in Guinea, and what can the United States do to strengthen democratic norms there?

Mr. FITRILL. I am, indeed, concerned about these issues. Right now, the levels of political tension in the aftermath of the violence and conflict of last year's election season still echoes.

The number of detainees currently held in custody in Guinea are worrying. Our focus is on the process. If there is wrongdoing, they should be charged.

If they have been charged, they should have a fair trial, and while detained, they should be given humane treatment. That is on the immediate sense of some of the issues in the country.

But, more broadly, the ability for people to exercise those fundamental rights of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, these are under some threat in Guinea.

I think the United States can keep its efforts on overarching democratic processes in the country and we could use our messaging both, public and private, to be able to encourage a greater advance towards political dialogue in that country.

At the moment, the tensions are such that there is very little dialogue occurring. People are talking past one another. And I believe the United States, we can use our good offices of the embassy and of officials in Washington to help encourage a greater dynamic of political dialogue in the country in order to achieve a future in which more regular democratic transitions can take place.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, and in my remaining 50 seconds, if you could assess China's influence in Guinea, because we know that Guinea has been a major recipient of Belt and Road support.

China, of course, does not adhere to the same standards with respect to rule of law and democratic norms that we aspire to.

Can you talk a little bit about the influence of China in Guinea and how that impacts U.S.-Guinea relations?

Mr. FITRILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

They are the largest trading partner that Guinea has. That is a challenge for Guinea and for the rest of the world.

The emphasis is on a level playing field, and we know that that is not always the case with China. But our focus on the broader macroeconomic policies of the country have led to real competition and that is why U.S. investors have been successful in the country as well as investors from other parts of the world.

But keeping that attention on transparency, on the applicability of the rule of law, these are the areas in which we need to remain focused so that we can have full, even, and fair competition.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Senator Rounds?

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me begin just simply, once again, by thanking all of you and your families for your service to our country.

Ambassador Raynor, in your previous assignment in Ethiopia, you engaged with the Ethiopian Government on several complex issues for the United States, including the war in Tigray and the historic transition under Prime Minister Abiy.

Senator Inhofe, Senator Bozeman, and I were there earlier this spring and we had the opportunity to visit with President Abiy at that time, and seemed to me that there were some real challenges there that we tried to work through with the Prime Minister.

You, clearly, have some insights with regard to what had occurred in Ethiopia. Now, as you move forward with coming to Senegal, you find yourself in a unique situation once again.

If confirmed, what lessons would you draw from your time in Ethiopia and how would you apply them in Senegal?

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you, Senator.

I guess I would note at the outset that the while there would, certainly, be much commonality in my engagement in Senegal, if



confirmed, as there was in Ethiopia, the starting point is pretty different.

Ethiopia was just launching during my time there a very new and ambitious effort to create a democracy and a free market economy, preceded by, frankly, millennia of repression and closed ways of doing business. Senegal, of course, has a long and strong democratic tradition.

But I think one of the lessons I learned from Ethiopia is that democracy can never be taken for granted, that you have to deal forthrightly with your counterparts in the country, make sure they are aware of what you can do to support our shared interests but also make sure they are aware when you have concerns about what they are doing that you feel is getting in the way of those shared interests.

That is something I have done throughout my career and throughout my two ambassadorships and we, certainly, anticipate doing in Senegal as well.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir. I am going to stick with Africa on my discussions.

And Dr. Ostfield, I see that Senator Kaine is here, and I am sure that he is going to provide ample opportunity for discussions with regard to Paraguay.

So if I could, I would like to turn to Mr. Fitrill, and just curious, as the former Director of the Office of West African Affairs you have had a unique perspective on developments in the West Africa region.

How would you assess the democratic, economic, and security landscape in the region, and how does Guinea fit into these regional trends?

Mr. FITRILL. Thank you. It has been a challenging two years, no question. I would say that all of those aspects that you mentioned are linked.

One of the problems is the advancement of violent extremist organizations has not occurred in a vacuum. It did not occur just because the organizations chose to enter the space.

They have achieved the success that they have had because they found a ground that was available for that kind of activity.

The local grievances, the backsliding of democracy, widespread corruption have all been problematic in the region, and the current attention needs to focus on all the drivers of extremism and not just the extremists themselves.

Our efforts to address the extremists themselves has to be done in a way in which it is not actually counterproductive.

All of these issues, frankly, pay no attention to national borders, and I know that the Government of Guinea itself is deeply concerned about its eastern and northeastern borders and considers these issues to be existential for their country.

And so the attempt to address those drivers of extremism across the Sahel, across West Africa, are absolutely critical for any way of addressing sustainably the concerns that these governments have right now.

Senator ROUNDS. If you could provide advice to us today with regard to Chinese influence and how to offset it; if there were, perhaps, one or two specific areas where we could be more precise,

more exacting, more on target with the type of programs that we should support, what would you recommend to us in terms of the right tools for use?

Mr. FITRILL. Bingo, Senator. You put it right in your own words. The programs that you gave us with the International Development Finance Corporation is probably the biggest step forward for us to be able to compete on a level playing field.

We can keep shining a light on the playing field. We can keep lobbying and persuading to make sure that international norms are respected.

But if we do not have the financing behind our expeditionary commercial efforts, then we are always going to be fighting for second place, and we have already seen tremendous successes with OPIC and with its successor organization, the DFC.

We are looking forward to some tremendous successes in the region. But having that finance behind was probably the biggest step forward.

Senator ROUNDS. Very good. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Senator KAINE?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Chairman, and Senator Rounds is right. I am really here to really focus on Paraguay. So Mr. Ostfield, welcome.

Just a quick story and then a question, and it is about U.S. vaccines in Paraguay and, really, throughout the region.

Just returned from a CODEL, six of us, three Democrats and three Republicans. We went to Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Colombia, and there were many issues. But what we heard again and again was just this deep appreciation for the U.S. donation of vaccines.

And if I had read a memo about it, I would have sort of understood it, but I really had to go and hear it because the story we heard again and again is the U.S. is donating vaccines to us. China and Russia are willing to sell us vaccines.

We really feel good about the quality of the U.S. vaccines. We are not 100 percent sure about the quality of the China and Russia vaccines, and when we make a contract with China and Russia to get vaccines, they may or may not come through.

Paraguay has had a very difficult time during COVID. It has one of the lowest vaccination rates in the Americas. It has got a population of 7 million.

They did a contract with China to sell them a million vaccines through Sinopharm and China just unilaterally cancelled the contract because Paraguay is one of the 15 countries in the world that recognizes Taiwan.

This is a huge political issue in Paraguay. President Benítez's handling of the pandemic and the challenges they have had led the congress there to consider impeaching him just a couple of months ago. They averted that, but China likely saw that as an opportunity and so just last month canceled the vaccines.

On the other hand, the United States has delivered a million vaccines, donated a million vaccines to Paraguay, and with the an-

nouncement of President Biden the other day, there is a chance that we may donate more.

Other nations in the Americas—El Salvador, the Dominican Republic—as soon as they stopped recognizing Taiwan, China gave them vaccines.

Often, in the last few years what we have heard from leaders in the region is that the U.S.—we would much rather deal with the U.S. than China, much rather—we are culturally so connected. But you are not around and China is, and if China is around we are going to deal with them.

The vaccine delivery and donations by the United States gives us such a massive opportunity to rebuild goodwill and, really, kind of accelerate our goodwill ahead of China's in the region if we do it right.

So I will ask you, Mr. Ostfield, should you be confirmed, how might you use the fact that the U.S. is being a great global donor, including to countries in the Americas, including Paraguay, to build our standing and deepen the relationship between the United States and Paraguay?

Mr. OSTFIELD. Thank you, Senator Kaine. It is great to hear about your experience on the recent CODEL to the region.

If confirmed, I would look forward to building on the recent U.S. donation of 2 million doses of vaccine. The first tranche of a million arrived July 9th. The last tranche, I believe, arrived last week.

If you ever look at any press reports, they arrived on planes with Star Wars logos. So quite a media story, in addition to the vaccine itself arriving in Paraguay.

By all reports, Paraguay has already implemented a fairly effective mass vaccination campaign. Reports I saw just this week there is now people receiving their second dose. So they have been that efficient, that effective, at getting vaccines out there.

And it is true that the China-Taiwan relationship or the China-Taiwan issue complicates things for Paraguay. They do not have access to the Chinese resources.

If confirmed, I would look forward to working with the Government of Paraguay to strengthen Paraguay's commitment to Taiwan. It was encouraging to note that during Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nuland's recent trip to Paraguay the President of Paraguay made a statement affirming Paraguay's long-standing connection to Taiwan. They are like-minded democratic partners.

The U.S. Embassy in Asunción in May of this year hosted the first virtual forum for U.S. and Taiwanese entrepreneurs, looking at investment opportunities in Paraguay specific to things like renewable energy and electric vehicle manufacturing.

If confirmed, one of the calls I look forward to making in Asunción is to the Taiwanese Ambassador there to identify ways that the U.S. and Taiwan can partner.

The U.S.-Taiwan connection is good for the United States, it is good for Taiwan, and it is good for Paraguay. And so ways that we can work together to help them are in our interests and I look forward to furthering those, if confirmed.

Senator KAINE. Well, just to kind of underline and exclamation point something, so the U.S. has donated 2 million vaccines in a country of 7 million.

I mean, that is a big deal in terms of the percentage of the population that U.S. donations are now able to cover.

We visited Ecuador. Just for my colleagues, Ecuador has had a tradition of an anti-U.S. Government for about 30 years.

They had an election in the spring and they not only elected a pro-American president, but they also elected a parliament where 80 percent of the members are brand new, and one of the reasons they did that is because the 30-year closer and closer to China, what has it gotten them?

It has got them oil drilling in the Amazon by Chinese companies that are causing huge environmental challenges, slipshod infrastructure projects, including dams that are causing waterfalls and rivers to dry up, Chinese fishing fleets vacuuming up fish around the Galapagos, which is part of Ecuador.

And many people view the election in Ecuador and this very dramatic turn toward a pro-U.S. posture as a revulsion at what happens when you get too close to China and the debt that comes along with that, and the slipshod quality of some of the work caused the public to want to do something else.

We have a real opportunity and the innovation of American firms, Operation Warp Speed, the Biden administration's decision to deploy in a very generous way, is something that in Africa, in the Americas, all around the world, it is a great opportunity for us to deepen ties.

Mr. Ostfield, I look forward to working with you, should be confirmed, and I think this is going to give you a really good ability to do good work there.

Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Kaine, and I think Paraguay is a really good example, as you said, of where the U.S. donation of 2 million vaccines has had a huge impact. Hopefully, it will be a model for how we approach others in the region and around the world.

Senator Young, I am told, may be joining us now via WebEx.

Okay. He is no longer available.

So I just have one last question because I did not have a chance to ask you one, Mr. Ostfield, and it relates to the environmental situation in Paraguay, and my colleagues will have another round, of course, for other members who are interested in asking additional question.

So, you know, last October, Paraguay endured one of its worst wildfire seasons and it is currently suffering from a drought that has depleted the Paraguay River, which is the country's main waterway and trade corridor that has gone to record lows.

This has led to environmental degradation and worsened economic hardship during the pandemic. It has also led Paraguay to ask Brazil, which is suffering from its own severe drought, to release water from the low-capacity Itaipu Dam.

So what is your assessment of the environmental and economic impact of the drought and how has this impacted Paraguay's relationship with neighboring Brazil?

Mr. OSTFIELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If confirmed, I would look forward to working with the Government of Paraguay on strengthening their ability to respond to the kind of environmental threats you described.

Paraguay has taken some meaningful actions in this step, already participated in the Ministerial Roundtable in April with Special Envoy for Climate Change Kerry, committed to achieving zero net emissions by the year 2050, and with USAID support has been working on improving sustainable livestock processes and forest fire management, recognizing the great threat they have experienced and that they face.

At the same time, the threats that Paraguay faces that are environmental in nature are linked to some of the issues that I described in my opening statement, particularly, rule of law, corruption, and impunity in the country. For Paraguay to effectively address these environmental challenges, which it needs to do, it is going to need to ensure that it has a system where there is an ability to enforce laws that are passed to achieve compliance with standards that the Government may assess and that U.S. assistance in these areas in investigation, prosecution, and so forth will actually be an asset for Paraguay in addressing the environmental challenges that it and its neighbors in the region are facing.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I will turn it over to the ranking member.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have one question but I would direct it to both Ambassador Raynor and to Dr. Ostfield, and it follows along the same line as I had earlier for Mr. Fitrill.

And that is with regard to the programs that we have available to us to provide and to promote goodwill and to improve our economic activity between the different countries, I also serve on the Armed Services Committee and in there we talk about ways in which we can promote with our allies and our friends the ability to coordinate activities and to have them learn our way of military activity.

But time and again, as we speak with these military officers, they talk about the need for the engagement by the Department of State and the different programs that can be very, very helpful and very efficient in maintaining good relationships with these countries and can be done at a very low cost, really, for the amount of impact that we provide.

I would ask, beginning with Ambassador Raynor, if there were particular programs that you have found to be beneficial, could you share that with us?

And then, Dr. Ostfield, if you could as well give us your thoughts.

Ambassador RAYNOR. Thank you, Senator.

I think I would mention three things in response to that.

First, I would note that our traditional development work is important. It meets human needs. It shows that we are in partnership with the country where we are engaged and not there to pursue our own narrow interests, and elevating the visibility of that impact is something that I have always sought to do at the embassies I have served at.

I think that is an important piece of it because we need to persuade not only the governments but the people of these countries where their true friends and partners are.

Secondly, I would note that leadership development programs in the United States, our programs—you mentioned the military ones, the War College, that sort of thing—world class. No one comes close to the quality.

But what we lack is scale. China does not do it as well as we do but they do it for hundreds of thousands of times more people than we do.

So if there were a way that we could increase the scale of some of these programs—bring them to the United States. It is not the same to do the work in the country because when they come to the United States they understand America in a way that they will never understand if they are not physically there, absorbing everything that we are.

The third thing I would mention is, as important as I think training and development programs are, I think the way that the United States, ultimately, will be transformational is through the private sector through high-quality private sector engagement with countries.

We have enormous interest in Senegal and in every country I have served at in the quality of U.S. private sector engagement, sharing information, high-quality labor standards, and environmental standards. We do it right. However, where we suffer is on the competitive cost side of that.

So you mentioned DFC, and I got to say that is a very exciting reinvention of that program from where I sit based on what we did before. The scale of it is more in keeping with what we need to be doing. Its construct can and should make it more nimble, because what we do is run out of time. We have processes, and China and others come with financing built in.

So we need to streamline and make more scaled and impactful the financing piece of the support we provide to our own private sector engagement.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Dr. Ostfield?

Mr. OSTFIELD. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

I would focus on three areas in terms of where the U.S. can better help Paraguay develop and become more of an even stronger and more viable partner for us and for the region it works in.

The first of those is addressing governance and rule of law and U.S. training and technical support and financial support to help Paraguay root out corruption.

To strengthen the integrity of their judicial system, which has a reputation of being weak and corrupt, is an essential element of ensuring that Paraguay has the kind of thriving democracy that the Paraguayan people deserve and that we also want to see for Paraguay.

Secondly, U.S. assistance in improving security in the region. That includes things like money laundering, links to terrorism financing, narcotics trafficking, and counterfeiting. U.S. assistance has helped in areas related to asset forfeiture, improved investiga-

tory techniques, and better case building mechanisms strengthened prosecution across the board.

Not only do we do that on the civilian side, U.S. military has been assisting the Paraguayan military in things like crisis response to help address the security situation in the tri-border area, which is the area where Paraguay borders Brazil and Argentina, but also more broadly.

And then finally, if Paraguay wants to, indeed, be an attractive destination for U.S. businesses, for U.S. businesses to further investment there, Paraguay is going to have to address these issues.

U.S. assistance is already working with Paraguay, for example, on improving the transparency of its solicitations and its procurement tenders, which have a tendency to be opaque, to help the Government of Paraguay better understand the risks with untrusted vendors, and to dissuade Paraguay's business community from the investment disputes and frivolous lawsuits in violation of intellectual property rights, which, ultimately, act as a deterrent for many U.S. businesses to invest in Paraguay.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

And I do not know if you have any closing remarks.

Senator ROUNDS. I would just simply say thank you to our panelists before us today, our nominees. Clearly, as I said earlier, you are a qualified group of individuals, and I thank you and your families for your service.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Let me second that and just say I think this is a very important moment for American diplomacy around the world, and in my judgment, all of you will help our country meet that moment in the countries you have been nominated to be our ambassador in, and I look forward to supporting your nominations.

For any members wishing to submit questions for the record, the hearing record will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, Friday, August 6th.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:55 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MICHAEL RAYNOR BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* What is the risk of terrorist activity in Senegal? From where do the threats emanate? On what areas will you focus U.S. efforts to support Senegal's counterterrorism efforts if confirmed?

*Answer.* Senegal's internal security situation is stable and generally peaceful, and its professional and capable police and gendarmerie forces operate throughout the country. I am concerned, however, by increasing instability and violence in the region. Our military and civilian security cooperation is focused on preparing Senegalese military and civilian forces to address terrorist and other threats. The United States is a key security partner to Senegal, and Senegal regularly hosts large scale AFRICOM military exercises in the region. Pre-COVID, the United States planned 45 joint defense engagements with Senegal. I understand most of our planned defense cooperation events were cancelled in 2020, but that the United States has since rescheduled several of our mission-critical bilateral engagements.

Senegal is a recipient of U.S. security assistance under the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Through the TSCTP, the United States works to increase Senegal's immediate and long-term capabilities to address terrorist threats and prevent the spread of violent extremism. Senegal maintains a strong will to counter violent extremism and seeks to deepen our already close counterterrorism partnership to further develop its capacity in this regard. If confirmed, security cooperation will remain a key priority of mine.

*Question.* Senegal remained on the Trafficking in Persons Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year. According to the report, the Government “did not investigate or prosecute traffickers exploiting children in forced begging consistent with the 2005 anti-trafficking law and did not take action against officials who refused to investigate such cases. . . . Officials did not consistently use the 2005 anti-trafficking law to prosecute alleged traffickers and continued to apply penalties inconsistent with the law.” If confirmed, how will you encourage accountability for officials who refuse to investigate forced begging? What steps will you take to encourage the Government to apply penalties for trafficking consistent with the law?

*Answer.* Per the 2021 TIP Report, the Government of Senegal does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. I understand that cooperation on anti-trafficking efforts with the Senegalese Government remains a top priority for Mission Dakar. Senegalese Government efforts this past year included implementing the third phase of its program to remove vulnerable children, including trafficking victims, from the streets; increasing investigations, prosecutions, and convictions; and adopting a new national action plan. The Government identified and referred to services 6,187 vulnerable children, including potential child trafficking victims, during the reporting period, a significant increase compared to the 1,358 children identified during the previous reporting period.

If confirmed, I will work to expand on this progress and to address with the Senegalese Government the prioritized recommendations in the 2021 TIP Report. These include increasing efforts to actively investigate and criminally prosecute trafficking offenses, punishing convicted traffickers with significant prison terms consistent with the 2005 anti-trafficking law, and establishing a system to automatically trigger investigations of alleged traffickers when potential trafficking victims are identified, including potential child forced begging victims. I will also continue to support the Department's project to combat sex trafficking under the Program to End Modern Slavery.

*Question.* Two prominent would-be candidates in the 2019 Presidential elections—Karim Wade, son of the former president, and Khalifa Sall, the former mayor of Dakar—were barred from running due to corruption convictions which some critics viewed as politically selective, particularly in the case of Khalifa Sall whom President Sall pardoned months after the vote. Local activist groups also came under increased state regulatory pressure during the electoral period. And Ousmane Sonko, an anticorruption activist who challenged President Macky Sall in the 2019 elections was arrested on charges of rape and disturbing public order in March 2021, prompting protests in Dakar and elsewhere. What accounts for the legal troubles of opposition figures? Are the charges politically motivated? What is the trajectory of democracy in Senegal—is space expanding or shrinking? What will you do if confirmed to help preserve political space in Senegal?

*Answer.* Although the official investigation into sexual assault charges against opposition leader Ousmane Sonko is ongoing, he and his supporters claim the accusations are a political conspiracy by President Sall to sabotage Sonko's 2024 presidential aspirations, comparing the charges to previous criminal cases orchestrated against Khalifa Sall and Karim Wade to disqualify them from the 2019 presidential election. Sonko's subsequent arrest in early March triggered several days of intense political protests that spiraled into widespread riots and looting, the worst Senegal had seen in decades. The unrest resulted in at least fourteen deaths, hundreds of injuries, and significant damage to private businesses across the country. It has also shifted the country's political landscape in ways that remain to be seen fully, including exerting additional pressure on President Sall to clarify his position on whether he will seek a third term in 2024. If confirmed, I will continue to call on the Government of Senegal, both publicly and privately, to respect democratic norms and constitutional requirements, including term limits and regular democratic transitions of power. I will also engage like-minded missions, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders to speak in a unified voice on issues of democracy and preserving political space in Senegal.



*Question.* A regional court with jurisdiction in Senegal determined that a controversial election law enacted in 2018 which requires citizen endorsements for presidential candidates violated civil liberties and directed Senegal's Government to annul it. Has the law been annulled? If not, why not, and is failure to annul it an indicator of a deterioration of the rule of law in your view?

Answer. The Government of Senegal annulled this law on July 8, 2021.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As Ambassador to Ethiopia, I launched major new programs to support democratization, human rights, opposition political parties, independent media, civil society, and relevant national institutions, including the creation of a credible human rights commission and electoral board. I led the design and implementation of new USAID programs in economic empowerment, political participation, education, and health to promote greater participation by women in political and economic life.

As Ambassador to Benin, I worked closely with the then-president and other elements of the Beninese Government to ensure respect for constitutional term limits, resulting in a democratic and peaceful transition of presidential power. I established new programs to counter corruption and boost government accountability and transparency, as well as significant new initiatives to foster interreligious tolerance and cooperation. As Acting Chief of Mission in Afghanistan, I led major development and justice sector programs to promote the well-being, human rights, education, rule of law, security, and economic prospects of Afghans and, in particular, Afghan women.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Senegal? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Senegal has long served as a democratic model in the region with a strong history of democratic values and peaceful transitions of power, respect for the rule of law, tolerance, and respect for human rights, values which the United States shares. I was deeply concerned, however, by the March unrest, which led to the tragic loss of life of fourteen individuals who were killed during the protests. A significant contributing factor to the unrest was political dissatisfaction related to perceived government oppression of critics, as well as concerns over youth unemployment and economic anxiety exacerbated by government-mandated Covid-19 restrictions. The Government took other deeply concerning actions during the unrest, such as suspending transmission of two opposition-friendly television channels broadcasting news and commentary on the protests. While Senegalese media have traditionally operated freely, and many international press outlets have offices in Senegal, press freedom is an area of increasing concern as government pressure on opposition voices has increased in the past year.

If confirmed, I will use my unique platform and voice as the U.S. Ambassador, both publicly in my interactions with the Senegalese people and privately with Senegalese officials, to elevate issues of democracy, democratic norms and constitutional requirements, press freedom, respect for human rights, and the need for citizen-responsive governance. I will continue to urge all parties to exercise restraint, to avoid future violence and destruction of property, and to work toward peaceful and inclusive dialogue to resolve complicated problems, which will require cooperation by all Senegalese to make meaningful progress.

*Question.* What steps will you take - if confirmed - to support democracy in Senegal? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. Senegal has long served as a democratic model in the region with a strong history of democratic values and peaceful transitions of power, respect for the rule of law, tolerance, and respect for human rights -- values which the United States shares. The Senegalese people understand how important democracy is, and they overwhelmingly support having a say in how they are governed and by whom, as evidenced by the March protests over concerns about the economic situation and youth unemployment, as well as political dissatisfaction related to perceived government oppression of critics. If confirmed, I will ensure that in our diplomatic engagements with the Senegalese Government we pay close attention to access to justice, respect for democratic norms and constitutional requirements, free and fair elections, media freedom, the health of civil society, and government transparency and

accountability. I will continue to advance opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate with these organizations for the betterment of the Senegalese people, and ensure coordination of effort with like-minded missions and other key stakeholders.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. Supporting democracy and good governance are key U.S. priorities in Senegal. I understand that U.S. public diplomacy and outreach in Senegal support Mission and Department goals on promotion of democracy and good governance through press outreach, small grants, American Center-based programs, digital video conferences, visiting speakers, exchange programs, and social media engagement. For example, USAID provides support to the Government of Senegal to meet its own governance targets to decentralize management and fiscal authority by delegating decision-making to regional and local governments, improve transparency and accountability at the national level, and consolidate and improve the quality of democracy in Senegal. USAID's work seeks to increase citizen engagement in government processes, strengthen effective local governance, improve transparency and accountability, and promote peacebuilding efforts in Casamance. If confirmed, I will prioritize these key efforts as Ambassador.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Senegal? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S., and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Senegal. Organizations promoting human rights, civil society, and good governance are critical to any functioning democracy. If confirmed, I will continue and strengthen the relationships built by Mission Dakar and the Department of State more broadly with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States, and Senegalese human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Senegal. I will continue to advance opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate with these organizations for the betterment of Senegal, and ensure that we coordinate our efforts with like-minded missions and other key stakeholders to address our concerns with a unified voice.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continue strengthening the relationships Mission Dakar has built across the political spectrum, including by engaging with both ruling and opposition parties and leaders. I will work with both the Government and opposition parties to develop a more inclusive political environment and will urge the Government to ensure the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly for all political actors, even those who do not agree with the Government. Through public statements, development projects, small grants, and direct engagements, I will advocate for a political environment that is inclusive of Senegalese women, youth, and minorities.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Senegal on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Senegal?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage with Senegal on press freedom issues. Senegalese media has traditionally operated freely, and many international press outlets have offices in Senegal. Press freedom is an area of increasing concern, however, as government pressure on opposition voices has increased in the past year. During the March 2021 unrest, the Government suspended transmission by two opposition-friendly television channels broadcasting news and commentary on the protests. I will also call on the Government to prevent and stop the harassment of journalists and media outlets whose reporting is critical of the Senegalese Government's

policies. Such actions have a negative impact on press freedom and underscore the need for the Government to be transparent, as doing so would make independent media outlets better positioned to share accurate information with ordinary Senegalese. We will continue to prioritize providing training and other capacity building opportunities for journalists. If confirmed, I will commit to meet regularly with independent, local press in Senegal.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue and, as appropriate, expand upon the Embassy's ongoing engagements with civil society and government counterparts to promote the importance of countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in Senegal.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Senegal on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage with Senegal on the right of workers and labor groups to organize, including to form independent trade unions, and I will call out incidents when this right to associate is restricted.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Senegal, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. Promoting respect for human rights and democracy is a priority for our mission in Senegal. If confirmed, I will use all diplomatic tools at my disposal to defend the human rights and dignity of all individuals in Senegal, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Senegal?

Answer. In a country that otherwise largely respects human rights, the struggle for LGBTQ+ individuals in Senegal is ongoing. The situation of Senegal's LGBTQ+ community remains dire, and members of the community continue to be subject to arbitrary arrests and to convictions for consensual same-sex activity. Incidents include the arrest and beatings of suspected LGBTQ+ individuals by religious police in Touba and arrests of LGBTQ+ individuals in Dakar for holding a birthday party. The Covid-19 pandemic has created additional difficulties for LGBTQ+ organizations and their mission to serve their communities. In February, following President Biden's message to the African Union, comments from Senegalese citizens overall were positive and generally appreciative of U.S. re-engagement in Africa, but 10% of the comments criticized its references to LGBTQ+ inclusion. Several warned against warming up to the United States too quickly and advised caution regarding mentions of the LGBTQ+ community. Likewise, Senegalese are widely critical of calls to respect the human rights of LGBTQ+ persons.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Senegal?

Answer. Promoting the human rights of LGBTQ+ people is a challenging endeavor in a society as conservative as Senegal. It is also a priority of the Biden administration around the world, and, if confirmed, I commit to carrying out the President's mandate. It is critically important, in doing so, to consult with LGBTQ+ individuals and organizations in Senegal to take account of the local context and ensure we do not exacerbate the problem. For instance, it may not always be appropriate to issue public statements in response to specific anti-LGBTQ+ incidents, but to engage in quiet, closed-door diplomacy that minimizes additional risks to LGBTQ+ people. Embassy Dakar has relaunched an interagency Human Rights Working Group to identify ways to assist human rights defenders, including LGBTQ+ activists, in addressing harassment and violence. Discretion and strategic engagement with the international community are the only avenues for LGBTQ+ activists to operate within the current social environment. LGBTQ+ activists and individuals will continue to face a difficult road as long as Senegal remains intolerant of LGBTQ+ persons. In gauging how, when, and whether to engage on this topic, it is invaluable to understand the sense of the local LGBTQ+ community, and I commit that, if confirmed, the Embassy team and I will continue engaging with the LGBTQ+ Senegalese and their allies.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Senegal?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit, in coordination with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs, to accommodate promptly all appropriate requests for briefings. As someone whose professional career began as a staff member of a Senate Select Committee, I have a strong appreciation and respect for Congress' key oversight role and will fully cooperate in accommodating that role.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO TROY DAMIAN FITRILL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* How much democracy and governance related assistance has the United States provided for programs and activities in Guinea over the last four fiscal years and in what areas? If confirmed, in what areas would you recommend assistance be channeled?

Answer. From FY 2017 to FY 2020, the State Department and USAID allocated \$12 million in bilateral foreign assistance to Guinea to support good governance; political competition and consensus building; and independent media and free flow of information.

If confirmed, I would recommend that we continue these programs, and also that we prioritize additional democracy and governance areas including rule of law, strengthening political parties, and transparency in elections.

*Question.* There were multiple reports that security forces killed civilians related to the March 2020 referendum and legislative elections, and the October 2020 Presidential elections. What is the status of the investigations into elections related violence in Guinea? If confirmed, how will you support accountability related to electoral violence?

Answer. I understand that there has been no progress on investigations into violence surrounding the 2020 elections and referendum. If confirmed, I will press the Government of Guinea to investigate thoroughly and transparently, and to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations and abuses, including those associated with the alleged unlawful killings in 2019-2020 in the lead up to and aftermath of the legislative elections, constitutional referendum, and presidential election.

*Question.* Human rights organizations claim that 300 to 400 people were arrested in the wake of the October elections. Opposition figures were targeted for arrest the following month. Were these arrests politically motivated? What is the status of those detained? What specific actions will you take, if confirmed, to address politically motivated detention, harassment and intimidation of opposition and civil society?

Answer. Authorities reportedly arrested an estimated 400 people during the March 2020 legislative and October 2020 presidential election periods. Arrested individuals include opposition leaders, civil society members, and journalists. Many of these arrests appear to be politically motivated. The Government of Guinea has released an unknown number of detainees since November 2020 and recently released eight high-profile opposition leaders, but arrests continue. At least two detainees have died in detention, while others continue to suffer from lack of access to adequate health care, prison overcrowding, and life-threatening prison conditions.

If confirmed, I will press the Government of Guinea to ensure that detained members of the political opposition receive all applicable procedural protections and fair trial guarantees for those who have been charged, and that those detained are treated humanely to help Guinea establish a more representative, democratic, and transparent government. I will press for the release of those who have been unjustly detained, who have not been charged, and whose detention appears politically driven.

*Question.* Are media freedoms respected in Guinea? Are journalists free to be critical of the Government without fear of reprisal? A recent legislative change calls for the High Authority of Communication to be appointed by presidential decree as opposed to being elected by a group of peer commissioners. How will that impact media freedoms? What steps will you take if confirmed to support free media?

Answer. I understand that press freedom in Guinea is significantly constrained due to government action. Journalists have been subjected to harassment and intimidation after publishing reports critical of the Government. Guinean journalists have been detained by security forces, and foreign journalists have been forced to leave the country. Government officials attempt to censor the media on spurious legal and administrative grounds. The July 2020 law allowing the president to ap-

point the chair of the High Authority of Communication and raising the number of presidentially chosen members is just another example of the Government's efforts to constrain press freedom.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to engaging across the spectrum on the importance of press freedom and to meeting regularly with press outlets. I will call on the Government of Guinea to respect press freedom and to prevent harassment of journalists critical of the Government. If confirmed, I will seek to continue support for the development of free press and journalists through training and capacity building programs for journalists.

*Question.* According to the State Department Country Report on human rights, Guinean law "criminalizes rape and domestic violence, but both occurred frequently, and authorities rarely prosecuted perpetrators." What assistance is the U.S. providing to law enforcement to address rape and sexual violence in Guinea?

*Answer.* The State Department, through the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), has provided \$400,000 for FY20. U.S. Government support provides mentoring and training to Guinean law enforcement officers to improve their understanding and support of internationally recognized human rights, fight trafficking in persons, and address sexual and gender-based violence. I understand that this training also strengthens Guinean law enforcement's capacity to identify and investigate rape and domestic violence cases.

*Question.* Guinea is on the Tier 2 Watch List for the second year in a row, according to the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report. The report indicates that the Government does not "provide sufficient funding to the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children, and Morals." What efforts will you undertake, if confirmed, to encourage the Government to dedicate resources to that office? What other efforts will you engage in if confirmed to ensure the Government adequately addresses trafficking in persons?

*Answer.* I understand that Guinea remains on the Tier 2 Watch List in the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report because the Government did not demonstrate overall increasing efforts to address trafficking in persons compared to the previous reporting period, even considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity.

If confirmed, I will work to raise awareness and enlist the support of communities and local government to address the human trafficking issue. I will press the Government to fully fund and support government officials and entities that work to support and protect trafficking victims. We will continue to work together with the Government of Guinea to strengthen Guinean capacity to improve its trafficking in persons record, and with NGOs and the international community to provide assistance and training to Guinean law enforcement and the judicial system to ensure that traffickers face justice. I will also continue to support the Department's project to combat child trafficking under the Program to End Modern Slavery, as well as the Department's bilateral project to identify and provide services to victims of trafficking.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Almost every position in my career has had a focus on promoting respect for human rights. As Labor Attaché in Guatemala, I counseled nascent factory unions in achieving formal recognition and lobbied government officials to allow unions to make use of arbitration proceedings. The former increased the number of recognized unions and the latter increased access to legal redress in the face of labor rights abuses. As Chargé d'Affaires in Mauritius, I led my Embassy team to organize and execute a three-day skills camp to train women to run for elected office. After Constitutional changes took place, the number of women in elected positions increased four-fold. If confirmed, I commit to keeping respect for human rights at the forefront of U.S. engagement in Guinea.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Guinea? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the number of members of the political opposition in Guinea who remain imprisoned and the limiting of political space for opposition parties and groups by the Guinean Government. All Guineans must be free to express opposing views. Abuses by law enforcement and security forces must be in-

vestigated and those responsible must face justice. The press must be free to report critically. If confirmed, I will call upon the Government of Guinea to resolve the detainee issue and make other positive overtures to the opposition to ease political tension. I will press for an investigation into violence and killings around the 2020 elections. I will push for greater freedom of the press and greater protections for journalists.

*Question.* What steps will you take - if confirmed - to support democracy in Guinea? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to raise concerns publicly and privately about lack of accountability for alleged human rights violations and abuses by security forces and the continued pretrial detention of opposition supporters, civil society members, and journalists. Potential impediments include the lack of transparency and accountability within the justice system, slow bureaucratic processes, and a lack of resources.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* The United States Government implements projects in Guinea supporting local governance, civil society, and media to consolidate good governance across the country. If confirmed, I will prioritize implementation of security sector reform projects and training to help prevent future human rights violations and abuses and instruct on the role of security services in sustaining and supporting democratic processes and institutions. We will work to build capacity of civil society organizations to promote respect for democracy and human rights and accountability in the democratic process.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Guinea? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* Promotion of respect for human rights in Guinea is one of the most important priorities for the United States. If confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Guinea. I will ensure our Embassy continues to build and strengthen its relationships with a broad spectrum of civil society both in the United States and in Guinea. I will work with our diplomatic and international partners to encourage the Government to cooperate with civil society to create a safer, freer, and more democratic Guinea.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our existing relationships and build new ones across the political spectrum and will engage with democratically oriented political figures and parties. I will work with both the Government and opposition parties to develop a more inclusive political environment which respects human rights and democratic norms. Through engagement, programs, and grants I will advocate for greater participation by women, minorities, and youth in politics.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Guinea on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Guinea?

*Answer.* A free press is vital in any democracy to hold leaders to account, as well as exposing and fighting corruption. If confirmed, I commit to engaging across the spectrum on the importance of press freedom and to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Guinea. I will call on the Government of Guinea publicly to respect press freedom and to prevent harassment of journalists critical of the Government. If confirmed, I will seek to continue support for the development of free press and journalists through training and capacity building programs for journalists.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* The corrosive effects of disinformation and propaganda on democracy are particularly troubling in countries still working toward enshrining democratic principles and respect for fundamental freedoms in their political cultures. If confirmed, I will continue current engagement and promote new engagement with government, the press, and civil society organizations to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in Guinea, including through the Embassy social media platforms.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Guinea on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* My tour as Labor Attaché in Guatemala taught me the importance of engaging with labor groups, including unions, to protect and promote the welfare of workers. If confirmed, my team and I will actively engage with the Government of Guinea on the right for workers, labor groups, and independent trade unions to form and join organizations of their own choice, and I will publicly call out abuses or restrictions of this right of freedom of association.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Guinea, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Promotion of human rights in Guinea will be one of my top priorities if I am confirmed. I commit to using all the tools at my disposal to promote and defend the human rights and dignity of all Guineans, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Guinea?

*Answer.* The confluence of traditional local cultures with Islamic tenants has created an environment in Guinea where consensual same-sex sexual conduct and recognition of the LGBTQI+ community is a strict taboo. The legal environment does not allow same-sex relationships or marriages, and Guinean law does not consider LGBTQI+ individuals a protected class. Anti-discrimination laws to protect LGBTQI+ persons do not exist. I am unaware of any prominent individuals that champion the cause of equal societal treatment for the LGBTQI+ community. In addition, the traditional nature and outlook of the majority of Guineans would be a natural obstacle to holding a frank public discussion about LGBTQI+ issues.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Guinea?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use my office to highlight the strengths of diversity and acceptance of all people for who they are. The United States is rightfully proud of the strides we have made, and continue to make, in living up to our founding principle that everyone is equal under the eyes of the law. I believe that if confirmed, I can use the persuasive power of the Embassy to help Guineans begin to address this important issue.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief members of congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Guinea?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work together with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs to respond promptly to all appropriate requests for information and briefings for members of Congress and their staff, and to offer such briefings whenever I am in Washington.





## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2021 (a.m.)

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:36 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Van Hollen, Risch, Young, and Cruz.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We appreciate the patience of both members and the nominees of conferring with the ranking member on the question of nomination.

We are here today to consider nominations for four very important positions: Ambassador Julieta Valls Noyes to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Ambassador Barbara Leaf to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Ms. Julianne Smith to be Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, and Ambassador Denise Bauer to be the Ambassador to France and Monaco.

Congratulations on all your nominations. The four of you have a distinguished history of public service. We appreciate your willingness to continue to serve our country.

We also appreciate your families because it is a sacrifice to families as well who are engaged in the service by their support and sometimes travel abroad. We thank them.

Before I continue, I understand that the distinguished Senator from Virginia is privileged to make three introductions. I do not get three introductions from New Jersey and I am the chairman.

In any event, Senator Kaine we'll recognize you now.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member Risch, for scheduling this hearing for such wonderfully qualified nominees.

It is my pleasure to introduce three of the nominees, two from Virginia, one from California, who is a very close friend: Denise

Campbell Bauer, to be ambassador to France and Monaco, Julieta Noyes to be Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration, and Barbara Leaf to be Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs.

I previously introduced Ambassador Bauer to this committee in 2013 when she was nominated to be ambassador to Belgium. I have had a chance to know Denise and her family now for about 15 years.

She had a distinguished career in journalism, nonprofits, and domestic and international politics. But in particular, in her service in Belgium, she served at a most challenging time.

In March of 2016, Belgium was subject to coordinated terrorist attacks at the same time as France also underwent those attacks. And at that point, Ambassador Bauer, she will describe, worked very hard to keep Americans safe, to work with our ally, Belgium, and even coordinate some activities between Belgium and France.

As Ambassador to Belgium, she was unanimously confirmed by the Senate. She worked very, very hard on that transatlantic relationship and to advance U.S. policy goals in Europe.

And as you know, the U.S. presence in Belgium also includes the NATO and EU missions, and so the Belgian Ambassador has a lot of important work in those multilateral efforts.

Her on-the-ground experience in the region leading the implementation of U.S. foreign policy at a challenging time has demonstrated her ability and would make her very, very fit to serve as our Ambassador in France and Monaco.

Ambassador Noyes exemplifies the dedication of career Foreign Service officers and their families, many of whom call Virginia home when they are not serving overseas.

I have had a chance to see Ambassador Noyes' work up close and personal. I met her in several occasions when she was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western Europe from 2013 to 2015 and, again, in Spain when I had the honor, as did the chair of this committee, to serve as honorary chair of the U.S. Spain Council.

Ambassador Noyes has served the country with great skill while raising three children together with her husband, who is also a Foreign Service alum, now a retired officer with 29 years of service.

Two of her children, wisely, attended Virginia universities, University of Virginia and Christopher Newport University.

And I would note in particular, Mr. Chair, that in this position, working on important issues of population, refugees, and migration, Julieta has a powerful family experience. She is the daughter of Cuban refugees and would bring that personal passion to the important work of State in this area.

Finally, I want to introduce Ambassador Barbara Leaf, another Virginian. I noticed that she is a proud alumni of William and Mary and the University of Virginia, but she is wearing only a William and Mary brooch today and not the UVA brooch. She probably had hoped I would not point that out.

But she is a very well qualified nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs. She comes to the committee with a deep background in Near Eastern Middle East politics.

She was a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and previously served as our ambassador to the UAE and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Arabian Peninsula in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

This struck me. All of these State Department career folks are wonderful in foreign language proficiencies but listen to this.

Ambassador Leaf speaks Arabic, French, Italian, and Serbo-Croatian. She will lead the bureau with integrity and enthusiasm, and I am proud to introduce this great Virginian to the committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kaine, for that introduction of all of our distinguished nominees.

I know that Senator Shaheen is very happy to see four incredibly talented women before the committee. Let me continue now.

Briefly, I had a conversation with the ranking member, and I appreciate his attention to the seriousness of the situation we have on nominees in the committee.

We have over 70 nominees pending before the committee and we have over 50 completed files. I look forward to working with the ranking member so that we can continue to expedite those nominees in the days ahead.

Okay. I am now being told that Senator Shaheen has also got an introduction to make.

Senator Shaheen?

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Risch.

I am very honored to be able to join Senator Kaine in doing introductions this morning, particularly to be able to introduce Julie Smith, President Biden's nominee to be Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

As chair of the Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation and co-chair of the Senate NATO Observer Group, like other members of this committee, I understand very clearly the importance of Ms. Smith's experience and expertise in what she will bring to this role.

Julie's resume and background is a testament to her commitment to the transatlantic alliance. Her career has spanned 25 years crossing the Pond to work on transatlantic security issues both in and out of government.

She has worked at both the Pentagon and the White House and has worked at some of America's most esteemed think tanks, including the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the German Marshall Fund, and the Center for a New American Security.

And Julie, of course, is no stranger to this committee. She testified in 2017 here on the U.S.-Russia bilateral relationship, and her expertise drawn from many years researching transatlantic relations has benefited those in and out of government.

She has spent the last three years researching and writing on Europe's evolving attitudes and vulnerabilities as they relate to China, a subject that we all know very well on this committee.

Julie has also worked to bring foreign policy to audiences outside the Beltway, most recently launching a program called “Across the Pond, In the Field” to bring Europeans to 12 U.S. cities to talk to Americans about foreign policy.

Her accolades and accomplishments alone make her worthy of confirmation, but I also want to highlight Julie’s leadership as a mentor to women in the national security space.

And yes, Mr. Chairman, I was very excited to see four women on the dais this morning who have been nominated to be ambassadors, and Julie has been involved for a long time in mentoring women.

She co-founded the Leadership Council for Women in National Security to provide a support network for women in a predominantly male space. And because of her leadership, there are a number of women in Washington who proudly call themselves mentees of Julie.

And I am also pleased to recognize Julie’s husband, David, who is here with her this morning and I think it is her older son, Liam, who is also here.

As a mother, her family has kept her on her toes, and I can appreciate that because I know that as a working mom you have to juggle a lot of things, which is really important to the world of diplomacy.

For all of these reasons, I am very happy to have Julie’s nomination before this committee. I am sure that my colleagues will appreciate her responses and I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we do have an agreement to move forward these nominees.

It is critical to ensure that American foreign policy can continue. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

Let me just briefly reference the positions that these nominees are being nominated for.

Ambassador Valls Noyes, congratulations on your nomination. You bring a distinguished record of diplomatic and management experience to the role, including your most recent assignments leading the Foreign Service Institute and serving as U.S. Ambassador to Croatia.

As you know, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration is responsible for addressing some of the most pressing global challenges we have today.

According to the United Nations, at the beginning of the year there will be more than 82 million forcibly-displaced people in the world, of whom 26.4 million are refugees. No doubt that number has only grown and will continue to grow.

From the global forced migration crisis to the humanitarian emergencies in Venezuela, Ethiopia, Syria, and Afghanistan, the United States must lead in addressing the acute needs that exist today and the long-term drivers of these crises.

The task before you is immense, and I recommend if you are confirmed that you develop strong consultative relationships with the many refugee and resettlement organizations that have deep expertise in this area, and I am confident they would welcome your engagement.

Let me say a few words specifically about Afghanistan and the dire humanitarian crisis there. Nearly half of the entire population, more than 18 million people, need humanitarian assistance right now.

More than 4 million Afghans are internally displaced and the outgoing instability and violence may very well produce large flows of refugees into neighboring countries in the coming months, which would create a great deal of instability.

The PRM bureau will be at the helm of the U.S. response to this crisis and your leadership will be essential to ensuring that our response meets the moment.

Ambassador Leaf, welcome back to the committee. I am pleased that you stopped by our office to get a little bit of a tour of the region. I am hopeful that we can get you quickly in place so the bureau and the whole department can benefit from your decades of experience.

Despite repeated efforts from multiple administrations to pivot to great power competition, the Middle East and North Africa remain central focal points of challenges and, I believe, some opportunities for the United States.

As you know, Iran has continued to advance its nuclear program, and I believe the United States must pursue all options to find a negotiated deal that addresses not just Iran's nuclear program but also its support for terrorism and its ballistic missile activity.

Lebanon is on the brink of collapse. Tunisia, once a bastion of hope for people all over the region, is experiencing a troubling back slide on the democratic reforms, and I have yet to understand exactly what the administration's plan is with Syria.

As Iraq heads towards elections, we have an opportunity to engage with leadership and Iraqis who want a brighter future, and I am hopeful that more countries across the region will build on the historic diplomatic relations between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain in the Abraham Accords.

Overall, I believe we need to reinvigorate our diplomatic presence and outreach in the region in which our policy has slowly become more and more militarized, and I trust that you are up to that task.

Ms. Smith, we welcome your nomination. Glad that the president selected you for this critical post. During his administration, President Trump repeatedly attacked NATO and our allies. This, unfortunately, drew criticism from both sides of the aisle in the Senate, evidence that bipartisan support for the Alliance is strong.

President Biden's visit to NATO earlier this year helped to repair ties. But work remains to be done to ensure that our allies understand that the United States is steadfast in its support for the Alliance.

You have an exemplary background, experience, intellect, and judgment to represent the United States at NATO, and I hope that we can get you out there as soon as possible.

There are many important conversations happening in Brussels right now about the future of NATO, what its mission will be in the new world in which we live, and we need an ambassador there as soon as possible.

Ambassador Bauer, I am pleased to see you again before the committee. I appreciated your leadership of the embassy team in Belgium, especially during the 2016 Brussels terrorist attack in which Americans were killed and injured.

It is critical that the United States has an experienced ambassador in Paris where we have so many issues to advance with their government, from counterterrorism in the Sahel to support for allied democracies in the eastern Mediterranean.

France is also critical to our policy objectives in Iran and Russia, and I have appreciated the French foreign minister and ambassadors engaging with the Senate on these issues. We look forward to hearing your goals of how we can deepen our oldest diplomatic relationship even further.

Let me close with saying that the four of you have immense challenges ahead. I am confident that your experience can serve our country well as you take on new responsibilities, if confirmed, and we look forward to each of your testimonies.

Let me turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Risch, for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, regarding the nominees, I appreciate the conversation. We will continue that. I committed to you and I continue to commit to you that I will work in good faith to get these people in place.

I was a governor. I understand that you cannot operate unless you have your team in place. You and I have worked hard to get them to the floor and, as we both know, that that is a special problem that neither you nor I have control over. I get a lot of complaints that you and I cannot deal with because it is a floor problem.

But I will continue to work in good faith and see if we cannot move these forward.

I thank all of you for taking the opportunity and undertaking the privilege of serving the United States in these important positions, and your families. As the chairman mentioned, this is a sacrifice that is borne equally by the families.

I want to talk briefly about each of these.

First of all, for the Assistant Secretary of State for the Near Eastern Affairs, the Middle East region remains shaped by seemingly intractable problems, including Arab-Israeli tensions, continued export of Iranian terrorism, the humanitarian crisis in Syria and Yemen, and growing Chinese and Russian encroachment.

I am concerned that the current administration's approach to these dilemmas appears to not strike the appropriate balance and runs the risk of ceding the region to other malevolent powers, and I think everyone knows of what I speak there.

The administration's precipitous withdrawal from Afghanistan has been a strategic unforced error, as both the chairman and I focused on yesterday.

Additionally, its diplomatic embrace of the Iranian regime is hard to understand. The lack of focus on the Abraham Accords is befuddling, to say the least.

Increased barriers to conventional arms transfers and the chilling of relations with our traditional Middle Eastern partners will send a message of American disengagement, which I do not believe that we want to do.

The Abraham Accords especially need to be embraced. They need to be enhanced. They need to be further moved forward.

And I know that as I watch the administration, I think there is a lot of reluctance simply because it was an action by the previous administration. But that was a tremendous success and we should celebrate it and exploit it as best we can.

Like the chairman, I do not understand what Syria policy is today. We need to understand that. I hear rumors and they are, hopefully, not true about the administration's thoughts regarding Assad and his rehabilitation or remaining in place. That is a wrongheaded approach. But in any event, we do need an approach that everyone understands.

Now is the time for the United States to reinforce that we stand with our partners and are up to the challenge. I expect to hear how you plan to improve our engagement in the region and address the serious risks ahead of us.

Next, we have the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration. The administration's botched evacuation from Afghanistan has resulted in thousands of refugees and internally-displaced people inside the country.

Taken with the ongoing refugee crisis endured by Syrians, Venezuelans, and the Rohingya, we now face the world's largest refugee and migration numbers ever.

Through the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, the U.S. Government provides significant assistance to humanitarian partners, including the United Nations.

It is crucial that we ensure all of this assistance meets U.S. national security needs and receives proper oversight.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these issues. I also remain deeply concerned with the Biden administration's decision to restart funding to UNRWA. This organization has a history of using textbooks which incite violence against Israelis as well as has employees with ties to Hamas. We should secure true reforms before giving another dime to this organization.

Moving on to the nominee for U.S. ambassador to NATO, NATO is the world's most successful political and military alliance in the history of the planet. But it is 72 years old and must be flexible to meet new challenges.

NATO will need to continue to deal with Russia and aggression on its southern border. It must also be aware of China's growing direct threat of alliance. The balance of power in the world today is incredibly different than it was 72 years ago.

Last year's NATO 2030 report attempted to address some of these emerging issues and recommended that NATO's Strategic Concept be updated to address China-related issues as well as ways that allies can improve political coordination. I hope to see these recommendations followed.

NATO is also a nuclear alliance. Membership in the Nuclear Ban Treaty is incompatible with being a U.S. ally and NATO member. We must push back strongly on any efforts by NATO members to lend credibility to that treaty or to weaken our nuclear-sharing arrangements.

Lastly, I am worried by the disregard we showed our NATO allies in our hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan. This administration has repeatedly emphasized the importance of our allies. Yet, the way we went about this evacuation has sent our partners the exact opposite message.

Our allies deserve better, especially after invoking Article 5 following the 9/11 attacks and fighting alongside our troops for more than 20 years. They are livid. I think everyone in this room knows that and it will be our job, your job, to fix that.

Finally, we have a nominee for ambassador to France and Monaco. The United States has long enjoyed close relations with France and it remains one of our closest allies.

In Africa, I look forward to continued engagement with our French partners on important challenges, including in the Sahel, Cameroon, the DRC, and the Central African Republic to ensure we pursue mutually beneficial approaches.

France's ambassador here in the United States is an excellent friend and ally, and I have seen and experienced France's desire for a stronger alliance firsthand.

Now is a critical time for us to make real progress in the relationship. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this.

With that, thank you, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

We will turn to our nominees now. I ask that you summarize your statement in about five minutes or so because the committee will want to ask you questions. Your full statements will be included in the record, without objection.

And if you have family members who could be with you today, please do not hesitate to introduce them.

And with that, we will start with Ambassador Noyes and then work our way down the aisle.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION)**

Ambassador NOYES. Thank you, Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch. It is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee as Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration. I am grateful to him and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

I am the first person ever nominated for this position from a refugee background. My parents and members of my extended family entered the United States as refugees from Cuba 61 years ago and later became proud American citizens.

Our family is profoundly aware of the debt we owe to this great nation and, indeed, I joined the State Department in part to repay that debt.



When given an opportunity, refugees and vulnerable migrants can become valued contributors to the countries that receive them. My hard-working family members happily give back to this country as taxpayers and engaged citizens.

I am honored to introduce you to one of them today, my mother, Julieta Valls. In addition to raising a family, my mom worked in international development for years, presenting the best of America to people in other nations.

And, Senators, I want to thank you for scheduling this hearing today so I can wish her a happy birthday on the Congressional Record.

I am also joined by my wonderful husband, Nick, a retired Foreign Service officer whose mother also immigrated to America. Our children, Alexandra, Nicholas, and Matthew, are watching online. My family support has enabled me to serve our country I love, and I thank them.

In over 35 years as an American diplomat, I have worked to advance human rights, refugee, and migration issues in multiple positions outside of PRM.

As ambassador to Croatia, I presided over the final stages of a U.S.-funded refugee resettlement program and hosted a regional conference on refugees.

My mission also ran regional training programs for police, prosecutors, and justice officials on topics that included supporting the rights of migrants.

As a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European Bureau, I managed relations with 11 Western European countries and the European Union, some of our key partners, in supporting at-risk populations around the world.

As Deputy Chief of Mission at our Embassy to the Vatican, I worked with church leaders, religious communities, and Catholic aid organizations on issues like combating human trafficking.

While director for multilateral and global affairs in the Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau, I oversaw international negotiations on human rights resolutions at the United Nations and conducted human rights consultations with multiple partners.

I was a member of the high-level delegations that reported to the U.N. on U.S. compliance with two major international treaties, the Convention against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Earlier in my career, I worked on democracy, human rights, and foreign aid issues in the Western Hemisphere. I would bring these experiences to bear as PRM assistant secretary and, if confirmed, would seek to strengthen America's leadership on global, humanitarian, and migration issues.

One of my most urgent priorities would be to help the vulnerable people of Afghanistan wherever they may be. Sadly, there are also millions of other vulnerable populations worldwide.

Working with partners like USAID, I would prioritize life-saving humanitarian assistance and protections for people from Syria, Burma, South Sudan, Venezuela, and beyond.

I also would advance support for maternal health in humanitarian crises and respond to gender-based violence, upholding the administration's commitment to women's health.

If confirmed, I would ramp up engagement with other countries to pursue durable solutions to the problems that lead people to flee their countries, including in our own hemisphere.

Another key PRM priority is to rebuild the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program as directed by the president. If confirmed, I would collaborate with the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, and work with Congress to ensure the program's success.

It is a testament to the generosity of Americans that the United States is the largest humanitarian aid donor in the world, but we cannot meet all global needs alone. If confirmed, I would carefully manage the U.S. taxpayer funds that enable PRM's work and urge other nations to share this responsibility more equitably.

I am eager to work with PRM's exceptional partners in international and nongovernmental organizations, Senate willing, to carry out PRM's mission, and if confirmed, it would above all be a privilege to learn from and lead the hard-working passionate employees of PRM. Their dedication is inspirational.

Senator Menendez, Senator Risch, members of this committee, my nomination as PRM Assistant Secretary is the greatest professional honor of my life.

If confirmed, I would give my all to lead PRM in supporting persecuted and vulnerable people around the world in keeping with our nation's centuries-long history of compassion and generosity.

As the daughter of refugees, I understand that history and that responsibility acutely. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Noyes follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES

Thank you, Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch. It is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees, and Migration. I am grateful to him and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

I am the first person ever nominated for this position from a refugee background. My parents and members of my extended family entered the United States as refugees from Cuba sixty years ago and later became proud American citizens. Our family is profoundly aware of the debt we owe this great nation. Indeed, I decided to join the State Department to help repay that debt.

When given an opportunity, refugees and vulnerable migrants can become valued contributors to the countries that receive them. My hardworking family members happily give back to this country as taxpayers and engaged citizens. I'm honored to introduce you to one of them today, my mother Julieta Valls. In addition to raising a family, my mom worked in international development for years, presenting the best of America to people in other nations. I am proud to be her daughter. I am also joined by my husband Nick, a retired Foreign Service Officer whose mother also emigrated to America. Our children, Alexandra, Nicholas, and Matthew are watching online. My family's support has enabled me to serve our country; I love and thank them.

In over 35 years as an American diplomat, I have worked to advance human rights, refugee, and migration issues in multiple positions outside of PRM. As Ambassador to Croatia, I presided over the final stages of a U.S.-funded refugee resettlement program and hosted a regional conference on refugees. My mission also ran regional training programs for police, prosecutors, and justice officials, on topics that included supporting the human rights of migrants.

As a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European Bureau, I managed relations with eleven Western European countries and the European Union, some of our key partners in supporting at-risk populations around the world. As Deputy Chief of Mission at our Embassy to the Vatican, I worked with Church leaders, religious communities, and Catholic aid organizations on issues like combating human trafficking.

While Director for Multilateral and Global Affairs in the Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Bureau, I oversaw international negotiations on human rights resolutions at the United Nations and conducted human rights consultations with many partners. I was a member of the high-level delegations that reported to the United Nations on U.S. compliance with two international human rights treaties: the Convention Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Earlier in my career, I worked on democracy, human rights, and foreign aid issues in the Western Hemisphere.

I would bring these experiences to bear as PRM Assistant Secretary, and if confirmed, would seek to restore America's leadership on global humanitarian and migration issues.

One of my most urgent priorities would be to help the vulnerable and displaced people of Afghanistan—wherever they may be. Sadly, there are also millions of other vulnerable populations worldwide. Working with partners like USAID, I would prioritize life-saving U.S. humanitarian assistance and protections for people from Syria, Burma, South Sudan, and beyond. I also would advance programs that support maternal health in humanitarian crises and respond to gender-based violence, upholding the administration's commitment to women's health.

If confirmed I would ramp up engagement with other countries to pursue durable solutions to the problems that lead people to flee their homes, including in our own hemisphere.

Another key PRM priority is to rebuild the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, as directed by the President. If confirmed, I would collaborate with the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services and work with Congress to ensure the program's success.

It is a testament to the generosity of America that the United States is the largest humanitarian aid donor in the world, but we cannot meet all needs of at-risk populations alone. If confirmed, I would carefully manage the U.S. taxpayer funds that enable PRM's work and urge other nations to share this responsibility more equitably.

I am eager to work closely with PRM's exceptional partners in international and non-governmental organizations, Senate willing, to carry out PRM's mission.

If confirmed, it would above all be a privilege to learn from and lead the hard-working, passionate employees of PRM. Their dedication is inspirational.

Senator Menendez, Senator Risch, members of this committee, my nomination to serve as PRM Assistant Secretary is the greatest professional honor of my life. If confirmed, I would give my all to lead PRM in supporting persecuted and vulnerable people around the world, in keeping with our nation's centuries-long history of compassion and generosity. As the daughter of refugees, I understand that history and responsibility acutely.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.

[Speaks in Spanish.]

The CHAIRMAN. I would sing my famous birthday song but it would take too long for the committee's consideration.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. So maybe after the fact.

Ambassador Bauer?

**STATEMENT OF HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER OF CALIFORNIA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO**

Ambassador BAUER. Thank you, Senator Kaine, for that very kind introduction.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

It is my great honor to be President Biden's nominee to be United States Ambassador to France and Monaco. I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me, and, of course, I am thankful for my husband of nearly 30 years, Steven, our wonderful daughters, Katherine and Natalie, my extended family, and everyone who has supported me over the years.

If confirmed, I will work closely with this committee and the Congress as I dedicate myself to protecting and advancing U.S. interests in Monaco and France.

I would be proud to join the talented dedicated State Department and interagency teams hard at work pursuing those goals. I saw firsthand the superb commitment our embassy teams provide U.S. citizens and businesses when I served as U.S. ambassador to Belgium from 2013 to 2017.

On March 22nd of 2016, my daughter, Natalie, was already on the bus on her way to school when Brussels was attacked by terrorists. I raced into the office as our team rallied to coordinate with and support our Belgian colleagues, to help victims, and guard against follow-on attacks.

This challenging time left no doubt why American embassies matter. Our team worked hand in glove with the Belgians, and they were there for our fellow Americans so that they were not alone far from home during perhaps the worst time in their lives.

It would be my great honor to again serve the American people, now as ambassador to France. I would like to highlight a few of the pillars of our partnership that I would bolster as ambassador.

France, as you have noted, is among our most capable and reliable military allies. As NATO allies, France and the United States have built and sustained the post-war global order, promoting freedom and prosperity.

France is the second largest global footprint after the United States and is the second largest troop contributor to the D-ISIS coalition. France has reached its NATO goal of 2 percent of GDP on defense spending and contributes to NATO missions and exercises.

The United States and France exchange information and share best practices on countering violent extremist threats, and France leads on countering terrorism in the Sahel where it has eliminated leaders of ISIS, al-Qaeda, and their affiliates.

If confirmed, I will not only ensure our cooperation continues but will look for ways to strengthen that important partnership.

France welcomes the United States return to the Paris Agreement and is eager to engage in close cooperation and strategic alignment on climate issues, particularly climate finance, clean energy, green recovery, and using trade and financial flows to further Paris Agreement objectives.

The United States and France share a deep economic relationship. France and the United States traded \$99 billion of goods and services in 2020, making France one of our largest trading partners in the EU.

France works on coordination with the United States and other partners to hold Russia and China accountable for their destabilizing activities, human rights abuses, and violations of international norms.

France has played a significant role in shaping EU policy towards the PRC and supports the U.S.-EU dialogue on China where we seek a values-driven approach.

If confirmed, I will advocate strongly with the French Government that we must hold Russia accountable for its actions and maintain pressure on the Kremlin to adhere to its international commitments and obligations, including the Minsk agreements.

And finally, the United States shares many of the same goals with France when it comes to Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. On all the challenges facing those countries, France seeks deeper cooperation with the United States.

If confirmed, I also look forward to fostering our relationship with the Principality of Monaco and working together with his Serene Highness, Prince Albert II, and his Government to further our joint goals.

Of course, if confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the embassy community and all Americans in France and Monaco.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Bauer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER

Thank you, Senator Kaine, for that very kind introduction.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify today. It is my great honor to be President Biden's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to France and Monaco. I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

And of course, I am thankful for my husband of nearly 30 years, Steven; our wonderful daughters, Katherine and Natalie; my extended family; and everyone who has supported me through the years.

If confirmed, I will work closely with this committee and the Congress as I dedicate myself to protecting and advancing U.S. interests in France and Monaco. I would be proud to join the talented, dedicated State Department and interagency teams hard at work pursuing those goals.

I saw firsthand the superb commitment our embassy teams provide U.S. citizens and businesses when I served as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium from 2013 to 2017.

On March 22, 2016, my daughter Natalie was already on the bus on her way to school when Brussels was attacked by terrorists. I raced into the office as our team rallied to coordinate with and support our Belgian colleagues to help victims and guard against follow-on attacks.

This challenging time left no doubt why American embassies matter. Our team worked hand in glove with the Belgians. And we were there for our fellow Americans—so that they weren't alone, far from home, during perhaps the worst time in their lives.

It would be my great honor to again serve the American people as Ambassador to France. I'd like to highlight just a few of the pillars of our partnership that I would bolster as Ambassador.

France is among our most capable and reliable military Allies. As NATO Allies, France and the United States have built and sustained the post-war global order, promoting freedom and prosperity. France has the second-largest global troop footprint after the United States and is the second-largest troop contributor to the D-ISIS Coalition. France has reached the NATO goal of 2 percent of GDP on defense spending and contributes to NATO missions and exercises.

The United States and France exchange information and share best practices on countering violent extremist threats, and France leads on countering terrorism in the Sahel, where it has eliminated leaders of ISIS, Al-Qa'ida, and their affiliates.

If confirmed, I will not only ensure our cooperation continues, but will look for ways to strengthen that partnership.

France welcomed the United States' return to the Paris Agreement and is eager to engage in closer cooperation and strategic alignment on climate issues, particularly climate finance, clean energy, green recovery, and using trade and financial flows to further Paris Agreement objectives.

The United States and France share a deep economic relationship. France and the United States traded \$99 billion of goods and services in 2020, making France the United States' third-largest trading partner in Europe.

France works in coordination with the United States and other partners to hold Russia and China accountable for their destabilizing activities, human rights abuses, and violations of international norms. France has played a significant role in shaping the EU's policy towards the PRC, and supports the U.S.-E.U. Dialogue on China, where we seek a values-driven approach. If confirmed, I will advocate strongly with the French Government that we must hold Russia accountable for its actions, and maintain pressure on the Kremlin to adhere to its international commitments and obligations, including the Minsk agreements.

And finally, the United States shares many of the same goals with France when it comes to Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. On all the challenges facing these countries, France seeks deeper collaboration with the United States.

If confirmed, I also look forward to fostering our relationship with the Principality of Monaco and working together with His Serene Highness Prince Albert II and his Government to further our joint goals.

Of course, if confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community and all Americans in France and Monaco.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Ms. Smith?

**STATEMENT OF JULIANNE SMITH OF MICHIGAN, NOMINATED  
TO BE UNITED STATES PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO  
THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANI-  
ZATION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EX-  
TRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY**

Ms. SMITH. Good morning, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor to be nominated to be the Permanent Representative of the United States to NATO.

I want to extend my thanks to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for placing their trust in me for this critical position.

If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the president's pledge to revitalize and strengthen America's alliances. I also want to thank Senator Shaheen for her kind words and leadership in the NATO Observers Group.

Let me start today by thanking my family, my husband, David, and our two sons, Liam and Dylan, for their love and support. David and Liam are with us here today. My son, Dylan, is tucked away in second grade at school.

I am proud to be a woman working in the field of national security. But my greatest joy comes from my family.

I also want to thank my parents, who are watching in my home state of Michigan, and my sister for their guidance and encouragement.

I have worked on a wide range of national security challenges over the years but Europe has always been my passion. Ever since I received a scholarship to spend a year at the Sorbonne as an un-

dergraduate, I have been fascinated by America's long-standing relationship with our closest allies across the Atlantic.

From my first job at a small think tank here in Washington, D.C., to my positions in the Pentagon, at the White House, and now the State Department, I have worked to strengthen our relationship with Europe, navigate our differences, and identify innovative ways to address our shared challenges.

No institution has played a bigger role in the history of the transatlantic relationship than the NATO Alliance. Since its creation in 1949, it has served as the bedrock of transatlantic security, protecting our shared values, and safeguarding each of its members against outside aggression.

NATO's story is a remarkable one of unity and solidarity. After the end of the Cold War, NATO's story became one of adaptation. Over the last 30 years, NATO has added 14 new members, developed new partnerships in the Middle East and Asia, agreed to operate a new warfighting domain such as cyber, and acquired new capabilities to respond to an array of emerging challenges, from terrorism to disruptive technologies to climate change.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the Alliance has bolstered its deterrence and defense posture, including through the deployment of multinational battle groups on its eastern flank.

Despite the fact that it makes decisions by consensus, NATO has repeatedly showcased its ability to take action quickly when it counts. It swiftly invoked Article 5 in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, for which the United States will always remain deeply grateful.

While NATO is rightly heralded as the most successful military alliance in history, the Alliance, now almost 75 years old, does have its share of challenges. Some allies are still struggling to meet their commitments to increase defense spending.

Decision-making remains slow, and the weakening of democratic values in some member states is tearing at Alliance cohesion. Allies are also making slow progress in the hard work of improving their military capabilities, especially in new domains like cyber and space.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with our NATO allies and partners to address such shortfalls and prepare the Alliance to face future challenges.

I will also look forward to working with allies on the important task of drafting a new Strategic Concept, which was last updated 10 long years ago.

That document must reflect the changing security environment of today, especially Russian aggression, threats we face in cyberspace, and the People's Republic of China's malign activities across the Euro-Atlantic region.

I will work to ensure that none of those new challenges detract from the Alliance's core task of ensuring a strong deterrence and defense for all its members.

I believe that part of NATO's success rests with the strong bipartisan support one finds both here in Congress and among the American public.

I was heartened to see the enthusiastic welcome that the Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, received when he addressed Congress in 2019.

If confirmed, I will ensure that bipartisan support continues and would look forward to welcoming congressional delegations to Brussels. It would be my great honor to represent the United States at NATO.

I believe in this alliance, I believe in the important role it plays in America's own defense, and I believe in our critical leadership role inside it.

I look forward to your questions and thank you for your consideration.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Smith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JULIANNE SMITH

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor to be nominated to be the Permanent Representative of the United States to NATO. I want to extend my thanks to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for placing their trust in me for this critical position. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the President's pledge to revitalize and strengthen America's alliances.

I would like to start by thanking my family—my husband David and our two sons, Liam and Dylan—for their never-ending love and support. I am proud to be a woman working in the field of national security but my greatest joy comes from my family. I also want to thank my parents (who are watching from my home state of Michigan) and my sister for their guidance and encouragement.

I have worked on a wide range of national security challenges throughout my career but Europe has always been my passion. Ever since I received a scholarship to spend a year at the Sorbonne as an undergraduate, I have been fascinated by America's longstanding relationship with its closest Allies across the Atlantic. From my first job at a small think tank in Washington to my positions in the Pentagon and at the White House, I have worked to strengthen our relationship with Europe, navigate our differences, and identify innovative ways to address our shared challenges.

No institution has played a bigger role in the history of the Transatlantic relationship than the NATO Alliance. Since its creation in 1949, it has served as the bedrock of Transatlantic security, protecting our shared values and safeguarding each of its members against outside aggression. NATO's story is a remarkable one of solidarity and unity.

After the end of the Cold War, NATO's story became one of adaptation to a changing world. Over the last 30 years, NATO added 14 new members, developed new partnerships in the Middle East and Asia, agreed to operate in new warfighting domains such as cyber, and acquired new capabilities to respond to an array of emerging challenges, ranging from terrorism to emerging and disruptive technologies to climate change. Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014, the Alliance has bolstered its deterrence and defense posture, including through the deployment of multinational battle groups on its eastern flank.

Despite the fact that it makes decisions by consensus, NATO has repeatedly showcased its ability to take action quickly when it counts. It swiftly invoked Article 5—the collective defense clause of the Washington Treaty—in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, for which the United States will always remain deeply grateful.

While NATO is rightly heralded as the most successful military alliance in history, the Alliance, now almost 75 years old, does have its share of challenges. Some Allies are still struggling to meet their commitments to increase defense spending, which they made after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2014. Decision making remains too slow, and the weakening of democratic values in some member states is tearing at Alliance cohesion, causing some members to question whether all Allies share the same values. Allies also are making slow progress in the hard and expensive work of improving their military capabilities, especially in new domains like cyber, space, and other emerging technologies.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with our NATO Allies and partners to address such shortfalls and prepare the Alliance to face future challenges. I will also look forward to working with Allies on the important task of drafting a new Strategic Concept, the roadmap that lays out NATO's future direction, which was last updated ten long years ago. That document must reflect the changing security environment of today, especially Russian aggression, threats we face in cyberspace, and the People's Republic of China's malign activities across the Euro-Atlantic region.



I will work to ensure that none of those new challenges detract from the Alliance's core task of ensuring a strong deterrence and defense for all its members.

I believe that part of NATO's success rests with the strong bipartisan support one finds both here in Congress and among the American public. I was heartened to see the enthusiastic welcome Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg received when he addressed Congress in April of 2019. If confirmed, I will ensure that bipartisan support continues and would look forward to welcoming congressional delegations to NATO Headquarters.

It would be my great honor to represent the United States at NATO. I believe in this Alliance, the important role it plays in America's own defense, and in our critical leadership role in NATO.

I look forward to your questions and thank you for your consideration.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Ambassador Leaf?

**STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA A. LEAF OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS)**

Ambassador LEAF. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of this committee. It is an honor to be here as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

If confirmed, this would be the culmination of a lifetime of work on behalf of the U.S. in the Middle East and North Africa.

My story is like that of many Americans called to public service, inspired by multiple generations of family members who served. My family has had someone serving in the U.S. military continuously for almost 80 years.

Much of my wider family were also called upon to support those who served, making their own sacrifices. My mother managed to raise six children on a tobacco farm in southern Maryland during the years my father, an Air Force pilot, served in far-off places.

I remember on an early assignment in the Foreign Service I met up with my oldest brother, Tim Leaf, here behind me who is representing the whole Leaf clan. I met up with him as a deployed Marine officer in the streets of newly-liberated Kuwait. My youngest brother deployed repeatedly to Iraq and Afghanistan, with great costs borne by his young family.

My younger sister is a Foreign Service officer, now serving in southern Africa, far from family and friends.

My husband, Chris Querin, had a distinguished career in the Marine Corps, taking him to Jerusalem, where we met early in my career. He and our two daughters, Maro and Asja, provided the unstinting loving support that enabled me to shoulder what was asked of me, even when that meant being apart from them when I served a year in Iraq.

Service is a theme in my family and service has more relevance today for Americans than ever before. In the Middle East, President Biden's strategic vision provides a roadmap and a set of principles for our engagements based on rebuilding long-term relationships in the region.

If confirmed, I will work to reinforce those partnerships around an affirmative agenda, focused on building shared prosperity but also confronting shared problems: fighting COVID-19, developing an international health infrastructure to prevent future pandemics, building a new energy economy around renewables to arrest the

drivers of climate change, addressing desertification and growing water shortages, combating transnational repression while promoting respect for fundamental freedoms and open societies, and sustaining the core institutions of the international order that have provided security and stability for over 70 years.

If confirmed, I pledge to represent the best of American values and will make it clear that relationships with the U.S. are stronger when human rights principles are respected.

The region has been convulsed by conflict and instability for over the past two decades, but many of our partners have turned towards deescalation and to working with the U.S. to quell the region's conflicts.

Iran, of course, has been the outlier to this trend. Tehran continues to pursue destabilizing policies, including through its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, its support for violent groups, and its abhorrent human rights record and long-standing practice of using wrongfully detained U.S. citizens as political tools. An Iran with a nuclear weapon would pose an even greater threat.

As part of the administration's renewed multilateral engagement, if confirmed, I will work in tandem with regional partners and allies to advance U.N. peace processes in Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

The president's vision for a collaborative relationship with the countries of the Middle East comes in the wider context of a growing global challenge to our values of open societies and open economies.

This challenge comes primarily from the People's Republic of China and Russia. Both pursue influence in the region in a zero-sum fashion. If confirmed, I expect to have frank conversations with our partners about the challenges posed by certain Russian and Chinese actions.

And if confirmed, I will not be able to accomplish this ambitious agenda without the outstanding Foreign Service officers, civil servants, contractors, and family members employed here and in the region.

I am committed to promoting the safety and security of our people overseas as a paramount priority, supporting the professional development of our employees and the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the bureau and our posts around the region.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you as we reshape, rebuild, and reenergize the U.S. Government's engagement with the Middle East, building a better future for the American people and the people of the region.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Leaf follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR BARBARA A. LEAF

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of this committee. It is an honor to be here as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. If confirmed, this would be the culmination of a lifetime of work on behalf of the United States in the Middle East and North Africa. I cannot express how much this opportunity to serve my country and the American people means to me.

My story is like that of many Americans called to public service, inspired by multiple generations of family members who served in one capacity or another. My family has had someone serving in the military, continuously, for the past 80 years. So much of my wider family were also called upon to support those who served, making their own sacrifices along the way. My ever-entrepreneurial mother managed to raise six children on a tobacco farm during years my father, an air force pilot, served in far-off places. On an early assignment in the Foreign Service, I met up with my oldest brother, a deployed Marine officer, in the streets of newly-liberated Kuwait. My little brother deployed repeatedly during America's two longest wars, to Iraq and Afghanistan, with great costs borne by his young family. My younger sister is a Foreign Service officer, now serving in southern Africa, far from family and friends. My husband had a distinguished career in the Marine Corps, taking him to Jerusalem, where we met early in my career. He, like our two daughters, provided the unstinting loving support that helped me shoulder what was asked of me, even when that meant being apart for a year while I served in Iraq.

Service is a theme in my family, and it has more relevance today for Americans than ever before, given the multiplying challenges abroad and at home that require re-investment in ourselves, re-commitment to partnerships, and U.S. leadership globally.

In the Middle East, President Biden's strategic vision provides a roadmap and a set of principles for our engagement, based on re-building long-term relationships in the region to meet the manifold, emerging new challenges. But the President's vision demands the evolution of our partnerships beyond the conventional security realm that has defined our approach to the region for well over 30 years. If confirmed, I would work to reinforce those partnerships around an affirmative agenda focused on building shared prosperity and confronting shared problems: fighting COVID-19 and developing an international health infrastructure to prevent future pandemics; building a new energy economy around renewables to arrest the drivers of climate change; addressing desertification and growing water shortages; combating transnational repression, while promoting respect for fundamental freedoms and open societies; and sustaining the core institutions of the international order that have provided security and stability for over 70 years.

If confirmed, I pledge to represent the best of American values, and will make it clear that relationships with the United States are stronger when human rights principles are respected.

The region has been convulsed by conflict and instability for the past two decades, but many of our partners have turned in recent months towards de-escalation and to working with the United States to quell the region's conflicts. Iran, of course, has been the outlier to this trend. Tehran continues to pursue destabilizing policies, including through its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, its subversive support for violent groups, and its abhorrent human rights record and long-standing practice of using wrongfully detained U.S. citizens as political tools. An Iran with a nuclear weapon would pose an even greater threat.

As part of the administration's renewed multilateral engagement, if confirmed I will work in tandem with partners and allies to advance U.N. peace processes in Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

The President's vision for a collaborative partnership with the countries of the Middle East comes in the wider context of a growing global challenge to our values of open societies and open economies, values that have underpinned the institutions of the international order. This challenge comes primarily from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia; both pursue influence in the region in a zero-sum fashion. If confirmed, I expect to have frank conversations with our partners about the challenges posed by certain Russian and PRC actions.

If confirmed, I will not be able to accomplish this ambitious agenda without the outstanding Foreign Service Officers, Civil Servants, Contractors, and family members employed here and in the region. I am committed to promoting the safety and security of our people overseas, the professional development of our employees, and the principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Bureau and our posts around the region.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you as we reshape, rebuild, and reenergize the U.S. Government's engagement with the Middle East, building a better future for the American people and the people of the region. Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all very much.

Before I start my questions, let me start a series of questions that we ask every nominee that comes before the committee, and

they are on behalf of the full committee and I just simply ask you for a verbal yes or no answer.

These are questions that speak to the importance that the committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and we expect and would be seeking from you.

I will ask each of you to provide just a yes or no answer to the following.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Did I get four yeses there?

Ambassador LEAF. Yes.

Ms. SMITH. Yes.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Do you commit to engaging in a meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. And do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you all for that. For the record, all four nominees answered yes to all the questions.

Let me start a series of five-minute rounds.

Ambassador Noyes, how can the department and the PRM in particular help ensure that thousands of Afghans allies who were left behind when the last U.S. military plane departed on August 30th have equal access to evacuations?

This will be one of the most critical immediate challenges that you will have. Give me a sense of how you envision your department's participation in that.

Ambassador NOYES. Senator, thank you for the question.

I think I speak for all of my colleagues at the State Department to say how proud we were to see how many people we were able to get out of Afghanistan and how heartbroken we were to see that we could not get out everyone that we wanted to.

The president, the Secretary, have made clear their intention to uphold the commitment that we had to the people who worked for us, to the people who qualify for Special Immigrant Visas, and we will continue to work to process their cases and get them out.

We have also made available consideration for referral under refugee programs, the P-2 refugee referrals, and other ways of getting access to resettlement in the United States.

We also would commit to working with international organizations like the High Commissioner for Refugees to seek resettlement for people at risk in other countries, not just in the United States.

Our commitment to uphold the human rights and to protect the vulnerable people of Afghanistan through resettlement, if that is what is needed, is a firm one, and if confirmed as Assistant Sec-

retary, I would work with colleagues throughout the department and other agencies to uphold that commitment.

The CHAIRMAN. Today is the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month, and many of us held a call with national leadership, and one of the questions that came up is that it seems that we treat refugees from the southern border below differently than we treat refugees from other people in the world.

Seems to me that a refugee, if they meet the definition under the law, is a refugee, regardless of where they come from. Do you share that view?

Ambassador NOYES. Yes, Senator. Anyone who qualifies as a refugee should be given the same treatment and the same consideration.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador Leaf, I could spend the whole hearing with you, but I will not because we had a good session yesterday. But I will put some questions for the record just so that we can have the record sustained. But I do want to broach one or two of them with you.

Over the weekend, Iran and the IAEA reached what seems to be a subpar last-minute agreement to prevent the IAEA from formally censuring Iran.

I remain deeply concerned about the details of this agreement, specifically because my understanding is that while the IAEA will have access to the information it needs, it will not be able to see that access. It will not be able to see the actual information in real time.

It will not be able to see the information that was taken out or that will be taken out from the storage chips of what was going on since Iran broke off inspections, and it will not be able to see the new information that will be placed in the new storage chips to do the video recording of what is going on.

Therefore, while there will be, quote/unquote, "monitoring" taking place, there will be no review of the monitoring. Therefore, we will have no information about the status of Iran's program. If there is something called a Pyrrhic victory, that is the ultimate definition of it.

Secretary Blinken has responded to that report by warning that Iran is running out of time to reap any benefits of a compliance agreement with the JCPOA.

I, honestly, believe that returning to the JCPOA just as it was does not realize the tremendous change in circumstances we have today as well as the fact that Iran's nefarious activities in ballistic missiles, destabilization of the region, arms trafficking, and a whole host of other things are equally or as important.

Let me ask you, how much time and diplomatic space do you think is left to get to a longer and stronger nuclear deal that also addresses these regional transgressions and attacks by proxies against not only U.S. partners and allies but also U.S. personnel and facilities in the region?

Ambassador LEAF. Thank you, Senator, for those questions and those comments.

I would not want to get into in a hypothetical answer to the question of how much time. Secretary Blinken laid down a warning marker with that remark and it is a valid one.

We have been waiting now, for two months to go back into a set of discussions, which are quite urgent, and as you said, the discussion on the JCPOA, a mutual compliance-for-compliance return to that agreement is only a starting point.

What I would say to your concerns about these other issues, including a supplemental agreement, longer, stronger, but also the ongoing nefarious activities, those are my concerns, too. The administration, in fact, does not view this as a sequential matter in terms of addressing those regional activities.

There are ongoing discussions with our most important ally in the region, Israel, as well as other concerned parties, and we work to synchronize and use a set of tools—economic sanctions, pressure, occasionally military and other diplomatic tools with them—to confront and constrain Iran in these activities.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it fair to say that we really do not know where Iran is at in its nuclear program right now?

Ambassador LEAF. I am not sure I would want to characterize it that way, Senator, and, obviously, there are intelligence estimates to that effect.

The CHAIRMAN. I get real concerned when I see Mr. Albright suggest that we are one month away. He is a pretty independent verifier. I get concerned when we are heralding the IAEA agreement that, basically, says, well, we will keep the monitoring but we cannot see anything that is happening and we do not know what has happened in between.

That is not creating a safeguard for anybody. We need to be a lot more robust with the IAEA. This committee will be seeking the IAEA's briefing, which it has not given to date, because we got to know what we are seeing and what we are not seeing and be honest with ourselves at the end of the day.

I have many other questions for some of the other nominees. But, in fairness, to our colleagues, Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Obviously, I share a lot of those concerns also.

And Ambassador Leaf, I can tell you, I told Secretary Blinken this when we met, and you can take it for what it is worth, but having been through this thing with Iran for so long, this business of saying now that you are going to try to get back into the old JCPOA and then there will be add-on negotiations and agreements in the future, with all due respect, I think that thinking is just delusional.

There is no way that Iran is going to continue to negotiate and do an add-on agreement if, indeed, they are able to get the JCPOA back where it was and get our sanctions off.

That is my two cents' worth, and I understand we have a basic disagreement in that regard. But nonetheless, I will be shocked if you can get that done.

Secondly, you heard the discussion from both myself and from the chairman regarding a Syria policy, and we need that.

I am not expecting you to opine on that today because I think you have got your work ahead of you before you can get there. But we need something that we can articulate and move forward on, and we do not have that on Syria.

Ms. Noyes, I want to talk about UNRWA for just a minute. I introduced the UNRWA Accountability and Transparency Act with 11 of my Senate colleagues, and we share real concerns on UNRWA.

What are your thoughts on UNRWA?

Ambassador NOYES. Senator, I share the concerns that you expressed in that legislation about the efficiency, the effectiveness, and the neutrality of UNRWA. The administration agrees, with the premise behind the legislation.

That said, it is my understanding that UNRWA is a force for stability in the region by providing vital services to Palestinians in need—education for school children, health care for people, and the only viable alternative to UNRWA in those areas would be Hamas.

Therefore, while we, certainly, would agree with the intent of the legislation and the framework agreement that the PRM bureau entered into with UNRWA accounts for the need to make changes and to redouble efforts to ensure the efficiency, the effectiveness, and the neutrality of UNRWA.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate your thoughts. I do not think simply because there is an alternative that is worse we should take this—in my judgment, a very bad agency and try to make that work.

I think we should try to make that work. But I think that if it does not work, we should not say, well, the only other alternative is Hamas. I do not subscribe to that theory.

But in any event, I think most everyone who has dealt with UNRWA and seen, for instance, the textbooks they print for use in their schools is just disgusted that U.S. taxpayer money is going down the drain in that regard.

I hope you will focus on that. I hope you can get them in a better direction, and it is going to take a considerable change in direction for me to embrace what they are doing.

Thank you for your efforts in that regard.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

My understanding is Senator Cardin is with us virtually.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do want to thank all of our nominees for their willingness to serve our nation during these extremely challenging times. We thank you. We thank your families.

Ambassador Leaf, I want to follow up on some of the comments that have already been made. We see some positive developments in the Middle East with the Abraham Accords, and Congress has passed that and the Senate Finance Committee has passed S. 1601, which would build on that to have the United States active in trying to get more of the countries in the Middle East to sign on to the Abraham Accords.

On the other side of the ledger, we see activities in the United Nations General Assembly that is very much trying to compromise Israel's sovereignty.

Just share with me your strategies in dealing with the countries in the region to get more to move towards the Abraham Accord approach with Israel rather than trying to isolate Israel in the United Nations.

Ambassador LEAF. Thank you, Senator, for that set of questions and comments, and I could not agree more on both counts.

First, with respect to the Abraham Accords, it is a truly exciting set of developments in a region that for so long has really not had a lot of good news, and I, if confirmed, very much look forward to seizing the opportunities opened with those nascent relationships and deepening, expanding them while really expanding the circle beyond the four countries.

I think there is a lot of opportunity. I would say the UAE and Bahrain and Morocco probably represented the sort of most forward leaning of the countries in that regard.

But, nonetheless, and this has been a subject of discussion with the Israeli Government, there are other opportunities out there, and I think it self-evidently should be a priority for my work, if confirmed, and it would thread into the work of every U.S. ambassador in the region so that it was a very concerted and coordinated effort.

I also agree with you in terms of the anti-Israel bias that we see repeatedly come up, whether in the UNGA or in U.N. bodies, and, if confirmed, I would absolutely work in lockstep with other members of the administration, with our mission to the U.N., and others to push back on that vigorously.

Senator CARDIN. I would just point out I think the Abraham Accords is a positive incentive for countries to normalize their relationship with Israel. The actions in the United Nations and its bodies require us to make it clear that there is a price to pay when we see this type of activity take place that is very much against the sovereignty of our closest ally in the Middle East.

I would hope you would also be aggressive in activities to make it clear that the United States will act on behalf of Israel in regards to the United Nations.

Ambassador Noyes, I want to ask you a question on immigration. I agree with Chairman Menendez's point in regards to Afghanistan, and that is going to, certainly, be a major focus of all of our work in the next several months in order to relocate those at risk.

But I want to get closer to our own hemisphere, and Senator Menendez raised these issues. We show international leadership by our actions here in America. Yes, we will show it in regards to the Afghan refugees.

But in regards to refugees coming out of our own hemisphere, we, certainly, have a lot of individuals who have left Venezuela. We have the Central American migration that we know about.

Can you just share with me the strategy of exercising leadership in our own hemisphere to show that we have the right global policies in regards to migration that can help us not only in dealing with the challenges we have in the Western Hemisphere but also our leadership globally?

Ambassador NOYES. Thank you for that question, Senator Cardin.

Certainly, this hemisphere is not alone in having issues with refugees and migration. One of the administration's major efforts with regard to how to deal with these issues is for Central America. There is a root cause's strategy to get to the causes that lead people to leave their nations.



But insofar as PRM is concerned, the administration has also put forward a comprehensive migration management strategy, which is an effort, a whole-of-government effort, to work with U.S. Government agencies but also with the governments of the region in trying to address the issues that lead to migration and to come up with collaborative approaches for dealing with those issues, whether it is providing access to temporary work permits, providing protection, humanitarian assistance in countries where they are needed, dealing with issues of corruption, rule of law.

And that is a model, Senator, that I believe could be very useful and very effective in dealing with migration questions and refugee challenges elsewhere in the world.

If confirmed, I really would like to do more in the area of humanitarian diplomacy, working closely with our partners and with other governments around the world to address these issues before they become so severe that they lead people to leave their countries, and also to address issues that have led people to leave their countries such that they can find ways to return safely, humanely, and voluntarily to their home countries.

I think there is a lot to be done in the area of humanitarian diplomacy. I think the approach the United States is taking in Central America and in Mexico with this holistic whole-of-government and collaborative approach with regional governments is, again, a model for these issues around the world.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. We will be judged by our actions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

My understanding is that there are presently no Republican colleagues seeking recognition so I will move to Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Mr. Chair, thank you. And again, congratulations to the nominees.

Ambassador Bauer, one of the wonderful opportunities in the U.S. relationship with France is that France has significant equities all over the globe in areas where the U.S. shares interest, and we work in tandem in Southeast Asia. We work in tandem in the Sahel. I want to ask a question about one of the countries you mentioned, Lebanon.

The U.S.-Lebanese relationship, especially with the Lebanese military, has been a strong one. Lebanon is very strategically important.

But right now in Lebanon there has just been a set of catastrophes, one after the next, and the current political situation in Lebanon poses grave risk both to the health and satisfaction and quality of life of everyday Lebanese but also the surrounding communities.

The French Government under President Macron has been very involved in trying to promote a better chapter for Lebanon. Should you be confirmed, what might we be able to do, the United States and France together, to figure out ways to help Lebanon to a better place?

Ambassador BAUER. Thank you for the question, Senator Kaine.

Yes, indeed, it is a very challenging situation, and it is my understanding that we are working closely with the French and that

the French take it very seriously and will be good allies, going forward.

It is certainly something I would engage on right away should I be confirmed, and would also welcome the opportunity to consult with you and other members of this committee to develop a best plan for going forward.

Senator KAINE. Excellent. I almost asked that question as a proxy for Senator Murphy, who is the chair of the Subcommittee of Foreign Relations that oversees that relationship, and he just was in Lebanon with other members of the committee.

I think it is an increasingly destabilized Lebanon is a real problem for a lot of nations, including the United States, and we can work together with France on that.

Ambassador Leaf, I am concerned about a number of things in the relationship between the United States and Egypt. There are some positive developments. President el-Sisi met with Prime Minister Bennett in Sharm El Sheikh recently, which was the first meeting between leaders of Egypt and Israel in a decade. That is positive.

But I am really worried about human rights issues in Egypt and they affect a lot of Virginians. There was reporting in the last few months about the involvement of Egyptian intelligence in the murder of Virginia resident Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

I wrote a letter to the Secretary of State last month asking the Department of State to dig into these allegations and then render some judgment on the potential applicability of 7013(c) visa restrictions.

You are not yet at State. That letter had not come to you. But these are very serious allegations of the involvement of the Egypt secret police and intel officials in the murder of a Virginian, a journalist.

Now, I will say the Egyptian Government has denied these allegations. We spoke directly about it with the head of Egyptian intelligence on the committee. But there is an answer to the question of whether or not they are involved, and if they were there has got to be some consequences.

Should you be confirmed, will you take this kind of a request of the Department of State to make an assessment about what occurred and then whether there should be accountability? Will you take this matter with the utmost seriousness?

Ambassador LEAF. Thank you, Senator, for that question, and it is an extraordinarily serious issue that you have raised.

Within the context more broadly, and I will say straight up, of course, I will take my responsibilities absolutely seriously, if confirmed, under both U.S. law and U.S. policy on human rights.

I would just offer another couple of comments on this broader issue that you raised, how human rights feature in the relationship with Egypt, and you will have seen this week that Secretary Blinken decided on the issue of \$300 million of the \$1.3 billion of foreign military financing for Egypt.

It was a very methodical and carefully thought through set of decisions to signal, to reaffirm, really, that as with countries around

the world, human rights do feature at the center point of relations with Egypt.

Now, we have long-standing national security interests in that relationship. Egypt has been a strategic partner of enormous importance for the U.S. but also for the region and for Israel, in particular.

And as you said, this was a remarkable thing. For the first time in a decade you had the two leaders meet publicly. The fact that leaders have met before, but they could not do it publicly in front of their publics speaks to how unsteady that relationship was.

I will just pledge to you that, if confirmed, I will absolutely keep my focus on these human rights issues and the case that you cite, in particular.

Senator KAINE. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Leaf, if confirmed, you are going to inherit a region that has been transformed in remarkable ways in recent years, most significantly by the Abraham Accords.

The Abraham Accords were historic peace agreements, the first in decades achieved in the region. They were achieved, I believe, because the prior administration abandoned the long-standing U.S. policy of deliberate ambiguity between Israel and the Palestinians and, rather, pursued a policy that America unequivocally stands with our friend and ally, the nation of Israel.

That clarity produced the Abraham Accords, I believe. That clarity was manifested in multiple ways, including moving our embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, including withdrawing from the disastrous Obama Iran nuclear deal.

The Biden administration seems bound and determined to unwind all of the positive progress made in the Middle East, to run away from the peace deal, to embrace the strategic ambiguity that for decades failed, and the Biden administration seems to want to go back to that failure.

When it comes to the Abraham Accords, the Biden administration, frankly, has been almost comical, going so far as quite literally putting out a guidance at the U.S. State Department not to utter the words Abraham Accords, in writing officials in the Biden State Department saying, "We do not use those words here." Instead, they are to be referred to as normalization agreements.

And I will say that was not simply a written guidance but, sadly, it is a guidance that seems to be followed. Just yesterday, the U.S. ambassador of the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, gave a speech on the anniversary of the Abraham Accords in which she refused to utter the words Abraham Accords. The entire thing seems like a Monty Python skit.

I understand that the Biden administration is not a fan of Donald Trump. But throwing away historic Middle East peace agreements because the administration does not like their predecessor is extraordinarily foolish, it is harmful to the United States, and it is harmful to our friends and allies.

Can you tell this committee, in your judgment, what is the importance of the Abraham Accords and should they be maintained and strengthened or should they be undermined and weakened?

Ambassador LEAF. Senator, I agree with you, those are historic Accords. The Abraham Accords changed and brought a new dynamic to a region that has really had very little in the way of good news in recent years.

There is no question in my mind that they have already contributed and will contribute still more to peaceful coexistence and to economic integration, and that last piece has been very much missing across this region.

I can assure you that, if confirmed, I will make it a top priority not just to help foster the deepening of the roots of those relationships, and each of them has different dynamics according to their own societies and cultures, but I will work with those governments and with the Israeli Government to strengthen and deepen those Accords and then widen the circle, absolutely.

There are more opportunities out there. They are not quite as in a state of readiness, perhaps, as the UAE was. But there are prospects there.

They start with some very significant moves on people-to-people contacts and that is one of the things that really, I think, was most striking in the case of the UAE and Bahrain.

Those governments had begun a very subtle process of beginning to warm their public up to the idea, and that is the sort of thing that, frankly, the U.S. has to push on with other governments and I am ready to do it.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

Ms. Smith, as you know, I am deeply concerned about the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. I think that President Biden made an enormous and, indeed, a generational geopolitical mistake by effectively giving that pipeline to Vladimir Putin.

In your judgment, what will be the national security harms, the economic harms, to Europe and to the United States if and when that pipeline goes online and is operational?

Ms. SMITH. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I agree with the president. I agree with you that the pipeline is a bad deal. It is a geopolitical project, as you yourself have noted many times.

It is a project that undermines the safety and security of our friends in Europe, particularly in Ukraine. I do not feel that this deal, this pipeline, in particular, will be something that will bring added security to Europe. Quite the contrary.

I look forward, though, if confirmed, to working with our allies, our partners, on the repercussions of this pipeline as I get to Brussels.

Senator CRUZ. I feel obliged to note the president does not believe that, because the only reason the pipeline is being completed is because Joe Biden waived the sanctions that were passed by an overwhelming bipartisan majority of Congress.

We had stopped the pipeline for over a year, and the Biden administration decided, because they wanted to make nice with Germany, they would give Putin a generational multi-billion-dollar gift

and they turned an incredible foreign policy victory into a foreign policy failure.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the senator has expired.

I would just note for the record an hour ago the State Department spokesman, Ned Price, was heralding the Abraham Accords and called it as such, and the United Arab Emirates promoted it as part of their Foreign Service movement.

The administration has used and I am sure will continue to use the term Abraham Accords.

Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch.

And, Chairman Menendez, thank you for setting the record straight about both the bipartisan support for the Abraham Accords here and the ways in which the State Department continues to advocate for their full implementation.

To the nominees before us, thank you for your willingness to serve. Let me thank your families and those who have helped support you in your careers and service so far and will support you should you be confirmed.

Let me just ask a few quick questions. I have less than five minutes but I am delighted to have a chance to ask each of you a question or two.

Ms. Bauer, if I might, what lessons did you learn from your time as Ambassador to Belgium about working with the Foreign Service? And you have said to me when we had a chance to talk before this hearing that one of the most important jobs an ambassador faces is protecting State Department employees and other American citizens abroad.

How do you intend to help contribute to that sacred challenge, that obligation, that opportunity, that our diplomats have abroad?

Ambassador BAUER. Thank you, Senator Coons.

Indeed, working with the team at the State Department and the interagency team in Brussels was an incredible privilege. It is a skilled and dedicated group of people and it is part of what made me so excited about the opportunity to potentially serve again was to think of working with the same extraordinary team.

On the security front, I think it is a matter of having really close communication, no silos, working as a team, making sure everyone trusts each other and we are having really regular communications not only within the team in France, should I be confirmed, but throughout Europe and, of course, consulting with the Senate and other important partners.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I did not mean to skip over Ms. Noyes.

If I might, your role is going to be absolutely critical, and as the daughter of Cuban refugees, I think you bring an important and unique perspective to this vital role.

If you would just share with me, briefly, what lessons from your service as ambassador to Croatia would you bring to PRM, and how should the State Department address the visa backlog and how will you work to increase international cooperation on difficult and urgent issues like resettlement of refugees and humanitarian assistance?

Ambassador NOYES. Senator, thank you for that question.

I think I have learned lessons from throughout my career in a variety of different positions, not just as ambassador but even as the Acting Director of FSI, lessons about management, about teamwork, about how I would pick up part of Denise's answer about working with the team and making sure that everyone makes a contribution.

One of my biggest priorities, if confirmed, would be to help rebuild the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, which is badly understaffed at this point at a time when it is really being stretched to carry out a lot of functions.

A big priority would be rebuilding that bureau, and in rebuilding that bureau working to rebuild the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, which is critical for America's humanitarian leadership around the world, and working with partners in the State Department and in the interagency on helping to resettle the Afghan refugees.

In so far as the visa backlog question, Senator, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration does not play a specific role on that issue. But I know that my colleagues at the Department of State are working very, very hard to process the remaining Special Immigrant Visas for Afghans and to do whatever is possible to help people at risk in Afghanistan.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. I think that is urgent work and I look forward to working with the chairman to ensure that the resources for that are available.

Might I ask two more quick questions or are we—

The CHAIRMAN. Since the senator is the chairman of the Foreign Ops Subcommittee and Appropriations, definitely go ahead.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

If I might, Ms. Smith, NATO has just concluded one of its most important longest missions and it is now, I think, facing a different range of threats, challenges, and adversaries.

China has expanded its influence not just in the Indo-Pacific but in Europe, investing in infrastructure, heightening its emphasis on the Arctic, targeting countries in Eastern, Central, and Western Europe with disinformation campaigns.

And in June, the NATO heads of state issued a statement that Beijing presents systemic challenges. What risk do you think China currently poses to the NATO Alliance and European stability, and how would you, if confirmed, work with NATO to counter China's malign influence?

Ms. SMITH. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I do worry about the dangers posed by China in the Euro-Atlantic area. I think about the investments that China is making in critical infrastructure across the continent.

I think about their own investments in disruptive technology, the lessons they are learning from Russia on utilizing disinformation, their evolving maritime presence, what they are doing in the Arctic. I really could go on.

The good news, as you noted yourself, Senator, is that the Alliance now has conducted its first China review in 2019. The Alli-

ance just recently stated at its summit this past June that it is a systemic challenge to the liberal world order.

Going forward, if confirmed, I would look forward to working with the allies as we draft the next Strategic Concept to make sure that the challenges posed by China to the wider Euro-Atlantic region are featured prominently in the Strategic Concept.

I would also look forward to working with them on acquiring better tools to counter some of the malign activities that China is pursuing.

Senator COONS. Thank you. Thank you to all of you. And thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for being here today. This is an important hearing. I hope that you move quickly to the floor.

But then you are destined to sit in limbo because we have two members of the Senate, a list that is growing, that have decided to hold up all national security nominees.

This is a growing danger to the national security of this country and I would hope that my Republican colleagues on this committee would help us address this very quickly, because every single day that we do not have ambassadors, every single day that we do not have assistant secretaries, is a day that America is not representing its interests around the world.

A few questions for the panel, and thank you all for your tremendous service to the country. We are so grateful for your willingness to continue it.

Ambassador Leaf, I admit to getting a little confused when I hear the administration talk about the strategy, moving forward, on the JCPOA. Obviously, Senator Menendez and I have slightly different views on this issue.

But what I understand to be the administration's policy is that while we absolutely believe that at the same time we can work on addressing Iran's nuclear program and its support for terrorist groups and its other malevolent behaviors in the region, our belief continues to be that a compliance-for-compliance deal on the JCPOA is meritorious on its own and that if we can get back into the JCPOA then that makes it a lot easier to confront many of their other behaviors around the region.

I just want to confirm that that continues to be the position of the administration, that understanding how difficult it is to figure out how to get back into the agreement that we still believe that it is a priority to get back into the agreement and we are not conditioning the restart of the JCPOA on an additional set of agreements on a whole host of nonnuclear behaviors by the Iranian regime.

Ambassador LEAF. Senator, the only word I would disagree with in that set of statements and that question was whether it would be easier following reentry into JCPOA to deal with all those other problems.

But no, to be serious, the administration is committed to a methodical diplomatic effort to rejoin the JCPOA based on mutual compliance. That is an overriding national security imperative because, at this point, Iran's nuclear program is untrammelled.

The priority is getting it back into a box. But notwithstanding those diplomatic efforts in Vienna, the administration continues in parallel, in tandem, to, on a constant basis, address the regional dimension of Iran's destabilizing behavior.

There is an objective on the part of the administration to then build upon in nuclear terms a longer stronger deal. But the ongoing work is ongoing. It will continue apart.

Senator MURPHY. I am going to submit a question to the record on Lebanon. I will not ask a question to you now.

But Hezbollah is spinning up a very effective narrative there right now about the United States blockade of energy resources into the country and they are offering ships of their own through Iran.

We have got to solve for this very quickly. The narrative is pervasive, and there are ways in which we can creatively try to address the fuel shortage, the crisis in Lebanon right now. But we have to do it very, very quickly.

And so I will submit a question to the record because I wanted to ask one final question here to you, Ms. Smith. I think one of the biggest scams going is the way that we assess NATO contributions to the Alliance.

Despite the fact that the adversaries to the United States and our NATO partners are using all sorts of means other than conventional military pressure to try to undermine the democracies of NATO, we continue to assess whether or not you are a full member in good standing by the amount of your defense spending, even though Russia is delighting in asymmetric warfare that is defended in ways other than aircraft carriers and ships and brigades.

Is there a better way, moving forward, that we can assess whether members of the NATO Alliance are in good standing other than the simple amount of their GDP that they are spending on hard traditional conventional defense spending?

Ms. SMITH. Senator, thank you for that question.

Traditionally, NATO's deterrence and defense posture has been based on three legs of a stool, so conventional capabilities, nuclear capabilities, and missile defense capabilities. And so we always measured allies' contributions in a very conventional framing.

But in recent years, as you noted, increasingly, the NATO Alliance is defining its posture, deterrence, and defense posture in other ways. It is looking at cybersecurity, increasingly working that into operational planning. It is looking at those gray zone threats, the hybrid threats: disinformation, coercion, and other forms of gray zone tactics.

And so, going forward, on this question of burden sharing, there is a lot to do. First and foremost, we have to keep a laser like focus on 2 percent. Allies all made that commitment to get to 2 percent in 2014. Many have gotten there or will get there by 2024. But we have to continue to apply pressure on those that will not yet meet that target by 2024.

Increasingly, I think we have to have conversations with our allies about other aspects: readiness, force generation, capability gaps, broadly defined.



And so, if confirmed, I would look forward to working with our allies on this broader definition of NATO's deterrence and defense posture and the question of burden sharing.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Let me join my colleagues in congratulating all of you on your nominations, and I am impressed with the great depth and breadth of foreign policy experience represented on this panel.

I also want to associate myself with the comments of both the chairman and Senator Murphy that the ever longer line of nominations being held up on the Senate floor hurts our national security and undermines our capacities.

Ambassador Noyes, you have got a huge amount of challenges in the portfolio you have been nominated to oversee, including recent developments in Afghanistan, and I am going to be submitting some questions to the record for you.

Ambassador Leaf, I just returned from a trip to Lebanon, Israel, and the West Bank with Senator Murphy and others, and I have a couple questions related to that trip, starting with Lebanon.

We were pleased to see that after over a year of no government, last Friday we finally have a government in Lebanon. As you know, that is just the first step. They have got to address the economic crisis, bring more accountability and transparency to a system that is rife with political corruption, and keep elections on track for next year.

But the one institution in the country that is almost universally respected is the nonsectarian Lebanese Armed Forces. And my question to you, and it is a simple question, is do you agree it is in our national interests to continue to support that effort?

And I will add one of the things that was highlighted during our visit was that because of the economic crisis, pay for members of the Lebanese Armed Forces has just collapsed.

In fact, there is a story today the Lebanese Armed Forces is providing helicopter rides for tourists in order to raise money, and the pay of the Lebanese Armed Forces is now way below what Hezbollah pays its militias.

A question. So you agree that continued U.S. support for the Lebanese Armed Forces is in our interest of providing some measure of stability respect to interfaith communities, inter-communal stability, and national stability? Just yes or no.

Ambassador LEAF. Yes, absolutely. If you would like, I can offer a few other thoughts on this.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. Let me get on the other questions. If I have time in the end—

Ambassador LEAF. Please.

Senator Van Hollen:—I will circle back.

We also, as I said, went to Israel and the West Bank. In Israel, we affirmed our support for the replenishment of the Iron Dome and our support for the Abraham Accords.

We also discussed both in Israel and the West Bank President Biden's plan to reopen the consulate in Jerusalem that had been

in existence for over a hundred years before the previous administration terminated it.

My question is does the president plan to continue with that commitment to open the consulate and what would be the timetable?

Ambassador LEAF. Yes, Senator, that is the President's commitment, and he believes, and Secretary Blinken spoke to this issue over the last couple months that reopening the consulate provides a critical platform for diplomatic engagement with both the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian people.

I am not privy to the plans in the State Department in terms of timing of that. But, if confirmed, of course, I will work to execute the President's commitment.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. In my remaining time, let me now circle back to Lebanon, and in addition to elaborating on the Lebanese Armed Forces just follow up with the issue that Senator Murphy raised, which is, as you know, Iran right now is sending tankers with fuel to Hezbollah via a port in Syria to be transported over land.

Our really great ambassador there, Ambassador Shea, has expressed her strong opposition to that but also proposed an alternative, a much more sustainable plan, a real plan that involves bringing electricity from Egypt through Jordan to Lebanon but would have to transit Syria.

There are issues of whether or not that is compliant with the Caesar Act or whether a waiver would be required. Can you just offer your thoughts on that, in addition to the Lebanese Armed Forces?

Ambassador LEAF. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for calling out Ambassador Shea for her great efforts there on the ground with her team.

Yeah, it is interesting, the issue of this acute energy crisis. It is side by side with the general disintegration of the economy, which is, as you and Senator Murphy saw, is having a terrible deleterious effect across society and is crumbling the foundations of the LAF itself. I mean, the currency has lost 90 percent of its value in the last two years. Imagine what a soldier makes.

On this issue of an energy solution, side by side with this, frankly, PR stunt by Hezbollah, this is a regionally produced solution or proposed solution, which, as you say, it is our partners, Egypt and Jordan, who have teamed together to look at the issue of excess electricity and natural gas to get it across Syria into Lebanon.

This is a project that, as I understand it, is endorsed by the World Bank. So, the State Department is looking at it carefully within the framework of U.S. law and sanctions policy.

But it shows some promise on the face of it and, of course, the Department will consult thoroughly with Treasury on the way forward. But it, certainly, offers the prospect of a cheaper, cleaner, and defensible solution, a short-term fix to what is a larger terrible problem in Lebanon.

And the first step, of course, is that they have finally, after 13 months, put together a government, which is only the first step. Important economic reforms must follow after.

And I will just say, finally, on the LAF, support for the LAF as the true cross confessional institution of public trust and capability in the country will remain a priority for this administration.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me follow up on one point that Senator Van Hollen made.

And I look forward to hearing back from the department. I helped write the Caesar Act and I do not want to give relief to the Assad regime.

However, in this particular case for these particular circumstances, if the department makes the determination that that is the only impediment towards an agreement for energy flow into Lebanon, I have asked them to come to me because I think it is important enough to find a way forward.

Let me also follow on. A question, Ambassador Leaf, that was promoted to you by Senator Murphy—and he and I do have a respectful disagreement about the JCPOA—I understood your answer to say that if we can get a compliance-for-compliance deal we will do that, and then the stronger longer comes later. Is that it?

Ambassador LEAF. Senator, what I meant by that was follow-on negotiations would necessarily look at building out on the JCPOA.

The CHAIRMAN. Right, but they would come later?

Ambassador LEAF. Following it. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. That is the problem. The conversations that I have had with the administration is that returning to the JCPOA with a commitment from the Iranians for a negotiation on what is longer and stronger, that is something I could support.

But if it is just compliance-for-compliance and then we wait to see whether the Iranians are actually serious about longer and stronger, that is a problem because they will have received what they wanted.

And let us remember that our circumstances today are different than when we entered the JCPOA. Number one, time has elapsed. The sunset clauses are closer. Some of them have already elapsed on some critical issues.

And Iran has moved forward on its abilities and knowledge in terms of enrichment. We are not in the same place. Even with compliance-for-compliance, we are not in the same place.

I do not hold you responsible for this because even though you work at the NSC it is, I am sure, above your pay grade. But I just want to make it clear that from the chairman's point of view this is a problem.

And so I have given the administration a lot of room under the basis that they are looking for an agreement that goes back to compliance but is also a pathway to longer and stronger, and just that it will happen later on in the hopes that the Iranians will be good actors is not something that I can be supportive of.

I just want to raise that question. I think this question is rather self-obvious, but I just want to do it for the record.

Do you commit to fully supporting Israel's right to self-defense and its qualitative military edge, including through U.S. military assistance?

Ambassador LEAF. Yes, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I want to go to Lebanon as well. This economic crisis has pushed the middle class into poverty, but the country's political elite still have shown no appetite for needed reforms.

This new government, it is my hope that Hezbollah will allow this government to operate.

How do we balance the need to help alleviate suffering in Lebanon while directly contributing to security and stability—which directly contributes to security and stability not only in Lebanon but Israel and throughout the region, but ensure that our assistance is being used to incentivize reforms?

Ambassador LEAF. Thank you, Senator. You have put your finger on the crux of the issue.

There is a situation that in real terms is quite terrifying that confronts Lebanon and I wish the Lebanese political class and its leaders and those who formed the caretaker government have felt the same sense of urgency about the situation that outsiders like the U.S. Government, the French Government, and others have felt about the situation.

There is at play here, a need for pressure and inducements but, really, not inducements in an immediate sense. It is, rather, that this government, having been formed, it is only the first minimal step on what has to be a long road of structural economic reform, which will then unlock, be it international financing, loans, and other forms of foreign assistance.

The Biden administration has been working this set of issues closely with France and several other regional partners to provide that constant pressure on individuals as well as the Government to make it clear that there is no rescue coming from outside.

The solution to Lebanon lies in Lebanese hands. But it is going to be a long slow road ahead.

The CHAIRMAN. I hope we will do what is necessary to try to get them to be part of the decision-making necessary so they can get IMF funding and reforms and move on, and I think there is a great will in the Congress to help Lebanon but Lebanon must help itself in that regard.

And I think if the message is there that we are standing willing to help, then the onus is upon its own leaders to create that opportunity.

Ambassador LEAF. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I just want to touch on Egypt with you and then I will move on.

Egypt is both an incredibly important security partner to us, to the region, to Israel. I was in Greece this summer. I spoke to the foreign minister. He made a very big point about Egypt's stability in the region.

They are a member of the East Med Gas Forum along with Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Jordan. They worked to deescalate the conflict between Israel and Hamas in the past conflicts. They, obviously, are playing a significant role in that regard.

They have issues as well. They have issues with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, or what we call the GERD. And when I speak to them, I believe that they are serious about their red lines on the GERD. And, though, while they do not seek it, I, certainly,

think the last thing we can avoid is a conflict there, at the end of the day. I hope that you will join whoever is in the administration focused on this to try to find a resolution.

Then, of course, we have our continuing challenges on human rights. I know that the Egyptians argue that, look at what we are doing for the quality of life for the Egyptian people. That should be considered human rights, too.

But imprisonment and unlawful detention is also not acceptable on these set of circumstances. We have to press them on all these different fronts, and I will assume that that is something that you will do, if confirmed.

Ambassador LEAF. If confirmed, I will absolutely do that. And you have sketched out exactly the color, the texture, the complexity of that relationship. But it is quite strategic.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Ms. Smith, I have some real concerns about NATO in terms of where we are headed, and your time there will be very important. They fall in two buckets. One is NATO, of course, was created as a security architecture, which has been exceptionally successful.

But it was also founded on a set of principles, of values, that were joined by the member nations. And, of course, the provision of the NATO treaty that says an attack on one is an attack on all is a critical nature of that. We have reaffirmed that.

But what happens in the eventuality that an attack by one NATO member against another NATO member takes place? It is a serious issue, and while we never envisioned that, I am deeply concerned about Turkey's actions in the eastern Mediterranean against another NATO ally, Greece, where we have Souda Bay, where we are deepening our relationship. We are on the verge of signing a new defense cooperation agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding, hopefully, in October.

I think that is a discussion that NATO is going to have to have. I would like to get your impressions on that.

Ms. SMITH. Thank you, Senator.

NATO, as you know, recently spent some time drafting this 2030 report thinking about where the allies want to take the Alliance towards 2030 and what capabilities it would need, what new mechanisms it might need, what measures it could undertake to address some new challenges.

But, really, at the heart of that report sits the importance of Alliance cohesion and unity, and that is a theme that runs throughout the report.

And as I noted in my opening remarks, I am concerned about some of the actions we are seeing in some NATO member states that bring into question whether or not each member state is upholding our shared values of democracy, individual liberty, and rule of law.

If confirmed, I would work to ensure that we can return our focus back to Alliance unity, solidarity, and resolve.

On your question about Turkey more specifically, this is an ally inside the NATO Alliance that has played a key role in some of its cooperation with both the United States and other NATO allies in the counterterrorism realm.

But we have also had some really hard questions with Turkey and some tough discussions, particularly about their decision to purchase the S-400s, which all of us have made clear are not compatible with the Alliance, not interoperable, and I think, rightly, past U.S. administrations, other allies, have warned the Turks that these types of purchases cannot be made operational. They cannot be maintained. They should not have been purchased in the first place.

And so we have to continue to drive the message home to our friends in Ankara that it is important that we focus on that Alliance cohesion.

Yes, we can have some tough conversations with our friends in Ankara, difficult discussions about human rights as well, but also acknowledge that Turkey is an ally and that all of us want Turkey to remain facing westward.

The CHAIRMAN. We want them facing westward as long as they are also sharing westward values. When you purchase the S-400, which is in violation of CAATSA, that I helped write—when you—totally not interoperable with the NATO Alliance—when you commit actions that instigate against another NATO ally in Greece—you overfly their airspace, you invade their territorial waters, you threaten their exclusive economic zone—when we say that there are more lawyers and journalists in prison in Turkey than in any other part of the world, and there are some bad parts of the world, that speaks volumes about not sharing on values.

What they did in Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the list is replete. I just hope that you will be going clear eyed with an understanding of this challenge.

Yes, we want them to be everything we aspired of them—the bridge between East and West, the secular, more democratic country, a strong NATO ally, respecting the rule of law.

But under President Erdoğan that is not the reality, and as it is in life, we have to deal with that which is the reality, not that which we aspire to.

I hope you will be thinking about that because we have to answer the question, God forbid, that one NATO ally attacks another what is the answer of the Alliance then.

Secondly, I hope you will pay attention to what is the new hybrid warfare that, particularly, Russia has done.

We need to be able to think about how we respond in that regard when Russia uses forces that are irregular—but they are Russian forces for all intents and purposes, whether they are the Wagner Group or others—and at the end of the day, threatens stability in the region, as well as the new cyber challenges that we have, which are a new form of warfare.

Are those items that you will be paying attention to, if confirmed?

Ms. SMITH. Absolutely. Russia remains the biggest geopolitical threat to the Euro-Atlantic region, certainly, will be the biggest military threat to the NATO Alliance for the foreseeable future, certainly, over the next decade.

NATO has done a lot to enhance its deterrence and defense posture since Russia went into Ukraine in 2014. But as you note, Senator, there is more work to be done. Russia's aggression continues.

We have to hold Russia accountable for their actions across the full spectrum of instruments whether we are talking about conventional capabilities, flying into NATO airspace, acts of intimidation, or cyber attacks.

NATO has done a lot to take on the cyber challenge, particularly in 2016, acknowledging that this is a new domain for the Alliance. But we do have more work to do in that regard.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. We look forward to you getting there soon because I think these issues are really percolating as we speak.

Finally, Ambassador Bauer, I do not want you to think you are not the object of my affection in terms of any questions.

Let me ask you, President Macron has sought to advance a concept of strategic autonomy, to use his words, which some have interpreted as France distancing itself from the United States and creating tensions within NATO.

What are your views on this question of strategic autonomy and what would you be saying, upon confirmation, to President Macron about it?

Ambassador BAUER. Thank you for the question.

As Ms. Smith was noting, NATO is the premier transatlantic forum for national security. That is, for us, our top priority is our NATO Alliance.

And France is, indeed, a very good partner on that, and I greatly appreciate their interest in strengthening security in Europe, and I would ask them, perhaps, as their first step to help us in encouraging those who are not meeting their commitments to the 2 percent in NATO and to other capabilities within NATO to do that.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. I get the sense of being stronger. I just hope that it is stronger in complete alignment with NATO. We are all for being stronger. But the last thing we need is a separate parallel effort with NATO when NATO can use all the strengthening it can get. I think that will be one of your important jobs.

And the last thing I would just say, commend to you, that the French care a great deal about Lebanon and we have heard that there has been some engagement. I hope you will deepen that and play with Ambassador Leaf and others a role to bring this whole combination of governments together.

I think the stability in Lebanon is incredibly important. I have had many discussions with the French ambassador here as well as the French foreign minister and some of their negotiators on the Iran portfolio.

We have talked to them about what the administration now describes as stronger and longer, that there has to be more than just a return to the JCPOA.

They seem to suggest that, yes, we recognize that, and I hope that you will be able to deepen that approach if you are confirmed to your position.

Ambassador BAUER. Thank you. That would certainly be a priority for me.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

All right. I have no other members virtually or otherwise. We thank you all for your testimony.

The record for the hearing will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, September 16, 2021. Please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than Thursday.

We would say to our nominees that there will inevitably be questions for the record for you. We would ask you to answer them fully, and I say that because we very often get answers that are very superficial, which then causes members to hold up a nominee's business meeting and we have to go back to the department to say this answer is not sufficiently answered.

To the extent that you get a question, please answer them expeditiously, answer them fully, so we can have your nominations be brought up at a business meeting.

With the thanks of the committee, to all of you for your willingness to serve, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---



### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

LETTER SUBMITTED BY ADMIRAL JAMES STAVRIDIS, USN (RET.),  
FORMER SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER AT NATO, SUPPORTING  
THE NOMINATION OF JULIANNE SMITH TO BE U.S. PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE TO THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC  
TREATY ORGANIZATION



September 15, 2021

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch,

I write today to strongly and personally recommend Julie Smith to be the US Ambassador to NATO. I have known and worked closely with Julie for well over a decade, going back to my service as a 3-star Admiral in the Pentagon, most notably during my tour as Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, and through the present day in her various defense policy roles in Washington. A few of the key points to be made concerning her career and service include:

- 25 years experience working on transatlantic security issues in government (Pentagon and White House); out of government (CNAS, CSIS, GMF); and overseas (have worked in both France and Germany and speak both languages). She is a committed Atlanticist.
- vast network of contacts in Europe, including at the minister and head of state level, which will help her do her job at NATO.
- deep knowledge of NATO issues, having worked and written about them for the past two decades.
- conceptualized, wrote, and ran CNAS's first two war games with Jerry Hendrix: "Assured Resolve" (which focused on hybrid threats to the Baltic States) and "Forgotten Waters" (which addressed the GIUK Gap and NATO's lack of situational awareness in that region).
- strong record of innovatively working across the aisle. Launched a program after Trump won to bring Europeans to 12 cities around the US to talk to Americans outside of Washington about U.S. foreign policy.
- served as both acting national security advisor and deputy national security advisor to Joe Biden as VP. Will have his ear in Brussels.
- spent the last three years researching and writing on Europe's evolving attitudes and vulnerabilities as they relate to China (with pieces in both the NYT and Foreign Affairs on this subject).

But beyond her deeply impressive biography, what I'd like to convey in this brief letter are her character, determination, and leadership. Again and again, I watched her deal with complicated international issues at the very heart of the NATO Alliance with creativity, energy, and collegiality. Often as Senior Military Assistant to SECDEF as a 3-star and later as SACEUR, I would look to Julie for advice on issues back in Washington and over in Brussels as well. She is uniformly kind, humble, and thoughtful, whether she is dealing with the most junior member of her staff or the Supreme Allied Commander at NATO. In Navy terms, she is a perfect "shipmate."

As SACEUR, I was in constant contact with the US Ambassador to NATO, and have watched that office serve as the fulcrum of US policy within the Alliance. It requires the nicest diplomatic touch alongside a rock-solid knowledge of both Europe and NATO itself: Ambassador Julie Smith would bring both qualities to the halls of this venerable and still vital Alliance. Please approve her nomination! All the best and very respectfully,

Admiral James Stavridis, USN (R)  
Vice Chairman, Global Affairs, The Carlyle Group  
Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Rockefeller Foundation  
16th Supreme Allied Commander at NATO

## Responses to Additional Questions for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* How many individuals are in the current P-2 referral queue?

*Answer.* To date, I understand over 20,000 cases consisting of around 55,000 individuals have been referred to the Afghan P-2 refugee resettlement program.

*Question.* How will PRM work with individual Afghans who have submitted applications through the P-2 referral process?

*Answer.* On August 2, 2021, the Department of State announced a new Priority 2 (P-2) designation granting U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) access for certain Afghan nationals and their eligible family members. (See <https://www.state.gov/u-s-refugee-admissions-program-priority-2-designation-for-afghan-nationals/>.) The Department of State has designated certain categories of Afghan nationals as having access to the USRAP by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement. This priority group includes Afghans who are or were employed in Afghanistan by a U.S.-based media organization or nongovernmental organization (NGO). It expands the opportunity to permanently resettle in the United States to many Afghans and their immediate family members who may be at risk due to their U.S. affiliation but are not eligible for a Special Immigrant Visa because they did not have qualifying employment or because they have not met the time-in-service requirement to become eligible for an SIV.

In addition to the P-2 designation noted above, Afghans may also gain access to the USRAP through Priority 1 referrals by a specific entity (U.S. embassy, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or a designated NGO), or Priority 3, reunification of family members of refugees already resettled in the United States.

The Department of State has issued instructions regarding how U.S.-based media and NGOs can submit referrals for P-2 designation for Afghan nationals. (See <https://www.wrapsnet.org/siv-iraqi-syrian-afghan-p2/>.) Organizations can use these instructions to refer to the USRAP any Afghan national staff (plus their spouse and children) who might be in danger now or in the foreseeable future.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program Priority 2 designation expands the opportunity to permanently resettle in the United States to many thousands of Afghans and their immediate family members who may be at risk due to their U.S. affiliation. As President Biden has made clear, assisting these Afghan allies is a top priority for the administration.

I understand that PRM is still receiving P2 referrals from U.S. employers, service members, and qualifying media and non-governmental organizations. The U.S. Government cannot currently process refugee referrals inside Afghanistan, so Afghan nationals who are referred for resettlement will be processed upon leaving the country. I am not aware of a timeline for that process nor a specific number of Afghan P-2 referrals that PRM expects to process in the next year. The administration recognizes the role this new designation and the refugee resettlement program in general will play in the lives of those that risked their safety to assist the United States. As President Biden has made clear, helping these Afghans is an ongoing commitment of the United States.

*Question.* How long should it take PRM to process P-2 applications during the pre-screening phase?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the amount of time it will take for the relevant PRM-funded Resettlement Support Center to pre-screen cases will vary according to region. In general, it takes approximately 12 to 18 months to process a refugee resettlement case from start to finish including pre-screening, the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services interview, and required security vetting.

*Question.* Do you support expanding the P-2 eligibility to include sub-grantees and sub-contractors of U.S.-funded projects, given that the risks these staff face are no less grave than those of primary recipients? If not, why not?

*Answer.* I understand the Department's policy is that Afghans who worked for sub-grantees or sub-contractors of U.S.-funded projects may be referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program through an Embassy P-1 referral if the individual is well-known to a U.S. Government official and has imminent or compelling protection concerns. Alternatively, such individuals who register with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in a third country may be referred for resettlement in the United States by UNHCR. I understand that sub-grantees and sub-contractors of U.S.-funded projects do not formally qualify for the P-2 program.

*Question.* Once eligible organizations have submitted referrals, how will employers, organizations, and referred individuals receive information about the status of their applications?

*Answer.* After the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program has received a referral from a U.S. Government agency, a U.S.-based non-governmental organization, or a U.S.-based media organization, and the individual has relocated to a country where refugee processing can occur, I understand the referred individual will need to contact PRM to begin processing their case. Individuals should follow the guidelines on [wrapsnet.org](http://wrapsnet.org) to contact PRM. At that point, PRM will assign the case to a PRM-funded overseas Resettlement Support Center for processing.

*Question.* What are the administration's plans to process Afghans in third countries?

*Answer.* Once an individual referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) arrives in a country where processing is feasible and reaches out to PRM, following the guidelines found on [wrapsnet.org](http://wrapsnet.org), I understand that PRM will create and assign a refugee case to the appropriate PRM-funded Resettlement Support Center (RSC) to begin processing the case where the refugee is located. I understand that RSCs will collect data and pre-screen Afghan USRAP applicants, and all individuals will need to complete a refugee interview with a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officer.

*Question.* What role and presence, if any, will U.S. agencies have in third countries? What role, if any, will UN agencies and international NGOs play there?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that there are regional PRM-funded Resettlement Support Centers that process U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) cases for individuals once they reach a third country. I also understand that individuals with urgent protection needs may register and seek assistance from the Government of the country they are in or from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

*Question.* How will PRM specifically ensure that they have access to basic services while awaiting U.S. Government P-2 processing?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that individuals with urgent needs should follow procedures to register for international protection and assistance with the government of the country where they are located. They may also register and seek assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. If confirmed, I would work with international humanitarian partners and other governments to address their needs for basic services.

*Question.* What will be the contingency plan should at-risk Afghans' applications for P-1, P-2, and SIV be rejected while they are in a third country?

*Answer.* Individuals with urgent protection needs should follow procedures to register for international protection and assistance with the government of the country where they are located. They may also register and seek assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. If confirmed, I would work with international humanitarian partners and other governments to address their protection concerns and needs for support. The United States appreciates that other countries have agreed to host and resettle at-risk Afghans, and if confirmed, I would pursue durable solutions for these individuals.

*Question.* What steps, if any, is PRM taking to provide similar protections or pathways for Afghans employed by international organizations?

*Answer.* I understand that Afghans employed by international organizations may be referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program through an Embassy P-1 referral, if well-known to a U.S. Government official, or through a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees referral to the United States or another resettlement country.

*Question.* What will be the process for P-2 eligible Afghans who were paroled into the U.S.?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that Afghan individuals at risk who are paroled into the United States as a result of the U.S. airlift are transferred temporarily to a U.S. military installation. Following medical and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service processing on the military base, these Afghan parolees can access the Afghan Placement & Assistance (APA) Program once they arrive at their final destination in the United States. The purpose of the APA Program is to provide paroled Afghans with initial relocation services for 30 to 90 days after arrival as they begin

to rebuild their lives in the United States. These services are provided through local refugee resettlement agencies and community partners.

*Question.* Will the administration modify the P-2 program to allow for processing while in the U.S.?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the U.S. Government is currently exploring options under the P-2 program for processing Afghans who have been paroled into the United States.

*Question.* How is PRM working with other federal agencies and the White House to conduct an assessment of security vetting processes, particularly in light of EO 14013?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of Homeland Security is the lead agency for vetting of all travelers applying for admission to the United States, including refugees. I understand PRM is working closely with the DHS' Citizenship and Immigration Service and other U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) vetting partners to conduct needed reviews and implement technical improvements to USRAP security vetting. I also understand that includes the goal of incorporating refugee vetting into the National Vetting Center to enhance the efficiency and reduce redundancies in vetting, without compromising the security of the American people.

*Question.* What steps do you think PRM should be taking with DHS to improve refugee vetting and security checks?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is the lead agency for vetting of all travelers applying for admission to the United States, including refugees. As noted previously, I understand PRM is working closely with the DHS' U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service and other USRAP vetting partners to conduct the needed reviews and implement technical improvements to U.S. Refugee Admissions Program security vetting. I also understand that includes the goal of incorporating refugee vetting into the National Vetting Center to speed the process and reduce redundancies, without compromising the security of the American people.

*Question.* Would you commit to reviewing and implementing the reports required by EO 14013 on vetting and SAO checks?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to reviewing and implementing fully and completely all of the reports and measures in E.O. 14013 that the President directs, including those focused on the Security Advisory Opinion (SAO) process and security vetting for refugee applicants to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. I believe the security of the American people remains paramount in all Department of State programs and initiatives and will work in keeping with that belief if confirmed.

*Question.* How is the Department engaging with allies around the world to meet the UN appeals for urgent humanitarian funding to support the needs of Afghans inside Afghanistan, including millions of IDPs?

*Answer.* I understand that the State Department continues to support the needs of vulnerable Afghans through urgent humanitarian funding, highlighted by the recent announcement of \$64 million in new humanitarian assistance to people affected by the ongoing crisis, bringing the total on behalf of the United States to \$330 million this fiscal year. This new support to United Nations agencies, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and World Health Organization, and to international non-governmental organizations, is part of the nearly \$1.2 billion in humanitarian funding to Afghanistan pledged by nations around the world. My understanding is that the Department continues to engage partners at the highest levels to encourage full funding of urgent appeals and a continued commitment to Afghans in need. If confirmed, I would call for international responsibility sharing to meet humanitarian needs there and around the world.

*Question.* Should the United States and the international community demand certain commitments from the Taliban before providing development aid? Should we insist that we will only provide support if they uphold the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the State Department and USAID are reviewing all types of U.S. foreign assistance to Afghanistan. In my view, that review should include discussion of our posture and expectations vis-à-vis the Taliban. I would refer you to my colleagues at USAID and in the South Central Asia bureau at the State Department on the USG's plans to provide development aid to Afghanistan. Insofar as humanitarian aid, I understand that U.S. humanitarian assistance

is provided on the basis of need through international and non-governmental organization partners, not directly to governments. In Afghanistan, more than 18 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in the face of food insecurity, protection risks, health crises, climate change, and conflict instability. The United States Government's humanitarian partners have reiterated their commitment to stay and to deliver lifesaving assistance directly to the people of Afghanistan with impartiality, neutrality, and independence; this commitment is based on the needs of the Afghan people, regardless of Taliban undertakings.

*Question.* What efforts will PRM be making and supporting to bring refugee labor mobility to the United States and expand efforts internationally to scale this additional solution for refugees and other displaced people?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration's Collaborative Migration Management Strategy (CMMS) includes a specific line of effort to enhance regional labor migration pathways, under which PRM, the U.S. interagency, international organization partners, and partner governments in North and Central America will expand existing and create new temporary work visa programs in the region. This is an important initiative, and if confirmed, I would seek to expand interim solutions, including further resettlement and labor mobility opportunities for refugees and other forcibly displaced people in other parts of the world.

*Question.* Migration is one of the greatest global challenges we face. Creating safe, legal pathways for migration should be a key component of our response. What is PRM doing to encourage development of refugee labor mobility pathways internationally and to make skilled labor visas accessible to refugee populations into the United States?

*Answer.* I agree on the critical importance of creating legal migration pathways, particularly in this hemisphere. If confirmed, I will implement the administration's Collaborative Migration Management Strategy (CMMS), which includes a specific line of effort to enhance regional labor mobility pathways. I understand PRM is working with the U.S. interagency, international organization partners, and partner governments in North and Central America to expand existing and create new temporary work visa programs in the region to provide pathways for safe, lawful employment to people likely to migrate seeking economic opportunity.

I respectfully refer you to the Refugee Career Pathways program in the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement for information about employment for refugees who have been resettled to the United States.

*Question.* What is PRM doing to encourage and ensure that those who come with skills, training, education and English language capability are matched to private sector employment opportunities commensurate with their abilities, so that they can contribute and provide for themselves and their families from the outset of their entry into the United States?

*Answer.* I understand the Reception & Placement Program, funded by PRM, lays the foundation for refugees to transition successfully to life in the United States. I also understand that a critical component of that success is the ability of refugees to achieve early self-sufficiency through employment. Resettlement agencies carefully consider the availability of appropriate employment opportunities as one of the key factors when determining where to resettle individuals, drawing on information from a network of over 200 local resettlement agency affiliate offices in approximately 150 communities around the country. For more information on refugee employment programming and outcomes, I would refer you to the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Services.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What would be your goals and priorities as Assistant Secretary of State for the bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would have three overarching goals as PRM Assistant Secretary.

The first goal would be to represent American values and American leadership in the world. To this end, I would lead PRM in promoting protection, providing lifesaving humanitarian aid, and seeking durable solutions through humanitarian diplomacy for over 80 million people in populations of concern. I would promote policies for safe, orderly and humane migration as well as population policies that en-

hance maternal and child health. To these ends, I would be a responsible steward of the taxpayer dollars that make PRM's work possible, emphasizing risk mitigation approaches to ensure aid reaches its intended recipients. I would emphasize greater international burden sharing to meet global humanitarian needs as well as needed reforms in international organizations to make them more efficient, effective, and accountable.

My second goal would be to rebuild the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, as directed by the President. I would collaborate closely with partners at the Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services and in close consultation with the Congress on this objective, and with PRM's excellent international organization and non-government organization partners, seeking innovations such as private-public partnerships to make the program more effective.

Last but not least, I would seek to rebuild the PRM bureau. PRM's response to recent events in Afghanistan impressed me deeply—people working 14 to 16-hour days, seven days a week, deploying to other locations around the world at short notice, to help people at risk. I would seek to fill the many staff vacancies in the bureau as quickly as possible, both to increase PRM's long-term capabilities and to provide relief for the existing team, and work with the administration to ensure the bureau has the adequate resources needed to accomplish its work. I would hold staff members accountable for their performance and conduct; reward strong performance; increase professional development opportunities for PRM's staff; and emphasize the need for diversity, equity, and inclusion as hallmarks of a strong team.

*Question.* Please comment on the U.S. Government's international emergency response capacity and contingency planning. How might PRM improve its capacity to protect lives and provide life-sustaining assistance?

*Answer.* The United States maintains a robust capacity to respond to humanitarian crises which exceed the ability and resources of an affected country to respond. The United States also engages in contingency planning within our own government and with international, local, and multilateral partners to coordinate humanitarian responses, which is particularly important as the scale and scope of disasters increases. I understand PRM is augmenting its own capacity as well as the capacity of its partners to respond to increasing humanitarian requirements and more complex operating environments, and if confirmed, I would continue to support these efforts.

*Question.* How will you work with USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance to ensure greater alignment, eliminate duplication and waste, expand humanitarian access, mitigate the risk of diversion by armed actors and terrorist groups, and ensure U.S. humanitarian assistance is effectively targeted toward those in greatest need? How will you work with our U.N. partners to do the same?

*Answer.* I understand that PRM and USAID/BHA are in regular communication from the working level up to leadership on the full range of programmatic and policy issues and have robust coordination mechanisms. One of my top priorities is to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are used in the most efficient and effective manner possible to reach intended beneficiaries. One element of that is ensuring appropriate coordination with USAID/BHA, leveraging each entity's respective strengths to achieve U.S. humanitarian objectives. Regular engagement with United Nations (UN) partners at the field and headquarters levels also ensures appropriate use of U.S. funding and focuses assistance on those most in need. If confirmed, I will continue this close collaboration between PRM and USAID/BHA and close partnership with U.N. entities.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the budget allocated to PRM in recent years?

*Answer.* The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance continues to grow year after year, and needs far outpace global resources to respond. Congress has been responsive to this growth in needs, as well as new and evolving requirements such as those related to the COVID-19 pandemic and, more recently, Afghanistan. The level of funding appropriated for humanitarian assistance reflects the strong bipartisan commitment to assisting the world's most vulnerable persons and to leading with our values and has accordingly supported PRM in providing a robust and agile response. In FY 2022, I expect PRM will continue to require sustained support to respond to existing crises and any new needs as they emerge. If confirmed, I would also make it a priority to seek increased contributions from other nations and organizations and to foster public-private partnerships to respond to these growing crises, in the interest of international responsibility sharing.

*Question.* To what extent does the current level of staffing of the PRM bureau address its three fundamental areas of responsibility: population, refugees, and migration?

*Answer.* PRM has an existing cadre of well qualified, dedicated staff. I understand that Department leadership recently approved 68 new permanent positions in PRM to advance humanitarian diplomacy in critical regions, better implement humanitarian goals and objectives, provide oversight for program integrity, and more efficiently program, manage, and monitor billions of dollars of foreign assistance to international and non-governmental organizations. Once these new positions and other vacancies in the bureau are filled, PRM will be well positioned to address all three fundamental areas of responsibility. If confirmed, I will seek to fill these positions as quickly as possible.

*Question.* What is your assessment of PRM's level of accountability and effective planning, as well as its ability to conduct program oversight?

*Answer.* I understand that PRM has a robust planning and programming process to align its allocations of funds with strategic priorities. PRM also regularly monitors its financial awards to non-governmental and international organizations at the field, regional, and headquarters levels to safeguard U.S. taxpayer dollars, as evidenced by excellent, publicly available audit reports. As humanitarian needs have grown around the world, I understand that PRM has sought to increase its staffing and oversight capabilities. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring PRM's programs are effective and accountable both to the beneficiaries and the American public.

*Question.* What are the key protection and assistance needs of today's refugees, IDPs, and migrants? If confirmed, how would you recommend that PRM marshal its resources to address these challenges? What countries or regions should PRM prioritize?

*Answer.* Protection and humanitarian assistance needs are immense as numbers of people displaced by conflict and crises globally have reached record levels in recent years. Among the most pressing needs are access—both access for humanitarian aid providers to reach people in need, and access to protection for people fleeing persecution and violence, prevention of and response to gender-based violence, and protection of children and others in particularly vulnerable situations. These urgent needs cut across all countries and regions. If confirmed, I would ramp up bilateral and multilateral U.S. humanitarian diplomacy to advocate for the protection of populations of concern, and leverage U.S. influence to prioritize protection efforts by international organizations and NGO partners.

*Question.* How has COVID-19 impacted the work of PRM's implementing partners? What do you anticipate will be the priorities for addressing the immediate needs and secondary impacts of the virus on vulnerable and displaced populations worldwide?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 pandemic has affected PRM's implementing partners' programming and ability to provide assistance in a timely manner due to increased operational costs, ongoing travel and access constraints, and other movement restrictions. It has also directly affected the health and welfare of marginalized populations around the world and exacerbated pre-existing gaps in health, protection, assistance, education, and livelihoods. I understand PRM's partners emphasize meeting international standards for assistance and protection for the most vulnerable while at the same time advocating for the inclusion of marginalized, displaced, and hard-to-reach populations such as refugees in national plans for vaccine delivery, relief, and recovery.

*Question.* Please discuss U.S. global humanitarian budget priorities for this fiscal year and next, with particular reference to humanitarian crises, the impact of COVID-19, and the potential consequences for humanitarian portfolios. What changes, if any, would you prioritize in PRM's funding approach to humanitarian response and/or its work with implementing partners, including U.N. agencies and NGOs?

*Answer.* Total humanitarian needs far outpace global resources to respond, and the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded existing vulnerabilities. I understand PRM's FY 2021 budget priorities will continue to FY 2022 and include response to the global pandemic; urgent humanitarian assistance to support those affected by crises in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Syria, among others; and rebuilding the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program.

PRM's approach reflects strong bipartisan commitment, demonstrated through successive administrations, to assisting the world's most vulnerable people and to

leading with our values. If confirmed, I am committed to maintaining U.S. humanitarian leadership and working with Congress to respond to existing as well as emerging humanitarian needs.

*Question.* How does the U.S. Government coordinate its responses to migration crises, such as those in Venezuela or Central America?

*Answer.* Interagency coordination between the State Department, USAID, and other agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security is critical in responding to migration crises. My understanding is that the National Security Council leads broad coordination through interagency meetings. Outside of that formal process, working level counterparts exchange information through standing meetings, ad hoc huddles, and technical advice on program and policy implementation and evaluation. At diplomatic posts overseas, PRM's Refugee Coordinators facilitate in-country coordination. If confirmed, I will continue this close collaboration between PRM and counterparts in the Department and the interagency.

*Question.* When and where does PRM take the lead and what, if any, are the differences in its approach as compared to that of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)?

*Answer.* My understanding is that PRM and USAID play separate but complementary roles in responding to humanitarian crises. PRM takes the lead in providing urgent humanitarian aid and protection to refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and vulnerable migrants, working through international organizations and non-governmental organizations. USAID takes the lead in response to natural and man-made disasters, disaster preparedness, and support for internally displaced populations; USAID also provides food aid to refugees. USAID also funds development programs. In situations where PRM and USAID responsibilities converge, I understand they have robust coordination mechanisms in the field and in Washington to ensure the overall efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. assistance. If confirmed, I will continue this close collaboration between PRM and USAID.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the scope of risks to women and girls, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic? What are ways that PRM programs specifically address these protection needs?

*Answer.* In times of crisis, women and girls are at enormous risk of gender-based violence (GBV)—from armed groups, strangers, neighbors, and family members. These risks in humanitarian settings were exacerbated by COVID-19 and corresponding mitigation measures, resulting in a “shadow” pandemic of GBV and worldwide spikes in GBV risks and reports. In response, the U.S. humanitarian response to COVID-19 prioritized protection activities, including programs to help prevent GBV and provide psychosocial services to GBV victims, along with healthcare, water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance in the COVID-19 humanitarian response.

#### UNRWA

*Question.* What accountability mechanisms are in place to ensure that the administration's resumption of funding for UNRWA does not benefit Hamas and its affiliates?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am firmly committed to ensuring that U.S. Government funding does not end up in the hand of terrorists, including Hamas. The administration provides assistance to international organizations and non-governmental organizations in a manner consistent with U.S. law and does not provide assistance to Hamas. PRM takes seriously its oversight of assistance provided to U.N. operations, including UNRWA, to ensure U.S. taxpayer-funded assistance is reaching the intended recipients, and if confirmed I would maintain this focus. I understand UNRWA employs safeguards to prevent support from reaching terrorist organizations, including vetting of staff, contractors, and beneficiaries; robust monitoring of its programs; thorough investigations of any allegations of abuses; and accountability for those who violate its policies.

*Question.* What accountability mechanisms are in place to ensure that the administration's resumption of funding for UNRWA does not include textbooks that include anti-Semitic material?

*Answer.* I condemn incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in any form. U.N. agencies, including UNRWA, do not develop their own curricula, but use the curricula of host governments. When concepts contrary to U.N. principles are identified in host governments' educational materials, UNRWA provides instructions and supplementary materials for its staff to address the issue. If confirmed, I will empha-



size the importance of adhering to humanitarian principles, including neutrality, in discussions with UNRWA.

*Question.* To what extent has the administration considered phasing out its support for UNRWA and transitioning it to other international relief agencies, such as the U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)?

*Answer.* My understanding is that UNHCR does not have a mandate to provide support for Palestinian refugees in the areas where UNRWA works. Only UNRWA has the mandate, set by the U.N. General Assembly, to provide essential services directly to Palestinian refugees in the five regions it covers. In order to fulfill its mandate, UNRWA employs teachers and health care workers who provide services directly to beneficiaries. The UNHCR mandate also includes a focus on seeking durable solutions such as resettlement, repatriation, and local integration for refugees, while UNRWA does not have that mandate. Decisions on resettlement, repatriation, and local integration of Palestinian refugees must be negotiated directly between Israel and the Palestinians as final status issues.

#### *IRAQ P-2*

*Question.* The State Department notified Congress in April 2021 that it had indefinitely suspended the P-2 program for U.S.-affiliated Iraqis. This notification followed a January 2021 State Department statement that the Department of Justice was “prosecuting individuals for stealing U.S. Government records to take advantage of this program,” which triggered a 90-day suspension. With the special immigrant visa program for Iraqis who were employed by or on behalf of the U.S. Government no longer accepting new applications, this P-2 program has been seen as a key avenue for Iraqis who assisted the United States to gain U.S. admission.

- What is the status of the review of the P-2 program for U.S.-affiliated Iraqis? What changes are under consideration for better securing this and perhaps other P-2 programs? When do you expect a revised P-2 program for U.S.-affiliated Iraqis to be reinstated?

*Answer.* I understand PRM has been working closely with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security at the State Department and with the Department of Homeland Security to support the investigation into the P-2 program for U.S. affiliated Iraqis and to ensure no individuals identified by the investigation travel to the United States. I also understand PRM has contracted a specialist team to analyze current Iraqi P-2 program operating procedures, develop recommendations to mitigate fraud vulnerabilities once the program reopens, and re-verify the qualifications of cases in the existing Iraqi P-2 pipeline. Once the overall framework for re-vetting cases has been established, it is my understanding that individual screenings and admission of those who pass this enhanced screening will begin.

*Question.* What was the involvement of former U.S. Embassy Moscow local employee Olesya Leonidovna Krasilova in the Iraqi P-2 fraud scheme?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department cannot comment on an ongoing criminal investigation. I respectfully refer you to the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia for additional information.

*Question.* Does the U.S. Government suspect her involvement in any other criminal activity, espionage, or improper/inappropriate conduct with coworkers or contacts during her time as an employee of the United States Government?

*Answer.* As this is an ongoing criminal investigation, I understand that the Department cannot comment on the findings.

*Question.* In a press briefing on March 6, 2020 (<https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign-policy/news/-/asset-publisher/ckNonkJE02Bw/content/id/4078184>), Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova claimed Krasilova was employed by a “Russian Government-funded agency,” when she was arrested by Spanish authorities pursuant to a U.S. extradition request. Which Russian agency did she work for? How soon after her employment at U.S. Embassy Moscow was terminated did Krasilova begin working for a Russian Government-funded agency?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department cannot comment on the findings as there is an ongoing criminal investigation. The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia may be able to provide additional information.

#### *P-2 PROGRAMS*

*Question.* Bills have been introduced in the current Congress that would establish new P-2 groups for certain residents of Hong Kong and certain residents of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. If you are familiar with these proposals, can

you offer any feedback on them? Do you have any general suggestions for congressional offices in drafting bills to establish new P-2 groups?

Answer. I am aware of the bills that would establish new P-2 groups for certain residents both of Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. If confirmed, I can assure you that I am committed to working within the Department, with Congress, international partners, and advocacy groups to ensure that all vulnerable individuals, including residents of Hong Kong and Uyghurs, have equal access to protection, including refugee resettlement in the United States and other countries.

#### *Lautenberg Amendment*

*Question.* What is the status of the Lautenberg program? Are there still Lautenberg applicants in Austria? How many Lautenberg applicants are in pipeline?

Answer. I understand refugees suffering religious persecution continue to be resettled under the Lautenberg program, and that the Department expects approximately 1,000 refugees from the Eurasia region to be resettled in the U.S. in FY 2021.

The Lautenberg Iranian program was suspended by the Government of Austria in early 2017, leaving over 800 Iranian applicants in Vienna. It is my understanding that most of those 800 Lautenberg Iranian applicants have since been resettled to the United States, however, approximately 78 Iranian applicants who were denied resettlement in the United States remained in Austria and are believed to have received asylum. I understand PRM and Embassy Vienna are negotiating with the Government of Austria on a potential restart of the Iranian Lautenberg program.

I understand that following a longstanding policy that protects refugee data, locations, and security check statuses, PRM does not disclose USRAP pipeline numbers.

#### *UNFPA*

*Question.* Does UNFPA engage with entities in the People's Republic of China which fund forced sterilization or abortion?

Answer. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) does not condone or support China's coercive population policies. My understanding is that UNFPA's activities in China to advance voluntary family planning that respects human rights, have been credited with positively influencing the partial liberalization of China's one-child policy. UNFPA lists the Republic of China's National Health Commission (NHC) as one of many partners in the current country program document, consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. UNFPA does not provide funding to the NHC, however, and the NHC does not implement any UNFPA activities.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to upholding all provisions of law prohibiting the use of U.S. foreign assistance resources to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, to support programs of coercive abortion or forced sterilization, or to lobby for or against the legalization of abortion, including the Kemp-Kasten amendment as it relates to UNFPA?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to upholding all provisions of law related to U.S. foreign assistance including those related to prohibiting the performance or promotion of abortion as a method of family planning, coercive abortion, or forced sterilization.

#### *Afghanistan*

*Question.* Despite the large need of resettlement, will you pledge that if confirmed, the U.S. will continue to use vigorous vetting procedures for all refugee admissions, including those from Afghanistan? My staff asked the Department about vetting protocols, including potential timelines, two weeks ago. If confirmed, would you engage right away on ensuring this information is shared?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States. If confirmed, I commit to working with you and all Members of Congress to achieve timely responses to your inquiries and requests on matters involving PRM, including what role the State Department has in vetting processes. I also commit to working closely with DHS and other vetting agencies to use vigorous vetting procedures for all refugee admissions to uphold the safety and security of the American people.

*Question.* How will you work with neighboring countries to assist with the large outflows of refugees from Afghanistan?

**Answer.** The United States is working with its partners to review and strengthen humanitarian preparedness and priority interventions in the region in the event of new refugee outflows from Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will encourage continued coordination between host governments and humanitarian organizations to monitor and respond to the protection and assistance needs of displaced Afghans in the region. I will also urge states to uphold their respective obligations to not return Afghan refugees or asylum seekers to persecution or torture, and to respect the principle of non-refoulement.

**Question.** In August 2021, DHS announced a new P-2 designation for certain Afghan nationals. The announcement indicated that PRM had created an “Afghan Referrals Workgroup comprised of federal agencies to refer individuals directly” for U.S. refugee resettlement consideration. Please explain the eligibility requirements for this P-2 program, and how the referral system works. How many Afghan nationals does PRM expect to admit as refugees under this program, and when are these admissions expected to occur?

**Answer.** On August 2, 2021, the Department of State announced a new Priority 2 (P-2) designation granting U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) access for certain Afghan nationals and their eligible family members. (See <https://www.state.gov/u-s-refugee-admissions-program-priority-2-designation-for-afghan-nationals/>.) The Department of State has designated certain categories of Afghan nationals as having access to the USRAP by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement. This priority group includes Afghans who are or were employed in Afghanistan by a U.S.-based media organization or nongovernmental organization (NGO). It expands the opportunity to permanently resettle in the United States to many Afghans and their immediate family members who may be at risk due to their U.S. affiliation but are not eligible for a Special Immigrant Visa because they did not have qualifying employment or because they have not met the time-in-service requirement to become eligible for an SIV.

In addition to the P-2 designation noted above, Afghans may also gain access to the USRAP through Priority 1 referrals by a specific entity (U.S. embassy, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or a designated NGO), or Priority 3, reunification of family members of refugees already resettled in the United States.

The Department of State has issued instructions regarding how U.S.-based media and NGOs can submit referrals for P-2 designation for Afghan nationals. (See <https://www.wrapsnet.org/siv-iraqi-syrian-afghan-p2/>.) Organizations can use these instructions to refer to the USRAP any Afghan national staff (plus their spouse and children) who might be in danger now or in the foreseeable future.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program Priority 2 designation expands the opportunity to permanently resettle in the United States to many thousands of Afghans and their immediate family members who may be at risk due to their U.S. affiliation. As President Biden has made clear, assisting these Afghan allies is a top priority for the administration.

I understand that PRM is still receiving P2 referrals from U.S. employers, service members, and qualifying media and non-governmental organizations. The U.S. Government cannot currently process refugee referrals inside Afghanistan, so Afghan nationals who are referred for resettlement will be processed upon leaving the country. I am not aware of a timeline for that process nor a specific number of Afghan P-2 referrals that PRM expects to process in the next year. The administration recognizes the vital role this new designation and the program in general will play in the lives of those that risked their safety to assist the United States. As President Biden has made clear, helping these Afghans is an ongoing commitment of the United States.

**Question.** How many U.S. citizens are currently in Afghanistan? Please address the total number of U.S. citizens in Afghanistan, independent of how many may have indicated, at some point, an interest in staying in Afghanistan.

**Answer.** U.S. citizens are not required to register with the Department of State or an embassy when they arrive in or depart from a country. Based on the requests received, the Department believes that most American citizens who wished to leave have departed. The number of remaining U.S. citizens in Afghanistan who have expressed a desire to leave remains fluid, and the Department remains committed to assisting them.

**Question.** How many U.S. legal permanent residents are currently in Afghanistan? Please address the total number of U.S. legal permanent residents in Afghanistan, independent of how many may have indicated, at some point, an interest in staying in Afghanistan.

Answer. Like U.S. citizens, Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) are not required to register with the Department of State or an embassy when they arrive in or depart from a country. The U.S. Government was able to evacuate or facilitate the relocation or evacuation of more than 124,000 individuals, including U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents, and foreign and Afghan allies, from August 14 to August 31.

*Question.* How many Special Immigrant Visa applicants are currently in Afghanistan?

Answer. As Secretary Blinken explained during his September 13 testimony, the State Department is working on getting numbers right now. The State Department still continues to receive communications from Special Immigrant Visa applicants in Afghanistan and the commitment to those applicants is ongoing.

*Question.* How many Special Immigrant Visa applicants' dependents are currently in Afghanistan?

Answer. As Secretary Blinken explained during his September 13 testimony, the State Department is working on numbers right now. The State Department still continues to receive communications from Special Immigrant Visa applicants and their dependents in Afghanistan and the commitment to them is ongoing.

*Question.* How many Afghans who were identified as at-risk but did not fit into the U.S. citizen, LPR, or SIV categories are currently in Afghanistan?

Answer. It is my understanding that at this time the number of Afghan citizens "at risk" as a result of their affiliation with the United States, or by virtue of their profiles, that have been referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) under either a Priority 1 (P-1) or Priority 2 (P-2) referral, exceeds 20,000. I understand PRM intends to fund U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) domestic and overseas implementing partners at an initial operating level to support 65,000 arrivals at the beginning of FY 2022. PRM will be prepared to increase funding as needed if arrivals surpass this initial operating level, though at this time there is not a precise estimate of the number of anticipated arrivals. While many P-2 submissions to the USRAP program do not meet the program's criteria relating to employment or U.S. affiliation, the volume of submissions continues to rise. Afghan nationals who feel they are at risk cannot self-refer to the USRAP. A P-1 or P-2 referral of an at-risk individual to USRAP for potential resettlement does not convey immigration status and does not confer evacuation assistance. I understand the United States will continue to support the Afghan people through humanitarian aid, diplomacy, and international cooperation.

*Question.* If the Taliban requires visas for persons to exit Afghanistan, and the U.S. no longer has a diplomatic presence inside Afghanistan, how will the U.S. get visas to those trying to exit the country?

Answer. The Bureau of Consular Affairs is responsible for the processing and issuance of U.S. visas abroad. My understanding is that the State Department is developing visa processing alternatives so that it can continue to deliver these important consular services for the people of Afghanistan, and respectfully refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for more specific information.

*Question.* Has the U.S. requested another country to facilitate the distribution of U.S. visas?

Answer. While the subject-matter of your question is not under the purview of PRM, my understanding is that the State Department is developing alternatives so that it can continue to process visas and provide other important consular services for the people of Afghanistan. I refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for more specific information.

*Question.* How will the State Department facilitate the evacuation of eligible Afghans of any category whose passports or travel documents were destroyed by the U.S. during the withdrawal?

Answer. It is my understanding that, as is standard operating procedure in case of an emergency evacuation from post, Embassy Kabul personnel were forced to destroy sensitive paper record holdings as part of the evacuation, including paper visa records. This was done to minimize the U.S. footprint and reduce the sensitive material remaining for security reasons, and in this case also to protect the identity of our Afghan allies. I understand the Department has been able to recover many of these records and share them with the Department of Homeland Security; for more specifics, I respectfully refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs. I further understand the State Department is developing alternatives to deliver consular services to facilitate the safe and orderly travel of U.S. citizens, Legal Permanent

Residents, and Afghans to whom the United States has special commitments, including those whose documents may have been destroyed in the evacuation of the Embassy.

*Question.* Do you have records of whose passports or travel documents were destroyed?

*Answer.* While the subject-matter of your question does not fall within the purview of PRM, it is my understanding this is standard operating procedure during an emergency evacuation to minimize the U.S. footprint and reduce the amount of sensitive material remaining. The drawdown and closure of the Consular Section of Embassy Kabul was conducted in accordance with this standard operating procedure. I understand the State Department will review its records for any case where travel documents may have been destroyed per emergency protocol and explore all options to assist affected persons with onward travel. I would refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for more specific information.

*Question.* How many U.S. citizens did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to the United States?

*Answer.* I understand that approximately 6,000 U.S. citizens were evacuated from August 14—31. From August 31 through September 15, approximately 60 more U.S. citizens and 25 Legal Permanent Residents departed Afghanistan with U.S. assistance utilizing charter flights and overland crossings. The U.S. Government continues to make good on its pledge to U.S. citizens, Legal Permanent Residents, and Afghans to whom we have a special commitment and has committed to helping them depart Afghanistan, if and when they choose to do so. These figures continue to change as other U.S. citizens are able to depart from Afghanistan through a variety of means. I refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for more information on U.S. citizens abroad, and the Department of Homeland Security, who will have more detailed information about the arrival of U.S. citizens to the United States.

*Question.* How many U.S. Legal Permanent Residents did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to the United States?

*Answer.* The State Department has assisted Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) wishing to depart Afghanistan throughout this effort. The decision on admission category—U.S. Citizen, LPR, Special Immigrant Visa, or other category—for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome, resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of Operation Allies Welcome.

*Question.* How many SIV principal applicants did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to the United States?

*Answer.* The United States Government is working on getting numbers right now. The decision on admission category—U.S. Citizen, Legal Permanent Resident, Special Immigrant Visa, or other category—for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Question.* How many SIV applicants dependents did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to the United States?

*Answer.* The United States Government is working on getting numbers right now. The decision on admission category—U.S. Citizen, Legal Permanent Resident, Special Immigrant Visa, or other category—for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Question.* How many Afghans did the USG evacuate to the United States who did not fit into the U.S. citizen, LPR or SIV categories?

*Answer.* The United States Government is working on getting numbers right now. The decision on admission category for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

toms and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Special Benefit Humanitarian Parole*

*Question.* How many Afghans have received special benefit humanitarian parole?

*Answer.* The Department of Homeland Security is responsible for granting parole and tracking those numbers, and I respectfully defer to them to respond to this query.

*Question.* What benefits are Afghans who have been paroled into the country receiving?

*Answer.* I understand that Afghans granted parole as a result of the U.S. airlift will have access to the Afghan Placement and Assistance (APA) Program, funded by PRM. The purpose of this program is to provide these Afghans with initial relocation services for 30 to 90 days after arrival as they begin to rebuild their lives in the United States. These services are provided through local refugee resettlement agencies and community partners, which receive a one-time per capita amount of \$2,275 of which \$1,225 is used to fund assistance needs such as housing and basic necessities, including food, clothing, and furnishings. The remainder of this funding supports services including cultural orientation, enrollment in English language instruction, school enrollment, immigration assistance, and referral to other social, medical, and employment services. At this time, I understand these Afghan parolees are not eligible for the same benefits as refugees and Special Immigrant Visa holders such as refugee-specific cash and medical assistance, or mainstream benefits including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medicaid, except parolees are eligible for SNAP benefits if there is a child under 18 in the family.

*Question.* What are the conditions of their parole?

*Answer.* I understand that Customs and Border Protection has granted two-year parole status for many Afghan individuals at risk who arrived under the airlift. Consistent with 8 U.S.C. § 1305 and as a condition of their parole, it is my understanding that parolees must provide their address to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) [www.uscis.gov/addresschange](http://www.uscis.gov/addresschange) and must notify USCIS of every change of address no later than 10 days after each move; and must comply with all public health directives, requests for additional information from the Department of Homeland Security and federal law enforcement; and follow local, state and federal laws and ordinances.

For full information on the parole conditions, I respectfully refer you to the Customs and Border Protection service.

*Question.* What vetting is occurring at U.S. reception centers, such as the Dulles Expo?

*Answer.* The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants prior to their application for admission to the United States. U.S. Customs and Border Protection, a component of DHS, is responsible for screening applicants upon entry and granting or denying admission to every individual who arrives to the United States and I respectfully refer you to them for information on this issue.

*Question.* Who is responsible for vetting upon arrival?

*Answer.* The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States. I refer you to my answer to your question No. 47. PRM was not involved in screening individuals evacuated as part of the U.S. military airlift August 14-31.

*Question.* Are you collecting biometric data for all Afghans admitted or paroled into the United States?

*Answer.* The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States and I respectfully refer you to them, though I understand that the screening and vetting process involves biometric and biographic screenings.

*Question.* Do you have copies of all the flight manifests?

*Answer.* I understand that U.S. Transportation Command maintains a database of flight manifests of both military and Department of State-chartered flights from overseas sites into the continental United States. I also understand that a number of flights submitted manifests directly to Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) via the

Advance Passenger Information System. The State Department is coordinating with CBP to obtain those manifests missing from the consolidated database, though that work does not fall under the purview of PRM.

*Question.* Do you provide identity documents for Afghans who do not have any?

Answer. My understanding is that the State Department is not providing identity documents to Afghan nationals. I respectfully refer you to the Department of Homeland Security, which is coordinating Operation Allies Welcome, for further questions.

*Question.* If so, by what means do you verify identity?

Answer. I understand the State Department is not providing identity documents to Afghan nationals.

*Question.* What happens to Afghans who fail vetting, for any reason?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States. I would refer you to DHS for more information.

#### *Afghans Evacuated to U.S. Bases*

*Question.* How many U.S. citizens did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to U.S. bases overseas?

Answer. From August 14 to August 31, I understand that approximately 6,000 U.S. citizens were safely evacuated along with eligible family members on USG flights. Since the suspension of embassy operations on August 31 through September 15, an additional approximately 60 U.S. citizens and 25 Legal Permanent Residents have departed Afghanistan with U.S. assistance utilizing charter flights and overland crossings. Most of these citizens and residents were evacuated to or through U.S. military bases overseas. I respectfully refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs to answer questions about its assistance to U.S. citizens overseas, including on U.S. bases.

*Question.* How many U.S. Legal Permanent Residents did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to U.S. bases overseas?

Answer. I understand that the State Department has assisted Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) wishing to depart Afghanistan throughout this effort. The decision on admission category—U.S. Citizen, LPR, Special Immigrant Visa, or other category—for any individuals ultimately arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Question.* How many SIV principal applicants did the USG evacuate from Afghanistan to U.S. bases overseas?

Answer. The United States Government is working on getting numbers right now. Thousands of evacuees were in different stages of the SIV process—many had only just inquired about their eligibility at the beginning of operations. The U.S. Government focused on evacuating American citizens, Legal Permanent Residents, and Afghan allies out as fast as possible while the airport was functioning. The decision on admission category—U.S. Citizen, Legal Permanent Resident, Special Immigrant Visa, or other category—for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Question.* How many SIV applicants' dependents did the USG evacuate Afghanistan to U.S. bases overseas?

Answer. The United States Government is working on getting numbers right now. Persons relocated were in different stages of the SIV process—many had only just inquired about their eligibility at the beginning of the operation. The decision on admission category for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, which will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Question.* How many Afghans did the USG evacuate to U.S. bases who did not fit into the U.S. citizen, LPR or SIV categories?

**Answer.** The decision on admission category—U.S. Citizen, Legal Permanent Resident, Special Immigrant Visa, or other category—for any individuals arriving to the United States, including Afghans who were evacuated from overseas as a part of OAW, resides with the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection. The Department of Homeland Security, as the lead agency for Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), ultimately will be in the best position to provide the most accurate breakdown of the various categories of Afghans evacuated as a part of OAW.

*Question.* What vetting is occurring on the bases?

**Answer.** The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States, and I respectfully refer you to them for a response.

*Question.* Who is responsible for vetting upon arrival?

**Answer.** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, a component of DHS, is responsible for screening upon entry and granting or denying admission to every individual who arrives to the United States.

*Question.* Are you collecting biometric data for all Afghans admitted or paroled into the United States?

**Answer.** The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States. I understand that the screening and vetting process involves biometric and biographic screenings. The U.S. Government has worked urgently and carefully to facilitate screening and vetting operations without compromising national security.

*Question.* Do you have copies of all the flight manifests?

**Answer.** I understand that U.S. Transportation Command maintains a database of flight manifests of both military and Department of State-chartered flights from overseas sites into the continental United States. I also understand that a number of flights submitted manifests directly to Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) via the Advance Passenger Information System. The State Department is coordinating with CBP to obtain from CBP about those manifests.

*Question.* Do you provide identity documents for Afghans who do not have any?

**Answer.** My understanding is that the State Department is not providing identity documents to Afghan nationals. I respectfully refer you to the Department of Homeland Security, which is coordinating Operation Allies Welcome, for further questions.

*Question.* If so, by what means do you verify identity?

**Answer.** I understand the State Department is not providing identity documents to Afghan nationals.

*Question.* What happens to Afghans who fail vetting, for any reason?

**Answer.** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States. I would refer you to DHS for more information.

*Question.* How many U.S. citizens left Afghanistan but have not made it the U.S. are residing in third countries?

**Answer.** I understand that U.S. citizens are not required to register their presence in a country with the Department of State, and the State Department does not track their whereabouts. The State Department cannot ascertain how many U.S. citizens who left Afghanistan are now residing in third countries. I respectfully refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for answers about their assistance to U.S. citizens still in Afghanistan and abroad after leaving Afghanistan.

*Question.* How many U.S. legal permanent residents left Afghanistan but have not made it the U.S. are residing in third countries?

**Answer.** The State Department does not have an exact number of Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) and their immediate family members who have departed Afghanistan. LPRs are not required to register their presence in a country with the Department of State, nor does the State Department track their whereabouts. The State Department cannot ascertain how many are now residing in third countries.

*Question.* How many SIV applicants left Afghanistan but have not made it to the U.S. are residing in third countries?



Answer. The State Department is working to ascertain those numbers now. I refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for more information.

*Question.* How many SIV applicants left Afghanistan but have not made it the U.S. are residing in third countries?

Answer. The State Department is working to ascertain those numbers now. I refer you to the Bureau of Consular Affairs for more information. Thousands of Afghans are in different stages of the SIV process—many had only just inquired about their eligibility at the beginning of August.

*Question.* How many applications have you received from P-1 or P-2 refugee status from Afghans?

Answer. I understand over 20,000 cases relating to approximately 55,000 individuals have been referred to the Afghan P-1 and P-2 refugee resettlement program to date.

*Question.* What, if any, agreements have you made with foreign governments to host Afghan populations?

Answer. My understanding is that the United States strongly encourages foreign governments to allow entry for Afghans and to coordinate with humanitarian international organizations to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghans in need. The United States also urges states to uphold their respective obligations to not return Afghan refugees or asylum seekers to persecution or torture, and to respect the principle of non-refoulement. The State Department will also continue its existing support of Afghan refugee populations in neighboring countries. This includes supporting third-country resettlement efforts led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and funding appeals from UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration to provide lifesaving protection, emergency food aid, shelter, and livelihood support to Afghan refugees outside Afghanistan.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* How has COVID-19 impacted the work of PRM's implementing partners? What do you anticipate will be the priorities for addressing the immediate needs and secondary impacts of the virus on vulnerable and displaced populations worldwide?

Answer. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted PRM's implementing partners' programming and ability to provide assistance in a timely manner due to increased operational costs, ongoing travel and access constraints, and other movement restrictions. It has also directly affected the health and welfare of marginalized populations around the world and exacerbated pre-existing gaps in health, protection, assistance, education, and livelihoods. I understand PRM's partners emphasize meeting international standards for assistance and protection for the most vulnerable while at the same time advocating for the inclusion of marginalized, displaced, and hard-to-reach populations in national plans for vaccine delivery, relief, and recovery.

*Question.* How does the U.S. Government coordinate its responses to migration crises, such as those in Venezuela or Central America? When and where does PRM take the lead and what, if any, are the differences in its approach compared to that of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)?

Answer. Interagency coordination between the State Department, USAID, and other agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security is critical in responding to migration crises. My understanding is that PRM and USAID play separate but complementary roles. PRM takes the lead in providing urgent humanitarian aid and protection to refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and vulnerable migrants, working through international organizations and non-governmental organizations. PRM also supports efforts to help governments build capacity to protect vulnerable populations and humanely manage migration. USAID takes the lead in response to natural and man-made disasters, disaster preparedness, and support for internally displaced populations; USAID also provides food aid to refugees. USAID also funds development programs in select contexts, such as in Central America, to address root causes of irregular migration and reintegration of returned migrants. In situations where PRM and USAID responsibilities converge, I understand they have robust coordination mechanisms in the field and in Washington to ensure the overall efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. assistance. If confirmed, I will continue this close collaboration between PRM and USAID.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the scope of risks to women and girls, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic? What are ways that PRM programs specifically address these protection needs?

*Answer.* In times of crisis, women and girls are at enormous risk of gender-based violence (GBV)—from armed groups, strangers, neighbors, and family members. These risks in humanitarian settings were exacerbated by COVID-19 and corresponding mitigation measures, resulting in a “shadow” pandemic of GBV and worldwide spikes in GBV risks and reports. In response, the U.S. humanitarian response to COVID-19 prioritized protection, including programs to help prevent GBV and provide psychosocial services to GBV victims, along with healthcare, water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance in the COVID-19 humanitarian response.

*Question.* President Biden indicated that he plans to set the FY 2022 refugee ceiling at 125,000 in his May 2021 statement on refugee admissions. Do you consider the admission of 125,000 refugees in FY 2022 to be achievable? What, if any, changes to the refugee program have been implemented or are under consideration to facilitate increased refugee admissions in FY 2022?

*Answer.* I expect the U.S. Government will make every effort to reach the target established by the President following consultations with Congress. In the immediate term, I understand PRM intends to fund U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) domestic and overseas implementing partners at an initial operating level to support 65,000 arrivals at the beginning of FY 2022 and will be prepared to increase funding as needed if arrivals surpass the initial operating level.

I understand the President’s Executive Order 14013 on Rebuilding and Enhancing Programs to Resettle Refugees and Planning for the Impact of Climate Change on Migration directs review of a series of bold reforms and initiatives for the USRAP, to support increased refugee admissions in FY 2022 and beyond. My understanding is that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) aims to increase staffing significantly, upscale in-person “circuit rides” by USCIS employees to interview refugee candidates in person, increase refugee video interviews, identify current bottlenecks, and implement process improvements to its adjudicatory processes. I expect that the USRAP will leverage technological solutions to strengthen data-driven decision-making and streamline refugee processing with the deployment of START and Global, the Department of State’s and USCIS’s respective new refugee applicant case management systems, while enhancing the security of all of refugee processing systems.

*Question.* In August 2021, DHS announced a new P-2 designation for certain Afghan nationals. The announcement indicated that PRM had created an “Afghan Referrals Workgroup comprised of federal agencies to refer individuals directly” for U.S. refugee resettlement consideration. I am very concerned about the plight of Afghan nationals who have been designated as P-2 refugees. How many Afghan nationals does PRM expect to admit as refugees under this program, and what is the status of current refugees? When are these admissions expected to occur?

*Answer.* As you note, on August 2, 2021, the Department of State announced a new Priority 2 (P-2) designation granting U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) access for certain Afghan nationals and their eligible family members. (See <https://www.state.gov/u-s-refugee-admissions-program-priority-2-designation-for-afghan-nationals/>.) The Department of State has designated certain categories of Afghan nationals as having access to the USRAP by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement. This priority group includes Afghans who are or were employed in Afghanistan by a U.S.-based media organization or nongovernmental organization (NGO). It expands the opportunity to permanently resettle in the United States to many Afghans and their immediate family members who may be at risk due to their U.S. affiliation but are not eligible for a Special Immigrant Visa because they did not have qualifying employment or because they have not met the time-in-service requirement to become eligible for an SIV.

In addition to the P-2 designation noted above, Afghans may also gain access to the USRAP through Priority 1 referrals by a specific entity (U.S. embassy, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or a designated NGO), or Priority 3, reunification of family members of refugees already resettled in the United States.

The Department of State has issued instructions regarding how U.S.-based media and NGOs can submit referrals for P-2 designation for Afghan nationals. (See <https://www.wrapsnet.org/siv-iraqi-syrian-afghan-p2/>.) Organizations can use these instructions to refer to the USRAP any Afghan national staff (plus their spouse and minor children) who might be in danger now or in the foreseeable future.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program Priority 2 designation expands the opportunity to permanently resettle in the United States to many thousands of Afghans

and their immediate family members who may be at risk due to their U.S. affiliation. As President Biden has made clear, assisting these Afghan allies is a top priority for the administration.

I understand that PRM is still receiving P2 referrals from U.S. employers, service members, and qualifying media and non-governmental organizations. The U.S. Government cannot currently process refugee referrals inside Afghanistan, so Afghan nationals who are referred for resettlement will be processed upon leaving the country. I am not aware of a timeline for that process nor a specific number of Afghan P-2 referrals that PRM expects to process in the next year. The administration recognizes the role this new designation and the refugee resettlement program in general will play in the lives of those that risked their safety to assist the United States. As President Biden has made clear, helping these Afghans is an ongoing commitment of the United States.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* Do you agree that UNRWA is a deeply problematic organization?

*Answer.* This administration supports the work of UNRWA, which provides critical services to vulnerable Palestinian refugees. UNRWA is a lifeline for thousands of Palestinian refugees in the region, as seen in May during the violence in Gaza. That said, I agree that UNRWA must undertake reforms to improve its efficiency, effectiveness and neutrality, and that UNRWA Commissioner General Lazzarini is leading efforts to this end. It is my understanding that the framework under which the United States resumed funding for UNRWA includes provisions for regular reporting, consultations, and monitoring of U.S.-funded aid. If confirmed, I will focus on management and other reform issues at UNRWA to ensure it is upholding its commitments to neutrality and is as effective and efficient as possible.

*Question.* As the largest individual donor to UNRWA, do you believe the U.S. should leverage our assistance to seek transparency and reforms from the agency?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will seek reforms related to neutrality, transparency, and management at UNRWA.

*Question.* The director of UNRWA recently acknowledged that the group's educational materials included inappropriate material. This is an ongoing problem that UNRWA pledges to fix, but never seems to adequately address. If confirmed, will you make it a priority to demand the removal of the incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in UNRWA materials?

*Answer.* I condemn incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in any form. I understand that UNRWA staff found the unacceptable content in supplemental educational material prepared in response to the pandemic, and UNRWA acted promptly to remove it. UNRWA's Commissioner General has committed to notifying the Agency's Advisory Commission immediately of any violations of its zero-tolerance policy and to collaborating with Commission members on educational issues. If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of humanitarian principles, including neutrality, in discussions with UNRWA.

*Question.* I remain deeply concerned about the ongoing humanitarian crises in Latin America, which is in part caused by the Maduro regime refusing to respond to the needs and priorities of the Venezuelan people. There are millions of Venezuelan refugees and migrants seeking asylum in the United States and other countries in the region, who are undoubtedly placing significant strain on those countries' refugee and governance systems. If confirmed, what is your long-term strategy to coordinate the bureau's efforts with these countries' efforts to accept Venezuelan refugees and migrants?

*Answer.* I share your concerns. The situation in Venezuela is a tragedy. Since FY 2017, the United States has provided over \$1.4 billion in humanitarian assistance, including over \$597 million in PRM programming, to international organizations and non-governmental partners to protect and assist vulnerable Venezuelans in seventeen host countries in the region. My understanding is that PRM assistance includes funding for temporary shelter and access to food, water, and sanitation facilities; legal support for asylum-seekers; capacity-building for regional asylum authorities; and livelihoods opportunities. If confirmed, I would continue to support the Department's engagement in international fora, including the Quito Process to enhance

coordination among host countries and advocate for a regional solution to the Venezuela crisis.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* The Biden administration's unprecedented evacuation of more than 120,000 people from Afghanistan brought many Americans home but it also delivered many Afghans out of harm's way. Those Afghans are now spread out around the world, including in the 13 partner countries that are serving as way points for refugees before they come to the United States. How we take care of these individuals over the coming days, months and years will determine our true commitment to American values. What should the U.S. be doing right now to best serve these Afghans and the communities that are welcoming them?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that there is ongoing and robust interagency engagement with the partner countries who generously agreed to host Afghans. Secretary Blinken recently traveled to Qatar and Germany to highlight U.S. appreciation for all that those countries and others have done to support the airlift and relocation efforts. Once they arrive in the United States, the recent evacuees are receiving orientation services, health care, and resettlement support from a broad range of U.S. agencies and humanitarian partners, as Secretary Blinken described in his September 14 appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

I also understand that the State Department has continued to support the needs of vulnerable Afghans remaining in Afghanistan or who are refugees in other countries through urgent humanitarian funding direct to international and non-governmental organizations and has been clear in its commitment to continuing to work with the international community to make sure these needs are addressed. If confirmed, I would continue this important engagement and support to respond to the needs of at-risk Afghans and the countries that host them.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with our allies to ensure the protection of Afghan refugees around the world?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States is working with its partners to strengthen humanitarian preparedness and priority interventions in the event of new refugee outflows from Afghanistan and will continue urging states to uphold their respective obligations to not return Afghan refugees to persecution or torture and to respect the principle of non-refoulement. If confirmed, I will encourage continued coordination between host governments and humanitarian organizations to respond to the protection and assistance needs of Afghan refugees, including supporting efforts led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and funding humanitarian partners to provide lifesaving protection, emergency food aid, shelter, and livelihood support to Afghan refugees outside Afghanistan.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with our NGO partners who are crucial to the refugee effort in the United States?

*Answer.* My understanding is that PRM is working with nine resettlement partners and affiliates across the country to welcome Afghans into American communities. Placement of individuals and families prioritizes reunification with U.S.-based family and friends and also considers the needs and characteristics of each individual and family. With U.S. Government support, the agencies will provide initial relocation support to Afghans to assist with critical needs such as housing, enrolling children in school, and basic necessities such as food, clothing, and furnishings. Additional support from the private sector will be critical to meeting the needs of this population, and I was happy to note the recent announcement of welcome.us and related initiatives to facilitate this important private sector support for our non-governmental organization partners. If confirmed, I would continue to liaise closely with PRM's resettlement partners and private sector supporters on this important work.

*Question.* My office has sent the names of more than 3,000 vulnerable Afghans to the State Department over the last several weeks. I am very concerned about those who remain behind, especially women and girls whose lives are at risk because of their existence. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that as many Afghans as possible who qualify for a Priority 2 designation are able to be processed and travel to the United States as expeditiously as possible?

Answer. I understand that, to date, over 20,000 cases consisting of around 55,000 individuals have been referred to the Afghan P-2 refugee resettlement program. PRM and its partners are working as quickly as possible to process these cases and have surged staffing as part of this unprecedented effort. The United States Government does not have the ability to process these cases inside Afghanistan at this time, so I understand case processing for these referrals to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program cannot begin until the individual relocates to a country where processing is feasible. Once in such a country, they will need to inform PRM of their current location and provide contact information. PRM will create a case and assign it to the appropriate U.S.-funded Resettlement Support Center for processing.

*Question.* In your opinion, are there any actions Congress needs to take to support the maximum use of the Priority 2 designation, including ensuring all arrivals receive resettlement benefits? If confirmed and once you are in place, will you commit to working with Congress to ensure the efficiency of the refugee system?

Answer. I am aware of the bill currently in Congress that would provide parolees with access to refugee benefits on arrival in American communities, and understand the administration strongly supports that bill. My understanding is that the Department is surging resources to review the large number of Priority 1 and Priority 2 (P-2) refugee referrals received in recent weeks. If confirmed, I am committed to working within the Department, with Congress, with international partners, with advocacy groups, and with private sector supporters to ensure that the P-2 designation is used appropriately and fully where applicable, and that all Afghans so designated have access to the resources needed to start anew in America. More broadly, I also am firmly committed to working with Congress to rebuild the entire U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and ensure its efficiency for all resettled refugees.

*Question.* As you know, several countries have offered to host many of the Afghans in transit as they await vetting and processing before entering the United States. For some of those countries, this could pose a tremendous strain on their own resources. What resources do you think will be needed to help house those Afghans destined for the United States, and are there any additional resources we could direct to these countries?

Answer. It is my understanding that interagency teams overseas are closely coordinating the operational and logistical support required to process Afghans destined for the United States and ensure such processing can continue. In the interim, as host governments identify requirements, these interagency teams are working to respond, including via international organizations and other partners. If confirmed, I would continue our engagement with host governments and humanitarian partners managing these operations and would lead PRM's effort to review funding appeals from those partners who request additional resources to host Afghans.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, would you commit to PRM reviewing the vetting process for incoming refugees from Afghanistan to ensure that there are no gaps in the process as a result of the hasty withdrawal process?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States.

If confirmed, it is my intent to review fully and completely the Department of Homeland Security's screening and vetting conducted for Afghans (and other citizens of other nations) applying to come to the United States under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. I commit to working closely with all of PRM's partner agencies to conduct such vetting.

*Question.* We understand the Embassy destroyed many passports and visas in Kabul. How does PRM vet refugee candidates in the cases where needed national IDs have been destroyed or not available?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security has the lead on the screening and vetting requirements for all applicants for admission to the United States.

With regard to applicants to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), which is separate from the U.S. entry of Afghans under Operation Allies Welcome, it is my understanding that PRM and its interagency partners have steadily strengthened security vetting since 9/11. USRAP applicants are subject to more vetting than any other type of traveler to the United States. I am also aware that the

USRAP has the capacity to process refugee applicants who do not possess a national ID or passport.

*Question.* Of the refugees to be admitted this fiscal year, how many does PRM expect to be from Afghanistan? How does the Afghan refugee program impact refugee applications from other regions, including along the southern border?

*Answer.* As of September 15, 2021, 729 Afghan nationals have arrived under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) in FY 2021. These Afghans were not relocated as part of the August 14-31 U.S. military airlift and underwent stringent USRAP processing overseas before admission. Neither the Afghans arriving via this airlift who were granted parole into the United States by the Department of Homeland Security, nor the Afghans admitted as refugees via the USRAP, have any impact on refugee applications from other regions.

*Question.* What steps are the Biden administration taking to support refugee admissions from threatened populations in China?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to placing human rights at the center of our foreign policy. Refugee resettlement is one of several ways the U.S. supports refugees globally and demonstrates its humanitarian leadership.

I understand that eligible Hong Kong residents and Turkic Muslim Chinese citizens who fear persecution from the Government of the People's Republic of China may access the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program in any appropriate category—including via referrals from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. As with most refugees from other nations, they must be outside of their country of nationality in order to qualify for refugee status. If approved, they may be resettled in the United States within the regional allocations for resettlement for the fiscal year in which they are admitted.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you prioritize supporting threatened populations in China?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting democratic values at the center of U.S. foreign policy and to standing up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. I am horrified by the crimes against humanity and genocide in Xinjiang, and the human rights abuses occurring across China. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with colleagues across the interagency and with allies, partners, and humanitarian organizations to advocate for Uyghurs, Hong Kong residents, and Tibetans, among others. I will also work to assist those fleeing persecution and other abuses in the People's Republic of China to find safe haven.

*Question.* Please discuss PRM's specific priorities to address humanitarian needs along the southern border.

*Answer.* I understand that in line with President Biden's Collaborative Migration Management Strategy, PRM priorities in Mexico include improving access to protection against human trafficking, exploitation, and other dangers to vulnerable migrants, such as those fleeing violence or torture. For example, I understand PRM supports gender-based violence prevention and response as well as child protection programs for migrants across Mexico. PRM also prioritizes urgent humanitarian assistance to meet the needs of refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants. Key PRM efforts include supporting shelter capacity and COVID-19 mitigation measures, access to legal assistance, healthcare, and psycho-social support.

*Question.* How will PRM coordinate with other agencies in dealing with the southern border crisis?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will coordinate within the Department of State and with the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Agency for International, and other interagency partners in implementing the administration's Collaborative Migration Management Strategy (CMMS) and parallel Root Causes Strategy (RCS) to address conditions in Central America that compel people to flee their homes and seek safety and opportunity abroad. These strategies increase humanitarian assistance and protection programs within the region, expand legal immigration pathways including through the U.S. Refugee Admission Program, and enhance border protection to reduce irregular migration to the southern border. Irregular migration is a deeply rooted challenge requiring short-, medium- and long-term solutions, such as those included in the CMMS and RCS.

*Question.* Do you expect a change in PRM's role in the interagency process particularly in light of USAID's relatively new Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance?

*Answer.* I do not expect a change in PRM's role in the interagency process. PRM and USAID/BHA each have important, distinct roles to play in responding to hu-

manitarian crises, and it is imperative they respond in a coordinated manner as one U.S. Government with a common mission. If confirmed, I intend to maintain close coordination between PRM and USAID/BHA to ensure their efforts complement each other and build on their respective strengths.

*Question.* Looking ahead, what do you anticipate will be the U.S. contribution level to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)? What reforms do you believe are necessary with UNRWA?

*Answer.* President Biden pledged to restore U.S. economic and humanitarian aid to the Palestinians, and the United States resumed for UNRWA this fiscal year. As with other humanitarian partners around the world, continued financial support will depend on funding availability, global needs, performance, and adherence to commitments to the United States. If confirmed, I would focus on management and other reform issues at UNRWA, including neutrality and financial sustainability.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you ensure all legal conditions are met prior to the disbursement of assistance to UNRWA?

*Answer.* If confirmed, yes, I will ensure all legal conditions are met prior to the disbursement of assistance to UNRWA.

*Question.* The director of UNRWA recently acknowledged that the group's educational materials included inappropriate material. This is an ongoing problem that UNRWA pledges to fix, but never seems to adequately address. If confirmed, will you make it a priority to demand the removal of the incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in UNRWA materials?

*Answer.* Yes. I condemn incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in any form. I understand UNRWA staff found the unacceptable content in supplemental educational material prepared in response to the pandemic, and UNRWA acted promptly to remove it. UNRWA's Commissioner General has committed to notifying its Advisory Commission immediately of any violations of its zero-tolerance policy and to collaborating with Commission members on educational issues. If confirmed, I will prioritize adherence to humanitarian principles, including neutrality, in discussions with UNRWA.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

*Question.* Is there anything the U.S. should be doing to help Afghans who qualify for P-2 status to leave Afghanistan?

*Answer.* This administration has been clear about its enduring commitment to supporting our Afghan allies, including those that remain in country as well as those that seek to leave. My understanding is that at this time the U.S. government has no ability to do in-country processing or facilitate evacuation/relocation support for individuals referred to the Priority 1 or Priority 2 program who remain in Afghanistan. However, the administration is urging Afghanistan's neighbors to allow entry for Afghans and coordinating with humanitarian international organizations to provide assistance to Afghans in need. The United States is also reminding countries to respect the principle of non-refoulement. I understand the Taliban has provided assurances that Afghans with travel documents who wish to leave the country will be able to do so, and if confirmed, I would work with colleagues in the Department to ensure those assurances are upheld.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you address the issue of Afghans who have left Afghanistan, apply for P-2 status while located in a third country, but are denied?

*Answer.* Individuals with urgent protection needs should register for international protection and assistance with the government of the country where they are located. They may also register and seek assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). If confirmed, I would work with international humanitarian partners and other governments to provide the support needed by those with protection concerns.

*Question.* Do you believe the Department has sufficiently staffed the job of processing P-2s or do additional staff need to be surged to meet demand?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the Department is surging resources to review the large number of Priority 1 and Priority 2 refugee referrals received in recent weeks. This includes recruiting volunteers from other bureaus to support the work of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). If confirmed, I will

make filling vacancies in the Bureau, including to address needs such as processing P-2s, one of my first priorities.

*Question.* To your knowledge, how many P-2 applications have been granted, and in which third countries were successful P-2 applicants located when they applied for and were granted P-2 status?

*Answer.* Resettlement in the United States under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is a 12-18 month process, so my understanding is that no Afghans who were referred to the program and recently fled Afghanistan have had their cases approved yet. As of September 15, I understand the Department has received P-2 refugee referrals for approximately 20,000 cases involving 55,000 individuals.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to providing this information to Congress on an ongoing basis?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to providing this information to Congress on an ongoing basis.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULIETA VALLS NOYES BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* UNRWA committed to provide a semi-annual report to PRM on activities to inform evaluation of conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA. Have they provided that report? If not, when do you anticipate they will? Can you commit to transmitting that report to Congress?

*Answer.* My understanding is that UNRWA has not yet provided this report to PRM, but that it intends to do so in the near term. This will be an internal report provided by UNRWA to the State Department. If confirmed, I will, subject to the rules on the handling and protection of sensitive information, work with Congress to accommodate its oversight interests, which I recognize and take seriously.

*Question.* UNRWA committed to preventing the use of local textbooks that include content contrary to UN principles in education materials. The commitment is a reference to concerns—which now go back more than a decade—that UNRWA was facilitating the use of textbooks promoting genocidal anti-Semitism. This year UNRWA officials acknowledged that, indeed, educational materials facilitated by UNRWA include inappropriate material, amid reports that its textbooks included calls for “jihad” against Israeli Jews and accusations that Israeli Jews were spreading diseases to Palestinians. How long do you assess it will take UNRWA to cease the use of textbooks that promote anti-Semitism?

*Answer.* I condemn incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in any form. Textbooks that promote anti-Semitism or other types of hatred are unacceptable. I understand that UNRWA staff themselves found the unacceptable content you reference in supplemental educational material, and UNRWA acted promptly to remove it. I understand that U.N. agencies including UNRWA do not develop their own curricula but use the curricula of host governments. When UNRWA or others identify concepts contrary to U.N. principles in host governments’ educational materials, UNRWA provides instructions and supplementary materials for its staff to address the issue and the unacceptable materials are not taught. If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of adherence with humanitarian principles, including neutrality, in discussions with UNRWA.

*Question.* What is the estimate in the report produced pursuant to Senate Report 113-81 accompanying PL 113-76?

*Answer.* I have been informed that this report is classified in order to protect Foreign Government Information. In keeping with Department policy, I have not been given access to classified information related to the position for which I have been nominated. If confirmed, I will seek a briefing on this report. It is my understanding that a copy of this report was transmitted to the Congressional committees with jurisdiction in 2015.

*Question.* What is the State Department’s assessment of the current number of Arab refugees who were displaced in 1948 from territories controlled by Israel?

*Answer.* The State Department does not have its own assessment of this number. I understand there are 5.7 million registered Palestinian refugees who are potentially eligible for United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) services, but far fewer avail themselves of UNRWA services. Descendants of eligible male “Pal-



estine refugees” are eligible for registration with UNRWA for the purpose of accessing services. As a result, individuals of Palestinian descent born after the initial displacement have registered. This approach to including descendants is similar to the one used by U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in other protracted refugee situations, such as Afghanistan and Somalia.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER TO BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Eastern Mediterranean*

*Question.* I have been impressed with the French Government’s support for democracies in the Eastern Mediterranean like Greece, Cyprus and Israel. Turkey continues to violate international norms and I have appreciated the French Government’s willingness to stand up to Ankara’s aggression. This includes in the Caucasus where the French were critical of Turkish support for Azerbaijan in last year’s war. How will you work with France to advance these shared concerns?

*Answer.* As a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, France is a key partner in promoting peace in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. French President Macron called for EU solidarity following disputes between Turkey and Greece and Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus over national gas reserves and what France sees as an increasingly “aggressive” Turkey. If confirmed, I will seek cooperation with the French on common interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and to maintain dialogue with Turkey to resolve disputes.

On Israel, France supports a two-state solution. If confirmed, I will work closely with French partners to align our perspectives on Israeli-Palestinian peace.

*Strategic Autonomy*

*Question.* President Macron has sought to advance a concept of Strategic Autonomy, which some have interpreted as distancing France from the United States and creating tensions within NATO. What are your views on Strategic Autonomy and are you concerned that it could serve to diminish support for NATO within Europe?

*Answer.* The Biden administration is committed to re-engaging European allies and revitalizing our alliances. If confirmed, I would welcome European efforts to spend more on defense, which responds to a long-standing U.S. call for more burden-sharing, and help fulfilling Allies’ commitment to NATO to spend two percent of GDP on defense. However, the notion of European strategic autonomy risks undermining the primacy of NATO in ensuring Europe’s defense, duplicating effort between the EU and NATO, and weakening Transatlantic relations. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with Allies and collaborating with this committee to reinforce to all Allies the importance of European defense efforts being complementary with NATO.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately. Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of State personnel?

*Answer.* This is a sensitive ongoing investigation and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. I understand a major interagency effort is investigating what is causing the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports unexplained health incidents receives immediate and appropriate attention and care, and I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a possible health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these inci-

dents and, of course, to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy teams. I will also consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In what areas do you feel we can collaborate more effectively with the French in Africa? How will you as U.S. Ambassador to France, if confirmed, support that?

*Answer.* France has significant ties in the Sahel and West and Central Africa and is a steadfast partner in the fight against terrorism. Our shared priorities include security, governance, economic development, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. If confirmed, I will work strategically with the French to ensure that our efforts are mutually supportive and reinforcing. I will encourage the French to use their strong political, economic, security, and cultural influence to promote the reforms that are the best path to long-term stability in these regions, and work with our interagency to support French objectives when aligned with ours.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* We are aware—as I’m sure you are—of President Macron’s calls for Europe to take greater charge of its own security by developing the “strategic autonomy” of the European Union. The United States has long supported the security of Europe, in particular our Allies in NATO.

- What are the implications of a stronger, more independent European defense strategy for the United States, and for NATO? Can Macron’s vision and NATO 2030 coexist?

*Answer.* NATO, of which France is a founding Ally and one of its most militarily capable, is the primary security organization for defense of the Euro-Atlantic and its members. Efforts to strengthen deterrence and defense in Europe must be complimentary to and not duplicate NATO efforts, enhance NATO-EU cooperation, and strengthen Transatlantic relations. If confirmed, I will reinforce to all Allies and partners that NATO is the essential forum for consultation and action on Transatlantic security and defense issues while promoting greater cooperation with the EU.

*Question.* We have heard the current U.S. travel ban restricting entry of Europeans for more than a year now is harming relations. I know this is an area of deep frustration for the French, and I have received a letter from a French counterpart relaying their concern.

- What should be done to address these restrictions? How can we establish parameters for safe travel?

*Answer.* The Biden administration has prioritized protecting American citizens during this extraordinary pandemic, and the National Interest Exception policy is one way to ensure we facilitate critical travel while also being mindful of ongoing concerns about the spread of COVID-19, including the Delta variant. The administration is constantly reviewing the situation and the scientific data and adjusts policy accordingly. If I am confirmed, I will ensure we continue to implement the administration’s policy as efficiently as possible, and that we are communicating the policy clearly to the French public. If confirmed, I will also be sure to quickly share any additional information regarding shifts in the travel restriction policy.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you cooperate with the French Government on addressing the global terrorist threat?

*Answer.* The United States and France exchange information and share best practices on countering violent extremist threats, and France leads on countering terrorism in the Sahel, where it has eliminated leaders of ISIS, Al-Qa'ida, and their affiliates. If confirmed, I will not only ensure our cooperation continues, but will look for ways to reinforce that partnership. Of course, if confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community and all Americans in France and Monaco.

*Question.* In your opinion, how might our existing cooperation with France be enhanced?

*Answer.* France is the United States' oldest Ally and is among our most capable and reliable military Allies. Our relationship is built on shared values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. There are also extensive cultural and economic ties between our nations. If confirmed, I will work with French leaders to promote close transatlantic coordination on the development of a policy agenda based on our shared values.

*Question.* Do you agree with President Macron's assessment of cooperation with China?

*Answer.* Along with the European Union (EU), France publicly characterizes the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a partner, competitor, and systemic rival, an understanding the United States shares. France agrees on the need for joint U.S.-European Union efforts to address the PRC's human rights abuses, coercive trade practices, and aggressive foreign policy. France seeks to cooperate with China when possible in multilateral fora, like the UN Security Council. In addition, France identifies China as a key partner for combatting climate change and addressing global public health concerns. If confirmed, I will work with French leaders to promote close transatlantic coordination on the development of a policy agenda based on our shared values.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you use your position to encourage France to increase its vigilance over Chinese attempts to influence its political and economic systems, such as the EU's Comprehensive Agreement on Investment?

*Answer.* France and the United States are fundamentally aligned in ways that the PRC and France are not. France recognizes that aspects of PRC governance and economic philosophy are fundamentally at odds with international norms. At the same time, France and China have significant economic ties. French Officials have repeatedly called China a "partner, competitor, and systemic rival." If confirmed, I will work closely with France to address the significant challenges the PRC poses.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DENISE CAMPBELL BAUER BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support greater U.S.-French military collaboration to support greater capacity development for a key NATO ally?

*Answer.* France is among our most capable and reliable military allies and I look forward to working together to strengthen our cooperation through NATO. Our bilateral relationship is important for our larger goal of increasing cooperation and raising the level of ambition of our relationship with all of our NATO Allies. France contributes to NATO activities, such as air policing and the enhanced Forward Presence to ensure deterrence and defense on the Alliance's eastern flank. The U.S. and France exchange information and share best practices on countering violent extremist threats, and France leads on countering terrorism in the Sahel. If confirmed, I will not only ensure our cooperation continues, but will look for ways to strengthen our partnership, and will be forthright when we do not see eye-to-eye.

*Question.* What is the Biden administration doing to encourage France and our NATO allies to maintain and strengthen defense capabilities in the face of continued aggression by Russia in Eastern Europe?

*Answer.* The Biden administration works in coordination with France and other NATO allies and partners to hold Russia accountable for their destabilizing activities, human rights abuses, and violations of international norms. France contributes

to NATO's enhanced Forward Presence on the Alliance's eastern flank. France is an active member of both the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism and the EU's Rapid Alert System efforts to counter Russian disinformation and malign influence.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the French Government so that the NATO Alliance continues to improve its deterrence and defense posture. I will also work closely to ensure continued close cooperation with France as part of our broader effort with other Allies and partners to hold Russia accountable for its actions, and maintain pressure on the Kremlin to adhere to its international commitments and obligations.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIANNE SMITH BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* NATO is going through a planning process to identify strategic priorities for the coming years. What are your views on this process and how it can be used to advance U.S. interests?

*Answer.* The process of drafting and adopting a new Strategic Concept is critical to the future of NATO. It provides a clear roadmap for the work Allies must take to ensure our collective security. If confirmed, I will work hard with Allies in Brussels to make sure the Strategic Concept reflects the changing security environment of today, especially Russian aggression, threats we face in cyberspace, and the People's Republic of China's malign activities. I will also work to ensure that actions we take to address new challenges do not detract from the Alliance's core task of ensuring a strong deterrence and defense for all Allies.

*Question.* How do you think the Alliance can best and appropriately respond to the challenge posed by China?

*Answer.* In recent years, Allies have devoted substantial effort to better understanding and addressing PRC policies and activities that affect Allied security since 2019, culminating in the thorough treatment of PRC issues in the 2021 Summit Communiqué. Allies agreed in 2021 that PRC policies and actions pose a systemic challenge to the international rules-based order and identified, *inter alia*, the PRC's nuclear and conventional military expansion, non-transparency, and influence over Allied critical infrastructure as key areas of concern. If confirmed, I will consult closely with Allies to build consensus on effective approaches to the PRC through the work of the North Atlantic Council and its committees, and in policy documents, including the Strategic Concept.?

*Question.* Are you at all concerned that this could divert attention from the threat posed by Russia to NATO members or the threat posed by terrorism to those countries in southern Europe?

*Answer.* Russia is the pre-eminent nuclear and conventional military threat to the Alliance, just as terrorism is one of the greatest asymmetric challenges to Alliance security. Without losing sight of these threats, NATO must be alert and responsive to the problems posed by the PRC. Fortunately, the Alliance has a strong history of addressing multiple threats simultaneously through its "360-degree approach" to security. Although the PRC is not presently an imminent military threat to Europe in the way Russia is, if confirmed, I would strongly support efforts to ensure NATO addresses the challenges PRC's international behavior and military expansion pose to Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will continue our close collaboration with Allies to address these challenges realistically, strategically, and systematically.

*Question.* Beyond the commitment by all NATO members to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense, how should we assess the other contributions that NATO members can make?

*Answer.* Allies have committed, as recently as the June 2021 NATO Summit, to continue to share the responsibility of our collective security against new and existing threats, both conventional and non-conventional. If confirmed, I will urge those Allies that are not on track to meet the Wales Pledge by 2024 to continue making progress toward that shared and important goal. In addition, I will urge allies to focus on other important aspects of their national defense, including readiness, force generation, and capability gaps. I will also work with Allies, and with Congress, if confirmed, on a shared understanding of NATO burden sharing that captures the wide range of tasks—including cyber security—that the Alliance is now undertaking. We must ensure the Alliance has the sufficient, capable, and ready inte-

grated defense posture required to maintain a credible defense and deterrence in the 21st century threat environment.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIANNE SMITH BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Should expansion of NATO be a priority of the alliance going forward?

*Answer.* Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty states Allies “may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede.” Membership decisions are based on shared values, capacity to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security, and Allied consensus to invite them to join. NATO’s newest member, North Macedonia, joined in 2020 and has already proven itself a valuable Ally, including by contributing to NATO operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo. If confirmed, I will consider any possible enlargement from the perspective of U.S. interests and the good of the Alliance as a whole.

*Question.* Do you believe NATO allies are apprehensive of further NATO expansion due to the emerging shortcomings of some members, or because of other concerns?

*Answer.* Allied perspectives vary regarding NATO enlargement. Membership decisions are based on shared values, capacity to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security, and Allied consensus to invite them to join. This is described in Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, to which all Allies have agreed. If confirmed, my approach to issues of NATO enlargement will be based on these criteria, U.S. interests, and the good of the Alliance. I look forward to dialogue with this committee on these issues.

*Question.* What do you see as the greatest current threat to NATO unity and cohesion?

*Answer.* For over 70 years, Allies have maintained cohesion to provide collective defense and prosperity to member nations. NATO has adapted to new threats and challenges during past inflection points such as 1989, 2001, and 2014. Today, NATO is again adapting to new and emerging threats and challenges. The key to NATO’s success is its ability to maintain unity, and the NATO 2030 agenda adopted at the June 2021 Summit affirmed the importance of consultation to the Alliance’s success. If confirmed, I look forward to increasing our engagement with Allies, including having difficult but necessary conversations. I will also work to maintain bipartisan support for NATO and look forward to consulting with Congress and welcoming congressional delegations to Brussels.

*Question.* What are the advantages of Strategic Autonomy for European nations themselves? What are the disadvantages?

*Answer.* The Biden administration is committed to re-engaging European allies and revitalizing our alliances. If confirmed, I would welcome European efforts to spend more on defense and build capacity, which responds to a long-standing U.S. call for more burden-sharing. However, we must ensure that those efforts to not risk undermining the primacy of NATO in ensuring Europe’s defense by avoiding unnecessary duplication and waste. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with Allies and collaborating with this committee to reinforce to all Allies the importance of European defense efforts being complementary with NATO.

*Question.* What are the advantages of Strategic Autonomy for United States security interests? What are the disadvantages?

*Answer.* The Biden administration is committed to re-engaging European allies and revitalizing our alliances. If confirmed, I would welcome European efforts to spend more on defense and build capacity, which responds to a long-standing U.S. call for more burden-sharing. However, we must ensure that those efforts to not risk undermining the primacy of NATO in ensuring Europe’s defense by avoid unnecessary duplication and waste. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with Allies and collaborating with this committee to reinforce to all Allies the importance of European defense efforts being complementary with NATO.

*Question.* What are the advantages of Strategic Autonomy for security interests across the NATO alliance as a whole? What are the disadvantages?

*Answer.* The Biden administration is committed to re-engaging European allies and revitalizing our alliances. If confirmed, I would welcome European efforts to spend more on defense and build capacity, which responds to a long-standing U.S. call for more burden-sharing. However, we must ensure that those efforts do not risk undermining the primacy of NATO in ensuring Europe's defense by avoid unnecessary duplication and waste. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with Allies and collaborating with this committee to reinforce to all Allies the importance of European defense efforts being complementary with NATO.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S.' execution of the withdrawal and evacuation mission from Afghanistan makes a continental separation of European defense from NATO more likely?

*Answer.* NATO is the foundation of Euro-Atlantic collective defense. It guarantees the security, freedom, and values of one billion citizens in North America and Europe. The Alliance has experienced and overcome divisive issues in the past because of the strength of our approach based on consultation and consensus. As the Secretary General has said, the United States consulted with the Allies throughout the process of ending NATO's military presence in Afghanistan and this was a decision taken together by all Allies. NATO benefits from European Allies developing greater defense capabilities. If confirmed, I will continue this tradition of close consultation that prevents any issue from detracting from NATO accomplishing its core tasks.

*Question.* Do you believe that the recent defense agreement between the U.S., U.K., and Australia, which has greatly angered France, and irked the European Union, makes a continental separation of European defense from NATO more likely?

*Answer.* A stronger, more capable Europe is in our shared interest, and our long-standing ties with NATO Allies and the EU are essential to deal effectively with 21st century challenges, as are complementary EU and NATO capabilities. Ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific is a shared interest between the United States and Europe, and if confirmed, I will continue to work to deepen transatlantic cooperation regarding the Indo-Pacific and around the world. We will not succeed without enhanced NATO-EU cooperation, something I will strongly support, if confirmed. Such cooperation should uphold NATO's role as the premier Transatlantic security and defense forum, and EU defense efforts must not detract from or duplicate NATO efforts.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the reason that Turkey decided to purchase S-400s from Russia instead of Patriot Missiles from the United States?

*Answer.* Turkey had the opportunity to purchase Patriot surface-to-air missile systems, and other NATO-interoperable air defense systems, but chose to purchase the Russian S-400. Ankara's acquisition and testing of an S-400 surface-to-air missile system from Russia undermine Allied interoperability and threaten Alliance systems. If confirmed, I will continue to urge Turkey not to retain the S-400 system and to refrain from purchasing any additional Russian military equipment. As the Biden administration has made clear to Turkey, any major new Russian arms purchases would risk triggering CAATSA Section 231 sanctions separate from and in addition to those already imposed.

*Question.* The U.S. has removed Turkey from the F-35 program and sanctioned it for its purchase of the S-400. What further actions, if any, do you believe the U.S. should take to urge Turkey to divest the S-400s?

*Answer.* Turkey knows what it needs to do to secure relief from existing CAATSA Section 231 sanctions. Ankara's acquisition and testing of an S-400 surface-to-air missile system from Russia undermine Allied interoperability and threaten Alliance systems. The United States continues to urge Turkey at every level not to retain the S-400 system and to refrain from purchasing any additional Russian materiel. As the Biden administration has made clear to Turkey, any major new Russian arms purchases would risk triggering CAATSA sanctions separate from and in addition to those imposed in December 2020.

*Question.* How would you work with NATO partners to discourage Turkey from moving forward with its S-400 Air Defense integration?

*Answer.* The Biden administration has clearly expressed that Russian S-400s are incompatible with NATO equipment and its NATO commitments. If confirmed, I will join administration colleagues in continuing to urge Turkey not to retain S-400 and not to purchase additional Russian materiel. As the Biden administration has made clear to Turkey, any new purchase of Russian military equipment would risk triggering CAATSA sanctions separate from and in addition to those imposed in De-

ember 2020. Our Allies, including Turkey share interests in countering terrorism, ending the conflict in Syria, and ensuring regional stability. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and our Allies to convince Turkey to change course.

*Question.* NATO's last strategic concept was written in 2010. In that time, new threats have emerged: Russia's expansionism in Crimea, eastern Ukraine, and Syria, China's emergence as a military and strategic power, democratic backsliding within NATO countries, the advent of new technologies and threats like cyberwarfare. Which elements do you believe that any new Strategic Concept should focus on the most?

*Answer.* The process of drafting and adopting a new Strategic Concept is critical to the future of NATO. It provides a clear roadmap for the work Allies must take to ensure our collective security. If confirmed, I will work hard with Allies in Brussels to make sure the Strategic Concept reflects the changing security environment of today, especially Russian aggression, threats we face in cyberspace, and the People's Republic of China's malign activities. I will also work to ensure that actions we take to address these new challenges do not detract from the Alliance's core task of ensuring a strong deterrence and defense for all Allies. I look forward to dialogue with this committee on the Strategic Concept.

*Question.* NATO's Black Sea littoral allies are increasingly vocal about their concerns of growing Russian threats in the region. What more do you believe NATO should do to help deter further Russian aggression in the Black Sea and help augment the military capabilities of the littoral nations?

*Answer.* The Biden administration has expressed clear support for our Black Sea Allies, and through cooperation with NATO Allies and partners is bolstering collective security in the Black Sea region. As the Biden administration has made clear to Russia, further aggression is unacceptable in the territory and territorial waters of its sovereign neighbors. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and our Allies to develop and implement a Black Sea security strategy that bolsters cooperation among our littoral state Allies and partners.

*Question.* What do you see as the largest obstacles to NATO's military mobility throughout the European continent?

*Answer.* NATO must be able to flow combat power across the Euro-Atlantic area to be effective, not only from the United States to Europe but in Europe, across borders, and utilizing Allies' infrastructure. The current level of investment into capabilities varies across the spectrum of different Allies. If confirmed, I would work with our NATO Allies on the way ahead to ensure infrastructure and other mobility challenges are never limiting factors for deterrence and defense.

*Question.* If Russia were to put military presence in Belarus, how do you think the U.S. should respond? How should NATO respond?

*Answer.* Respectfully, I'm unable to provide a complete answer to a hypothetical. If confirmed, I would work with Congress as well as the Departments of State and Defense to maximize benefit to Alliance strength and security.

*Question.* In such a scenario, would putting more troops in Poland and the Baltics be a useful response or a harmful one?

*Answer.* Respectfully, I'm unable to provide a complete answer to a hypothetical. If confirmed, I would work with Congress as well as the Departments of State and Defense to maximize benefit to Alliance strength and security.

*Question.* Do you believe that nuclear weapons are inherent to NATO's strength in deterring and defending against enemies of the alliance?

*Answer.* NATO utilizes an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defense capabilities for its deterrence and defense. As Allies reiterated in their June 2021 Brussels Summit Communique, "as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance." If confirmed, I commit to work with Allies to provide for our collective security, including maintaining a safe, effective, and credible nuclear deterrence.

*Question.* Do you commit to maintaining NATO's nuclear arsenal?

*Answer.* As Allies reiterated in the June 2021 Brussels Summit Communique, "as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance." If confirmed, I will coordinate with Allies to support NATO's deterrence and defense posture, including NATO's nuclear deterrence posture, which relies on U.S. nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe and the capabilities and infrastructure provided by Allies concerned.

*Question.* What role do U.S. military exercises with NATO Allies play in strengthening U.S. and Allied warfighting capabilities, building interoperability between NATO members, and signaling resolve both to other Allies and adversaries like Russia?

*Answer.* NATO conducts a variety of posture management activities, which are critical to maintaining NATO's deterrence and defense posture. NATO's exercises credibly demonstrate its ability to deliver warfighting capabilities where and when needed. United States military exercises with Allies test and improve interoperability and are a concrete manifestation of NATO's resolve. If confirmed, I commit to work with Congress, the Department of Defense, and our Allies and partners to continue to build capabilities, increase readiness, and signal resolve to our adversaries.

*Question.* Do you believe the current scope, scale, and frequency of U.S. military exercises in Europe is sufficient to fulfill these objectives? If confirmed, do you commit to working with Allies to expand-or at least maintain-the current scope, scale, and frequency of U.S. military exercises in Europe?

*Answer.* NATO is the most successful Alliance in history, preventing the outbreak of war between major powers in Europe for over 70 years. U.S. and NATO's exercises are essential to maintain deterrence, readiness, and interoperability and reassure our Allies. If confirmed, I will work with our Allies to strengthen NATO's credible deterrence and defense posture, including through exercises.

*Question.* Do you believe U.S./NATO military exercises are provocative to Russia? If confirmed, how will you reconcile Russian concerns with the need to enhance NATO's warfighting capabilities and strengthen Allies?

*Answer.* Russian accusations that the United States and NATO demonstrate hostile intent through exercises are disingenuous. NATO's activities are predictable, transparent, defensive, and designed to improve readiness and demonstrate the Alliance's capability and resolve to repulse armed attack. U.S. and NATO's exercises are essential to maintain deterrence, readiness, and interoperability and reassure our Allies. If confirmed, I will work with our Allies to strengthen NATO's credible deterrence and defense posture, including through exercises.

*Question.* Do you believe it is accurate or fair to equate U.S. multinational exercises like Defender with large-scale Russian exercises like Zapad?

*Answer.* The United States is transparent about its activities; Russia is not. We are transparent about our exercises, conduct them safely, and notify Russia appropriately. U.S. and NATO exercises help reassure our Allies, and transparency as undertaken by the United States and NATO contribute to stability and predictability with Russia. Russia misuses the Vienna Document notification system to thwart transparency of its exercises and conducts large-scale snap exercises, such as its buildup along the border with Ukraine in spring 2021. If confirmed, I pledge to work with Allies to ensure that false Russian narratives about U.S. and NATO posture management activities do not undermine Allies' determination to signal Allied resolve and build readiness and interoperability through planned, challenging exercises.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIANNE SMITH BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* What do you view as the key challenges to alliance cohesion within NATO? What role do you see for the U.S. administration and the U.S. Congress in addressing these challenges?

*Answer.* For over 70 years, Allies have maintained cohesion to provide collective security and prosperity to member nations. Today, however, the weakening of democratic values in some member states is tearing at Alliance cohesion. As the recent NATO 2030 report stressed, the key to NATO's success is its ability to maintain unity and resolve. If confirmed, I look forward to increasing our engagement with Allies, including having sometimes difficult but necessary conversations about both our shared values and our shared challenges. I will also work to maintain bipartisan support for NATO and look forward to consulting with Congress and welcoming congressional delegations to Brussels.



*Question.* How should NATO respond to political developments in NATO member states, such as Turkey, that run counter to the democratic principles on which the alliance was founded?

*Answer.* NATO is a defensive Alliance. Simultaneously, NATO is an Alliance of values, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. NATO takes decisions on the basis of consensus, and Allies must find ways forward on common priorities. Allies must also be ready to voice—either privately or publicly—concern about actions inconsistent with Allies’ commitments, including concerns about democratic backsliding in Allied member states. If confirmed I look forward to working with Congress to foster a constructive dialogue in the Alliance about these issues.

*Question.* Should NATO consider monitoring or sanctioning member states that violate NATO’s foundational principles?

*Answer.* The North Atlantic Treaty states in Article 2 that “all Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being.” For over 70 years, Allies have maintained cohesion to provide collective security and prosperity to member nations. The key to NATO’s success is its ability to maintain unity and resolve, and, if confirmed, I will ensure we hold Allies accountable to the same set of values.

*Question.* Will you, as Ambassador, continue to press for increased allied defense spending?

*Answer.* Allies have committed, as recently as the June 2021 NATO Summit, to continue to share the responsibility of our collective security against new and existing threats, both conventional and non-conventional. If confirmed, I will urge those Allies that are not on track to meet the Wales Pledge by 2024 to continue making progress toward that shared and important goal. In addition, I will urge allies to focus on other important aspects of their national defense, including readiness, force generation, and capability gaps. I will also work with Allies, and with Congress, if confirmed, on a shared understanding of NATO burden sharing that captures the wide range of tasks—including cyber security—that the Alliance is now undertaking. We must ensure the Alliance has the sufficient, capable, and ready integrated defense posture required to maintain a credible defense and deterrence in the 21st century threat environment.

*Question.* How do you view the potential for burden-sharing that looks beyond national defense budgets to include available military capabilities, contributions to allied missions, and efforts to counter hybrid threats?

*Answer.* Allies have committed, as recently as the June 2021 NATO Summit, to continue to share the responsibility of our collective security against new and existing threats, both conventional and non-conventional. If confirmed, I will urge those Allies that are not on track to meet the Wales Pledge by 2024 to continue making progress toward that shared and important goal. In addition, I will urge allies to focus on other important aspects of their national defense, including readiness, force generation, and capability gaps. I will also work with Allies, and with Congress, if confirmed, on a shared understanding of NATO burden sharing that captures the wide range of tasks—including cyber security—that the Alliance is now undertaking. We must ensure the Alliance has the sufficient, capable, and ready integrated defense posture required to maintain a credible defense and deterrence in the 21st century threat environment.

*Question.* How adequately is NATO addressing the defense and security implications of increased Chinese investment and political influence in Europe?

*Answer.* This administration is deeply concerned about the dangers posed to Transatlantic security by the PRC’s investments in critical infrastructure, advanced technologies, and modern military capabilities, including missiles that can target all NATO Allied countries. At the June 2021 NATO Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government declared that the PRC’s “stated ambitions and assertive behavior present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security.” If confirmed, I will continue our close collaboration with Allies to address the challenge from Beijing realistically, strategically, and systematically.

*Question.* To what extent is there consensus within the alliance on how best to respond to security challenges from the Chinese Government?

*Answer.* Decision-making by consensus is never easy, especially with 30 Allies with individual opinions and threat perceptions. However, Allies have come together and found common ground to chart a path to the future throughout the past 70 years, on many global challenges. Today is no different. If confirmed, I commit to consult closely with Allies to build consensus on approaches that advance U.S. policy objectives on the PRC. Allies showed the ability to find common ground on complicated policy issues like how to address the PRC in the recent NATO Summit Communiqué, and I am confident we can find a way to address the security environment in the next Strategic Concept as well as other venues.

*Question.* How effective are current U.S. and NATO efforts to deter Russian aggression in Europe, and what more can be done?

*Answer.* The United States has worked with Allies at NATO to maintain a firm message to Russia that there can be no return to “business as usual” until there is a clear, constructive change in Russia’s behavior. The NATO Alliance pursues a dual track approach to Russia, balancing openness to political discussion—on the basis of reciprocity—with strong and credible deterrence and defense, including on NATO’s eastern flank. If confirmed, I look forward to working with our Allies to ensure NATO continues to bolster its deterrence and defense posture, increases focus on capabilities, readiness, and force generation, and maintains unity in the face of Russian aggression.

*Question.* To what extent do you expect sustained political support in Europe for NATO’s firm stance on Russia?

*Answer.* Allies agree Russia is the primary geopolitical threat in the Euro-Atlantic area. At the June 2021 NATO Summit, Allies publicly affirmed that NATO has suspended all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia, while remaining open to political dialogue. Until Russia makes clear and constructive changes to its behavior, there can be no return to “business as usual”. Allies also affirmed that NATO will respond to the deteriorating security environment by enhancing its deterrence and defense posture, including by a forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance. If confirmed, I will work to maintain Allied unity in the face of Russian aggression.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIANNE SMITH BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* What are the implications for the security of NATO’s Baltic members from Belarus’ planned installation of Russia’s S-400 Air Defense systems?

*Answer.* Since Russia’s 2014 invasion of Ukraine, NATO has implemented the most significant reinforcement of its eastern flank in the post-Cold War era, including the Baltic Air Policing mission. President Lukashenka’s comments that Belarus may procure new systems from Russia, including the S-400, is of concern. NATO is committed to the security of the entire Alliance, including Baltic Allies, and will respond appropriately to the deployment of additional Russian military capability in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with the Departments of State and Defense, Congress, and NATO Allies on appropriate measures of support for Baltic Allies and NATO’s regional partners.

*Question.* How will you engage with NATO to counter the growing belligerence of Russia and its encroachment into Belarus?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Allies at NATO to maintain a firm message to Russia that there can be no return to “business as usual” until there is a clear, constructive change in Russia’s behavior. I will also ensure NATO continues to bolster its deterrence and defense posture. The Alliance has taken several steps to express deep concern over the situation in Belarus, from restricting Belarusian access to NATO HQ to condemning Lukashenka’s actions in the June 2021 Summit Communiqué. If confirmed I will seek ways to continue to hold both Russia and Belarus accountable for destabilizing activity.

*Question.* How does the situation in Afghanistan affect our relationship with NATO allies?

*Answer.* U.S. standing within NATO remains strong. After twenty years, Allies agreed to end our military engagement in Afghanistan. This reflects our success delivering justice to those who attacked us on September 11th and disrupting terrorists seeking to use Afghanistan as a safe haven to attack us. Allies decided to reassess where it made the most sense to position our militaries based on the global

threat picture as it exists today, not two decades ago. The United States worked side by side with Allies and partners in Afghanistan, strengthening the ability of our military and civilian personnel to work effectively together. If confirmed, I will continue the close consultations with Allies, as we have done since before the withdrawal, when all Allies decided to leave with us. I will also look forward to consulting with the Allies on the “lessons learned” process they are currently conducting on the broader mission in Afghanistan.

*Question.* Message to NATO allies about the U.S. commitment to coordinated operations in defense of the alliance?

*Answer.* NATO remains history’s strongest military alliance, and the United States will continue our leadership role within it. The U.S. commitment to the Alliance and to Article 5 is ironclad. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to support NATO defensive operations, as well as operations that enhance regional security in other ways. For example, NATO Mission Iraq is expanding to broaden the capacity of the Iraqi Government’s security institutions. Kosovo Force (KFOR) has bolstered the regional security environment in the Balkans for twenty years.

*Question.* How would you work with NATO partners to discourage Turkey from moving forward with its S-400 Air Defense integration?

*Answer.* The Biden administration has clearly expressed that Russian S-400s are incompatible with NATO equipment and Turkey’s NATO commitments. It is a policy priority for the United States to prevail on Turkey not to retain S-400 and not to purchase additional Russian materiel. As the Biden administration has made clear to Turkey, any new purchase of Russian military equipment would risk triggering CAATSA sanctions separate from and in addition to those imposed in December 2020. At the same time, Turkey is our Ally, and the United States and Turkey share interests in countering terrorism, ending the conflict in Syria, and ensuring regional stability. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and engaging Turkey.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIANNE SMITH BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* I recently had a call with 26 Ambassadors from NATO-allied countries, and all were unanimous in their calls for NATO coordination on Afghanistan. Many of our allies in NATO and others in Europe have also publicly expressed their frustrations regarding how the United States handled the withdrawal and the lack of coordination with them. I am concerned with how this may affect the strength of the Alliance in the immediate future.

- How do you see the current state of relations with our NATO allies following our withdrawal from Afghanistan? What will you do to reassure our allies of our commitment to coordination through NATO, if confirmed?

*Answer.* Since Allies invoked Article 5 and went into Afghanistan after al-Qaeda, we have adhered to the “in together, consult together, leave together” approach. Indeed, as the Secretary General confirmed in recent days, the United States consulted with the Allies throughout the process of ending NATO’s military presence in Afghanistan. NATO is the foundation of Euro-Atlantic collective defense. The Alliance has experienced and overcome divisive issues in the past because of the strength of our approach based on consultation and consensus. If confirmed, I will continue this tradition of close consultation that prevents any issue from detracting from NATO accomplishing its core tasks.

*Question.* How do you think the United States should respond to the calls for greater European security independent of NATO and the United States?

*Answer.* The Biden administration is committed to re-engaging European allies and revitalizing our alliances. If confirmed, I would welcome European efforts to strengthen European defense including by spending more on defense, insofar as this contributes to Allies’ fulfillment of their Wales Pledge commitments. However, the notion of European strategic autonomy risks undermining the primacy of NATO in ensuring Europe’s defense, duplicating effort between the EU and NATO, and weakening Transatlantic relations. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with Allies and partners to reinforce to all Allies the unparalleled value of the Transatlantic Alliance, rooted in the sacrosanct Article 5 commitment.

*Question.* The Taliban has tried to tell the world that it is different than it was in 1996. But their approach and perspective on women has clearly not evolved and as such, we must continue to hold the Taliban to account, in partnership with our allies.

- If confirmed, how will you work through NATO to find ways to support the rights of Afghan women and girls under Taliban rule? What specific actions should NATO take as a bloc?

*Answer.* NATO has been clear that it will continue to hold the Taliban to its commitments, especially on counterterrorism and with respect to the rights of all Afghans. The Taliban has said many things, but we have told them in no uncertain terms we are watching their actions to assess our possible future direction with them. The United States and NATO Allies are considering how to use our full diplomatic, economic, and assistance toolkits to support the peaceful, stable future the Afghan people deserve. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with you on ensuring the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, in particular, remain in the Alliance's focus.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to reassure our allies in NATO of the strong U.S. commitment? What specific steps will you take to strengthen coordination with and within the Alliance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will reassure Allies our commitment to collective defense under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty is ironclad. For over 70 years, Allies have maintained cohesion to provide collective security and prosperity to member nations. The key to NATO's success is its ability to maintain unity, and the NATO 2030 agenda affirmed the importance of consultation to the Alliance's success. If confirmed, I look forward to increasing our engagement with Allies, including having difficult but necessary conversations. I will also work to maintain bipartisan support for NATO and look forward to consulting with Congress and welcoming congressional delegations to Brussels.

*Question.* I am concerned by the actions of an emboldened Russia in the Black Sea region, following several recent aggressive incidents by the Russians.

- What more can be done to support freedom of navigation in the Black Sea?

*Answer.* The Biden administration attaches high importance to security and stability in the Black Sea littoral. Through cooperation with NATO Allies and partners, including presence and exercises, the United States is bolstering collective security in the Black Sea region. As the Biden administration has made clear to Russia, aggression is unacceptable in the territory and territorial waters of its sovereign neighbors, as well as in international waters and airspace. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and our Allies to develop and implement a Black Sea security strategy that bolsters cooperation among our littoral state Allies and partners.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIANNE SMITH BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Nord Stream 2*

*Question.* If Nord Stream 2 is brought online it will provide Russia with energy hegemony over our NATO allies. Those allies have conveyed in public that they will be significantly more vulnerable not just to energy coercion but to military aggression, across NATO's Eastern flank.

- Please assess the security risks to NATO, and especially NATO's eastern flank, that would be created if Nord Stream 2 was completed.

*Answer.* The Nord Stream 2 pipeline is a Russian geopolitical project that undercuts the energy security of a significant part of the Euro-Atlantic community. U.S. opposition to Nord Stream 2 centers around the Kremlin's malign activities, including its aggression against Ukraine and past use of energy as a weapon through gas supply cut-offs and disruptions. The administration continues to work with Germany, Ukraine, and other Allies and partners to reduce the risks of an operational Nord Stream 2 pipeline, including through the package of measures detailed in the July 21, 2021 U.S.-Germany Joint Statement on support for Ukraine, European Energy Security, and our Climate Goals. If confirmed, I will work with our NATO Allies and partners to both address the repercussions of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and strengthen European energy security.

*Question.* If Nord Stream 2 is brought online it will provide Russia with energy hegemony over our NATO allies. Those allies have conveyed in public that they will be significantly more vulnerable not just to energy coercion but to military aggression, across NATO's Eastern flank.

- In your understanding, what can the United States still do to stop Nord Stream 2 from being completed, in order to avert these risks?

*Answer.* The Biden administration opposes Nord Stream 2 and believes that this Russian geopolitical project is a bad deal for both Ukraine and Europe. That said, the pipeline was over 90 percent complete when this administration came into office, and sanctions could not stop its construction. Gazprom announced on September 10, 2021 that construction on the pipeline was complete. Throughout the process of testing, inspecting, and certifying, and otherwise operationalizing the pipeline, the United States will continue to oppose Nord Stream 2 and work with Allies and partners to reduce the risks of an operational Nord Stream 2 pipeline, including through the package of measures detailed in the July 21, 2021 U.S.-Germany Joint Statement on Support for Ukraine, European Energy Security, and our Climate Goals. The administration remains committed to implementing PEESA, as amended; it has sanctioned seven persons related to Nord Stream 2 and identified 16 of the vessels as blocked property and continues to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BARBARA A. LEAF BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Israel*

*Question.* This week marks the one year anniversary of the historic Abraham Accords, normalizing relations between Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain, which have the potential to increase security and prosperity for Israel and other countries in the Middle East.

- Will you commit to fully supporting Israel's right to self-defense and Qualitative Military Edge, including through U.S. military assistance?

*Answer.* Yes. The United States has a long-standing, unshakable commitment to Israel's security, one important component of which is substantial security assistance to preserve Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over potential regional threats. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to continue this legacy.

*Iraq*

*Question.* The U.S. remains committed to a sovereign, stable and democratic Iraq. The recent agreement on July 26 between President Biden and Prime Minister Kadhimi to end U.S. combat operations signals a hopeful new phase in the U.S.-Iraqi partnership. However, Iran continues to exercise malign influence in the country and its militias continue to target U.S. facilities while extorting and murdering ordinary Iraqis.

- What should the U.S.'s assistance priorities be in Iraq? What further steps can the U.S. take to boost Iraq's ties with its Arab neighbors and make the country less dependent on Iranian energy?

*Answer.* U.S. assistance in Iraq should focus on democratic and economic reforms to reduce corruption, facilitate investment, develop a domestic private sector that can generate badly-needed employment for Iraq's youthful population, and improve the lives of the Iraqi people.

The United States continues to press Iraq to do more in terms of generating and delivering electricity for the public, reducing its reliance on Iranian electricity and gas. This requires Iraq to capture flared gas, employ grid modernization to reduce transmission losses, develop renewable energy potential, and to import power from other neighbors. The United States is ready to help develop Iraq's renewable energy sector.

With regard to electricity grid interconnections, the United States has championed the work to connect Iraq's grid to that of the GCC Interconnection Authority. This interconnection would allow Gulf countries to sell 500 megawatts of power to Iraq. The United States also supports an interconnection between the Iraqi and Jordanian grids. While Iraq is contracting out its portion of the transmission lines, USAID is supporting the Jordanian side. Iraq has moved slowly on implementing its side.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the current U.S. diplomatic footprint in Iraq? Should the U.S. boost that footprint to better counter Iranian influence? What resources would be required to do that safely and do you commit to working to swiftly restore consular operations at Embassy Baghdad?

*Answer.* U.S. policies. In Summer 2021, the Embassy conducted a fresh staffing review given changing circumstances, and Department leadership is currently considering the results. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring all of our posts, including Baghdad, are secure and appropriately staffed for their mission.

If confirmed, I commit to working to restore consular operations at Embassy Baghdad. Several Compound Access Control (CAC) points sustained damage in the December 2019/January 2020 attack, leading to a suspension of consular operations. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) worked with Diplomatic Security to establish an interim consular screening facility for use by U.S. citizens. OBO is currently in the process of awarding a design and construction contract for the repair of the Main CAC to allow full consular services to be restarted.

*Question.* How important is it to reopen the U.S. Consulate in Basra? If confirmed, what conditions will you need to see before moving to reopen it?

*Answer.* I view it as vitally important that the United States engage with all segments of Iraqi society, including Basrawis and others in southern Iraq. Basrah remains one of the key economic engines of Iraq given its vast oil and gas resources, but also remains one of the poorest provinces and suffers from climate change and a lack of potable water. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues at the State Department and throughout the administration to expand our diplomatic outreach across Iraq. There are many issues that would have to be taken into consideration before resuming operations at the consulate in Basrah, such as the necessary security measures, as well as congressional and legal requirements.

#### *Lebanon*

*Question.* Lebanon's economic crisis has pushed middle class Lebanese into poverty but the country's political elite still show no appetite for needed reforms and still seem to expect a no strings attached bailout if the suffering in Lebanon gets bad enough.

- How does the US balance the need to help alleviate suffering in Lebanon which directly contributes to security and stability not only in Lebanon but in Israel and the region more broadly but also ensure our assistance is being used to incentivize reforms?

*Answer.* Current U.S. assistance programs in Lebanon are designed to directly support the Lebanese people as they weather the current economic and humanitarian crisis, as well as support key partners and institutions, such as the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces, which are critical to stability in Lebanon and the region. If confirmed, I will reinforce to the Lebanese Government that concrete actions remain crucial—indeed, a condition—to unlocking longer-term structural support to Lebanon.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the new Lebanese Government? Is it capable of delivering for the Lebanese people and being a capable partner for the United States?

*Answer.* The United States welcomed the announcement that Lebanon's leaders agreed to form a new government under the leadership of Prime Minister Najib Mikati. The formation of a government is just the first step to halting Lebanon's terrible downward spiral; the follow-on steps must include enacting reforms to address the economic crisis, bring more accountability and transparency to a system that is rife with political corruption, and keep elections on track for next year. The solution to Lebanon's dire problems lie in Lebanese hands. If confirmed, I stand ready to support the new government as well as hold its members accountable for the hard work ahead.

#### *Lebanon and Syrian Sanctions Liability*

*Question.* I recognize the need to import energy from Egypt and Jordan to ease the suffering of hard-hit Lebanese and to prevent Iran and Hezbollah from capitalizing on a crisis that they are in large part created. I am also aware that the infrastructure for such a project already exists and I appreciate the willingness of Jordan and Egypt to help the people of Lebanon. However, I am also concerned about such a project running afoul of U.S. sanctions on Syria the risk that such imports could normalize the Assad regime's brutality.

- What sanctions liability do you see in such an import project and how do we balance these competing needs by getting the Lebanese people the relief they need without rewarding the Assad regime for more than ten years of atrocities against its own people?

Answer. Lebanon is currently experiencing an acute energy crisis that is having a tremendous impact on critical infrastructure such as hospitals and the water supply. U.S. assistance programs are designed to directly support the Lebanese people; Egypt and Jordan have recently offered a set of potential bilateral and multilateral agreements that could help Lebanon begin to address its power crisis in a sustainable and transparent manner. U.S. sanctions on the Assad regime remain an important tool to press for accountability, to include for its atrocious record of human rights abuse. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of the Treasury and our partners to ensure that any potential deal our partners reach is consistent with U.S. law, our broader policy priorities to mitigate any benefits to the Assad regime, and all relevant U.S. sanctions, and look forward to continuing to consult with Congress on this important issue.

#### *Syria*

*Question.* I am concerned that the Assad regime's apparent success in reestablishing full control of Daraa, despite prior diplomatic agreements that ensured a measure of local autonomy, will pave the way for an increased presence of Iranian backed militias, including Hezbollah, where they can continue to brutalize or displace the local population while menacing Israel and Jordan.

*Question.* Do you share these concerns and if so, what diplomatic measures can the administration take, both bilaterally and at the United Nations, to prevent additional civilian displacements and ensure Iranian militia activity does not further threaten Israel and Jordan?

Answer. The United States continues to engage with partners and allies as well as the U.N. to encourage all parties to adhere to ceasefires in Syria. The United States is also strongly committed to countering Iran and the militia groups it supports in Syria and will work with allies and partners to push back against Iran's destabilizing activities. The Biden-Harris administration is concerned by the grave conditions in Dara'a that resulted in the displacement of civilians and the blockage of humanitarian aid and has raised these concerns at the U.N. and with key Security Council members. If confirmed, I will continue our support for humanitarian organizations that are trying to deliver aid and will continue to push for increased access.

#### *Syria-U.N.-led Political Process for Syria*

*Question.* It is broadly acknowledged that the U.N.-led political process for Syria under UNSCR 2254 is broken due to Russian-enabled Assad regime intransigence. There is further a push by both Russia and the Assad regime to normalize ties with other Arab states like Jordan the UAE and Bahrain.

- What alternatives does the administration have to advancing the goal of an end to Syria's civil war in light of the gridlock in the U.N. process?

Answer. There is little question that unstinting Russian and Iranian military and other support have enabled the Assad regime to deflect international demands for accountability and political change for over a decade. The United States is engaged with U.N. Special Envoy Geir Pedersen, our allies, and other international partners in order to explore options and encourage all possible efforts to advance a political resolution to the conflict. The Biden-Harris administration supports the U.N.-facilitated, Syrian-led process laid out within the parameters of UNSCR 2254, including a nationwide ceasefire, the release of arbitrarily detained Syrians, and free and fair elections monitored by the U.N. If confirmed, I will continue to engage diplomatically to press for an end to the Syrian people's suffering.

*Question.* What do you see driving our Arab partners' increasing engagement with Damascus and how can U.S. diplomacy halt this creeping normalization?

Answer. There appears to be a belief among some countries in the region that engagement with Assad will lead to a reduction of the latter's relationship with Iran. I am skeptical on that score. The United States will not itself reestablish or upgrade diplomatic relations with the Assad regime. If confirmed, I will urge states in the region to consider carefully what they might require of the regime on behalf of the Syrian people—whether accountability for the missing or detained, or access to humanitarian aid and security, which the regime currently denies much of the country. The United States will remain engaged with the U.N., our allies, and other international partners on the best way forward in Syria.

*Question.* Do you think we can be doing more to ensure accountability and good governance in the Autonomous Administered Areas of North East Syria?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration understands political and economic stability are key to the ability of our local partners in Syria to focus on fighting ISIS. In one of its first acts, the administration lifted the U.S. freeze on stabilization assistance for Syria and announced in March almost \$50 million for U.S. stabilization efforts in northeast Syria and will continue these efforts with FY 21 resources; the administration's FY 22 request for Syria reflects further robust support. U.S. assistance in northeast Syria prioritizes stabilization activities that contribute to the restoration of daily life by closing gaps in local authority capacities; supporting transitional justice, justice and accountability, and civil society programs; and addressing vulnerabilities previously exploited by ISIS.

#### *Egypt*

*Question.* What do you see as the largest priorities for security assistance to Egypt? How can U.S. engagement promote further energy development and security cooperation between Egypt and its neighbors, especially in the realm of clean and renewable energy?

*Answer.* I see the highest priority security challenges for Egypt as being the threat stemming from extremist groups in Libya and the Sahel, border security and maritime security. U.S. security assistance is appropriately focused on helping Egypt develop and maintain the capacity to address those priorities while emphasizing professionalization of its forces and support for human rights and international humanitarian law. Egypt has enormous solar and wind potential, and has made significant investments in the past decade to increase the share of renewables in its energy production. I am eager to work with Egypt to fulfill its aspirations to export clean energy to its neighbors, which will require significant investments in upgrading regional energy connectivity.

*Question.* Egypt faces the very real prospect of reduced flow from the Nile River. What more can the US do to help Egypt cope with such a future?

*Answer.* I well appreciate the singular importance of the Nile flow to Egypt's economy, especially its agriculture. I am pleased to see that Egypt is taking steps to modernize its agricultural systems and increase efficiencies in water use to better manage the growing demands for this critical resource in the future. U.S. assistance has brought improved education, clean water, better health, economic growth, and other benefits to the Egyptian people. The Department is working with Egypt to promote economic growth that underpins stability, and to advance our commercial and environmental goals.

*Question.* If confirmed, what message will you send to Egypt regarding its purchase of Russian Su-35's?

*Answer.* Dissuading Egypt from acquiring Su-35 fighter aircraft or any other major new military equipment from Russia is a key priority for the United States. The U.S. Government has consistently warned Egypt at the highest levels that accepting delivery of Su-35s or any new major military acquisitions from Russia risks triggering mandatory CAATSA Section 231 sanctions and negatively affecting our defense relationship and security cooperation. If confirmed, I will reinforce this message to the Government of Egypt.

*Question.* If confirmed, what message will you send to Egypt regarding ongoing human rights abuses, including the harassment and detention of the family members of U.S.-based activists? What leverage does the U.S. retain in this regard?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about the human rights situation in Egypt. If confirmed, I will communicate U.S. expectations to the Government of Egypt of tangible and sustained progress on improving its human rights record. The Biden-Harris administration supports greater space for Egyptian civil society and human rights organizations, as well as respect for freedom of expression. Secretary Blinken's recent decision on Foreign Military Financing showed that the Biden-Harris administration considers human rights to be a national security interest. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government of Egypt to address these human rights concerns. Promoting a stable, prosperous Egypt, where the Government protects the human rights of all individuals and fulfills the aspirations of the Egyptian people, is a core objective of U.S. policy.

#### *Peace Agreement in Libya*

*Question.* The peace agreement in Libya and the national unity government that it brought about present an important opportunity for Libyans and their neighbors



in Africa and around the Mediterranean to turn the page on ten years of violence and chaos. However, challenges remain, most notably the continuing presence of Russian and Turkish-backed mercenaries, which represent, in my mind, the biggest threat to stability in Libya and the elections scheduled there for December.

- What steps can be taken, with the Libyan Government, along with the international community to get foreign fighters out of Libya?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration is in discussions with European and regional allies and partners, the interim Libyan Government, and others on how progress can be made towards the full withdrawal of all foreign military forces, foreign fighters, and mercenaries consistent with the October 23, 2020 Libyan ceasefire agreement. To that end, if confirmed, I am committed to charting a path forward toward national elections with the interim Libyan Government, regional partners, and the U.N. Those elections will themselves be a critical point along the way of getting foreign forces out of Libya. If confirmed, I am also committed to supporting the October 23, 2020, Libyan ceasefire agreement and its full implementation as called for in UNSCR 2570.

*Question.* What further steps should the US take to ensure that presidential and parliamentary elections are held on schedule in Libya?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration is in discussions with Libyan political leaders on the urgent need for them to agree on a constitutional and legal framework for elections. The Biden-Harris administration is also coordinating with European and regional allies and partners to ensure a united position from the international community on the importance of holding on-time elections. USAID has helped the Libyan High National Election Commission advance technical preparations for the elections so that they are prepared to hold the elections quickly once a legal basis is agreed. Ultimately, it will be up to Libyan political officials to forge compromises to ensure elections take place on December 24, and the administration has vigorously pressed the parties to do so.

#### *Turkey and Libya's Maritime Border Agreement*

*Question.* I have been vocal in my criticism of the maritime border agreement between Turkey and Libya's previous Government of National Accord, which I believe was based on a flawed understanding of international maritime law and a complete disregard for the legitimate claims of neighboring Mediterranean countries, including Greece and the Republic of Cyprus.

- What steps can the U.S. take to ensure that any such agreement is coordinated with Libya and Turkey's Mediterranean neighbors and takes into account their legitimate claims in the Mediterranean?

Answer. The Memorandum of Understanding on maritime boundaries between Turkey and Libya's former Government of National Accord has raised tensions in the region and has been unhelpful to efforts to negotiate a solution to the conflict. The United States has called on all parties to refrain from actions that risk heightening tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. As a longstanding policy, the United States encourages states to resolve their disputes peacefully in accordance with international law.

#### *U.S. Influence in Libya*

*Question.* If confirmed, what facts would you need to see on the ground to move forward with a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence inside Libya? What further resources would you need?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration's intent is to resume regular diplomatic activities in Libya when the security situation permits and the necessary security measures are in place. The process for resumption of diplomatic operations entails a thorough Department analysis and review, careful logistical and security planning, interagency coordination to meet security, policy, and legal requirements, and congressional notification procedures. The administration will keep Congress informed with regard to any resources it would need.

*Question.* In the meantime, what further steps can be taken to maintain U.S. influence in the country?

Answer. Since the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli suspended operations in July 2014, officers with the Libya External Office in Tunis have conducted periodic day-trips into Libya for diplomatic engagement and frequently engaged with Libyan interlocutors in third-country locations. The administration, including Special Envoy Ambassador Richard Norland, also coordinates closely with European allies, countries in the region, and the United Nations. The United States co-chairs the Berlin Process Eco-

conomic Working Group through which international partners help Libya make crucial economic reforms. Foreign assistance also boosts U.S. influence in the areas of the economy, access to water, and combatting climate change.

#### *Tunisia*

*Question.* How can U.S. engagement most effectively help Tunisia reach a sound economic footing?

*Answer.* The United States shares the Tunisian people's goal of a democratic government that can address the immediate economic and health crises facing the country. In that connection, our assistance promotes sustainable, inclusive economic growth and mitigates the effects of COVID-19. If confirmed, I will urge President Saied to designate a Prime Minister without further delay and enable formation of a government so that the United States and our partners can more effectively assist Tunisia in economic growth and development, particularly via the IMF.

*Question.* What more can the U.S. do to bolster both Tunisian civil society and the successful and productive security relationship between our two countries?

*Answer.* U.S. assistance, consistent messaging, and diplomatic engagement will continue to support civil society and civic engagement, which will be key to the success of any political and economic reforms. If confirmed, I am committed to strengthening our bilateral security relationship, through which the U.S. Government has provided over \$928 million since 2011. This aid has improved the ability of the Tunisian military and civilian law enforcement agencies to conduct counter terrorism operations, secure the country's borders, provide citizen-oriented policing, and protect human rights while operating within the rule of law.

#### *Yemen*

*Question.* The administration's renewal of assistance to northern Yemen and insistence that the Houthis allow further humanitarian access there has helped to hold off a drastic worsening of an already terrible humanitarian crisis. However, the Houthis ongoing advance on Marib threatens to displace hundreds of thousands of already desperate Yemenis and shows a lack of interest by the Houthis in a peaceful end to the fighting, especially when coupled with their ongoing attacks against Saudi Arabia using Iranian missiles and drones.

- What is behind the Houthis determination to press on with a costly and destructive offensive? What steps can the U.S. take to bring them back to the negotiating table?

*Answer.* The Houthis remain intransigent and focused on their military offensive against Marib, which is the single biggest impediment to a national ceasefire and follow-on political negotiations. Apparently determined to take the oil-rich province, the Houthis are demonstrating wholesale indifference to the humanitarian cost. The offensive is exacerbating Yemen's humanitarian crisis, puts at immediate risk some one million IDPs and other civilians and is triggering broader instability. There is an international consensus on the urgency of resolving this conflict; if confirmed, I will work with U.S. Special Envoy Tim Lenderking and our international partners to push the Houthis to engage with the new U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg in good faith and without preconditions. The United States continues to work with our international partners to apply pressure on the Houthis, to include via domestic and U.N. sanctions, and, if confirmed, I will continue that critical work.

*Question.* The lack of fuel imports remains a major humanitarian concern. What more can the U.S. do to push Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni Government to allow more fuel imports to be allowed into Yemen?

*Answer.* The United States remains committed to addressing the humanitarian situation in Yemen. We closely monitor and consistently raise the need for unrestricted fuel imports at Hudaydah with the highest levels of the Yemeni and Saudi Governments. In response to continued U.S. advocacy, the Republic of Yemen Government has cleared 17 fuel ships to enter the port of Hudaydah since March 2021. Food and other commodities for commercial and humanitarian purposes continue to flow through Hudaydah at normal rates, according to the U.N. Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM). Fuel imports through other Yemeni ports have increased, such that nationwide fuel imports are actually higher than average. That said, it is time for a different approach by the Hadi Government and the Saudi Government.

#### *Jordan*

*Question.* As you know, the current assistance Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the U.S. and Jordan is set to expire next year.

- What should be the U.S.'s priorities for the next MOU?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure U.S. assistance to Jordan through the next MOU is targeted to bolster the economic stability of this critical ally. A stable and secure Jordan allows us to jointly pursue shared regional security and economic goals. Economic Support Funds should foster self-reliance and capacity development of government and private sector counterparts towards implementing critical economic reform. To the degree the U.S. Government can incentivize needed structural reforms, Jordan can more rapidly open new pathways to economic growth. Foreign Military Financing should help ensure Jordan can continue to act as a close partner on a variety of shared security goals, including as a contributing member in the Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

*Question.* What further political and economic reforms do you think are needed to help Jordan get on to a more secure and sustainable footing?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will promote private-sector-led and inclusive economic growth in Jordan. The country requires reforms to enable the private sector to grow more rapidly, to attract foreign investment, increase the capacity of firms to compete on the global market, and significantly expand current employment levels. Other important reforms include improving public sector effectiveness; improving the business climate; deepening electricity and water sector sustainability; and including more women and youth in the formal economy.

*Question.* What further ways can the U.S. support sustainable water sources in Jordan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage Jordan to complete its national water desalination project, the Aqaba-Amman-Conveyance Project, in a timely and effective manner so that it addresses Jordan's water needs.

On July 8, Jordan and Israel announced an agreement to allow Jordan to purchase an additional and much needed 50 million cubic meters of water this year. If confirmed, I will encourage Jordan and Israel to finalize the agreement and continue to look for additional ways to increase water cooperation in the coming years. Expanding cooperation on the water issue will present additional opportunities to foster a healthier political relationship between the two countries.

*Question.* What is the potential for further cooperation between Israel and Jordan on the Red Sea-Dead Sea water project?

*Answer.* Both Israel and Jordan have indicated they no longer plan to pursue the Red Sea-Dead Sea water project. If confirmed, I will encourage Jordan to move out expeditiously on its national water desalination project, the Aqaba-Amman Conveyance Project, in a timely and effective manner so that it addresses Jordan's water needs.

#### *Gulf*

*Question.* Saudi Arabia's direct diplomatic engagement with Iran, facilitated by Baghdad, has been widely reported and is broadly considered an indicator that the Gulf states are not comfortable relying on JCPOA negotiations as a guarantor of their security against Iran's regional meddling. As a former US Ambassador to the UAE, I am confident you are very familiar with these sentiments.

- How do you perceive the utility of these ongoing talks and if confirmed, how will you work to ensure our regional partners, including the Gulf States as well as Israel, are integrated into Iran's nuclear talks?

*Answer.* I am aware of reports of multiple rounds of Saudi-Iranian talks facilitated by Iraq. Direct contacts and discussions between countries in the Gulf and Iran can be constructive in reducing tensions in the region; for the Gulf countries, these channels are also useful for making clear their requirements of Iran, including non-interference in their affairs. The UAE started such discussions in the summer of 2019, at a time of severely heightened tensions in the Gulf, and those exchanges continue today. Diplomacy is not a reward in this sense, but a vital means for securing their interests. Our Gulf partners and Israel have valid security concerns over Iran's destabilizing activity in the region. If confirmed, I will work with the Special Envoy for Iran, Rob Malley, to ensure our partners are consulted in the course of the JCPOA negotiations, as well as coordinate on U.S. efforts to deal with Iran's regional activities and to help our partners do the same.

#### *Red Sea / Horn of Africa*

*Question.* From the GERD dispute between Egypt and Ethiopia, to competition between Gulf States in the Horn of Africa, to maritime security along both sides of

the Red Sea, there is significant overlap between NEA and the Africa Bureau, especially along the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa.

- What aspects of cooperation between the two bureaus do you think are going well? What areas need improvement?

Answer. Bureaus in the department, including Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) and African Affairs (AF), must work closely together to ensure full coordination and cooperation on the full range of shared and overlapping issues, and across the geographical/bureaucratic seam. Sustained communication at the leadership level in Washington and in the field ensures that both Bureaus can overcome these seams, and if confirmed I will promote mechanisms to encourage such communication. If confirmed, I will provide the leadership and model the kind of close cooperation with AF that is critical for the success of our respective work. I will also work closely with the Department's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Jeffery Feltman, and ensure that NEA missions work collaboratively with AFRICOM.

If confirmed, I will also ensure that Red Sea and African issues are part of our regular conversations with key NEA Governments.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to improve cooperation with the Africa Bureau on issues that span this divide and to ensure that such issues facing sub-Saharan Africa are raised with governments in the Middle East?

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead by example, and ensure that NEA staff coordinate closely with colleagues in the AF Bureau and with the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Jeffery Feltman, as well as with AFRICOM. If confirmed, I will ensure that Red Sea and African issues are part of our regular conversation with key NEA Governments. If confirmed, I will also continue to ensure diplomacy, defense and development tools are brought together to address cross-cutting issues through the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership.

#### *Eastern Mediterranean Energy and Security*

*Question.* Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority have all joined the EastMed Gas Forum alongside Greece, Cyprus and Israel, greatly increasing the potential for cooperation among the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean on energy development and security, especially for clean and renewable energy sources.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to coordinate with both the European Affairs Bureau and the Bureau of Energy Resources to promote increased cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean?

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead by example, and ensure that NEA staff coordinate closely with colleagues in the European Affairs and AF Bureaus and with the Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa Jeffery Feltman, as well as with AFRICOM. If confirmed, I will ensure that Red Sea and African issues are part of our regular conversation with key NEA Governments. If confirmed, I will also continue to ensure diplomacy, defense and development tools are brought together to address cross-cutting issues through the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership.

#### *Great Power Competition in the Middle East*

*Question.* The administration has repeatedly insisted that it is pivoting away from the Middle East to focus on great power competition with Russia and China.

- How do you see your job unfolding within this new paradigm?

Answer. Global power competition happens around the globe, including in the Middle East. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to rebuilding and restoring U.S. partnerships across the region. If confirmed, I will energetically promote the value of a sustained and strategic partnership with the United States, a partnership that stands in stark contrast to the transactional relationships offered by the People's Republic of China and Russia. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues in the Bureaus of European Affairs (EUR) and East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP) to ensure that strategic priorities with respect to Russia and the People's Republic of China are regular agenda items in discussions with regional partners.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take as Assistance Secretary to counter Russian and Chinese influence in the Middle East and North Africa?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues in the Bureau of European Affairs (EUR) and the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP) to ensure that strategic priorities with respect to Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) are regular agenda items in discussions with regional partners. This will include empowering the three Regional China Officers deployed at embassies across the region to increase reporting, analysis, and engagement on PRC-related

issues. If confirmed, I will also work with our Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as well as our Bureau of Political Military Affairs, to ensure an approach that maintains our position as the premier partner in the region while elevating our values, including respect for human rights.

The administration's commitment to reducing regional tensions, banking the fires of conflict, building deep partnerships based on an affirmative agenda, and demonstrating the value of a sustained partnership with the United States remains the best approach to countering Russian and PRC influence across the region.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. BARBARA A. LEAF BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Great power competition often occurs outside of the Pacific. How do you plan to compete with Russia and China given the administration's apparent retreat from the Middle East?

*Answer.* The President's vision for a collaborative partnership with the countries of the Middle East comes in the wider context of a growing global challenge to our values of open societies and open economies. This challenge comes primarily from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia. Our strength as a nation resides in the very commitment the U.S. Government has demonstrated over decades to our partners, and to the values the United States brings to those relationships.

The administration seeks to deepen diplomatic, security, cultural, and economic engagements through an affirmative agenda grounded in our democratic values. If confirmed, I will work to demonstrate that partnership with the United States remains our best strategy for addressing global competition in the Middle East, now and into the future.

*Question.* The Iranian regime received an approximately \$4-5 billion windfall in sanctions relief as a result of the JCPOA. In 2017, Sec. Blinken indicated that the "few billion dollars that have wound up in Iran's coffers that had huge debts to pay and the money that was freed up as a result of the deal has mostly gone to pay those debts and to bolster the economy." However, a vast body of follow-on reporting indicates that a majority of sanctions relief was instead funneled to the regime's proxies in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen. As the Biden administration pursues sanctions relief as a part of its return to the JCPOA, what tools and safeguards exist that would prevent Iran from directing future sanctions relief to malign activities?

*Answer.* As the U.S. Government acknowledged at the time, although Iran devoted most of the resources it obtained through sanctions relief under the JCPOA toward bolstering its economy, it did use some of it for its military and its regional activities. Iran and its proxies and partners engaged in these activities prior to the JCPOA, after the conclusion of the JCPOA, and with increased aggressiveness after the U.S. exit from the JCPOA in 2018. An Iran with a nuclear weapon would present a threat of a far greater magnitude. The U.S. Government maintains a range of tools to combat terrorist financing and will continue to use these to counter Iran's destabilizing activities and support for terrorism. The administration will continue to use its considerable leverage—including sanctions that would remain in place in the event of a U.S. return to the JCPOA, the threat of sanctions re-imposition, and other joint action with our allies and partners—to protect U.S. interests.

*Question.* Both the Israelis and our partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council, who sit much closer to the Iranian threat, bemoaned a lack of consultations prior to the U.S. entry into the JCPOA. Further, many have characterized Special Envoy Malley's consultations as "one-way" and not responsive to their concerns. Do you commit to extensive consultations with Israel and our regional partners prior to making concessions to Iran? Will you seek Israel's concurrence before finalizing any proposed agreement or arrangement related to Iran's nuclear program?

*Answer.* Department officials, and in particular Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley, have been in close contact with partners in Israel and among the Gulf Arab states and will continue consulting closely with these key partners as this process proceeds. Every one of us shares a common interest: seeing to it that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* How do you address criticisms that the Biden administration re-engagement with Iran has only served to isolate Israel and our Gulf partners?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has an ironclad commitment to Israel's security. Alongside that commitment, the administration is focused on de-escalating tensions, banking the fires of conflict in Yemen, Libya and Syria, and enhancing stability throughout the Middle East. The Department has updated Israeli and Gulf counterparts regularly before and after negotiation rounds and is regularly engaged in discussions on our work to constrain and contain Iran's destabilizing regional activities. All of the Gulf countries have opened diplomatic channels with Tehran and are using them energetically for de-escalation; most of the channels pre-date the Biden-Harris administration.

*Question.* The JCPOA confronted the international community with several problematic sunset provisions on Iran's ability to receive and transfer conventional weapons (expired in 2020) and nuclear-related ballistic missile activity (expires in 2023). How will the Biden administration address re-imposing these restrictions in a more lasting manner—particularly given Russian and Chinese objections?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration remains concerned about Iran's nuclear capabilities as well as its ability to receive and transfer conventional weapons. The Department is working with its partners to address these, and the many other issues of concern with Iran. The administration believes that diplomacy is the best path forward on the nuclear challenge at this time, but is prepared to leverage all applicable authorities, including sanctions, against Iran for its provocative and destabilizing activities, including its ballistic missile development and provision of weapons to armed groups and other violent partners and proxies.

*Question.* Explain your strategic approach to promote sovereignty, diminish Iranian influence, and separate Iranian-backed proxies from legitimate security guarantors in Iraq and Lebanon.

*Answer.* I am committed to working closely with regional and European allies to diminish Iran's destabilizing activities across the region, including in Iraq and Lebanon.

The administration will continue to use its considerable leverage—including sanctions that would remain in place, the threat of sanctions re-imposition, and other joint action with our allies and partners—to protect U.S. interests and to promote wider security and stability in the region. If confirmed, I will deepen the good work led by our missions in the field, supporting and empowering moderates—whether in government or civil society—who support rule of law and the sovereignty of the state.

*Question.* How does the October 2020 expiration of the conventional weapons embargo affect Iran's ability to exert influence in the region?

*Answer.* The expiration of the U.N. conventional weapons arms embargo has not resulted in any discernable change in Iran's ability to exert influence in the region. For decades, Iran has taken actions that destabilize the region, including support for terrorism, developing its ballistic missile program, and providing weapons and materiel to proxy groups. The Biden-Harris administration will continue to use domestic authorities to dissuade countries from providing arms to Iran or buying them from Iran.

*Question.* In recent years, China has become Iran's preeminent oil and trading partner, providing Iran with crucial technological support to help develop its energy resources and other forms of infrastructure. In June 2020, China and Iran allegedly entered into a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership', which includes a maximum investment of \$400 billion to improve Iran's oil, gas, and transportation infrastructure. What impact does Chinese economic investment have on the efficacy of the international sanction regimes against Iran? What gains does China receive from such investment? How would the Chinese Government, or Chinese-based companies, benefit from the lifting of U.S. sanctions against Iran?

*Answer.* In March 2021, the PRC and Iran signed a 25-year strategic cooperation agreement, building on a bilateral Comprehensive Strategic Partnership signed in 2016. Such PRC partnerships are not unique. The PRC has Comprehensive Strategic Partnerships with a number of other countries in the region, which often include investment proposals that never materialize. The PRC's recently concluded agreement with Iran also likely includes such proposals.

Nevertheless, the Department is watching Iran's economic activities closely, including its economic engagement with China. The administration's current Iran-related sanctions remain in effect unless and until they are lifted, and the U.S. Government will of course continue to address efforts at sanctions evasion.

*Question.* How does the United States drive a wedge between or shape CCP-Iranian relations?

Answer. While competition defines the U.S. relationship with the People's Republic of China, there are other areas of cooperation; one of those is the effort to constrain Iran's nuclear program. Beijing has no interest in seeing Iran develop a nuclear weapon, given the profoundly destabilizing impact that would have in a region upon which China depends for its oil and other energy imports.

The Department will continue to engage with the PRC on this common interest and discourage Beijing from taking steps vis-à-vis Iran that threaten our interests.

*Question.* Please provide your view of the Abraham Accords and their impacts for regional security, economic cooperation, and prosperity in the region.

Answer. The Abraham Accords of 2020 between Israel and the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan represent an important new dynamic and a key opportunity to enhance peaceful co-existence and economic integration. The Accords have already proven to be a vehicle for economic growth, having spurred new trade and investment deals that previously would have been unthinkable. Over time, these unfolding relationships and the new economic partnerships they are fostering will create opportunities for the young and marginalized communities across the region.

*Question.* How do plan to expand on the Abraham Accords to broker additional normalization agreements and ensure that existing agreements reap tangible economic and security benefits?

Answer. I very much welcome the Abraham Accords. If confirmed, I am committed to working with countries across the region to deepen both the new relationships as well the historical relationships with Egypt and Jordan, and foster new ones. I will do this by engaging our missions throughout the region, highlighting the economic and security benefits of relations with Israel and leveraging the wide range of diplomatic tools at our disposal. If confirmed, I also look forward to learning from Israel's new partners in the region to better understand how we can work together to advance new normalization agreements and strengthen the existing ones.

*Question.* In 2016 John Kerry argued that there would be no "separate peace" between Israel and Arabs without first solving the issue of Palestinian statehood. What are your views on Palestinian statehood and its ties to additional normalization agreements? Doesn't re-inserting Palestinian statehood back into the peace process hinder prospects of further normalizations with Israel?

Answer. I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. By making Israel more secure and opening new channels for constructive dialogue and diplomacy between Israel and the Arab world, normalization agreements also bring with them the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Similarly, making progress towards a two-state solution may hasten new normalization agreements. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* What is your assessment of Palestinian leadership and its ability to reach consensus between Gaza and the West Bank on issues of statehood and support for terrorism?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Israel and the Palestinian Authority to restore calm in the West Bank and Gaza and keep flash point issues from flaring into violence. There are issues of good governance and accountability that affect the standing of the Palestinian Authority in the eyes of the Palestinian public, and that lie within the PA's hands to advance; there are at the same time steps that the Israeli Government can consider for enhancing the role of the PA in delivering services and economic opportunities. It is incumbent upon both sides to adopt an affirmative and practical approach to the conflict that encourages constructive, positive steps for providing the Palestinian people—whether in Gaza or the West Bank—greater economic opportunities while restoring the conditions that will make possible eventual direct negotiations of a two-state solution.

*Question.* In your view, how do Israeli-Arab normalization agreements affect the prospects for Israel-Palestinian peace negotiations?

Answer. All such agreements—whether the Abraham Accords, the historical peace agreements between Jordan and Egypt and Israel, or additional normalization agreements—contribute to diminishing the deep antipathy that has characterized Arab-Israeli perspectives for decades. In opening new channels for constructive dia-

logue and diplomacy, and for unprecedented people-to-people engagement between Israel and the Arab world, these normalization agreements have the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Similarly, progress towards a negotiated two-state solution may encourage other states in the region to take steps towards normalization. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance normalization between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as advance the conditions for direct negotiation of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* Provide your views on the relocation of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and United States recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. What is your view on the reversibility of these U.S. policies?

*Answer.* This administration recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. The administration also recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; the U.S. Embassy will remain in Jerusalem. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, the administration above all gives great weight to Israel's security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria and Iran remains active in Syria, it would be irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door.

This administration has not reversed U.S. policy on these important issues. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that all issues related to Jerusalem and Israel's security are handled with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Despite opening the aperture of ESF and INCLE to the Palestinians, the State Department has achieved no progress on the pay-to-slay policy. Please provide your roadmap for addressing this egregious practice.

*Answer.* I believe the Palestinian practice of prisoner and martyr payments is abhorrent. I, and this administration, are absolutely committed to working to end the practice of Palestinian prisoner and "martyr" payments in a manner that addresses longstanding U.S. and international concerns. If confirmed, I would build on the work thus far, through sustained diplomatic engagement and pressure, underscoring that part of resetting the U.S.-Palestinian relationship is seeing reform on this heinous practice.

*Question.* At great cost, the United States has worked to support a sovereign independent Iraq, reframe the U.S.-Iraq bilateral relationship, and foster regional stability. How do you plan to continue to further U.S. interests in Iraq? What are your priority lines of effort linked to U.S. national security interests? What role will institutional reform and anti-corruption efforts play in this strategy? What role will countering Iranian influence play in this strategy?

*Answer.* A sovereign, stable, democratic, and prosperous Iraq is in the national interest of the United States as well as our partners in the Middle East. U.S. policies and programs are focused on that strategic objective. With Iraq's parliamentary elections scheduled for October 10, the Department's efforts are focused on increasing political participation by increasing trust in the elections' credibility, including by leading international efforts to fund the U.N. Assistance Mission to Iraq's electoral monitoring and technical assistance programs. U.S. assistance and engagements in support of institutional reform and anti-corruption efforts also contribute to more responsive, transparent, and inclusive democratic governance and institutions.

Since 2014, the United States has led international efforts to enable the return of displaced people to their homes and consolidate the Iraqi Government's control over areas liberated from ISIS. These initiatives and others are hampered by Iran's malign influence, including its support for militias operating outside state control, and their repeated efforts to target civil society activists and protestors for assassination. Iran-backed militias are a continuing threat to the Iraqi state. To effectively counter this, it is essential that the United States continue its efforts to build the capacity of the Iraqi Government and its democratic institutions.

*Question.* How do you plan to address the presence of Iranian-backed militias?

*Answer.* The administration shares your concern about Iran's destabilizing activities, including its support for proxies and militias. Iran's unacceptable support for terrorism threatens our forces, diplomatic personnel, and partners in the region. The President is committed to countering any Iranian threat to our personnel and our vital interests and has and will continue to respond to any such threats using



all appropriate means. If confirmed I will work within the Department and inter-agency, using the full spectrum of tools available, to address the threat Iranian-backed militia groups pose to United States personnel, interests, and partners.

*Question.* Critics point to President Obama's withdrawal from Iraq in 2011 as one of the biggest errors of his presidency. The Obama administration departed without securing a Status of Forces Agreement, allowed the Iraqi Security Forces to atrophy, did not adequately address the abuses of the Maliki Government, and failed to address Sunni disenfranchisement that ultimately set conditions for the Islamic State's unchecked movement across the Iraqi border in 2014. Please provide your perspectives on the root causes of the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq as they related to U.S. policies, views on current troop levels as they relate to State Department objectives, and recommendations on key State Department initiatives for preventing an Islamic State resurgence.

*Answer.* There were many factors that contributed to ISIS' rise. The Syrian civil war opened a battleground that attracted terrorists from across the world to Iraq's doorstep. ISIS has roots in Iraq, but in Syria it became a conventional force, asserting control over territory and capable of attacking a sovereign state. At the same time, Iraq's Government ruled in a sectarian manner and failed to adequately address the needs of minority communities, creating a permissive environment for a brutal offensive that captured significant Iraqi territory in 2014-2015. The United States then led a Coalition to assist the Iraqi Security Forces, including the Kurdish Peshmerga, in taking back their territory. At the U.S.-Iraq Strategic Dialogue held in July, the two delegations decided that the U.S. military presence would remain in Iraq, transitioning fully to advising and assisting the Iraqi forces. U.S. troop levels reflect the current stage of the Defeat-ISIS mission and the increased capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces.

*Question.* How important is continued U.S. troop presence to Iraq's stability?

*Answer.* U.S. forces are in Iraq at the request of and in coordination with the Government of Iraq. The Biden-Harris administration supports maintaining a small number of military service members to coordinate intelligence-sharing and to advise and assist Iraqi counterterrorism forces as they lead the ground fight against the continuing threat of ISIS, so it cannot re-emerge to again threaten Iraq, the American people, or our partners.

*Question.* How appropriate are current bilateral diplomatic agreements (exchange of notes) for a sustained diplomatic and security cooperation mission?

*Answer.* The administration assesses that we have sufficient arrangements with the Government of Iraq to continue the fight against ISIS and to develop the long-term capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces.

*Question.* Iraq's security apparatus remains dependent on DoD-administered Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) and congressionally-appropriated foreign military financing (FMF). Additionally, nearly 50% of Iraq's FMF expenditures are consumed with maintaining existing contracts. Please provide your thoughts on transitioning Iraq from CTEF to more traditional forms of Title 22 security cooperation, and 'right sizing' the Iraqi Security Forces in a manner that the Government of Iraq can sustain given current budget shortfalls.

*Answer.* Iraqi officials tell us at every opportunity that U.S. and Coalition support are necessary to maintain our military gains, as ISIS remains a threat in Iraq. While anticipating that Iraq will continue to receive substantial assistance from DoD in the short term via the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF), DoD's future spending in Iraq is still to be determined. The Biden-Harris administration is focusing FMF on long-term security priorities in Iraq. The Office of Security Cooperation—Iraq (OSC-I) continues to pursue opportunities that will make Iraq more self-sufficient, especially in terms of maintenance. The U.S. Government wants to be Iraq's partner of choice and will work to wean Iraq off expensive contract maintenance as part of the maturation of the Iraqi Security Forces. The Department's efforts are focused on leveraging FMF as a vital instrument for developing Iraq's long-term capability and capacity to defeat threats to Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

*Question.* Lack of United States engagement and enforcement of chemical weapons 'redlines' during the Obama administration opened the door to increased Russian involvement and allowed the civil war and abuses against the Syrian people to continue unabated. Current progress towards a political reconciliation under UNSCR 2254 have similarly stalled. Please provide your views on the United States' role in Syria and accelerating progress on UNSCR 2254.

Answer. The United States is engaged with the U.N., including Special Envoy Geir Pedersen, our allies, and other international partners, in order to explore options and encourage all possible efforts to advance a political resolution to the conflict. While this has been the least kinetic year in a decade of conflict in Syria, it has proven to be the most disastrous one in economic terms, with 90 percent of the Syrian people falling below the poverty line. The immediate focus of the administration has thus been: ensuring the robust provision of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people; sustaining ceasefire lines to prevent further violence; and providing the necessary resources to support and demonstrate our continued commitment to the enduring defeat of ISIS. If confirmed, I commit to working to advance efforts to promote progress toward a political resolution within the parameters of UNSCR 2254.

*Question.* U.S. Syria policy is broadly governed by UNSCR 2254 and associated sanctions regimes. Does Bashar al Assad's expanded military control and the de facto ceasefire change alter the prospects of a political settlement under UNSCR 2254? Do we need a new construct apart from UNSCR 2254 for Syria policy?

Answer. The Assad regime controls some 70 percent of Syrian territory, but that increased exercise of control has not provided the regime any greater legitimacy, given the terrible record of the past decade. The United States remains focused on three priorities: ensuring the robust provision of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people; sustaining ceasefire lines to prevent further violence; and providing the necessary resources to support and demonstrate our continued commitment to the enduring defeat of ISIS (); these priorities fall within the larger framework of advancing a political settlement to secure the future stability of the Syrian people, however remote that settlement appears at this time. If confirmed, I will continue to engage diplomatically to mitigate the Syrian people's suffering and press for accountability for the crimes against humanity committed by the regime. The United States will remain engaged with the U.N., our allies, and other international partners to encourage all efforts to advance the political track. To this end, the United States has been working with our partners and allies to support U.N. Special Envoy Geir Pedersen's efforts to advance the political process in Geneva.

*Question.* What is the linkage between U.S. troop levels in Syria, countering the Islamic State, blunting Iranian designs, influencing Turk and Russian Syria calculus, and associated impacts on political UNSCR 2254 discussions?

Answer. The U.S. military mission in Syria is there for one mission: preventing an ISIS resurgence. The mission requires demonstrated U.S. commitment and continued U.S. stabilization assistance to our partners. The Syrian Democratic Forces cannot continue to take on ISIS without U.S. support. The administration will continue to work with Turkey on our shared objectives in Syria, while addressing areas of disagreement. The United States has always been open to dialogue with Russia on Syria as long as the dialogue contributes to protecting civilians and to credibly advancing a political resolution to the conflict, as laid out in UNSCR 2254. If confirmed, I will use all diplomatic tools available to ensure that the political process moves forward.

*Question.* What relative effect would a U.S. troop withdrawal have on U.S. influence over future negotiations?

Answer. The United States continues to retain a limited military presence in NE Syria for the campaign against ISIS in partnership with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and is deeply committed to this partnership. The SDF cannot continue to root out ISIS terrorists on its own or guard the tens of thousands of ISIS detainees who are still in their custody, without U.S. support. Furthermore, preventing a resurgence of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, as well as its branches and networks beyond the Middle East, demands revitalized U.S. engagement, along with our 82 partners and allies within the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

*Question.* The Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act is intended to prevent rehabilitation of the Assad regime, seek accountability for the regime's atrocities, and advance a political solution to the conflict. Please provide your views on the role of Caesar legislation in furthering U.S. objectives in Syria.

Answer. The State Department is committed to advancing accountability for atrocities committed by the Assad regime, as well as for abuses by terrorist organizations and other parties in Syria. The Caesar Act, and our other Syria and Syria-related or applicable sanctions authorities, are important tools to press for accountability and limit the ability of the Assad regime and others to fuel or profit from the ongoing conflict. Members of Congress spoke clearly on this issue when they voted for the Caesar Act. On July 28, the Biden-Harris administration imposed sanctions in

the spirit of the Caesar Act on Assad regime institutions and officials implicated in human rights abuses, illustrating the administration's push for accountability and justice for victims. If confirmed, I will continue to use all available tools and authorities to target persons perpetrating human rights abuses in Syria on behalf of the Assad regime.

*Question.* Turkey's objectives in northeast Syria run counter to U.S. interests while we tacitly support their activities in the northwest. How do we reconcile and balance Syria and Turkey policy? Can you balance Syria-Turkey policy without finding a Kurdish solution?

*Answer.* Turkey is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and we share an interest in sustainably ending the conflict in Syria. The United States will continue to work together with Turkey toward our shared objectives in Syria and to address areas of disagreement. Turkey has remained an important partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance, as demonstrated by Ankara's advocacy for the adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2585 to reauthorize the provision of cross-border humanitarian assistance through Turkey into northwest Syria. The United States will work together with Turkey and our local Syrian partners for the safety and security of U.S. forces, partner forces, and civilians.

*Question.* The U.N. experts report on Libya accused the warring parties and their international backers—the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and Egypt on one side and Turkey and Qatar on the other—of violating the arms embargo with total impunity. Similarly, the issue of foreign mercenaries has plagued the run-up to Libya's December elections. How do you plan to address reported violations of the U.N. arms embargo? How do you impose costs on arms embargo violators without harming U.S. objectives in other areas? How do you impose costs on mercenaries and their sponsors?

*Answer.* Ensuring the rights of all Libyans to choose their leaders is critical as Libyans seek to regain their sovereignty after years of destructive foreign interventions. The October 23, 2020, ceasefire agreement calls for respecting the U.N. arms embargo and for the removal of all foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya. For the first time in many years, there is a broad international consensus on both the ceasefire agreement and the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum's roadmap for presidential and parliamentary elections in December. This consensus includes some, if not all, of those who previously engaged in supporting Libyan factions against each other. I am committed to working with the interim Libyan Government, regional partners, and the U.N. to support the ceasefire agreement and its full implementation as called for in UNSCR 2570, including the immediate withdrawal of all foreign military forces, foreign fighters, proxy groups, and mercenaries. Holding the December elections is a U.S. priority, as a new national government will be able to make informed, sovereign decisions, including on defense issues.

*Question.* While current policy has been to publicize Russian adventurism in Libya, how does the United States impose real costs for Russia's use of private military contractors, i.e. Wagner, in Libya?

*Answer.* Russia has increased its use of private military companies like the Wagner Group in disparate parts of the globe, to destructive and destabilizing effect; their use represents an attempt to increase Russian influence while providing the Kremlin with a thin veil of deniability. The United States has sanctioned PMC Wagner and its personnel, including its president, Yevgeniy Prigozhin, and has publicized Wagner activities in Libya and sub-Saharan Africa. The U.S. Government also supports the work of the U.N. Panel of Experts to identify violations of the arms embargo. The U.S. Government continues to support the Libyan-defined path towards elections, which could pave the way for a new Government to establish control over its territory, an essential step for removing foreign forces.

*Question.* Egypt is located at a strategic crossroads between the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Africa, remains an important U.S. partner in the region, and is important to Israel's security. However, in light of Egypt's growing cooperation with Russia and reports of potential Su-35 sales, is Egypt pivoting irrevocably towards Russia?

*Answer.* Egypt is a strategic partner for the United States and the bilateral defense relationship—more than four decades old—advances important U.S. national interests. Egypt's recent decision to apply a billion dollars of its own national funds towards refurbishment of its Apache helicopters, the largest ever nationally funded procurement of U.S. defense articles, underlines that Egypt, too, recognizes the strategic nature of the bilateral relationship. Cairo still views the United States as its security partner of choice, but we unquestionably face intensified competition in the

defense procurement arena. Over the last decade, Egypt has been diversifying its arms purchases, including with French, German, and Italian procurements. The administration continues to reinforce the advantages of purchasing U.S. systems, including in terms of quality and interoperability with U.S. and regional partners. In the case of the potential acquisition of Su-35 fighter aircraft or other major new military equipment from Russia, the administration has emphasized the serious risk of triggering mandatory sanctions under CAATSA Section 231. We have by no means lost the battle for influence and primacy of position. That said, the U.S. Government must continue to focus energy on dissuading Egypt from potential significant Russian arms purchases.

*Question.* The Egyptians cite holds under the Obama administration for their outreach to Russia. Similarly, the Biden administration recently held \$170M in FMF conditioned on political prisoners. Please provide details of the cases associated with the administration's FMF hold and the implications of holding FMF over non-American imprisonments.

*Answer.* Secretary Blinken recently decided to condition the use of \$130 million in FMF on the Government of Egypt fulfilling specific human rights-related requests, which have been the subject of a private dialogue. The Biden-Harris administration has engaged with the Government of Egypt privately to communicate these requests, and believes this approach affords the best prospects for making serious progress on this important set of issues.

*Question.* Would you characterize a potential Egyptian purchase of Su-35s from Russia as a significant transaction as described under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with the relevant State Department offices and U.S. Government agencies to closely review any delivery of Su-35 aircraft from Russia as potentially a significant transaction under Section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act.

*Question.* Have the Abraham Accords set conditions for a renewed Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA) or a derivative? What multilateral structures you suggest to maintain stability in the Middle East while simultaneously reducing U.S. commitment?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to helping Israel build partnerships that further integrate it into the region. Any sustainable regional economic and security dialogue will need to include Israel, and normalization efforts have opened that door. If confirmed, I will use diplomacy to press for a structured regional dialogue—with support from other members of the United Nations Security Council—that explores ways to reduce tensions, create pathways to de-escalation, and manage mistrust, particularly between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

*Question.* Would these multilateral structures force the United States to rely on imperfect partners with imperfect human rights records? How does the United States strike the appropriate balance between U.S. presence and reliance on imperfect partners to maintain security and accomplish U.S. national security interests?

*Answer.* The President has made clear that the administration will not give our partners in the Middle East a blank check to pursue policies at odds with American interests and values. If confirmed, I will have frank conversations with our partners about our elevation of human rights as a foreign policy priority. The deep and strategic relationships between the United States and our closest regional partners allows us to advance regional security and engage in a constructive dialogue on human rights that will make our relationships stronger and more sustainable. If confirmed, I will pursue both while supporting our closest partners in the face of threats to their security.

*Question.* During a November 2019 primary debate, then President-elect Biden said he would limit arms sales to Saudi Arabia and make them the "pariah that they are." President Biden has since suspended offensive arms sales to the kingdom and ceased offensive support to the Kingdom's operations in Yemen (although this was largely symbolic). Isolating Saudi Arabia would likely have negative consequences for U.S.-Saudi counterterrorism cooperation, would diminish U.S. efforts to improve Saudi Arabia's human rights record, and would eliminate Saudi Arabia's potentially helpful role in a broader Middle Eastern multilateral security construct.

- How do you frame the U.S. Saudi relationship in a manner that best promotes U.S. national security interests and doesn't push Saudi Arabia to [the People's Republic of] China ?

Answer. Saudi Arabia remains a key Middle East partner of the United States and can play a constructive role in resolving regional disputes and conflicts, as well as contribute to solutions to global challenges such as climate change. U.S.-Saudi counterterrorism cooperation over many decades has saved countless lives, and directly contributed to the fight to defeat ISIS. The U.S. commitment to support Saudi Arabia in defending its territory, home to more than 70,000 U.S. citizens, is a cornerstone of our strategic partnership and is unmatched by any potential rival to U.S. interests in the region. The United States also needs this partnership to reflect our values. If confirmed, I will support the administration's recalibration of the U.S.-Saudi relationship to bring greater transparency and accountability to it, while anchoring human rights on the bilateral agenda and preserving our underlying strategic partnership in everything from counterterrorism, to pushing back against Iranian malign activities, to higher education and climate change. This is a multifaceted and deep-rooted partnership that must address areas of concern and advance areas of shared opportunity.

#### United Arab Emirates Policy

##### *UAE's Role in the Middle East*

*Question.* UAE has served as an important U.S. partner in the Middle East and Afghanistan. UAE led efforts to normalize diplomatic ties with Israel under the Abraham Accords, and has a deep economic relationship with the United States. What is the UAE's role in the broader Middle East vis-à-vis U.S. national interests?

Answer. The UAE has been one of our closest economic, diplomatic, and security partners in the Middle East. It has built some of the most effective institutions and companies in the region and demonstrated that it can play a constructive role in resolving or de-escalating regional conflicts. The UAE Government provided tremendous support to Operation Allies Refuge, housing, feeding and caring for thousands of Americans and Afghans whom the U.S. Government removed from harm's way, as they made their way to the United States. The UAE has shown, in its historic agreement to establish relations with Israel, as well as its productive recent diplomatic efforts with Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt, that it can contribute meaningfully to a more peaceful Middle East and broader region. That is not to say that the U.S.-UAE relationship has not faced challenges. The 2017 Gulf rift divided U.S. partners in the region; the UAE's and Qatar's animosity exacerbated conflicts in Libya and the Horn of Africa. Doha and Abu Dhabi have made significant progress in reconciling these differences since the Al Ula Declaration of January 2021, which formally brought the Gulf rift to an end. If confirmed, I will encourage continued work to repair relations between these two important U.S. partners, and will look to the UAE to continue its close and multifaceted partnership with the United States.

*Question.* How does the United States moderate UAE's often expeditionary Muslim Brotherhood-oriented foreign policy and encourage it to take a more productive role?

Answer. The UAE has been a capable, productive diplomatic and security partner for the United States for decades. That is the case today as well, on issues such as Libya and in the UAE's helpful efforts on the fraught issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, an issue that has threatened to bring Egypt and Sudan into outright conflict with Ethiopia. While we do not always agree with the UAE on its course of action, our history of collaborative work—including on multiple security operations, from Afghanistan to the campaign to defeat ISIS—provides the U.S. Government with ample influence. Experience in Yemen and Libya has also taught the UAE important lessons about the ease of getting into conflicts and the difficulty of exiting from them. From defense cooperation to bilateral trade to diplomatic work to deepen the regional benefits of the Abraham Accords, I see significant benefits that can be achieved via collaborative work with Abu Dhabi.

##### *UAE, Russia and China*

*Question.* Despite being a key U.S. partner in the region, and central to normalization efforts with Israel, UAE also has a history of deepening cooperation with Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) that runs counter to U.S. interests. How does the department plan to address the UAE's partnership with Russia and [the People's Republic of] China?

Answer. Several U.S. partners in the Middle East have deepened cooperation with Russia and the PRC in recent years. The administration has been clear that the United States has no issue with normal economic relations. Some areas of cooperation with these two countries, however, run up against U.S. interests, where they pose a threat to the security of sensitive weapons systems, U.S. defense and com-

mercial technology, and information technology. If confirmed, I plan to address these issues forthrightly with the United Arab Emirates and other partners to convey U.S. red lines. We will not compromise on these issues.

*Question.* Please provide an update on UAE's relationship with the PRC as it relates to the F-35 sale.

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has signaled its intent to move forward with these proposed defense sales to the UAE, even as the two governments continue discussions to ensure there are unmistakably clear mutual understandings with respect to Emirati obligations and actions before, during, and after delivery. Congress and the administration are focused on the same important issues about this sale, and if confirmed I will ensure they continue to be addressed. Projected delivery dates on these sales, if implemented, would be several years in the future. Thus, the administration anticipates a robust and sustained dialogue with the UAE to ensure that any defense transfers meet mutual strategic objectives to build a stronger, interoperable, and more capable security partnership and are employed in a manner consistent with international human rights law and the law of armed conflict.

The UAE continues to be a key regional partner for the U.S. Government, and its defense procurements help regional security. If confirmed, I will work to ensure a continued constructive U.S.-UAE relationship while ensuring the UAE understands and respects the administration's concern about the PRC's efforts to increase its strategic cooperation with the UAE.

#### *UAE and Libya*

*Question.* In your assessment, how closely are the Emiratis coordinating with the Russian state, as well as its subsidiaries like Wagner, in Libya? What forms does this coordination take? Are there instances in which it has escalated into concrete and tangible support, whether that be to the Russian state or Russian-aligned operators?

*Answer.* The United States has called on all external parties, including the UAE, to respect Libyan sovereignty and the October 23, 2020 ceasefire agreement, which called on all foreign forces and mercenaries to depart the country. The UAE has supported forces aligned with General Haftar in recent years. The Defense Department's Office of the Inspector General reported in 2020 that the UAE may have supported the Wagner Group in Libya, as well. Recently, the administration has urged the UAE, in alignment with the international community's consensus, to use its influence with any Libyan political figures to help resolve the current impasse over the electoral framework, so that presidential and parliamentary elections may be held on time in December 2021.

#### *UAE and Syria*

*Question.* There is growing concern over the prospect of the UAE normalizing ties with Bashar al-Assad. Do you share this concern? Are there tools the U.S. can employ to prevent the UAE from normalizing relations with the Assad regime, including through the provision of reconstruction funds to Syria?

*Answer.* I am concerned that any government would consider normalizing ties with the Assad regime in Damascus without any measure of progress on the myriad requirements laid out in UNSCR 2254. The United States will not reestablish or upgrade our diplomatic relations with the Assad regime, and will continue to consult closely with our partners and allies in the region on the best way to achieve progress in Syria. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage the UAE and other regional partners to consider what they might require of the Assad regime—on behalf of the Syrian people—before any potential engagement with Damascus. Syrians consistently say that the issue of first priority for them is gaining an accounting for missing and detained family members, for example.

*Question.* In your assessment, is there more the U.S. can do diplomatically to end the war in Yemen? If so, what?

*Answer.* The United States welcomes the appointment of the new U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg; his appointment, and his announced intention to focus on bottom-up political work in Yemen presents additional opportunities to muster the requisite pressure on the Houthis to agree to a national ceasefire. The U.S. Government remains committed to supporting a U.N.-led peace process to achieve a durable resolution to the conflict, but a ceasefire is a necessary starting point. Sustained engagement by U.S. Special Envoy Lenderking has helped create unprecedented international consensus on ending this war through inclusive political talks. If confirmed, I will work with him and the U.N. Special Envoy to urge

all parties to engage with the U.N., with each other, and with civil society, without pre-conditions. I believe there is an opportunity to achieve peace in Yemen and we must seize it.

*Question.* Do you believe UNSCR 2216 properly reflects the current context in Yemen? Will the new administration seek to modify this UNSCR?

*Answer.* The administration is committed to exploring all possible options, taking into consideration the timing, sequencing, and ramifications of any new resolution. The United States continues to work with partners in the region, U.N. Security Council members, and the U.N. Special Envoy to advance the peace process. Revitalized diplomatic engagement in support of the U.N.-led peace effort is crucial for ending the war. A new resolution may be appropriate after further progress has been made in inclusive political negotiations, which remains a key objective of the administration. If confirmed, I will continue to strongly support the targeted arms embargo and sanctions designations of UNSCR 2216 as key elements of the UNSCR 2140 Yemen sanctions regime.

*Question.* Despite the August 4 explosions and unrest that followed, Lebanon's political elites have continued to cling to power. Current policy has been to withhold broader financial assistance absent reforms targeting corruption and transparency. Please describe your policy objectives in Lebanon and how they differ from previous approaches.

*Answer.* Lebanon is facing accelerating political, economic, security, and public health crises, made worse by the failure of Lebanese political elites to form a government and institute critical economic reforms. The United States, in coordination with like-minded partners, has been pressing Lebanese leaders for the past 13 months to form a government; those efforts appear to have paid off. The formation of a government under PM-designate Najib Mikati is only the first step; the Government must take on structural reforms, and work to end endemic corruption. That is the focus of U.S. diplomatic efforts, in tandem with other like-minded regional and European partners. Given the dire humanitarian situation, the United States also continues to provide support directly to those in most need and is working to bolster key legitimate institutions that can strengthen Lebanese sovereignty in the face of the malign influence of Hizballah. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage key partners in Europe and the Gulf to assist the Lebanese people and keep up their political engagement in a united effort to push Lebanese leaders to make long-overdue reforms.

*Question.* What conditions would Lebanon need to meet in order to qualify for U.S. financial support? If confirmed, will you continue sanctions against corrupt and Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) linked officials to advance these reforms?

*Answer.* The formation of a government was just the first step in Lebanon's long road to arrest the spiraling economic crisis; the next steps will necessarily include enacting reforms to address the economic crisis, bring more accountability and transparency to a system that is rife with corruption, and keep elections on track for next year. The Mikati Government must act, and act swiftly. If confirmed, I stand ready to support the new government with the hard work ahead. If confirmed, I will also support efforts to use economic tools, such as targeted sanctions, to pursue Hizballah's financial networks and hold accountable those individuals who impede a reform agenda. I will also urge other countries to take national-level action to designate, ban, or otherwise restrict the group.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to working to ensure the \$11B in CEDRE, IMF, World Bank funding earmarked for Lebanon remains contingent on key reforms, including reforms to the electricity/natural gas sector, increased transparency, and an audit of the central bank?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the international community to ensure that Lebanese leaders understand that meaningful reforms remain crucial to unlocking long-term structural support to Lebanon.

*Question.* Many in Congress see the Lebanese Armed Forces as a vital counterweight to the influence of LH and Lebanon's legitimate security guarantor. What role do you see for the LAF in Lebanon?

*Answer.* The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) are the sole legitimate defender of Lebanon, are reliable U.S. partners, and are an important counterweight to Hizballah's malign influence. The LAF also remain the only cross-confessional institution with broad support from all elements of Lebanese society, transcending sectarian and party affiliations. A strong, stable LAF undermines Hizballah's assertion

that its arms are necessary to defend Lebanon from external aggression. If confirmed, I will ensure the LAF remain critical partners for the United States.

*Question.* Do you commit to continued FMF assistance to the LAF, barring information that indicates otherwise?

*Answer.* The LAF is one of our primary partners in achieving U.S. objectives in Lebanon. FMF assistance has become especially critical as the LAF has assumed responsibilities beyond its normal remit in response to the compounding crises facing the country. If confirmed, I commit to using FMF assistance to further the strong partnership between the United States and the LAF in support of our security objectives.

*Question.* Will you commit to consult with Congress before modifications to LAF assistance?

*Answer.* U.S. foreign policy is optimized when there is constant communication and collaboration between the executive and legislative branches of government. If confirmed, I pledge to continue our cooperation on these issues, and I will work through the interagency and with Congress to ensure the delivery of appropriated funds to Lebanon.

*Question.* Despite efforts to the pivot to the Pacific, competition with China must also occur outside the IndoPacific region and on a global scale. China's Belt and Road initiatives are prospering in Africa, South Asia, and are making lasting inroads in the Middle East. Given a diminished U.S. commitment to the Middle East under the Biden administration in favor of the IndoPacific, how do you plan to contend with the growth of Chinese strategic expansion?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to rebuilding and restoring U.S. partnerships across the globe, including in the Middle East. This is not a diminishment of the U.S. commitment. If confirmed, I will continue to demonstrate to our partners the value of a sustained and strategic partnership with the United States through diplomacy, economic engagement, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges. This stands in contrast to the transactional nature of investments by the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The United States distinguishes itself from Beijing's state-led approach by promoting private-sector driven alternatives. The United States focuses on partnerships and on strengthening local capacity to promote development, innovation, and prosperity. The United States will continue to promote entrepreneurship, transparency, good governance, fair practices, and internationally recognized environmental, social, and labor standards.

*Question.* How does the United States remain the partner of choice in the Middle East given CCP encroachment and lack of Chinese focus on human rights issues?

*Answer.* U.S. values—our support for essential freedoms of expression and worship, as well as our emphasis on respect for universal human rights—offer a potent counterpoint to PRC-style autocracy. U.S. higher education and entrepreneurship, and American culture are also powerful draws for the societies of the Middle East, and if confirmed, I will continue to promote them through energetic advocacy and programming. U.S. leadership in addressing global challenges like the pandemic and climate change is also a key source of our strength as a country.

The Biden-Harris administration is leading as well on efforts to encourage de-escalation in the region, and with increasing success. The Gulf rift of 2017 is largely mended, there are encouraging signs of outreach between previously adversarial countries like Egypt and Turkey, and a re-alignment of regional countries around a common effort to resolve conflicts in Yemen and Libya. The U.S. effort resonates with countries across the region, demonstrating the value of a long-term strategic partnership with the United States.

*Question.* The U.S. has growing concerns with China's economic relationship with Israel. Given the relative weakness on Israel's committee on foreign investment and issues highlighted by the CCP's involvement in Haifa port, how do you effectively decouple the CCP from Israel?

*Answer.* The administration remains deeply concerned by attempts by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to extend influence and acquire critical and dual-use technology through acquisitions and investment in Israel. The administration welcomes efforts by all countries to enhance investment in quality infrastructure development. I believe that such an investment must be within the confines of strong regulatory structures that ensure all companies investing in Israel do so in a responsible manner, consistent with international practices, that benefits the people of Israel, and does not undermine Israeli national security. While Israel's establish-



ment of a new investment advisory committee is a step in the right direction, I understand there are concerns as to its effectiveness, given the voluntary nature of its coverage and its lack of coverage for the high-tech sector. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel to strengthen its foreign investment advisory committee to minimize exposure to national security risks, including the acquisitions of critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure.

*Question.* The Department of Defense recently disbanded the Defeat ISIS Task Force and dismissed the Task Force Director. Similarly, State Department eliminated the Special Envoy to Counter ISIS (SECI) as an independent entity and placed the office under the CT Bureau. What are your views on the threat posed by ISIS?

*Answer.* ISIS in Syria and Iraq remains a serious threat and ensuring its enduring defeat remains a central priority of the Biden-Harris administration. The dual-hatting of the CT Coordinator and Special Envoy does not reflect a diminution of the position of the Special Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. It instead reflects the evolving nature of the ISIS threat to encompass areas outside Iraq and Syria, and a desire to situate the enduring Defeat-ISIS mission within the established CT Bureau architecture. Doing so enables the Defeat-ISIS campaign to more effectively leverage CT Bureau civilian counterterrorism capacity-building assets to counter ISIS branches and networks globally.

*Question.* Thousands of foreign terrorist fighters and their families remain in Syrian Democratic Forces prisons or makeshift camps in Syria. Repatriation efforts to return these fighters and families to their countries of origin have been wildly unsuccessful. These fighters and their families represent a strategic vulnerability to the region. How will you address repatriation, de-radicalization, and demobilization efforts?

*Answer.* The best long-term solution for foreign terrorist fighters and their family members is repatriation, followed by prosecution, rehabilitation, and/or reintegration, as appropriate. If confirmed, I intend to deepen our diplomatic outreach to press countries of origin to repatriate their citizens from northeast Syria. I will collaborate with the U.S. interagency in their work to support countries' efforts to repatriate their nationals, including through U.S. Government assistance with logistics and planning of repatriations, such as use of U.S. Government assets to transport foreign fighters and associated family members out of the region, and assistance in building partners' counterterrorism capacities for investigations, prosecutions, and rehabilitation.

*Question.* What civilian security, democracy, and human rights programs would you highlight or pursue to address the seeds of conflict that led to the Islamic State's rise and allure and have not been effectively addressed?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration understands stability and its drivers are key to enabling our local partners in Syria to focus on fighting ISIS and ensuring its enduring defeat. In one of its first acts, the administration lifted the U.S. freeze on stabilization assistance for Syria. In March, the administration announced almost \$50 million for U.S. stabilization efforts in northeast Syria and will continue these efforts with FY 2021 resources. U.S. assistance in northeast Syria prioritizes stabilization activities that contribute to the restoration of daily life by closing gaps in local authority capacities; supporting transitional justice, justice and accountability, and civil society programs; and addressing vulnerabilities previously exploited by ISIS.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BARBARA A. LEAF BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* The Israel-Gaza conflict continues to flare up, according to recent news reports that Israel's military bombed Palestinian militant weapons sites in the Gaza Strip early Sunday, August 22 in response to a violent demonstration on Saturday August 21 at the perimeter fence that left an Israeli police officer critically injured. As Assistant Secretary for NEA, what recommendations would you make to President Biden regarding next steps to help manage the tensions there?

*Answer.* The May 21 Gaza ceasefire has mostly held, but we are engaging multiple partners who have a role to play in calming the situation. The August 21 protests ended with the death of one Israeli police officer, as well as the death and injuries of a number of Palestinians. There have been Israeli airstrikes in response to

incendiary balloons and rocket attacks from Gaza. The situation remains tense because many of the factors that contributed to the May violence remain unresolved. If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and the Palestinian Authority, as well as international partners, in maintaining calm in the West Bank and Gaza and keeping flashpoint issues in Jerusalem from reigniting the situation. President Biden has been clear in his conviction that a negotiated two-state solution would best secure the future of a democratic, Jewish Israel, and provide equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity to both Israelis and Palestinians. I would recommend an affirmative and practical approach that encourages constructive, positive and tangible steps by both Israeli and Palestinian authorities to keep the possibility of a negotiated two-state solution alive.

*Question.* As Assistant Secretary for NEA, how are you planning on addressing the dismal human rights situation in Egypt even after the administration decided against appropriately responding to the Congressional provision?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about the human rights situation in Egypt. The Biden administration has made clear its intention to elevate the role of human rights in our foreign policy, and that includes in the U.S.-Egyptian relationship. The Secretary's decision on FMF—the first time a Secretary of State has not waived the Congressionally-mandated human rights certification requirement—is only one facet of the Department's engagement on human rights. The Department supports greater space for civil society and human rights defenders, and freedom of expression. The administration's human rights dialogue with the Egyptian Government is focused on seeing steady, enduring progress on such fundamental rights.

*Question.* As Assistant Secretary for NEA, how will you address these troubling reports out of Tunisia and continue to stand on the side of Tunisia's democracy?

*Answer.* The United States shares the Tunisian people's goal of a democratic government that is responsive to the country's needs. If confirmed, I will urge President Saied to appoint a new head of government to address Tunisia's immediate economic and health crises, announce concrete plans for a return to the democratic path, and pursue reforms through an inclusive process that recognizes the Tunisian people's demand for reforms that improve the functioning of their democracy. These steps must include diverse political actors and civil society as well as respect for the rule of law and fundamental freedoms.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BARBARA A. LEAF BY TODD YOUNG

*Question.* What is your view of the U.S.-Israel relationship? If confirmed, what will you do to maintain and strengthen this relationship?

*Answer.* Israel is a critical partner to the United States and the two are united by shared values and strategic interests; those include a commitment to democracy, economic prosperity, and regional security. Israel is a stable country in an unstable region, and the U.S. Government's closest security partner in countering a broad spectrum of threats, ranging from cyber-attacks to Iran's destabilizing proliferation of advanced weaponry to its network of proxies. With an open and free society that is largely accepting of LGBTQ+ individuals, Israel has been dedicated to the cause of women's empowerment and gender equality since the founding of the state. If confirmed, I will commit to maintaining and strengthening all aspects of this relationship.

*Question.* Israel constantly faces terrorist attacks and threats—including rocket attacks by Hamas in Gaza and attacks from Iranian-backed groups in Lebanon and Syria. Do you fully support Israel's right to defend itself from terrorist attacks?

*Answer.* Yes, I fully support Israel's right to defend itself from terrorist attacks and strongly condemn these attacks, no matter where they come from.

*Question.* What is the status of the recently notified U.S. direct commercial sale of \$735 million in U.S.-origin precision-guided munitions to Israel?

*Answer.* I understand the notification was approved and authorizes the export of precision-guided munitions, including any technical data and defense services, to Israel to support weapons integration, flight tests, and hardware delivery of Joint Direct Attack Munition variants and Small Diameter Bomb Increment I variants.

*Question.* Do you support maintaining the Palestine Affairs Unit at the Embassy in Jerusalem? How would opening a separate consulate in Jerusalem serve U.S. interests?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the U.S. presence in Jerusalem enables our government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leadership. The U.S. Government has been clear that our Embassy will remain in Jerusalem. Currently, the Palestinian Affairs Unit within the embassy is the primary point of contact with the Palestinian people. In May, Secretary Blinken stated “the United States will be moving forward with the process to reopen our consulate in Jerusalem. That’s an important way for our country to engage with and provide support for the Palestinian people,” I understand that this is part of the administration’s renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership.

*Question.* What would be your strategy for strengthening the Abraham Accords while persuading more countries to normalize relations with Israel? How would you build on the success of the Abraham Accords?

*Answer.* As President Biden and Secretary Blinken have said, this administration welcomes and strongly supports the Abraham Accords and normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world. The Department is leading the U.S. Government’s efforts, working with the National Security Council and U.S. Government interagency, to deepen existing agreements and urge other countries to normalize relations with Israel.

If confirmed, I am committed to working with countries across the region to build on existing relationships and develop new ones, including by highlighting the tangible benefits of relations with Israel and leveraging the wide range of diplomatic tools at our disposal. I also look forward to engaging with Israel’s new partners in the region to find ways to improve the lives of Israelis and Palestinians alike to help create the conditions for a durable two-state solution.

*Question.* What do you believe are the most pressing security challenges Israel faces, and what role do those threats play in convincing regional partners that Israel is the not the cause of instability in the region?

*Answer.* Israel believes Iran is the greatest threat to its security. As Secretary Blinken and other senior U.S. officials have said, the United States is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and believes diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal. An Iran with a nuclear weapon is likely to act even more provocatively when it comes to these issues. The administration has fundamental problems with Iran’s actions across a series of issues—including its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, and its destabilizing actions in the region. Our partners in the region share a similar concern.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you seek to use your connection and experience in the region to garner more regional support for the vital humanitarian needs of the Yemeni people?

*Answer.* I am proud that the United States continues to lead the humanitarian response to this crisis, with over \$4 billion worth of assistance provided to the Yemeni people since 2014. If confirmed, I will work closely with key countries in the region and around the world, as well as the United Nations, to ensure pledges are disbursed, humanitarian organizations are adequately funded, and the needs of the most vulnerable Yemenis are addressed in a coordinated and effective manner. I will also work with the U.N. and other partners to promote unfettered access for humanitarian assistance throughout Yemen to ensure aid reaches those in need.

*Question.* What would be your approach, alongside Tim Lenderking, in breaking the diplomatic stalemate that exists in Yemen?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government has welcomed the appointment of Hans Grundberg, the new U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen, and remains committed to supporting a U.N.-led peace process to achieve a durable resolution to the conflict. Sustained engagement by U.S. Special Envoy Lenderking has helped create unprecedented international consensus on ending this war through inclusive political talks. If confirmed, I will urge all parties to engage with the Special Envoy, the U.N., with each other, and with civil society, without pre-conditions. I will also ensure the governments of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen are taking the steps necessary to advance peace, and will work with key international and regional partners to press the Houthis to cooperate with the U.N.-led process. We have an opportunity to achieve peace in Yemen, and we must seize it.

*Question.* Do you believe that the Iranian-backed Houthis desire a political settlement? Or does Iran desire to maintain a footprint and instability from which to target Saudi Arabia? Do you believe that the Houthis have the autonomy to decide this for themselves?

*Answer.* The Houthis remain singularly focused on their military offensive against Marib, the greatest impediment to U.N. and U.S. peace efforts. The offensive is also exacerbating Yemen's humanitarian crisis, threatening directly some one million IDPs and other civilians in harm's way. The Houthi leadership must show they are committed to a political settlement by engaging with the new U.N. Special Envoy in good faith. In addition to continuing to prosecute the war inside Yemen, the Houthis, with Iranian support, have also launched more than 240 cross-border air attacks on Saudi Arabia this year alone, endangering the Saudi people and more than 70,000 U.S. citizens residing in the Kingdom. If Iran wants to show it can be a responsible actor in the region, Yemen is a good place to start, by ending lethal aid and training to the Houthis.

*Question.* Denying the Houthis access to key weapons and technology from Iran is critical to both reducing the threat the group poses to our regional partners and pressuring the group to cease attacks and negotiate in good faith. Do you agree? If so, how should the U.S. expand cooperation with partners and allies to expose and interdict the flow of key Iranian weapons, materiel, and equipment to the Houthis?

*Answer.* I agree. The Houthis rely on Iranian weapons, intelligence, training, and support to conduct horrific attacks impacting civilian targets as well as infrastructure in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Denying the Houthis access to this lethal support from Iran is a critical part of the Department's regional strategy. If confirmed, I will continue with this comprehensive approach using a variety of tools—from sanctions to interdiction to support for Saudi Arabia's legitimate self-defense needs—to counter Iran's lethal aid to the Houthis and other armed groups, as well as it destabilizing behavior more broadly in the region. The Department will also continue to prioritize the implementation and enforcement of U.N. Security Council resolutions barring the unauthorized transfer of weapons to the Houthis.

*Question.* What are the biggest dangers Iran poses to the international community and how would you rank them in order of urgency?

*Answer.* The most serious threat that Iran poses globally is its untrammelled nuclear program. That is why the Biden administration prioritizes constraining Iran's program through measured, determined diplomacy. Iran poses additional threats through a spectrum of regional and global activities, including but not limited to its plots to kidnap our citizens, its abhorrent practice of using wrongfully detained Americans and foreign nationals as political tools, its support for terrorism, its lethal support to armed groups, proliferation of advanced weaponry to these groups, and its ballistic missile program. An Iran with a nuclear weapon would pose an even greater threat when it comes to these issues.

*Question.* Secretary Blinken has said that any replacement of JCPOA needs to be "longer and stronger." How would you define longer and stronger? What are the minimum requirements for a "longer and stronger" deal?

*Answer.* Iran's unchecked, unconstrained nuclear program poses a threat to global security. Constraining it is therefore the overriding priority for the United States and its P5+1 partners. To achieve that immediate objective, the administration is pursuing a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. If the Department is successful in doing so, the intent is to build on that as part of a comprehensive approach using a variety of policy tools to strengthen the constraints on Iran's nuclear program and address other issues of concern.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should learn any lessons from Hamas's heinous rocket campaign it unleashed on Israel in May, especially concerning Iran's destabilizing proxy campaign it is waging throughout the region?

*Answer.* Hamas's heinous rocket attacks on Israel in May only reinforced the Biden-Harris administration's ironclad resolve on Israel's security, including through deterring and countering Iran's destabilizing regional activities. This includes the need to work with Israel and other allies and partners to counter the flow of materiel and financial support to Hamas and other Gaza-based militant groups.

*Question.* Can you explain why it would be a prudent policy to pursue a nuclear agreement with Iran without doing anything to stop Iran's other destabilizing activities?

*Answer.* Even as the administration pursues a diplomatic effort to constrain Iran's nuclear program, it continues to address Iran's destabilizing regional activities. The Biden administration is committed to continuing to counter the threats posed by Iran using the various tools at its disposal, including sanctions, and working in close coordination with allies and partners.

*Question.* How can we look our partners in the face and tell them convincingly that we are committed to their security when we permit Iran to keep funding terrorist proxies, to keep launching attacks on international shipping and energy infrastructure, to keep testing ballistic missiles?

*Answer.* Iran's destabilizing regional activities are nothing new. Tehran has posed such threats for decades, across multiple administrations. The Biden administration is unwavering in its commitment to its allies and partners and continues to engage closely with them as part of a comprehensive approach that includes sanctions, interdiction, defense and intelligence cooperation, and support for Israel's freedom of action to counter Iran's destabilizing activities. In fact, the administration's sustained diplomatic engagement with allies and partners has ensured a more united, better coordinated, and more consistent approach in countering the Iranian threat and advancing our shared goals in the region.

*Question.* In your view, are the LAF a viable counterweight to Hezbollah's influence within Lebanon?

*Answer.* The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is the sole legitimate defender of Lebanon, a reliable U.S. partner, and an important counterweight to Hezbollah's malign influence in the country. A strong, stable LAF undermines Hezbollah's assertion that its arms are necessary to defend Lebanon from external aggression. The LAF remains the only cross-confessional institution with broad support from all aspects of Lebanese society, transcending sectarian and party alliances.

*Question.* Since the U.S. began funding the Lebanese Armed Forces, have they taken any meaningful steps to confront Hezbollah?

*Answer.* According to a December 2019 GAO Report, the LAF's border security and counterterrorism capabilities notably improved from 2013 to 2018. With the support of U.S. training and equipment, the LAF has defeated ISIS in Lebanon, reasserted control over territory along its border with Syria, and increased its presence in southern Lebanon in support of UNIFIL. These improvements undercut Hezbollah's unfounded argument that its weapons are necessary to protect Lebanon's sovereignty. If confirmed, I will continue to use all the tools at our disposal to push back on Hezbollah's terrorist activities and destabilizing influence in Lebanon and across the region.

*Question.* Given the deterioration of the Lebanese state, can you assure the committee that U.S. equipment provided to the LAF will not fall into the hands of Hezbollah?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to undertake rigorous measures to minimize the likelihood that Hezbollah or any other terrorist organization will benefit from our assistance, including thorough oversight, vetting, and robust risk mitigation practices carried out by the U.S. Government and implementing partners. The LAF is a strong U.S. partner with an exemplary end-use monitoring record. The Department continues to hold the LAF accountable for its use of U.S. assistance funds and have no reason to believe that any U.S. equipment has fallen into the hands of Hezbollah.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BARBARA A. LEAF BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* Just last week Lebanon announced a new government formation under Prime Minister Mikati. While this is a positive step in the formation of a government, I remain concerned about the deep economic crisis in the country.

- What are U.S. priorities in engaging with the new Government? How can the U.S. help as the country's economy continues to collapse further?

*Answer.* Lebanon must implement significant reforms to address the spiraling economic crisis it faces, on an urgent basis and in a sustainable way. If confirmed, I will build on the work by the Department and our embassy, and in concert with key partners, to keep up the pressure on PM Mikati's new government to implement long-overdue economic and governance reforms; these reforms are demanded by the

Lebanese people, and should be done ideally in partnership with the IMF, Lebanese civil society, and other key actors. The Mikati Government should also prepare the country to hold parliamentary elections in May 2022 as scheduled. The United States and our international partners have been clear that Lebanon's leaders must act in order to unlock potential financing programs and structural support, but the hard work must start immediately. The United States stands with the Lebanese people, and will continue to support it and key institutions, to help the most vulnerable weather the crisis.

*Question.* How can we work with civil society, as well as the Lebanese Government, to support transparent and efficient parliamentary elections next spring?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue our efforts to hold PM Mikati's new Government accountable for ensuring transparent parliamentary elections are held next spring. I will also support our existing programs aimed at assisting reform-minded actors to respond to the needs of citizens through transparent and democratic processes. If confirmed, I will ensure my team works closely with Lebanese civil society, which deserves our continued support as it both holds the new Government accountable and assists it in implementing needed reforms, as well as election monitoring initiatives. I will also work with the international community to press for a transparent electoral process to obtain credible elections that represent the will of the people, untainted by foreign malign influence.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. BARBARA A. LEAF BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* Please transmit copies of those emails. The Washington Free Beacon reviewed at least two of them.

*Answer.* As a nominee I am not in a position to act on behalf of the State Department with regard to its records. I take my responsibilities with respect to Congressional oversight seriously and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to respond to your concerns.

*Question.* Please transmit any other internal guidance - emails, memos, cables, notes, decision memos, briefing papers, instructions, etc. - that instructed staffers not to use the phrase "Abraham Accords."

*Answer.* As a nominee I am not in a position to act on behalf of the State Department with regard to its records. I take my responsibilities with respect to Congressional oversight seriously and if confirmed I look forward to working with you to respond to your concerns.

*Question.* In your testimony on September 15 you indicated that you are supportive of the Abraham Accords. Can you commit to ensuring that any guidelines or policies prohibiting using the phrase "Abraham Accords" are revised and reversed?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the Biden-Harris administration refers to the agreements known as the Abraham Accords as such. I certainly do. If confirmed, I will continue to use that moniker.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?

*Answer.* In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, the administration gives great weight to Israel's security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria and Iran is present in Syria, it would be greatly irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door. This administration has not changed U.S. policy on this important issue.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* This administration has not altered U.S. policy on this important issue. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* What are the regional security opportunities for the U.S. now that Israel is part of CENTCOM?

*Answer.* Now that Israel is part of the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility, regional security opportunities for the United States range from enhanced communication between our two countries to expanded opportunities for regional multilateral engagements, such as exercises and planning conferences.

*Question.* How do you plan to maximize Israel's integration into our regional security architecture?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would promote Israel's integration into our regional security architecture in close coordination with my colleagues at the Department of Defense, including CENTCOM.

*Question.* Please describe any new significant sanctions that have been imposed on Iran since the inauguration of President Biden.

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has imposed the following Iran-related sanctions since it took office:

- On September 17, the Treasury Department sanctioned international financial networks supporting terrorism, including providing support to Lebanese Hizballah and Iran's Qods Force;
- On September 3, Treasury sanctioned an Iranian intelligence network targeting an Iranian-American activist in the United States;
- On August 13, Treasury sanctioned an oil broker network supporting the Qods Force;
- On June 10, Treasury sanctioned an international network enriching the Houthis and Qods Force in Yemen; and
- On March 9, the State Department designated Iranian officials pursuant to Section 7031(c) of the FY2021 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriation Act due to involvement in gross violations of human rights.

*Question.* Please describe the details of any arrangements, deals, or agreements that are being contemplated by the Biden administration to reduce pressure on Iran other than reentry into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

*Answer.* There have been no such arrangements, deals, or agreements contemplated to reduce pressure on Iran.

*Question.* What measures has the Biden administration taken to insulate our diplomats from engaging with Iranian officials connected to international terrorism or who have been sanctioned?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal. However, the U.S. Government has yet to engage in any direct discussions with the Iranian Government or its officials as their Government currently bars such interactions. Additionally, State Department policy generally limits USG personnel from interacting with Iranian officials, and specifically restricts interactions with officials known or suspected to be members of terrorist organizations or subject to sanctions designations.

*Question.* To what degree was the State Department aware of Ghani's departure beforehand?

*Answer.* I am currently not a State Department employee and am not privy to Department knowledge on this issue.

*Question.* Did you or any State Department officials, to your knowledge, engage in conversations with any governments under NEA's purview to request that they

provide Ghani with safe haven, including the governments of Qatar or the United Arab Emirates?

*Answer.* After President Ghani departed Kabul for Uzbekistan and the Government of Uzbekistan informed the U.S. of his presence on Uzbek soil and that he wished to travel onward to the UAE, the administration conveyed to both Governments of Uzbekistan and the United Arab Emirates that such arrangements would be a bilateral one between those governments and Ghani himself.

*Question.* Do you believe that it would be in America's national security interest for resources to go to the Government of Lebanon even if that government was controlled or unduly influenced by Hezbollah?

*Answer.* Hizballah is a terrorist organization, and the United States undertakes rigorous measures to safeguard U.S. assistance from conferring benefits to Hizballah or any other terrorist group, including thorough oversight, vetting, and robust risk mitigation practices. As part of its security assistance, the U.S. Government conducts End-Use Monitoring (EUM) to mitigate the risk of unauthorized transfer or use of U.S. technology and equipment. The Lebanese Armed Forces continues to comply fully with all EUM reporting and security requirements.

*Question.* On August 19, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Shea said that the Biden administration intends to waive sanctions on the Assad regime in order to provide energy to Lebanon: "There is a will to make this happen. There will be some logistical things that need to happen too, but I think that it will all fall into place fairly easily." The waiver will facilitate the transfer of gas and resources through Assad-controlled Syria and to Lebanon and its Government. Do you support waiving such sanctions?

*Answer.* Lebanon is currently experiencing an acute energy crisis that is having a terrible impact on critical lifesaving infrastructure such as hospitals and the water supply; the crisis needs a long-term solution, but shorter-term measures are also urgently needed, given the deleterious effect on the public. These potential bilateral and multilateral agreements proffered by regional states, which have been endorsed by the World Bank, could help Lebanon begin to address its power crisis in a sustainable and transparent manner. I understand that the Department of State is currently conferring with those partners to gain further detail on the proposals and is conferring with the Department of Treasury as well. U.S. sanctions remain an important tool to press for accountability for the Assad regime, to include on its atrocious record of human rights abuses. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of the Treasury and our partners to ensure that any potential deal our partners reach is consistent with our broader policy priorities and all relevant U.S. sanctions. I look forward to continuing to consult with Congress on this important issue.

*Question.* On September 15 you testified that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) are an important partner in the Middle East and serve as a check against Hezbollah. Do you support calibrating support for the LAF on the degree to which it fulfills those functions? Under what conditions would you support restricting assistance to the LAF?

*Answer.* The Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is the sole legitimate defender of Lebanon, a reliable U.S. partner, and an important counterweight to Hizballah's malign influence in the country. The LAF is also a cross-confessional institution with broad support from all aspects of Lebanese society, transcending sectarian and party alliances. A strong, stable LAF undermines Hizballah's assertion that its arms are necessary to defend Lebanon from external aggression. If confirmed, I will continue to build the LAF's capacity to serve as a counterweight to Hizballah and act in the interests of the Lebanese people.

*Question.* What percent of U.S. assistance to Lebanon was used for activities or operations aimed at disarming Hezbollah in 2019 and 2020? A rough estimate or a range will be sufficient.

*Answer.* U.S. military assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is focused on developing the LAF's capabilities and professionalism, as well as developing it as an institution that acts as a counterweight to Hizballah's influence. Since 2006, the United States has provided more than \$2.5 billion in security assistance to the LAF. This assistance has helped increase its capacity to serve as the exclusive legitimate defender of Lebanon's sovereignty and violent extremist organizations, including ISIS.

*Question.* What percent of U.S. assistance to Lebanon was used for activities or operations aimed at disrupting Hezbollah activities short of disarming them in 2019 and 2020, e.g. through roadblocks? A rough estimate or a range will be sufficient.



Answer. U.S. assistance to Lebanon is one of the many tools the Department uses to support the Lebanese people, civil society, and institutions critical to building a sovereign state responsive to its people's legitimate needs. U.S. security assistance also supports partners, such as the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces, that are critical to stability and security. A government that reflects the will and is able to meet the needs of all Lebanese, and security institutions that can defend Lebanese sovereignty, undermine Hizballah's illegitimate and illegal actions, as well as its malign influence in Lebanon and the region.

*Question.* Please describe the degree to which, in your assessment, Hezbollah continues to influence or control over the Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport or facilities located within the airport.

Answer. The U.S. Government remains concerned about Hizballah's influence at ports of entry into Lebanon, including at the airport. In PM Mikati's new cabinet, a Hizballah minister was appointed Minister of Public Works and Transport.

*Question.* Please describe the degree to which, in your assessment, Hezbollah continues to influence or control over the Port of Beirut or facilities located within the port?

Answer. The influence Hizballah exerts over ports of entry remains of considerable concern and also denies the Lebanese people the benefit of customs revenue, which is significant given the large budget deficits Lebanon continues to face. In PM Mikati's new cabinet, a Hizballah minister was appointed as Minister of Public Works and Transport. The Department will continue to evaluate the impact of this appointment and report on the situation. To combat Hizballah's influence, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated under Executive Order 13224 Hizballah security official Wafiq Safa for acting for or on behalf of Hizballah. As head of Hizballah's security apparatus, Safa exploited Lebanon's ports and border crossings to smuggle contraband, enable Hizballah travel, and facilitate the passage of illegal drugs and weapons into the seaport of Beirut, routing certain shipments to avoid scrutiny.

*Question.* Is the administration withholding \$130 million in aid from Egypt on the basis of the conditions described in the *Washington Post* report? If the report is inaccurate, what parts are inaccurate?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration's goal with regard to this decision is to seek progress on human rights. The administration supports further strengthening the bilateral security and defense relationship with Egypt, while also seeking sustainable improvements in the Egyptian Government's approach to human rights. The Department has focused on specific human rights issues of concern, including cases of political detention and restrictions on civil society.

As noted in Congressional Notification 20-271 (September 14), the Secretary could not certify that Egypt is taking sustained and effective steps related to the human rights-related conditions in section 7043(a)(3)(A) of the FY 2020 SFOAA. The Department will make available \$300,000,000 in FY 2020 FMF for Egypt for counterterrorism, border security, and nonproliferation programs, consistent with the exception to the certification requirement under section 7041(a)(3)(A) of the FY 2020 SFOAA. However, because serious human rights concerns remain, the Department will not move forward with the application of \$130,000,000 of these funds to Foreign Military Sales cases for Egypt unless the Government of Egypt affirmatively addresses specific human rights-related conditions. The \$130,000,000 will not be deposited into Egypt's interest-bearing Federal Reserve Bank account and may be reprogrammed if Egypt fails to meet the conditions within the prescribed timeframe. It is the administration's goal to continue to work with Egypt as a strategic partner to encourage progress on improving respect for human rights. To this end, the Department expects that the Government of Egypt can and will meet the conditions presented to them.

While I cannot speak to the accuracy of press reports, I take seriously the authority of Congress to conduct oversight, and if confirmed I look forward to working with you on these and other important issues.

*Question.* Please provide a list of any individuals, including if relevant, the 16 referred to in the *Washington Post* story, who are the subject of conditions imposed on aid to Egypt. For each individual on the list, please list the following:

- Their names;
- Their organizational affiliations;
- The specific charges that the Egyptian Government has brought against them, which the U.S. is asking the Egyptians to dismiss; and

- Whether the individual is a U.S. citizen, or if not, whether the individual holds a Legal Permanent Resident Card, or if not, if the individual has applied for immigration or visa status and what that status is.

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration's goal with regard to this decision on FMF is to seek progress on human rights. The administration supports further strengthening the bilateral security and defense relationship with Egypt, while also seeking sustainable improvements in the Egyptian Government's approach to human rights. The Department has focused on specific human rights issues of concern, including cases of political detention and restrictions on civil society.

As noted in Congressional Notification 20-271 (September 14), the Secretary could not certify that Egypt is taking sustained and effective steps related to the human rights-related conditions in section 7043(a)(3)(A) of the FY 2020 SFOAA. The Department will make available \$300,000,000 in FY 2020 FMF for Egypt for counterterrorism, border security, and nonproliferation programs, consistent with the exception to the certification requirement under section 7041(a)(3)(A) of the FY 2020 SFOAA. However, because serious human rights concerns remain, the Department will not move forward with the application of \$130,000,000 of these funds to Foreign Military Sales cases for Egypt unless the Government of Egypt affirmatively addresses specific human rights-related conditions. The \$130,000,000 will not be deposited into Egypt's interest-bearing Federal Reserve Bank account and may be reprogrammed if Egypt fails to meet the conditions within the prescribed timeframe. It is the administration's goal to continue to work with Egypt as a strategic partner to encourage progress on improving respect for human rights. To this end, the Department expects that the Government of Egypt can and will meet the conditions presented to them.

President Biden and President al-Sisi in May agreed on the importance of a constructive dialogue on human rights. Since then, the administration has pressed the Government of Egypt on multiple levels to address specific human rights concerns, including during Secretary Blinken's discussion with President al-Sisi in Cairo in May. Although the Department has and will continue to publicly raise concerns about Egypt's human rights record, administration officials have also conveyed these specific requests privately, in an effort to avoid Egyptian Government sensitivities about responding to foreign pressure. The Department anticipates hosting a ministerial Strategic Dialogue session with Egypt later this year to advance the U.S. - Egypt partnership and secure positive steps on human rights.

While I cannot speak to the accuracy of press reports, I take seriously the authority of Congress to conduct oversight, and if confirmed I look forward to working with you on these and other important matters.

*Question.* Additionally, for any individual on the list described above who is not a U.S. citizen, please also describe:

- The process through which the State Department or as relevant the broader interagency reviewed the cases and came to the determination that their cases should be used as conditions for aid.
- Whether they are affiliated with groups that promote Islamist ideologies, distribute anti-Semitic materials, or distribute political disinformation.
- Whether the Biden administration intends to grant U.S. visas to them should the Egyptian Government release them.

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration supports further strengthening bilateral security and defense relationship with Egypt, while seeking and sustainable improvements in the Egyptian Government's approach to human rights. The Department has focused on specific human rights issues of concern, including cases of political detention and restrictions on civil society.

As noted in Congressional Notification 20-271 (September 14), the Secretary could not certify that Egypt is taking sustained and effective steps related to the human rights-related conditions in section 7043(a)(3)(A) of the FY 2020 SFOAA. The Department will make available \$300,000,000 in FY 2020 FMF for Egypt for counterterrorism, border security, and nonproliferation programs, consistent with the exception to the certification requirement under section 7041(a)(3)(A) of the FY 2020 SFOAA. However, because serious human rights concerns remain, the Department will not move forward with the application of \$130,000,000 of these funds to Foreign Military Sales cases for Egypt unless the Government of Egypt affirmatively addresses specific human rights-related conditions. The \$130,000,000 will not be deposited into Egypt's interest-bearing Federal Reserve Bank account and may be reprogrammed if Egypt fails to meet the conditions within the prescribed timeframe. It is the administration's goal to continue to work with Egypt as a strategic partner to encourage progress on improving respect for human rights. To this end, the De-

partment expect that the Government of Egypt can and will meet the conditions presented to them.

President Biden and President al-Sisi in May agreed on the importance of a constructive dialogue on human rights. Since then, the administration has pressed the Government of Egypt on multiple levels to address specific human rights concerns, including during Secretary Blinken's discussion with President al-Sisi in Cairo in May. Although the Department has and will continue to publicly raise concerns about Egypt's human rights record, administration officials have also conveyed these specific requests privately, in an effort to avoid Egyptian Government sensitivities about responding to foreign pressure. The Department anticipates hosting a ministerial Strategic Dialogue session with Egypt later this year to advance the U.S.-Egypt partnership and secure positive steps on human rights.

While I cannot speak to the accuracy of press reports, I take seriously the authority of Congress to conduct oversight, and if confirmed I look forward to working with you on these and other important matters.

*Question.* Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

*Answer.* The Houthis, with continued Iranian support, remain intransigent and focused on their military offensive against the city of Marib. That offensive is the single biggest impediment to a national ceasefire and follow-on peace talks; it is exacerbating an already-dire humanitarian crisis, placing at risk a million internally displaced persons who found refuge in Marib after escaping fighting in other parts of the country. The Houthis also exacerbate the humanitarian consequences of the fuel situation at Hudaydah port by stockpiling fuel and manipulating fuel prices, driving up costs far beyond the reach of most Yemenis. In addition, the Houthis continue to interfere in the delivery of humanitarian aid.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in general.

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration revoked the terrorism designations of Ansarallah, sometimes referred to as the Houthis, in recognition of the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen and the adverse impact the designation immediately had on NGOs and private commercial importers of food and other basic goods. Shortly after the FTO designation announcement, the administration began to hear of de-risking—by banks, insurance firms, and transport companies—putting at risk near-term food imports. The administration listened to concerns voiced by the United Nations, humanitarian groups, and bipartisan members of Congress, among others, regarding potential impacts of the designation on Yemenis' access to basic commodities. The short time that passed between the designations and the revocations limited the impact the designations could have had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports. According to U.N. data, food and other humanitarian assistance items are now moving through Yemeni ports at normal rates except in some areas under Houthi control.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

*Answer.* The short time that passed between the designations and the revocations limited the adverse impact that designations could have had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports. In Marib, the escalation of hostilities by the Houthis has caused additional needs and secondary displacement. The lifting of sanctions, however, has helped ensure the safe delivery of life-saving food, emergency shelter, water, and sanitation and hygiene supplies, as well as essential non-food items, such as blankets and water containers.



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2021 (p.m.)

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., via video-conference, Senator Coons, presiding.

Present: Senators Coons [presiding], Cardin, Kaine, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Young, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE**

Senator COONS. Good afternoon. It is my honor to call this hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to order.

I welcome the chance to serve as chair of this hearing and appreciate Chairman Menendez asking me to take this on as we consider five highly qualified nominees, and I welcome, as ranking member for this hearing, Senator Hagerty and the five nominees who are before us.

Let me briefly introduce them, and I will make a very brief statement and then invite Senator Hagerty to make whatever opening statement he may care to.

Our five nominees for this afternoon's hearing are Dr. C.S. Eliot Kang, to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation; Adam Scheinman, to be Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation; Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat, to be Director General of the Foreign Service; Bathsheba Nell Crocker, to be U.S. Representative to the Office of the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva; and Dr. Michael Carpenter, to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Let me begin by thanking all five of you, thanking you for your willingness to continue your service to this Nation. And let me extend my thanks to your families, who normally, if we were in person, would, many of them, be physically with us, and so I would have a chance to greet them. I do not know if any of them are hovering just off the screen, but please convey to them my gratitude for their support for your career and service.

Before we proceed into the substance of your opening statements, our colleague from New Jersey Senator Booker will introduce Ambassador Bernicat. Let me also, before we proceed to that, do two more things. I am going to ask all of our nominees today to please keep your statements to roughly 5 minutes in length. The com-

mittee will accept your written testimonies in full and submit them for the record.

And I also want to note for all members and staff who may be listening that questions for the record for this confirmation hearing will be due by the close of business this Thursday, September 16th.

With that, let me invite Senator Hagerty to make any opening comment he would like to. Then we will proceed to an introduction by Senator Booker.

Senator Hagerty?

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Chairman Coons, thank you very much. And I want to thank Senator Risch for inviting me to serve as the ranking member today. And I also want to thank the nominees for appearing before our committee today. I appreciate your willingness to serve our great Nation. I am looking forward to hearing from each of you.

I would like to start with the nomination to the Director General of the Foreign Service. This position has the unique responsibility of recruiting, retaining, and sustaining the Foreign Service and the civil service workforce of the State Department.

As a former U.S. Ambassador to Japan, I recognize that the people of the State Department are critical to the success of American diplomacy. For the United States to tackle the growing number of complex global challenges, we should seek to build the finest diplomatic corps in the world. I look forward to hearing from the nominee about how we will achieve this goal.

Next I would like to turn to the nomination to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation. As strategic adversaries such as China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea continue to expand their arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, the world is becoming more dangerous each day.

The United States should look for opportunities to expand counterproliferation efforts in ways to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. I am particularly interested to hear from the nominee about his views on the increasing WMD threats from China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea and what the United States should be doing.

I would like to turn next to the nominee to be the Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation. There are a growing number of countries, such as China and Iran, that pose significant challenges with respect to nuclear energy and nonproliferation norms. I look forward to hearing from the nominee about ways to update the NPT for the 21st century.

Now I would like to turn to the nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. I just returned from NATO, and it is clear that following the withdrawal from Afghanistan, we are at a critical juncture with many of our European allies and partners, and they need to know that the United States can and will be a reliable partner. This is even more important, considering Russia's efforts to spread malign influence throughout Europe. I look forward to hearing from the nominee about these issues.

And now I want to turn my attention to the nominee to be the Representative of the United States to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva. As the lead U.S. official representing over 100 U.N. bodies in Geneva, you will be responsible for advancing U.S. interests in many multilateral organizations. As we all know, China and other strategic adversaries are looking to expand their influence by remaking global institutions in their image. I look forward to hearing from the nominee about what steps she intends to take to fight for America.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time. Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Hagerty.

Let me now invite Senator Booker of New Jersey to offer an introduction of Ambassador Bernicat.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CORY A. BOOKER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

Senator BOOKER. Well, this is an extraordinary honor, Senator Coons. Thank you very much.

I am really elated, frankly, to be able to introduce President Biden's nominee to serve as Director General of the Foreign Service, Ambassador Marcia Bernicat. We are currently, as you know, facing tremendous challenges all across the globe that will not only define the history of the world but will most certainly define the history of our Nation. Challenges like the global crisis of climate change to taking on the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to cause such tragedy around the world.

And we know this, for all of us Senators who have been traveling, America's diplomatic leadership is now needed more than ever. And that is why we need this great Jersian Ambassador Bernicat leading the diplomatic corps responsible for representing the United States of America and advancing our interests around the world.

I can think of no one more qualified for this extraordinarily important position. She has served as a Foreign Service officer for three decades starting, I think, when she was 2 or 3 years old. Ambassador Bernicat has had a career that is not just impressive, but impactful.

She most recently served as senior official for economic growth, energy, and the environment at the State Department and prior to that served as the Ambassador to Bangladesh and previously concurrently as the Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

Over the course of her diplomatic career, she has received extraordinary honors and respect from those who she served with. She is somebody that is both well respected and looked up to, but also someone in which folks have great confidence in.

She has served in Barbados, Malawi, Morocco, India, Nepal, France, and Mali. All across the world she has made an impact and left a lasting legacy. She represents the best of the United States of America, and I would say, coming from the great State of New Jersey, she represents the best of New Jersians. Born in the wonderful Red Bank, New Jersey.

Ambassador Bernicat probably has many, many accolades, but perhaps her two best living legacy examples of her success is her two sons, who she has raised while serving in the Foreign Service.

As we Senators in a bipartisan effort work to reinvest in the diplomatic efforts to keep America safe, rebuild our alliances and partnerships, and live up to our collective values here at home and abroad, Ambassador Bernicat is exactly the kind of leader that we need.

I urge my colleagues not because of fealty to New Jersey, I urge my colleagues because of fealty to the United States of America to support her nomination.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Booker. I appreciate that introduction.

We are now going to proceed to hear opening statements from each of our five nominees in the order in which they were noticed for this hearing by the committee.

So no disrespect, Senator Booker, we are going to begin with Dr. C.S. Eliot Kang, and then we will proceed through the five nominees in the order that they were noticed.

Senator BOOKER. No disrespect taken, but go ahead.

Senator COONS. It is just part of the traditions of this committee. So, if I might, Dr. Kang, your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG OF NEW JERSEY, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND NONPROLIFERATION)**

Dr. KANG. Yes, sir. Thank you very much.

Senator Booker, I am also from New Jersey. Ocean County, Lakewood, New Jersey.

Senator BOOKER. Yes.

[Laughter.]

Dr. KANG. Yes. Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am grateful to President Biden for nominating me to be the Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation.

I am also grateful to Secretary Blinken for his trust and faith in supporting my nomination.

Crossing the Pacific as a 9-year-old immigrant almost half a century ago, my only ambition was to taste a real hamburger. No doubt my mother and father, who made the fateful decision for my family to start a new life in the United States, had more lofty hopes for me and my sister, Myung. However, I am sure they never imagined the honor of me appearing before this august body to be examined for my worthiness to serve this great Nation as an Assistant Secretary of State.

If confirmed, I pledge to continue working tirelessly for the American people. Indeed, public service is in my DNA. I have been following the footsteps of my late father, a decorated combat pilot and a Government official. And my mother, a lifelong educator and recipient of New Jersey Governor's award for outstanding teaching.

I started my career in my mother's profession, but the events of September 11, 2001, led me to my father's path of Government service. It has not been an easy path to tread, but unwavering support from my wife, Michelle, and the understanding of my two sons, Gregory and Wesley, have strengthened my steps and resolve.



In 2003, I first joined the State Department's Bureau of Political and Military Affairs and then Bureau of Arms Control as a William C. Foster Fellow, which was a congressionally established program for bringing academics into the Government's—into the Department's arms control and nonproliferation work.

I became a career civil servant in 2005, and since 2006, I have held various leadership positions in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, working to protect the American people from dangers posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

As a career officer, I have endeavored across four presidential administrations to minimize the threat of nuclear, chemical, biological, and advanced conventional weapons and the destabilization these weapons can cause.

However, despite tremendous bipartisan efforts and the steadfast leadership of this committee to stem the tide of the most destructive and horrible weapons, the challenges only appears to be growing. Indeed, the explosion of technology seems to create as many problems for our security as it solves for our society.

In the late hours of the evening, I reflect upon the increasing challenges we face, and I arrive to work every morning resolved and determined to do something about them. In this commitment, I am not alone.

I am privileged to serve the American people alongside a remarkable group of colleagues who share my dedication, the men and women serving in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation who frustrate our adversaries and are respected by allies and friends throughout the world. I am inspired by these public servants who gladly accept personal sacrifices to serve our Nation.

The President's confidence in me, a career officer, is an honor for me and my family, but it is also a testament to the expertise and ability of the remarkable professionals in the Bureau. Indeed, the Bureau is an extraordinary collection of civil servants, Foreign Service officers, and contractors with expertise in the physical sciences, engineering, intelligence, military sciences, communications, and program administration. Many are leading subject matter experts with international reputations. I am in awe of the tremendous skill and knowledge and dedication they bring to tackle some of the most pressing security problems facing the world and the Nation.

If confirmed, I will work even harder to empower my colleagues to tackle the challenges this committee expects us to meet.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, the ranking member, and the members of the committee for your time and attention today and for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kang follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee; thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am grateful to President Biden for nominating me to be the Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation. I am also grateful to Secretary Blinken for his trust and faith in supporting my nomination.

Crossing the Pacific as a nine-year-old immigrant almost a half-century ago, my only ambition was to taste a real hamburger. No doubt, my mother and father who made the fateful decision for our family to start a new life in the United States had more lofty hopes for me and my sister, Myung. However, I'm sure they never imagined the honor of me appearing before this august body to be examined for my worthiness to serve this great nation as an Assistant Secretary of State. If confirmed, I pledge to continue working tirelessly for the American people.

Indeed, public service is in my DNA. I have been following the footsteps of my late father, a decorated combat pilot and government official, and my mother, a lifelong educator and recipient of New Jersey Governor's Award for Outstanding Teaching. I started my career in my mother's profession, but the events of September 11th, 2001 led me to my father's path of government service. It has not been an easy path to tread but unwavering support from my wife, Michelle, and the understanding of my two sons, Gregory and Wesley, have strengthened my steps and resolve.

In 2003, I first joined the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and then Bureau of Arms Control as a William C. Foster Fellow, which was a congressionally established program for bringing academics into the Department's arms control and nonproliferation work. I became a career civil servant in 2005, and since 2006, I have held various leadership positions in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation working to protect the American people from the dangers posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. As a career officer, I have endeavored across four presidential administrations to minimize the threat of nuclear, chemical, biological, and advanced conventional weapons and the destabilization these weapons can cause. However, despite tremendous bipartisan efforts and the steadfast leadership of this committee to stem the tide of these most destructive and horrible weapons, the challenges only appear to be growing. Indeed, the explosion of technology seems to create as many problems for our security as it solves for our society. In the late hours of the evening, I reflect upon the increasing challenges we face; and I arrive to work every morning resolved and determined to do something about them.

In this commitment, I am not alone. I am privileged to serve the American people alongside a remarkable group of colleagues who share my dedication: the men and women serving in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, who frustrate our adversaries and are respected by our allies and friends throughout the world. I am inspired by these public servants who gladly accept personal sacrifices to serve our nation. The President's confidence in me, a career officer, is an honor for me and my family, but it is also a testament to the expertise and ability of the remarkable professionals in the Bureau. Indeed, the Bureau is an extraordinary collection of civil servants, foreign service officers, and contractors with expertise in the physical sciences, engineering, intelligence, military sciences, communications, and program administration. Many are leading subject matter experts with international reputations. I am in awe of the tremendous skills and knowledge and dedication they bring to tackle some of the most pressing security problems facing the nation and the world. If confirmed, I will work even harder to empower my colleagues to tackle the challenges this committee expects us to meet.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, the Ranking Member, and members of the committee for your time and attention today and for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Dr. Kang.  
Mr. Scheinman?

**STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN OF VIRGINIA, NOMINATED TO BE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT FOR NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Ambassador SCHEINMAN. Thank you, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Hagerty, and all other members of the committee present today. It is really an honor to appear today as President Biden's nominee for Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation.

I am grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for the confidence placed in me, and I am very pleased to be here today with my old friend Eliot Kang and all other nominees here today.

Mr. Chairman, this is my second time nominated to serve in this position. The first followed more than two decades in the Federal civil service working on issues related to nuclear weapons proliferation and related nuclear risks. And for the last 4 years, I served on the faculty of the National War College which, among other benefits, was a welcome opportunity to step back and view nuclear matters through a wider lens.

At the War College, we teach that major U.S. national security challenges are best met using all instruments of power—diplomatic, military, economic, and informational. And in partnership with friends and allies and, on occasion, our competitors. A perfect illustration is nuclear proliferation. It is a challenge to our vital interests and one for which there are no purely military or political solutions.

There is no doubt that the international system is in transition. It is increasingly competitive. It is less predictable, and in a time of turbulence, some would ask whether the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, or the NPT—an agreement conceived in the Cold War period—was still fit for purpose. To my mind, the answer is a resounding “yes.” There is no nuclear weapons challenge facing the United States for which the NPT limits our strategic options or for which better options would be available in the treaty’s absence.

On the contrary, the NPT is a force multiplier and extends the range and reach of our nuclear diplomacy and global confidence in nonproliferation norms and all the supporting institutions. This, I think, explains the continuity of U.S. bipartisan support for the NPT, support that spans 12 presidencies—6 Democratic and 6 Republican administrations from President Kennedy to President Biden.

As in prior decades, it certainly remains true that nuclear proliferation dangers are best tackled not alone, but through collective action, and the NPT anchors that action. It is the basis for assembling diplomatic coalitions to confront countries like Iran and North Korea. Its wide, robust international safeguards came into being, and we continue to strengthen them. And it provides a framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation and restraint on transfers of the most sensitive nuclear technologies.

It also permeates U.S. alliances that are themselves potent instruments of nonproliferation policy. Same time we have to acknowledge that the NPT is not immune from pressures that could erode its appeal. Regional grievances, rising frustration of parties over the slow pace on nuclear disarmament actions are really serious problems for the NPT’s political process. And no one here needs any imagination to guess at the consequences for the treaty and for international security if Iran were to take the path of North Korea and withdraw from the treaty to develop nuclear weapons.

If confirmed, I look forward to doing my part to advance a broad U.S. strategy to strengthen the NPT in all aspects. There is much work to do, from strengthening the institutional machinery for nonproliferation to reassuring allies that they can depend on the United States for defense and deterrence and providing the arms control enterprise that President Biden has started with the agreement with Russia on a 5-year extension of the New START Treaty.

These are important steps, and I hope they lay the groundwork for additional measures.

Most significantly, our NPT agenda requires steady U.S. leadership. We were present at the creation of the nonproliferation regime. No other state has our reach or our influence to sustain it. And if confirmed, I pledge to do my part to carry forward the legacy of U.S. leadership, working closely with Congress, with my interagency colleagues and our foreign partners to preserve and strengthen this vital instrument.

So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome any questions you or members of the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Scheinman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM M. SCHEINMAN

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

It is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee for Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me. I am also very pleased to be here today with my fellow nominees.

Mr. Chairman, this is my second time being nominated for this position. The first time capped more than two decades in the federal civil service dedicated to preventing nuclear weapons proliferation and related nuclear risks. More recently, I served on the faculty of the National War College, which was a welcome break from the day-to-day rhythms of government work but also an opportunity to step back and view nuclear matters through a wider lens.

At the war college, we teach that major U.S. national security challenges are best met using all instruments of power—diplomatic, military, economic and informational—and in partnership with friends, allies, and on occasion our competitors. A perfect illustration is nuclear proliferation, a challenge to our vital interests and for which there are no purely military or political solutions.

There can be no doubt that the international system is in transition, increasingly competitive and less predictable. In a time of such turbulence, some ask whether the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—or NPT, an agreement conceived in the Cold War era—is “fit for purpose.”

To my mind, this question answers itself resoundingly in the affirmative. There is no realistic nuclear weapons challenge facing the United States for which the NPT limits our strategic options or for which better options would be available in the treaty's absence. To the contrary, the NPT is a force multiplier, extending the range and reach of U.S. nuclear diplomacy and global confidence in nonproliferation norms, rules and supporting institutions. This explains the continuity of U.S. bipartisan support for this treaty, support that spans twelve presidencies, from President Kennedy to President Biden—that's six Democratic and six Republican administrations.

As in prior decades, we recognize today that nuclear proliferation dangers are best tackled not alone but through collective action. The NPT anchors such action. It is the basis for assembling diplomatic coalitions to confront Iran and North Korea. It is why robust international nuclear safeguards came into being and continue to strengthen. It provides a framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation and restraint on transfers of sensitive nuclear technologies. And it permeates U.S. alliances that are themselves potent instruments of nonproliferation policy.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that the NPT is not immune to pressures that over time may erode its appeal. Regional grievances and rising frustration of many parties over the slow pace of nuclear disarmament actions are serious problems that roil the NPT's political process. And one needs little imagination to guess at the consequences for the treaty and international security if Iran were to take the path of North Korea by seeking to withdraw from the treaty to develop nuclear weapons.

If confirmed, I look forward to doing my part to advance a broad U.S. strategy to strengthen the NPT in all its aspects. There is much work to do, from strengthening international safeguards, to expanding peaceful nuclear cooperation without adding to proliferation dangers, to enhancing the security incentives of states to support the NPT. Reassuring allies that rely on the United States for defense and deterrence is one such measure. Another is reviving the nuclear arms control enterprise, as the Biden administration has advanced by reaching agreement with Russia

on a five-year extension of the New START Treaty. The agreement to resume a high-level dialogue on strategic stability is another welcome development, one that can lay the groundwork for additional measures.

Most significantly, our NPT agenda requires steady U.S. leadership. We were present at the creation of the nonproliferation regime and no other state has our reach or influence to sustain it. If confirmed, I pledge to do my part to carry forward the legacy of U.S. leadership, working closely with Congress, my interagency colleagues, and our foreign partners to preserve and strengthen a treaty system that contributes so much to the nation's security.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I welcome any questions you or other members of the committee may have.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Scheinman.

We will now turn to Ambassador Bernicat.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT  
OF NEW JERSEY, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE**

Ambassador BERNICAT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Coons, Ranking Member Senator Hagerty, distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today.

I sincerely thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Director General of the Foreign Service and to serve as Director of Global Talent Management. If confirmed, I will work with the members of this committee to build a workforce better able to confront the breadth and depth of challenges we face in the 21st century.

Supporting the more than 76,000 women and men who make up our diverse global team would be the highest privilege of my four-decade career. I am inspired by my colleagues who so dutifully serve our Nation, too often in harm's way. They deserve our full support, and their welfare will be my north star.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge my aunt and uncle, Blanche and Robert Stephens; my sister and brother-in-law, Kathryn and Luther White; and brother and sister-in-law, Rodney and Cindy Bloom. I would also like to thank my sons, Sumit Nicolaus and Sunil Christopher, and their father, Olivier, who hold a special place in my heart in no small part for having shared this Foreign Service journey with me across the globe.

As Secretary Blinken noted when he came before this committee, when America does not lead on the global stage, others who do not necessarily have our best interests at heart and mind fill the void, or the challenges simply go unaddressed. In order to lead with diplomacy, we need a strong State Department.

Our team has been tested in unprecedented ways over the last 20 months. Most recently mobilizing to evacuate more than 123,000 people, including 6,000 U.S. citizens, 2,800 locally employed staff from Afghanistan, one of the largest noncombatant evacuations in U.S. history. And this effort was preceded in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic by our coordinating the repatriation of over 100,000 Americans from 136 different countries and territories in less than 6 months.

A 21st century workforce must reflect our diverse Nation. If confirmed, I will prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility so the Department is fully representative of the American people

and is a workplace where every employee is treated with dignity and respect and has an equal opportunity for professional development and promotion. I will work with Ambassador Winstanley, the Department's first Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, to ensure the initiatives she leads are embedded at every level of our organization.

Mr. Chairman, over the past 20 months we have adapted to unprecedented circumstances. At State, we are building on that experience to invest in a workforce that is more mobile, agile, and expeditionary, especially one that gets outside capitals more often to directly engage local communities.

The virtual world provides new tools and expanded outreach, for example [inaudible]. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we are prepared to return to the workplace while taking full advantage of a more hybrid workforce and environment.

We will also need to build a broader knowledge set to meet the challenges our Nation faces—from preventing the next pandemic, harnessing the full potential of emerging technologies, and addressing climate change, to strengthening our alliances and countering our adversaries.

Our diversity as a nation gives us strategic advantage. By seeking the best talent, most creative minds, and our fellow citizens' varied experiences and backgrounds, State is better equipped to advance America's security, its other interests, our values, and commitment to democracy. In our diversity, we embody the values to which our Nation aspires, and we also inspire Americans to pursue a life of service and give young people across the globe hope for a better future.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work to strengthen accountability, empowering our employees to take risks, learn from their mistakes, and assume greater responsibility for their decisions. And I will endeavor to make healing central to all my efforts—from a pandemic that robbed us of too many colleagues and family members, from the withdrawal from Afghanistan where so many of our employees served over the past two decades, and from the racial and social strife that has rocked our country and our workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Bernicat follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today. I sincerely thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Global Talent Management.

If confirmed, I will work with the members of this committee to build a workforce better able to confront the breadth and depth of challenges we face in the 21st century. Supporting the more than 76,000 women and men who make up our diverse, global team will be the highest privilege of my four-decade career. I am inspired by the women and men who so dutifully serve our nation, too often in harm's way. They deserve our full support and their welfare will be my north star.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge my Aunt and Uncle Blanche and Robert Stephens, the matriarch and patriarch of our family, my sister and brother-in-law Kathryn and Luther White and brother and sister-in-law Rodney and Cindy Bloom. I'd also like to thank my sons, Sumit Nicolaus and Sunil Christopher, and

their father Olivier, who hold a special place in my heart in no small part for having shared this Foreign Service journey with me across the globe.

As Secretary Blinken noted when he came before this committee, when America does not lead on the global stage others who do not necessarily have our best interests in mind fill the void, or the challenges simply go unaddressed. In order to lead with diplomacy, we need a strong State Department.

Our team has been tested in unprecedented ways over the last 20 months, most recently mobilizing to evacuate more than 123,000 people, including 6,000 U.S. citizens and 2,800 Locally Employed Staff from Afghanistan, one of the largest non-combatant evacuations in U.S. history. This effort was preceded, in the wake of the COVID pandemic, by coordinating the repatriation of 101,386 Americans from 136 countries and territories in less than six months.

A 21st century workforce must reflect our diverse nation. If confirmed, I will prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility so the Department is fully representative of the American people and is a workplace where every employee is treated with dignity and respect and has an equal opportunity for professional development and promotion. I look forward to working with Ambassador Abercrombie-Winstanley, the Department's first Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, to ensure the initiatives she leads are embedded at every level of the organization.

Mr. Chairman, over the past 20 months we have adapted to unprecedented circumstances. At State we are building on that experience to invest in a workforce that is more mobile, agile and expeditionary; especially one that gets outside capitals more often to directly engage local communities. The virtual world also provides new tools for outreach. Our national network successfully recruited record numbers of outstanding, diverse candidates for the Pickering, Rangel, and Foreign Affairs IT Fellowships, and pursued ambitious efforts focused on diversity for career candidates. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management to ensure we are prepared to return to the workplace while taking full advantage of a more hybrid workforce and environment.

We will also need to build a broader knowledge set to meet the challenges and benefits from the opportunities our nation faces—from preventing the next pandemic, harnessing the full potential of emerging technologies and addressing climate change, to strengthening our alliances and countering our adversaries. Our diversity as a nation gives us strategic advantages. By seeking the best talent, most creative minds, and our fellow citizens' rich and varied experiences and backgrounds, State is better able to advance America's security, interests, values, and commitment to democracy. In our diversity we embody the values to which our nation aspires, inspire Americans to pursue a life of service and give young people across the globe hope for a better future.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work to strengthen accountability, empowering employees to take risks, learn from their mistakes, and assume responsibility for their decisions. And I will endeavor to make healing central to all my efforts—from a pandemic that robbed us of too many colleagues and family members; from the withdrawal from Afghanistan, where so many of our employees served over the past two decades; and from the racial and social strife that has rocked our country and our workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador.

Next we will turn to Ms. Crocker.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Ms. CROCKER. Thank you, Senator Coons, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of this committee.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the Representative of the United States to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva.

I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken for this opportunity to again serve my country.

I am so grateful for the love and support of my husband, Milan Vaishnav, our daughters, Asha and Farrin, and for their sacrifice, should I be confirmed to take on this important role. I am also thankful for the support of my father, Chester Crocker, and my sisters and their families, and I am thinking today of my mom, who would have so proud to witness me appearing before this committee again.

My parents instilled in me a deep commitment to public service. I have had no greater honor than serving my country, side by side with our career diplomatic corps. And I am especially proud that my father and I are the only father-daughter Assistant Secretaries of State in State Department history.

My previous roles as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs at the United Nations and overseeing CARE USA's humanitarian work have shown me that the United Nations works most effectively when the United States leads and leverages all of the tools at our disposal to advance U.S. national security interests across and through the United Nations system.

My previous experiences position me well to represent the United States across the many different organizations in Geneva and ensure sound oversight of the U.S. contributions to those organizations. I am committed to advancing reforms to make those organizations more efficient and effective and to ensuring the United States is best positioned to lead, to collaborate, and, where necessary, to outcompete, so that the United Nations system remains grounded on its foundational values of advancing human rights, democracy, economic opportunity, and international peace and security.

China, Russia, Cuba, and others are threatening those values, seeking to co-opt multilateral institutions, including Geneva-based organizations, to impose their national agendas and reshape the rules-based international organizations. For example, at the International Telecommunications Union, the People's Republic of China and Russia aimed to undercut U.S. efforts to protect the open Internet. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the United States and our like-minded partners can drive the discussion and the rules of the road, at the ITU and other standard-setting bodies, and support strong candidates for leadership in the Geneva-based organizations.

The Biden-Harris administration decided that the United States should run for re-election to the U.N. Human Rights Council to ensure that body focuses on the world's worst human rights violators. The Geneva-based organizations are critical to U.S. efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthen global health security, and support effective and efficient provision of humanitarian assistance in crisis and conflict situations around the world. The World Health Organization is a central pillar of the global house security architecture.

If confirmed, I will prioritize U.S. leadership in the efforts to strengthen the WHO through reforms that promote transparency, accountability, cost effectiveness, sustainability, and equity across the agency and its programs. I am committed to ensuring that the



organization can more effectively and transparently tackle COVID-19 and future emerging global health threats in collaboration with other U.N. and international partners.

During my time at CARE USA, I saw firsthand the key role, the vital role that the United States plays in leading and supporting humanitarian efforts around the globe. In Geneva, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization on Migration, the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, and the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent are key partners in those efforts. And if confirmed, I will ensure robust U.S. leadership and oversight at those agencies and look to leverage U.S. contributions to drive needed reforms and ensure other countries step up.

At their best, Geneva-based organizations are valuable partners across an array of U.S. priorities, including global health security, human rights, humanitarian assistance, technology, and other standard-setting efforts, climate change, intellectual property, trade disarmament, and more.

If confirmed, I will aim to reestablish U.S. relationships and leadership so that we can effectively leverage the unique multilateral platform Geneva offers to work with allies and partners, the private sector, and civil society to advance U.S. goals and push back on PRC and others' efforts to undermine those organizations.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee today. I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to working with this committee to ensure that USUN Geneva effectively meets the challenges of today's strategic landscape.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Crocker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER

Thank you, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of this committee.

I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken for this opportunity to again serve my country.

I am so grateful for the love and support of my husband, Milan Vaishnav, and our daughters, Asha and Farrin—and for their sacrifice should I be confirmed to take on this important role. I am also thankful for the support of my father, Chester Crocker and my sisters and their families, and am thinking today of my mom, who would have been so proud to witness me appearing before this committee again.

My parents instilled in me a deep commitment to public service. I have had no greater honor than serving my country side-by-side with our career diplomatic corps, and I am especially proud that my father and I are the only father-daughter Assistant Secretaries of State in State Department history.

My previous roles as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, at the United Nations, and overseeing CARE USA's humanitarian work have shown me that the United Nations works most effectively when the United States leads and leverages all the tools at our disposal to advance U.S. national security interests across and through the United Nations system.

My previous experiences position me well to represent the United States across the different organizations in Geneva and ensure sound oversight of the U.S. contributions to those organizations. I am committed to advancing reforms to make those organizations more efficient and effective and to ensuring the United States is best positioned to lead, to collaborate, and, where necessary, to out-compete—so that the United Nations system remains grounded on its foundational values of advancing human rights, democracy, economic opportunity, and international peace and security.

China, Russia, Cuba, and others are threatening those values, seeking to co-opt multilateral institutions, including Geneva-based organizations, to impose their national agendas and reshape the rules-based international order.

At the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the PRC and Russia aim to undercut U.S. efforts to protect the open internet. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States and our like-minded partners can drive the discussion and the rules of the road—at the ITU and other standard-setting bodies—and support strong candidates for leadership in the Geneva-based organizations.

The Biden-Harris administration decided that the United States should run for re-election to the U.N. Human Rights Council to ensure that body focuses on shining a spotlight on the world's worst human rights violators.

The Geneva-based organizations are critical to U.S. efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthen global health security, and support effective and efficient provision of humanitarian assistance in crisis and conflict situations.

The World Health Organization is a central pillar of the global health security architecture. If confirmed, I will prioritize U.S. leadership in the efforts to strengthen the WHO through reforms that promote transparency, accountability, sustainability, cost effectiveness, and equity across the agency and its programs. I am committed to ensuring that the organization can more effectively and transparently tackle COVID-19 and future emerging global health threats in collaboration with other U.N. and international partners.

During my time at CARE USA, I saw firsthand the critical role the U.S. plays in leading and supporting humanitarian efforts around the globe. In Geneva, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization on Migration, the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, and the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent are key partners in those efforts, and, if confirmed, I will ensure robust U.S. leadership and oversight at those agencies and look to leverage U.S. contributions to drive needed reforms and ensure other countries step up.

At their best, the Geneva-based organizations are valuable partners across an array of U.S. priorities, including global health security, human rights, humanitarian assistance, technology and other standard setting efforts, climate change, intellectual property, trade, disarmament, and more. If confirmed, I will aim to re-establish U.S. relationships and leadership so that we can effectively leverage the unique multilateral platform Geneva offers to work with allies and partners, the private sector, and civil society to advance U.S. goals and pushback on PRC and others' efforts to undermine those organizations.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee today. I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to working with this committee to ensure that USUN Geneva effectively meets the challenges of today's strategic landscape.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ms. Crocker.

Dr. Carpenter, you are our last of our five nominees today. We look forward to your opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Dr. CARPENTER. Thank you, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee for this opportunity to appear before you today as the President's nominee for Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

It is a tremendous honor to be nominated for this position, and I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I would also like to thank my parents, my spouse, and our two children for their endless love and support.

My mother immigrated to this country from Poland. She was born during World War II while my grandparents, both physicians, were fighting the Nazi occupation as clandestine officers in the underground Home Army. After the war, the Communist dictatorship

rewarded their heroism by confiscating their property and torturing my grandfather to divulge the names of his fellow officers. He refused, even when it cost him his job at the local hospital. Over four decades later, though, he lived to see the Solidarity movement sweep aside the oppressive Communist regime.

My family's struggles against totalitarianism instilled in me an appreciation for the democratic freedoms we enjoy as Americans and a conviction that they must never be taken for granted. I graduated from high school in 1989, the very year that communism was defeated in Central Europe. After earning a doctorate studying democratic movements, I joined the Foreign Service.

I was working on the South Caucasus when Russia invaded Georgia in 2008, and I was serving as NSC Director for Russia when it invaded Ukraine in 2014. Later, at the Pentagon, I led efforts to strengthen and support the sovereignty and territorial integrity and Euro-Atlantic aspirations of the countries between NATO and Russia.

Today, the optimism of 1989 seems distant. Democratic institutions are under assault, and increasingly aggressive authoritarian regimes seem to weaken and divide democratic states against one another. A Communist dictatorship in China is trampling human rights and using economic coercion against other states.

A revanchist Russia is repressing civil society and using active measures to disrupt and weaken democratic rivals. In many countries within the OSCE space, anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance are gaining ground. Judicial independence is eroding. Journalists are harassed. And ruling parties with no interest in fair electoral competition are capturing state institutions.

Recognizing the enormous challenges that lie ahead, I would highlight the following three vital areas, where, if confirmed, I would seek to partner with the members of this committee as well as with the Helsinki Commission.

First, to promote comprehensive security across all three OSCE dimensions—politico-military, economic and environmental, and human rights. Participating states must address not just conventional military threats, but also hybrid threats, such as election interference, energy coercion, disinformation, dark money, cyber operations, and transnational repression. We need to find ways not only to shine a light on these malign activities, but also to defend ourselves and our democratic partners against them.

Second, to promote prosperity and rule of law, participating states must establish stronger anti-corruption measures, both east and west of Vienna. Corruption erodes economic growth, it undermines security, and it enables state capture. Like-minded states must work together to fight kleptocracy, using tools like criminal statutes against bribery, Global Magnitsky-style sanctions, and collective action against offshore secrecy.

Third, our allies and partners must work together to strength the resilience of frontline democracies. In Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, and many Balkan countries, OSCE institutions offer a range of tools for strengthening democratic resilience. Supporting religious freedom, media pluralism, electoral reform, and judicial independence all fall into this basket, as do efforts to bridge societal divides and resolve longstanding conflicts.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the instrumental role that Congress plays in achieving these goals. Whenever Members of this body observe an election, condemn human rights abuses, or demand push back against foreign coercion, you serve as a force multiplier. If confirmed, it will be an honor to work the members of this committee, the Helsinki commissioners, and other Members of Congress to advance our shared interest in democracy, transparency, prosperity, and security for the American people.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Carpenter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the committee for this opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee for Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. It is a tremendous honor to be nominated for this position and I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I would also like to thank my parents, my spouse, and our two children for their endless love and support.

My mother immigrated to this country from Poland. She was born during World War II while my grandparents, both physicians, were fighting the Nazi occupation as clandestine officers in the underground Home Army. After the war, the Communist dictatorship rewarded their heroism by confiscating their property and torturing my grandfather to divulge the names of his fellow officers. He refused, even when it cost him his job at the local hospital. Over four decades later, though, he lived to see the Solidarity movement sweep aside the oppressive Communist regime.

My family's struggles against totalitarianism instilled in me an appreciation for the democratic freedoms we enjoy as Americans and a conviction that they must never be taken for granted. I graduated from high school in 1989, the very year Communism was defeated in Central Europe. After earning a doctorate studying democratic movements, I joined the Foreign Service. I was working on the South Caucasus region when Russia invaded Georgia in 2008 and was serving as NSC Director for Russia when it invaded Ukraine in 2014. Later, at the Pentagon, I led efforts to strengthen and support the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and Euro-Atlantic aspirations of the countries between NATO and Russia.

Today, the optimism of 1989 admittedly seems distant. Democratic institutions are under assault and increasingly aggressive authoritarian regimes seek to weaken and divide democratic states against one other. A Communist dictatorship in China is trampling human rights and using economic coercion against other states. A revanchist Russia is repressing civil society and using "active measures" to disrupt and weaken democratic rivals. In many countries within the OSCE space, anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance are gaining ground. Judicial independence is eroding, journalists are harassed, and ruling parties with no interest in fair electoral competition are capturing state institutions.

Fortunately, the OSCE is uniquely suited to addressing these challenges. The Helsinki Final Act's linkages between security, economic relations, and human rights and its insistence that the latter are not an internal matter but a legitimate concern for all members of the international community have been transformational. Today, all participating States are held to account for their adherence to OSCE principles and commitments. If confirmed, I will continue speaking up for human dignity, freedom, and justice wherever they are challenged in the OSCE region. There are also bright spots and positive changes occurring. Though often less visible, OSCE field missions in Central Asia, the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe do highly impactful work to promote security, human rights, and rule of law at the local level.

Recognizing the enormous challenges that lie ahead, I would highlight the following three vital areas where, if confirmed, I would seek to partner with the members of this committee as well as the Helsinki Commission:

First, to promote comprehensive security across all three OSCE dimensions—political-military, economic and environmental, and human rights—participating States must address not just conventional military threats but also "hybrid" threats such as election interference, energy coercion, disinformation, dark money, cyber operations, and transnational repression. We need to find ways not only to shine a light on these malign activities but also to defend ourselves and our democratic partners against them.

Second, to promote prosperity and rule of law, participating States must establish stronger anti-corruption measures both east and west of Vienna. Corruption erodes economic growth, undermines security, and enables state capture. Like-minded states must work together to fight kleptocracy, using tools like criminal statutes against bribery, Global Magnitsky-style sanctions, and collective action against off-shore secrecy.

Third, our allies and partners must work together to strengthen the resilience of frontline democracies. In Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, and many Balkan countries, OSCE institutions offer a range of tools for strengthening democratic resilience. Supporting religious freedom, media pluralism, electoral reform, and judicial independence all fall into this basket, as do efforts to bridge societal divides and resolve longstanding conflicts.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the instrumental role that Congress plays in achieving these goals. Whenever members of this body observe an election, condemn human rights abuses, or demand pushback against foreign coercion, you serve as a force multiplier. If confirmed, it will be an honor to work with the members of this committee, the Helsinki Commissioners, and other members of Congress to advance our shared interest in democracy, transparency, prosperity, and security for the American people.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

And now I am going to begin an initial round of 5 minutes. We have a robust participation in this virtual hearing, and I will ask just a few brief questions. I will try to direct one to each of the nominees, and then we will proceed to a first round. And if members are interested in a second round, if you please convey that to my team while we are doing these questions, that would be quite helpful.

Dr. Kang, if you would just briefly describe to me what would the ISN Bureau's highest priorities be under your leadership?

Dr. KANG. Thank you for that question, Senator Coons.

I have—my career has been focused on nuclear matters, whether it be related to nuclear security, nuclear safeguards, even nuclear safety. But my biggest fear has always been a biological weapon that is unleashed on the world. And the COVID-19 pandemic right now is a wake-up call, and this is an area I have been very concerned about for many, many years.

Four years ago, when I was Acting Assistant Secretary during the transition between President Obama and President Trump, I tried very much to increase our capability in this area in the Bureau. We have a very small staff even now, less than a half a dozen. Most of them, fellows, are from elsewhere. But when I consider that I had led diplomacy and engagement with our foreign partners and elsewhere to make everyone cognizant of a danger a radiological device could create, the mayhem that it could create and wreak on our economy and the casualties it could cause, just imagine what if COVID-19 was a purposely designed biological weapon.

Now, state parties would be hesitant to use such a weapon. But I could clearly see a nihilistic group of terrorists and the threshold for creating something like this is not as high as creating a nuclear weapon without apparatus of a state with its engineering and manufacturing capabilities.

So that is my greatest fear. Yet at the same time, the international instrument that at least my Bureau is responsible for, the Biological Weapons Convention, is the least institutionalized, least developed, and in many ways least significant of the many non-

proliferation regime out there. So, sir, this is one area where I will be focused like a laser beam and trying to make some advances.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Dr. Kang. I will ask one more question, and then I will be asking in a second round.

Mr. Scheinman, if I could? The NPT tries to balance peaceful use of nuclear energy with the goals of preventing the proliferation of sensitive fuel cycle nuclear technologies in enrichment and reprocessing and reducing the risk of the proliferation of nuclear weapons technology. How should the United States balance those two goals, and what would you do to help improve the effectiveness of the NPT?

Ambassador SCHEINMAN. Thank you very much for the question, Senator Coons. It is really a critical issue for the long-term success of the nonproliferation system because if we do not adequate controls over peaceful use of nuclear technology, we are very likely to see additional proliferation down the road.

There are two areas where I think we need to spend a lot of time and energy. One is ensuring that the IAEA, the International Atomic Energy Agency's verification system is as strong and robust as possible, that we have agreements among states to make it as strong and robust as possible, so that we have a very clear firebreak between a country's peaceful nuclear program and any potential that that program might be put to weapons.

The system has worked pretty well, but it could certainly be improved. And one area in particular that we hope to see improvement on is gaining global support for the additional protocol to the IAEA safeguards agreement, which is essential if we are going to ferret out undeclared nuclear programs. Absolutely essential.

The other area is perhaps a bit outside of the NPT, but it deals with supplier policies. I worry about the spread of the most sensitive nuclear fuel production technologies, enrichment and reprocessing, because if that spreads to additional countries, it would be very, very challenging to prevent countries from not using that for military purposes down the road. So we have to work with the export control supply regime, the nuclear suppliers group to encourage the highest level of restraint in those transfers.

We need to work with other nuclear suppliers so that we have understandings that when we sign contracts, it is not going to include enrichment and reprocessing technology. And we should acknowledge in the NPT itself that certain technologies are more dangerous than others, and we ought to erect the highest possible barriers. So that is some of the ways I think we can look at that.

Senator COONS. Okay, thank you, Mr. Scheinman. I look forward to a next round where I will try to question our three other nominees.

Senator Hagerty? Senator Hagerty, you are muted.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Bernicat, I would like to start with you. I would like to begin with a quote from Ambassadors Bill Burns and Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and this is the quote. "The personnel evaluation process consumes 3 months of an officer's time, with no commensurate accountability for, let alone improvement in, individual or collective performance."

As U.S. Ambassador to Japan, I worked with some very talented colleagues in the State Department, but I can certainly sympathize with that statement, given the amount of time that people spent on performance evaluations. And I recall a saying that if one wants to offer criticism at the Department of State that one does it by damning someone by faint praise, as they say. I cannot tell you how many 5s I saw on personnel evaluation forms. And I strongly advocate for having a more rigorous evaluation process to ensure that accountability is at the center of the State Department's personnel process.

So my first question is do you agree with the characterization of the State Department's personnel evaluation process as described by Ambassadors Burns and Thomas-Greenfield?

Ambassador BERNICAT. Senator, thank you very much for that question, and you know from your own experience how time-consuming our performance evaluation process is.

I have to say, having served with Linda Thomas-Greenfield when she was Director General and being a colleague of Bill Burns over the years, I know that Linda in particular worked very hard to reform the EER process, which we did. I can tell you, if confirmed, I will rededicate my efforts to further reforms, which I understand are already being considered.

The evaluation process is the sole means by which we promote people, but it is really the penultimate activity in what should be a year's worth of performance evaluation. And as a supervisor, I have always—and a leader, I have always encouraged my team, if you are a supervisor, to provide honesty feedback throughout the year and with the notion of improving performance because no one is perfect. And then as to my employees to seek that kind of critical feedback because it is very hard to see our blind spots, and our performance in those blind spots change from time to time. So I assure you that we have improvements we can make, and we should make them.

Senator HAGERTY. I am glad to hear it and look forward to working with you to talk through metrics. And again, I do not mean critical in a bad sense, but as I said, the performance evaluations seem so inflated to me as a business person that it is hard, it is hard for a person to see how they might improve when anyone—when everybody gets such high scores in the system.

One more place I want to turn is the issue of promotion in the State Department, Ambassador. Again, I am going to come back to Bill Burns and Linda Thomas-Greenfield. They also said this, that opportunities for mid-career graduate or professional education are scarce—and here is what gets me—and they carry little weight with promotion panels.

The effect is often to penalize employees who receive extra training or undertake assignments to other agencies, or they work in Congress because they have gone outside of the State Department system and spent time there. And if what they say is true, it really seems counterproductive to me to building a diplomatic corps, that we want to have the type of breadth of experience and preparation for the 21st century. And if confirmed, I would love to hear how you would ensure that professional education, experiences like

working on the Hill, are something that actually inures to the credit of our State Department employees.

Ambassador BERNICAT. Yes, well, thank you. I would say three things on this issue.

One is that expanding your skill set as a Foreign Service officer at whatever point in your career is considered a valuable and credible reason to promote someone. In and of itself, the training is not a promotable function, if you will, but have you applied the skills that you learned in that additional training or time off?

Secondly, the promotion boards. Again, my experience as an employee and as a supervisor, promotion boards have been instructed to in recent years to give added weight to those experiences.

And thirdly, and this is a real key, Senator, we have had a rollercoaster experience with hiring, both in terms of budget and in terms of hiring freezes over the course of my career. It is really difficult to allow people the time that they need to take to get training when we are short on personnel. And so, I know that our budget requests are looking to once again build in the kind of cushion where we can let people take time off without harming the core mission.

And Senator, if I can just add parenthetically, I had a year of university training at Berkeley before going to India, and I believe it directly helped lead to my promotion after that. So I would say when we use those training opportunities, build in those exchange opportunities, then they strengthen a person's promotability.

Senator HAGERTY. I am glad to hear you say that, and that is your perspective. I know talking with my employees at the Embassy in Japan, there was a perception that it may—you know, it may actually be a disadvantage to take that time off, and I understand the resource constraints that make it difficult and challenging. But I look forward to working with you because I do think those sort of broadening experiences make a real difference.

Mr. Chairman, I will yield my time back. Look forward to a second round.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. And first, let me thank all of our nominees for their willingness to continue to serve our country. We thank you. We thank your families.

Dr. Carpenter, I first want to appreciate the meeting that we had and your statements today about working with the members of the Senate and the Helsinki Commission members and the Helsinki Commission itself. I think we share the same objectives. I was very pleased to hear your three priorities.

In regards to the hybrid threat, you are exactly right. I call your attention to a report I authored when I was ranking on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about Mr. Putin's use of an asymmetric arsenal to bring down democratic states. I think you will find a lot of the issues you talk about. We document Russia's specific use of these tools to compromise democracies.

And that is why resiliency of frontline democracies so much needs to be a priority. We have seen a decline of democracies globally, and certainly within the OSCE region, there has been a significant decline of democratic states.



And then, lastly, the corruption issue. You and I have talked about this. The corruption is the fuel that allows the autocratic regimes to stay in power. So I am going to ask your help in three bills that are moving through the Congress because sometimes we do not get the full cooperation of the executive branch and the missions within the State Department.

One would set up a tier rating system for how well every state in country—every country in the world is dealing with corruption. The other makes the Global Magnitsky statute permanent and strengthens some of the provisions within it. And the third establishes a fund that we can use when an opportunity presents itself to deal with—dealing with corruption in countries.

All three are bipartisan, and all three are very strongly supported. There has been positive action in our committee. But I would ask your support for these initiatives because I think it very much will help you in regards to your mission.

So I look forward to working with you, and I will be glad to hear a response.

Dr. CARPENTER. Thank you, Senator Cardin, for your incredible leadership on these issues. And it has been so heartening to see the Helsinki Commission, and you in particular, leading the effort on anti-kleptocracy. And I would note that the anti-kleptocracy act now has, I believe, seven different bills attached to it, all of which strike at key elements of global corruption.

This is a problem, as you just noted, Senator, that is inextricably linked to the growth of authoritarianism around the world. Often we see regimes that consolidate political power that start out by using corrupt means, whether it is doling out procurement contracts or using other forms of graft and bribery, to be able to accumulate economic power.

So those two things, sort of the oligarchization of politics around the world and the growing authoritarianism of politics around the world, go together. And of course, some of our biggest competitors, both Russian and China, are experts at weaponizing corruption against democratic states.

So I value these efforts, the incredible number of ideas and bills that have come out of the Helsinki Commission, many of which you have cosponsored, and look forward to advancing this agenda, if confirmed.

Senator CARDIN. I look forward to working with you.

Dr. Kang and Ambassador Scheinman, I would like to ask you about probably the greatest the threat we have on nuclear proliferation, and that is Iran. We are in a somewhat difficult decision right now not to be part of the JCPOA. Which we have seen Iran violate the JCPOA, and yet we are, it looks like, supporting a path that will not allow for international sanctions. I want to know your strategies for how you will advise President Biden and the administration on what can work in making sure Iran does not have nuclear weapons.

Dr. KANG. Perhaps I should start, sir? Absolutely Iran should never obtain a nuclear weapon. The President is absolutely committed to that, and that is consistent passed over a number of administrations. But return to the JCPOA advances our national security interest. And it is the intention of the President to build a

longer and stronger deal, which encompasses regional destabilization that Iran is responsible for, but also the ballistic missile development they have, which could threaten certainly the regional neighbors but perhaps, over time, ultimately the United States.

So, yes, there has been a break in conversations and negotiations between our lead negotiator, Rob Malley, who is in charge of this, since June, but there also has been an election in Tehran. Now the Supreme Leader makes the ultimate call, but nonetheless, it is left to the presidential administration to implement and negotiate their position with us. So we are still waiting for a positive response from Iran, but nonetheless as, Senator Cardin, you point out, the Iranians are creating plants underground, which has nothing to do with peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Enrichment up to 60 percent for uranium, also producing uranium metal of 20 percent, these are dangerous moves. So while we have not imposed a deadline for these negotiations, I think Secretary Blinken made it clear and stated that we are very conscious that as time proceeds, Iran's nuclear advances will have a bearing in its view, our view of returning to the JCPOA. And President also said the process will not be open indefinitely.

And sir, as someone who had pioneered in many ways and also been at the front edge of many nonproliferation and counterproliferation sanctions targeting, whether it be DPRK, Syria, or Iran, all those machineries and authorities—and thanks for tools that Congress has armed us with—we are ready to make sure that Iran makes the right decision not just for, well, for itself, for the sake for the Iranian people.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. We are next going to hear from Senator Young.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Chairman. I will stick with the topic of Iran for starters here. Since both Dr. Kang and Mr. Scheinman are up for related and somewhat overlapping positions, I would like you each to speak to your views on the following questions.

Just to lay the foundation here, at the last moment, the IAEA struck a deal with Iranian officials on September 12th to continue nuclear monitoring. However, in that deal, the storage cards for the monitoring cameras are sealed and cannot be viewed until the United States and Iran resume JCPOA talks. But this, of course, is a critical time when Iran is actively moving towards having enough material for a bomb.

I would like to know what each of you believes is a realistic time-frame before Iran has enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon. How much time are we dealing with here?

Dr. KANG. Ambassador Scheinman, are you comfortable dealing with it? Perhaps as a sitting official—

Senator YOUNG. Dr. Kang, go ahead, please.

Dr. KANG. Yes, perhaps I am in a better position because I do not believe Mr. Scheinman is privy to some of the latest information and assessment.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, go ahead, sir.

Dr. KANG. Yes, sir. So the platform, of course, this particular platform is not ideal for transmitting the most accurate and precise information to you, sir. So, if confirmed, I certainly will be happy to brief you on this matter.

Senator YOUNG. Okay, okay.

Dr. KANG. But it is true, I mean, they have, as when they were complying with JCPOA, they were about a year away from producing enough fissile material for a viable weapon.

Senator YOUNG. Sure. Well, there has been—

Dr. KANG. Now they are months away. Yes?

Senator YOUNG. I understand, if you are read into this, you, of course, would not want to provide any classified estimates, which is good. You passed that test. But open source, you know, materials indicate that a couple of months is some of the latest estimates that may or may not be accurate.

I will ask each of you to answer the following. What alternatives is the Biden administration considering if the resumption of talks fails? Dr. Kang?

Dr. KANG. Yes, sir. So, ultimately, that would be up to the President and the Secretary and others at a much higher pay scale than myself. But it is clear that what my mission would be, and our Bureau is very well equipped to apply those necessary sanctions, interdiction, and other measures to make sure that there is sufficient incentive for Iran to reconsider its position.

Senator YOUNG. Okay, so your job would not be to offer counsel on such matters?

Dr. KANG. Well, I would definitely voice my opinion, sir, and I will be part of the interagency process. But I have been dealing with proliferators all my career here at State Department.

Senator YOUNG. Yeah.

Dr. KANG. DPRK, Syria.

Senator YOUNG. You mention sanctions, Dr. Kang. We had sanctions before this administration came in. So what other options might you recommend?

Dr. KANG. Well, certainly there are other things that once again I cannot fully discuss with you in this platform. But as a general matter, interdiction is something we are very good at. There are varied export control measures that we lead, and we will turn those on, right back on.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, sir.

Mr. Scheinman, will you be involved consultatively with the administration in your role on such matters?

Ambassador SCHEINMAN. Yes.

Senator YOUNG. And if so, if you would kindly indicate what alternatives the administration should consider if these talks fail.

Ambassador SCHEINMAN. Thank you, Senator. I would note that my responsibilities will not include our direct negotiations with Iran. That is handled by others in the administration. I will probably look at the issue through the lens of the Nonproliferation Treaty and what do we do if Iran were to break out of the Nonproliferation Treaty.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. Well, my time is winding down. I would just note I also had question for Ms. Crocker pertaining to an unrelated matter. It relates to the Human Rights Council and—

Senator COONS. Just be briefly, if you might, Senator Young.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, I will, indeed. The step they took of establishing a permanent commission of inquiry to investigate Israel, the only such permanent agenda item on the council. We will ask

you about that in writing. Perhaps you could offer your views on the propriety of that matter.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Young.  
Senator Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Bernicat, to all of you, thank you for your willingness to serve. I understand that Special Envoy Kerry and his team are doing a lot of work in terms of how to make sure taking action on climate is a routine part of how our Foreign Service thinks about their mission on a day-to-day basis. Can you talk a little bit about where you see the opportunities to make climate action part of recruitment, training, and promoting Foreign Service officers so that it becomes a permanent part of the Foreign Service and the State Department and does not swing wildly depending on who the Secretary is and who the President is?

Ambassador BERNICAT. Thank you so much, Senator Schatz, for that question that has been teasing all of us and especially in my current role as Acting Assistant Secretary for Oceans, Environment, and Scientific Affairs. Our goal is to increase the literacy Department wide on [inaudible] environment—

Senator COONS. Ms. Ambassador Bernicat, in a demonstration of the need for greater investment in State Department IT, your signal is cutting out very, very badly.

[Crosstalk.]

Ambassador Bernicat:—and health issues, it begins with recruiting. But of course, the bulk of our corps is generalist, and so—I did improve the audio. Is that working?

Senator COONS. Sure. Why do we not try and continue now?

Ambassador BERNICAT. Can you hear me?

Senator SCHATZ. The audio seems to be working. Go ahead.

Ambassador BERNICAT. Okay. I have also changed location. So tell me if that helps.

[Inaudible.] Thank you, Senator Hagerty.

Recruiting more people with the STH skills as well as promoting stem education are part of the plan, but I can assure you, sir, if confirmed, that we will also look for ways to improve training for all officers and staff as well as to bring more people into the various bureaus who have specific responsibility for these issues. In no small part because they are tied not just to environment, but to energy, to increasing jobs, and to everything related to the environment, including health.

Senator SCHATZ. You know, I think that is a good start, but I want to be really crisp with what I am asking. I am looking for the kinds of changes that are institutionally difficult to reverse and do not depend on who the President is. And just an emphasis on who you hire is not an unreasonable start, but I am looking for processes, training manuals, curricula, and all of that to change because climate is not going to go away as a threat multiplier and as a diplomatic challenge. So I look forward to working with you on that.

Ambassador, as you know, we pass a defense authorization every year, and we sometimes pass a Coast Guard authorization every year, and I am wondering if you can talk about in your mind's eye

what it would be like if the Congress passed an annual State Department reauthorization, as we do for the Department of Defense, and how that might help to address the challenges that you see with the Foreign Service.

Ambassador BERNICAT. Well, sir, thank you for that question, and let me just say, thank you, I look forward to working with this committee and with Congress on a whole host of issues related to the health and function of our staffs and the State Department in general.

I would say that, you know, in general, our greatest resource is our people. And so, the ability—as you say, recruiting is a good start, but we also need to make sure that we are retaining and developing that talent pool all along the way in their career, and to be able to do that in a steady funding, to be able to plan workforces out over a period of time is really important.

We are, parenthetically, right now the youngest Foreign—excuse me, State Department in terms of seniority that we have been years, and that has a lot to do with the hiring surges that took place under Secretary Powell and Secretary Clinton, as well as a good number of retirements, especially in our civil service corps.

In terms of processes related to the environment, there are a whole host of things from legislation that requires specific actions. We are—we are leading again from the front on environmental issues, and we are committing ourselves to a number of actions that have multiple-year execution in order to make them happen. And so we are looking to build in ways to make sure that we are supporting not only our commitments, but the countries that we are asking to make those commitments.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, can I have another minute?

Senator COONS. One question, if you would, Senator Schatz.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Just, Dr. Kang, the Biden administration is continuing the previous administration's proposals to expand U.S. nuclear capabilities, including a new low-yield nuclear sea-launched cruise missile that many of us believe is dangerous and unnecessary. I understand that some of the true bad actors are not persuaded by anything or by much, and that sort of calls of hypocrisy are not particularly compelling. But I am also wondering about the rational countries that we are trying to persuade not to pursue their own nuclear ambitions and how we square our pursuing of these low-yield nuclear sea-launched cruise missiles with our desire to stop proliferation among some of our allies and adversaries who are considering whether they want to go down the wrong path.

Dr. KANG. Thank you for that question, Senator.

I will try my best to answer that question because that would not be in the area of responsibility for the Bureau of ISN. It will be for the companion bureau, AVC, Arms Control and Verification and, of course, Under Secretary Bonnie Jenkins, who has the Department lead on this. But having said that—

Senator SCHATZ. In the interest of time, in the interest of time and clarity, do you see that as a challenge for the United States?

Dr. KANG. Oh, yes, sir. I mean, there is intimate link between arms control and nonproliferation. Those who have—possess nu-

clear weapons in the context of the NPT, a nuclear weapons state, they have an obligation to reduce and ultimately seek disarmament. So it would set a bad example. For example, China massively expanding its nuclear strategic capability is counter-productive, and it runs counter to nonproliferation.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Senator COONS. Senator Van Hollen?

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Hagerty, and congratulations to all of you on your nominations. It is great to see a panel of such experience.

And Ambassador Bernicat, congratulations on the nomination to be the Director General of the Foreign Service. I am thrilled with the appointment. As you may know, I come from a Foreign Service family and very interested and focused on ensuring the strong morale and support for the Foreign Service.

And Senator Dan Sullivan, Republican from Alaska, and myself formed the Foreign Service Caucus a number of years ago, when we introduced legislation called the Foreign Service Families Act. And that act would extend different benefits to Foreign Service families to try to bring them up on a par with the benefits that are extended to military families serving overseas. And I know that the most recent Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review found, and I am quoting, "Ensuring opportunities for spousal employment should be an integral part of plans to retain and motivate staff."

Do you agree with that?

Ambassador BERNICAT. Oh, my goodness, Senator Van Hollen, I have to just express enormous gratitude for the work that you, Senator Sullivan, and others have done particularly on behalf of our families. We have almost 2,000 family members now working overseas. They bring—and back here in Washington. They bring amazing talents to augment our often barebones operations. And so, looking for ways to ensure that we can take advantage, but also that makes it easier to serve as families.

You know, Senator, I cannot help but—I cannot resist when you mention Foreign Service families, I do not think Bathsheba knows this, but I studied under her father at Georgetown University. And so in the spirit of being mentored, I do not think I would be here today if it were not in part for Chet Crocker. So, Bathsheba, I am also part of the family.

Senator Van Hollen: Well, thank you, Madam Ambassador, for mentioning that as well about Chet Crocker, and it is great to see Bathsheba here and others. Let me—and just on the Foreign Service Families Act, we have asked the chairman of the full committee to put it on the next markup calendar, and we are waiting for a green light from the ranking member of the full committee, and I see no reason for opposition, but we are continuing to push.

So, Dr. Kang, thank you for your current service in the acting position, and I look forward to supporting you in this confirmation process.

On the issue of nuclear nonproliferation, Saudi Arabia, as you know, has been engaged with successive administrations with nuclear cooperation talks but continues to have in place—Saudi Arabia, that is—the lowest standard of safeguards with the IAEA. And

again, they say they want at least two nuclear power plants as part of a program going forward, and they seem intent on mastering the front end of a nuclear fuel cycle and developing enrichment capabilities.

So my question to you is, has the administration, has the Biden administration made any attempt in either bilateral or multilateral settings to push Saudi Arabia to sign and implement the additional protocol with the IAEA?

Dr. KANG. Senator, thank you for that question.

We have been in negotiation with Saudi Arabia since 2012. I think that says something. And of course, President Biden has made it clear that he will recalibrate our relationship with Saudi Arabia in human rights and other matters that complicate the relationship.

Now in terms of having the lowest standard, well, Saudi Arabia is party to the NPT, and it has in force a comprehensive safeguard agreement. And that in terms of their ambitions are very high, and certainly, they have the financial resources to make it happen, just as we have seen what UAE has done. But having said that, they have not made significant moves in actually gaining capability.

The United States has supported the universalization of additional protocol, and that is policy. And also we discourage enrichment and reprocessing where these capabilities do not already exist.

And so, we are pursuing a 123 agreement with Saudi Arabia because precisely because 123 agreement is a nonproliferation tool. So we are, of course, briefing members, as well as staff, as if there are any movement on this, and of course, it will always be a pleasure to brief you on this matter.

Senator Van Hollen: Well, I appreciate that. I see the time is expired, but we will follow up with you on that, and I will be submitting a question for the record on the administration's full compliance with the BRINK Act, which was to ensure we plug a lot of the loopholes in the sanction regime against North Korea. We saw the recent reports about their firing missiles, and so I will put that in the record. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Van Hollen.

And I do not believe Senator Kaine is still with us. Is that correct? So I believe every member who is participating has had a chance at a first round. Senator Hagerty, I know you have got additional questions you would like to ask, and I have a few more I will ask, but let me defer to you to begin the second round, Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. That is very kind of you, Chairman Coons. I appreciate it.

I would first like to turn to Dr. Carpenter, talk about Nord Stream 2.

Dr. Carpenter, you previously said, and I want to quote this, "To make sanctions against Russia work, the United States and its allies need to dispense with symbolic gestures and impose stronger sanctions that will have an immediate economic impact." Dr. Carpenter, I just want to say that I wholeheartedly agree with that statement.

And in 2019, you stated the following. “The European Union has, unfortunately, lacked the political will to implement its own anti-monopoly rules and stop Nord Stream 2 from coming to fruition, which means the U.S. Congress is now the only body that can prevent the pipeline from being built.”

Dr. Carpenter, I wholeheartedly agree with that statement, too. Yet, in May, the Biden administration waived U.S. sanctions against Nord Stream 2 AG and sanctions against its chief executive. And last week, Gazprom announced that it has now completed the pipeline.

So, Dr. Carpenter, my question is this. With the pipeline now complete, what do you feel will be the impact on energy security in Europe?

Dr. CARPENTER. Well, thank you for the question, Senator. I am very concerned by the geopolitical consequences of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. This is a project by the Kremlin that brings no new gas molecules from Russia to Europe but merely bypasses Ukraine and the Central European countries and delivers that very same gas directly to Germany, thereby giving the Kremlin enormous leverage over Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, and other countries in Central Europe.

Going forward, if I am confirmed, I will work to reinvigorate the second dimension of the OSCE, the economic and environmental dimension that deals with energy security, and I will seek to work very closely with my friend Amos Hochstein, who is the senior adviser to the Secretary on Energy Security, to build resilience for our partners, and particularly Ukraine, in terms of energy supply, so that Russia cannot continue to use energy supplies as a form of political weaponization of energy and energy coercion.

And last thing I will say on this, Senator, I think it is very important that the United States continue to have a—continue to be ready to use all of the authorities contained within PEESA and CAATSA, which are the laws of the land when it comes to this.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I know the OSCE will have many divergent opinion in terms of Nord Stream 2, and I wish you the best with that, Dr. Carpenter.

Dr. Kang, can I turn with you now to focus on North Korea. You know, we worked enormously hard with Japan, with the U.N. Security Council, to impose three different, three successively more abiding sets of economic sanctions on North Korea. They had an immediate and very, very important effect on North Korea’s economy. Yet China has continued to undercut our position there.

And at the same time, North Korea has persisted in working in secret on their nuclear program, and there is an example I would like to highlight. And that is according to nongovernmental experts, North Korea is producing uranium at a covert facility, covert uranium enrichment facility, known by the U.S. intelligence community as the Kangson enrichment site.

It is not surprising that North Korea would build secret facilities to produce fissile material, but it poses significant proliferation challenges, especially considering Pyongyang’s previous efforts to provide Syria with a nuclear reactor. If confirmed, you are going to be responsible for spearheading the State Department’s efforts



to reduce WMD-related threats by promoting bilateral and multi-lateral initiatives to prevent proliferation.

So, my question is, Dr. Kang, if confirmed, will you commit to providing regular updates to the committee about the administration's efforts to address North Korea's declared and undeclared nuclear and missile facilities and programs?

Dr. KANG. Absolutely, Senator. I have a long relationship with our lead on re-engagement with North Korea, Ambassador Sung Kim. I have extensive relationship in the Government talking with Korea, as well as Japan. This will be a top priority.

As you know, North Korea is an awfully hardened state, and as you rightly point out, there is always this escape valve of China. China made a decision some time ago that it is tolerable for North Korea to have nuclear weapons as long as it is a buffer state. So it is difficult proposition, but I believe the President is on a right path. We have got to calibrate a practical approach, and this is something Ambassador Sung Kim and myself during the Bush administration have some practical experience in.

Senator HAGERTY. I have had the privilege of working with Ambassador Sung Kim as well, and I look forward to continue to working with both of you as we address this challenge.

Mr. Chairman, if you would permit me, I have just a follow-on question, if I might, for Assistant Secretary Crocker?

Senator COONS. Of course. Please.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you so much.

Assistant Secretary Crocker, I want to focus on China's growing influence among international organizations. You mentioned this in your opening remarks. And while you served as the Assistant Secretary for International Organizations during the Obama administration, China took over leadership of multiple international organizations and staffed them with Chinese nationals.

But in 2017, our posture towards China's malign behavior changed. And if confirmed, I hope that you will continue that posture developed during the previous administration to continue to counter China's influence in global institutions. And further, I fully expect you to fight for American influence by supporting qualified candidates in leadership positions and look to increase positions for Americans, such as greater positions in the Junior Professional Officers Program at the U.N. and, as you mentioned, representation like at the ITU. But I hope to see much more participation there.

And so, my question is, if confirmed, what actions will you take to make certain that qualified United States candidates are in leadership positions at U.N. bodies in Geneva?

Ms. CROCKER. Thank you for that question, Senator, and I think, as you noted, this is a strategic priority for China, and it needs to be a strategic priority for the United States. And indeed, the State Department and the administration are making a concerted effort working with like-minded partners and allies to ensure that we are able to both identify and then robustly support qualified, viable, independent candidates for leadership positions in international organizations, be they American candidates or other like-minded candidates.

And if confirmed, this will be a top priority for me. It is an effort that I fully support, and I would look to use my role and the role

and the resources of the U.S. mission in Geneva, working closely with the State Department and across the interagency, to ensure that we are best positioned diplomatically and—and in terms of resources to support the candidacies.

You mentioned the ITU, where, of course, there is an American candidate up for Secretary General, for an election that will take place in September of 2022. And if confirmed, I would consider this to be one of my highest priorities on getting out to Geneva to support that candidacy and ensure that the mission is doing everything it can to support the candidacy.

And I think, again, looking at both election for leadership positions but also, as you mentioned, making sure that we are strategically focused on ensuring that we are looking also at staffing up and down the system. The Chinese are doing that, as you note, from the junior political officer level all the way up, and we need to do that. And if confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress to make sure—and this committee to make sure—that we have appropriate resources to do that.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I am very pleased to hear that, Assistant Secretary Crocker. Thank you.

And I will be submitting a question for the record for Mr. Scheinman about China and the NPT. I am very concerned their obligations as signatory to that treaty and the fact that they are not living up to those obligations. That will be in the QFRs coming forward, Mr. Scheinman.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me with some extra time.

Senator COONS. Of course. Thank you, Senator Hagerty, and thank you for a series of, I think, reasonable and balanced questions. Ironically, the last question you asked of Assistant Secretary Crocker was the question I was going to ask.

Senator HAGERTY. I am sorry.

Senator COONS. And I will add—no, no, I think it is well worth focusing on for a moment. One of the things that I was most enthusiastic about in terms of actions of a member of the previous administration, there was a heated contest for leadership of the World Intellectual Property Organization. And Andrei Iancu, the former PTO Director, successfully mobilized an effort amongst all of our allies to ensure that the successful nominee was from a country and a person with experience that would suggest a commitment to protecting IP rather than someone who might be more questionable in terms of their commitment to IP.

There are so many organizations that you will have some role in that I just want to emphasize, and I agree with Senator Hagerty that it is important that we, the United States and our partners, pay attention to the ways in which China is expanding its influence throughout the U.N. system.

Let me ask one last question then, if I might, Ms. Crocker. There is a number of entities of the United Nations, the Human Rights Council, for example—UNESCO is another—where we have withdrawn, either because of previous conduct, I think it was Senator Van Hollen who referenced the sort of permanent agenda item on the Human Rights Council questioning Israel that we had found objectionable, or whether it is some of the ways in which UNESCO,

by admitting Palestine, has run afoul of our priorities and views. We are now in significant arrearages both with the U.N. as a whole and with some of the specialized agencies or entities.

In your view, just speaking broadly, are we better off being at the table and current in our payments and pushing back on adversaries who have competing perspectives on entities, whether it is the WHO or the ITU or otherwise, or are there certain circumstances where we need to withdraw from U.N. entities because of the ways in which they have conducted themselves?

Ms. CROCKER. Thank you for that question, Chairman Coons.

It is my view, and agree very much with the position and approach of the Biden-Harris administration on this, that we are far better served to be at the table and in good standing in terms of our financial payments to the organization in order to be able to effectively drive the kinds of reforms that we want to see across the system around accountability, efficiency, effectiveness. And also dealing with some of the credibility issues that, frankly, exist in different parts of the system, whether that is the anti-Israel bias at the Human Rights Council that you and Senator Young also raised earlier or some of the issues—or some of the issues at UNESCO.

So I think for sure it is better for us to be in good standing from a financial perspective. But also I think it is just important to recognize, and this gets also to Senator Hagerty's questions earlier, that it is important for us to be able to be at the table with the full weight of United States from a diplomatic perspective backing us.

And I certainly saw firsthand when I was Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, the important role that our bilateral and multilateral missions faced—they play and the importance of making sure that they are well resourced. And that we have strong people across the board able to raise these issues and raise them at the right levels in countries around the world because when we are operating at full strength diplomatically as the United States, there is no one that can really go to bat with us.

So if we want to go whether it is toe to toe with the Chinese or with the full strength that we need to be at to push the reforms we want to see across the system, I fully agree that we need to both be in good financial standing and also in our strongest position possible from a diplomatic perspective.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you. Thank you both for that answer and to all five of our nominees today for your willingness to continue your service to the United States and for your dedication to taking on these important posts and positions.

As I referenced at the beginning of this hearing, questions for the record are due by the close of business this Thursday the 16th. A number of members who have participated today have indicated they intend to submit QFRs. So please do so respond promptly so that we can conclude the hearing process and hopefully move forward with your confirmation votes.

Thank you, Senator Hagerty, for serving as the ranking member of this confirmation hearing.

And to the five of you, congratulations, good luck. I personally look forward to supporting your nominations and hope to stay in

regular touch with you as we go forth to serve the people of the United States, depending on the action of the Senate in the coming weeks and months.

So, with that, this hearing is concluded. Thank you all very much.

[Whereupon, at 3:57 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* As you noted during your hearing and in your meeting with SFRC minority staff, the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) is the least developed of the nonproliferation regimes. What practical steps must we take to strengthen the BWC?

*Answer.* There are a range of practical steps that can be taken to strengthen implementation, increase transparency, and promote the safe and secure use of the life sciences for peaceful purposes - but only if its members can find the political will. If confirmed, I will work to break the longstanding political deadlock in the BWC and advance such practical steps.

*Question.* Given the limitations of the BWC, what new actions must the U.S. take outside the convention to address biological threats?

*Answer.* The BWC reflects the global norm against biological weapons and provides international legal underpinning for measures taken by responsible countries to prohibit and prevent BW, but complementary U.S. efforts are essential. New efforts to raise the bar for international biosafety and biosecurity are needed. International capabilities to detect, respond to, and attribute BW use need to be strengthened as well - and because such use could mimic a natural outbreak, this means that the links between international public health and international security institutions must be reinforced.

*Question.* According to 1 FAM 457.3, the Biological Policy Staff is charged with “developing and promoting measures to prevent misuse of advances in the life sciences, to include participation in U.S. Government and international groups on health security issues; outreach to the scientific community and private industry; and promoting international standards and norms.” During your tenures in ISN, what specific initiatives or steps have you spearheaded or participated in to fulfill that mandate? Please provide examples. What would you like to do more of to meet this challenge?

*Answer.* Although the Biological Policy Staff is constrained by its small size, it has taken a number of steps in this area, including briefing on U.S. experiences and advocating that other countries develop oversight mechanisms for potentially high-risk research; organizing and participating in workshops to assess, test, and refine qualitative frameworks for assessing risks and benefits; establishing ties between the U.S. National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity and its French equivalent; and a G7 Experts’ Meeting on Strengthening Laboratory Biorisk Management last year. More work in all these areas is needed.

*Question.* According to the Department of State website, the Biological Policy Staff works with foreign partners on the oversight of emerging technologies such as synthetic biology. What specific initiatives and steps have you spearheaded or participated in to address the challenges posed by synthetic biology?

*Answer.* A number of offices in ISN work to address issues posed by synthetic biology and other emerging technologies. This has included promotion of voluntary screening guidelines for providers of synthetic DNA; collaboration with iGEM international on outreach regarding dual-use awareness and risk assessment; work in the BWC and elsewhere to evaluate and promote risk assessment frameworks, including the approach set out by the National Academies recently in Biodefense in the Age of Synthetic Biology; and promoting new export controls on desktop DNA synthesizers and related technology.

*Question.* Does ISN have the authorities, personnel, and resources it needs to address the proliferation of biological weapons?

Answer. ISN has significant authorities to address BW proliferation, highly qualified and motivated personnel, and an important suite of threat reduction programs. However, biological weapons proliferation is an enormous challenge both politically and technically. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to identify and address specific needs and opportunities to ensure our effectiveness in this important mission.

*Question.* Does ISN play any role in approving or disapproving life sciences or biological research collaboration with other countries that could pose dual-use concerns, including research on pathogens, viruses, and toxins, even if such collaboration is funded by another federal agency? If so, please describe ISN's involvement.

Answer. ISN does not fund nor directly approve any life sciences research. The United States has policies pertaining to Federally funded research on high consequence pathogens and dual-use research of concern, which are applicable regardless of where the research is conducted. These policies establish a high bar for funding based on a careful assessment of risks and benefits and require steps to mitigate any risks. ISN ensures that Federal policy development takes into account our international obligations and urges other countries to adopt similar policies that minimize the potential misuse of life sciences research.

*Question.* Do you agree that ISN must have a stronger role in decisions to share weaponizable biotechnology with China and other countries that may not be in compliance with BWC obligations?

Answer. ISN is the focal point within the State Department for policies to prevent the misuse of life sciences, and we participate in the interagency processes that establish the oversight policies for sharing research [and technology] that might pose concern. Our role ensures that the policy development considers both our international obligations from the BWC and the international implications of our policies. We believe this requires careful consideration of risks and benefits, and where appropriate, measures to mitigate the risks, including for sharing technology with those we have concerns regarding their compliance with the BWC.

*Question.* What is the U.S. doing to address Russia's offensive biological weapons program?

Answer. As the lead bureau on the BWC, ISN works closely with the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance, as well as others within the Department and the interagency to address this and other threats. To counter Russia's offensive biological weapons program, the United States has engaged with allies and partners and imposed export restrictions on certain Russian organizations associated with Russia's BW program. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts through direct bilateral information exchanges with key allies and partners and consider a variety of export-control and sanctions related actions against Russia.

*Question.* Does the loss of Afghanistan to the Taliban increase the likelihood of terrorist bioweapons labs on Afghan territory? What must the U.S. do to address any such threats, or other terrorist BW capabilities?

Answer. The accessibility of weaponizable biological materials is of great concern to me. If confirmed, I will increase assistance to countries in South and Central Asia to reduce threats emanating both out of and into Afghanistan.

*Question.* China is growing its nuclear arsenal at an alarming rate. What impact will this have on the NPT? How should the U.S. address it, in the context of the NPT?

Answer. The PRC's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament, one of the pillars of the NPT. It is urgent for China to take on greater responsibility, transparency, and restraint with respect to its nuclear weapons arsenal. The United States will pursue those objectives both in bilateral engagements with China and in multilateral fora such as the NPT Review Conference.

*Question.* Should the IAEA be subject to political considerations of any particular government and its negotiations on other matters, or should the IAEA only consider strict compliance issues?

Answer. The United States strongly supports the professional, technical, and independent work of the IAEA to verify States' compliance with their NPT-required safeguards agreements and to undertake additional monitoring and verification activities as requested by the IAEA Board of Governors. A strong, credible international safeguards regime is a core United States national security interest.

*Question.* At what point do the advances of the Iranian nuclear program make any return to the nuclear deal irrelevant?

*Answer.* I am carefully evaluating Iran's expansion of nuclear activities, as reported by the International Atomic Energy Agency. As Secretary Blinken has made clear, continued Iranian nuclear advances bring us closer to the point where a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action would fail to reproduce the nonproliferation benefits the deal originally delivered. The administration remains committed to pursuing a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear program. If confirmed, I will make clear the window of opportunity will not remain open indefinitely.

*Question.* Iran has successfully stymied the IAEA's investigation of Iran's past nuclear activities. How can the IAEA restart this investigation and keep it going effectively?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned that Iran has yet to provide the IAEA with the information it needs to resolve questions regarding potential undeclared nuclear material. Iran must cooperate fully and substantively with the Agency without further delay in a way that leads to resolution of these issues. The U.S. is working with Allies and partners to reinforce support for the IAEA and the Director General (DG) as they pursue these serious issues. If confirmed, I will be watching closely whether Iran provides the necessary level of cooperation, starting with the DG's meetings with senior Iranian officials in Vienna this week and in Tehran in the near future.

*Question.* Considering the Iran nuclear archive and the findings in the 2021 Arms Control report, can the U.S. confirm today that Iran has solely peaceful intentions for its nuclear program?

*Answer.* I would refer you to the Intelligence Community regarding Iran's intentions. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action provided the strongest verification and monitoring measures ever negotiated to help ensure Iran's nuclear activities are exclusively peaceful. Resumption of mutual compliance with the deal would ensure the renewed implementation of these important measures, as well as restrictions on the size and scope of Iran's nuclear activities.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran engages in nuclear hedging? Why or why not? In that context, is it advisable in your view to lift nuclear and terrorism sanctions on Iran?

*Answer.* The administration is committed to ensuring that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon and to addressing the many other issues of concern related to Iran. If confirmed, I would remain committed to engaging in meaningful diplomacy to achieve a return to mutual compliance with JCPOA commitments, and would recommend against providing the sanctions relief described in the JCPOA unless there is a return to mutual compliance. Regardless of the status of the JCPOA, the administration will continue to utilize sanctions to respond to Iranian policies that are contrary to U.S. national security interests.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you plan to work within the administration to encourage the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to investigate Iran's potentially ongoing nuclear weaponization work, which the nuclear archive indicates Tehran hid and dispersed at research institutes, universities, and military sites after 2003?

*Answer.* Iran's history of deception regarding its past nuclear weapons program is not new. Verifiably ensuring Iran never resumes such activities, despite Iran's past denials, is a core purpose of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which provides for the most intrusive verification and monitoring procedures ever negotiated. The administration will continue to seek a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments, which would ensure that its critical verification and monitoring measures are restored.

*Question.* If confirmed, how can you assure Congress that political considerations or multilateral issues are not used to avoid holding Iran accountable for its non-compliance with safeguard agreements?

*Answer.* The United States has made clear our serious concerns regarding potential undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, as reported by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is essential that Iran fully comply with its legally binding obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA to resolve these important matters without further delay. The stability of any diplomatic outcome regarding Iran's nuclear program relies on the credible resolution of these serious issues and Iran's full compliance with its safeguards obligations.

*Question.* Do you support the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)? If confirmed, will you fully implement it?

Answer. Yes, I support and, should I be confirmed, am fully committed to implementing CAATSA, especially Section 231, for which the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation leads U.S. implementation. If confirmed, I will urge all our partners and allies to refrain from major new purchases of Russian military equipment that could risk mandatory sanctions under CAATSA Section 231.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* How do you envision the United States' role in bolstering the international nuclear nonproliferation regime?

Answer. The Interim National Security Strategic Guidance—issued less than two months after the President took office—noted that the threats posed by WMD proliferation, “cannot be effectively addressed by one nation acting alone. And none can be effectively addressed with the United States on the sidelines.” The United States led in the creation of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, such as the establishment of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and it is vital that we continue to lead efforts to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Should the United States continue to work to prevent new states from possessing their own nuclear weapons?

Answer. Yes. The President's Interim National Security Guidance states that “as we re-engage the international system, we will address the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons.” The Guidance also states that nuclear proliferation poses an existential danger. Addressing these threats requires that we minimize the number of states possessing nuclear weapons, and the administration places a high priority on using the tools of national security to achieve this objective. Renewed American nonproliferation leadership will be essential to reducing the dangers posed by nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Which new or expiring agreements require the bureau's near-term focus? How should the United States balance the goals of increasing states' access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the nonproliferation goals of preventing the further spread of sensitive fuel cycle nuclear technology?

Answer. The United States is in negotiations for peaceful nuclear cooperation agreements with Jordan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Thailand. If confirmed, I would support the negotiation of additional peaceful nuclear cooperation agreements, which are needed for significant exports of U.S. nuclear material and equipment, to increase access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the highest standards of nuclear security and nonproliferation and continue the United States' longstanding policy of limiting the spread of enrichment and reprocessing capabilities around the world.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* What are your views on the threats posed by biological dual-use research of concern?

Answer. I take threats posed by dual-use research of concern (DURC) seriously. In fact, one of ISN's missions is to prevent the life sciences from being misused for biological weapons development. Dual-use research of concern warrants careful oversight and risk/benefit analysis. The ISN Bureau has advocated for thoughtful national oversight of such research in international forums, such as the Biological Weapons Convention, for almost a decade and, if confirmed, I will continue to do so.

*Question.* Would Chinese interest in dual-use research of concern be consistent with your understanding of the Chinese national strategy of military-civil fusion?

Answer. Military-Civil fusion seeks to develop a singular ecosystem within which all dual-use technology is simultaneously advancing military and civilian programs. Key to this is the removal of the traditional barriers between the national defense

and national economic systems. Whether specific types of dual-use research of concern might be exploited in this way would likely depend on the extent to which the research was specifically relevant to People's Republic of China military applications and objectives.

*Question.* Should the United States be involved in, or support, potential dual-use research of concern conducted in China?

*Answer.* The United States has federal funding and oversight policies for research that might pose particular concerns, including dual-use. These policies require careful consideration of risks and benefits, and where appropriate, measures to mitigate those risks. Policy development is led by the National Security Council and by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and decisions about the funding of specific research proposals are made by the responsible funding agency. The ISN Bureau ensures that policy development considers both our international obligations and the international implications of policy choices.

*Question.* Can you explain the ISN Bureau's international outreach related to dual-use research of concern in their role as ex-officio member of the Nation Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB)?

*Answer.* The ISN Bureau's international outreach on dual-use research of concern has consisted of a variety of advocacy and awareness-raising efforts, including participating in or organizing workshops and briefings and working to develop common understandings internationally. With the exception of efforts to facilitate collaboration between the NSABB and its French counterpart, this outreach is unrelated to the ex-officio role.

*Question.* Did the ISN Bureau, in their role on the NSABB, support lifting the moratorium on gain of function research with viruses in the United States in 2017?

*Answer.* The Department of State's role on the NSABB is a non-voting ex officio position. ISN neither advocated for lifting of the moratorium nor participated directly in the decision taken by the NSABB.

*Question.* Would Chinese military research into weaponizing pathogens such as coronaviruses be a concern under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)?

*Answer.* Research into the weaponization of any pathogen by any BWC State Party would be a matter of concern. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance to address any concerns regarding compliance with the Convention.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to undertake a full-scale investigation into the transfer of dual-use technology, know how, and money by the U.S. Government to Chinese research institutions engaged in synthetic biology and engineering chimeric pathogens through gain of function experiments?

*Answer.* A number of mechanisms exist to guard against the risk that transfers of U.S. technology will be misused. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these mechanisms are effective and are fully utilized, taking into account lessons learned.

*Question.* At any time, were you instructed to shudder or stop the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance (AVC) investigation into the potential Chinese BWC concerns by Biden State Department appointees or other administrative staff?

*Answer.* No. As I understand it, the AVC Bureau, under the previous administration, commissioned an internal inquiry into COVID origins. This ad hoc inquiry was conducted as part of a larger contract. I defer to the AVC Bureau about details of this contract. I understand the group briefed State Department staff during both the Trump and Biden administrations.

*Question.* What was your role as acting T Assistant Secretary in supporting the AVC Bureau's research into potential Biological Warfare links to the PLA's Academy of Military Medical Science, (AAMS) which was referenced in the January 15 Fact Sheet?

*Answer.* I had no role in relation to this research, nor in the development of the January 15 Fact Sheet.

*Question.* I understand the ISN and AVC office directors responsible for Biological Warfare warned of a potential "can of worms" that would be opened if AVC investigated Chinese BW programs and potential ties to research being done at the WIV. What, specifically, was the concern with regard to a "can of worms?"

*Answer.* ISN personnel at no point objected to such an investigation by AVC or warned against such investigation. Assertions to the contrary are incorrect.



*Question.* Why would the State Department Weapons of Mass Destruction programs, who are responsible for holding the PRC accountable to their international obligations, not opt to investigate every potential lead? If confirmed, will you allow the State Department investigation to continue into potential military links to the research at the WIV?

*Answer.* The Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance has primary responsibility for issues related to assessing compliance with arms control agreements, and continues to monitor and assess information related to countries' compliance with the BWC, working closely with IC colleagues and others in the inter-agency. If confirmed, I will work closely with AVC and other partners to address such concerns.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* What can the United States do to reinforce the norms of the Chemical Weapons Convention?

*Answer.* The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) Bureau is the lead on the Chemical Weapons Convention. However, if confirmed, I commit to implementing Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act while also coordinating with AVC to limit the proliferation of chemical weapons.

*Question.* Is the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) up to the task? What reforms would you recommend to make it more effective?

*Answer.* The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) Bureau is the lead on the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). If confirmed, I commit to coordinating with AVC to limit the proliferation of chemical weapons.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, are you committed to fully enforcing INKSNA and other U.S. non-proliferation sanctions?

*Answer.* Yes. Sanctions are a critical tool that contribute to nonproliferation goals. If confirmed, I would join the Department's commitment to implementing its sanctions authorities, including the requirements of the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA). The Department recently transmitted five INKSNA reports to Congress—in Feb 2020, Sept 2020, Nov 2020, Jan 2021, and July 2021—clearing a backlog of previously delayed reports. This has led to sanctions against 46 foreign entities/individuals for proliferation activities, including against 18 entities for supporting Iran's missile program.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the effectiveness of sanctions measures in supporting nuclear non-proliferation?

*Answer.* Sanctions are an effective tool in impeding, rolling back, and countering proliferation and changing the behavior of those who provide aid or support to proliferators. Sanctions are one of a number of important tools in the counterproliferation toolkit, and they can be deployed in a targeted and strategic manner.

If confirmed, I will work closely with other agencies, particularly with the Department of the Treasury, to fully implement all U.S. nonproliferation sanctions, and to work with allies and partners to ensure U.N. sanctions are also implemented and enforced.

*Question.* Is Iran in compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty? If so, how could Iran be compliant with the NPT when it has not answered the IAEA's questions on undeclared nuclear material and activities?

*Answer.* Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA all peaceful nuclear material and related activities in Iran. Iran's failure to provide substantive or technically credible responses to the IAEA's questions related to possible undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran is cause for serious concern and raises serious questions regarding Iran's compliance with its NPT and IAEA safeguards obligations. These concerns are under active discussion in the IAEA Board of Governors. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear mate-

rial and activities, as well as continued IAEA Board action as necessary to ensure Iran complies with its NPT-related obligations.

*Question.* Do you think the Biden administration should commit to not lifting or waiving sanctions on Iran until it, at a minimum, complies with the IAEA's requests on undeclared nuclear material and activities?

*Answer.* The long-term stability of any diplomatic solution to the Iran nuclear challenge relies on the credible resolution of these serious safeguards concerns. The administration strongly supports the IAEA's ongoing investigations regarding possible undeclared nuclear material in Iran. Iran must provide the IAEA full cooperation without further delay. The foundation for any long-term solution is strong and credible verification; credible resolution of the serious safeguards concerns reported by the IAEA Director General must be a brick in that foundation. In addition to the assurances that would be provided if it does so, a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments, which include the strongest verification and monitoring measures ever negotiated, would ensure that these critical measures are restored.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* The four Nuclear Security Summits successfully led to elimination or downblending of global civilian stocks of weapons usable fissile material. If confirmed, what diplomatic efforts will you take to encourage countries to reduce stocks of fissile material in their military programs and other non-military stocks that are not subject to IAEA safeguards?

*Answer.* The United States will continue to lead by example in eliminating surplus plutonium and downblending highly enriched uranium that are no longer needed for defense purposes. The United States has called on states to declare moratoria on production of fissile material for weapons, and if confirmed I will continue those efforts. In addition, I will support U.S. and international efforts and diplomacy related to placing fissile material no longer required for military purposes under IAEA safeguards and arranging for its appropriate disposition.

*Question.* Extension of the State Department travel ban to North Korea and the need to obtain a specific license from the Treasury Department have made it more difficult for generous Americans and others to provide life-saving assistance to North Koreans—assistance that is explicitly exempted under U.S. law. If confirmed, will you work with your State and Treasury Department colleagues to issue new guidance that clearly defines what additional goods related to food and medicine to be exempted from U.S. sanctions?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government actively seeks to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance in the DPRK as a matter of U.S. policy, and maintains a number of sanctions exemptions and authorizations related to humanitarian aid. It has also led efforts to streamline the process for humanitarian exemptions in the U.N. Security Council DPRK sanctions committee. The DPRK itself has created the most significant barriers to the delivery of aid by closing its borders and limiting access for the personnel responsible for implementing such projects. If confirmed, I will work to support efforts aimed at helping humanitarian aid reach vulnerable people in the DPRK.

*Question.* In 2019, President Trump unsigned the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)—a global treaty that regulates the conventional arms trade—despite the fact that the treaty simply requires other countries to uphold the same domestic legal standard we have: to not transfer arms to countries if it is believed they will be used to violate international humanitarian law. Will the United States rescind the Trump administration's letter to the United Nations stating that the United States did not intend to ratify nor fulfill the obligations of this treaty?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I support reviewing the implications of decisions taken to date on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), both in the United States and in the ATT Conferences of States Parties, to determine the proper relationship of the United States to the Treaty. I believe this review should be situated within the larger context of U.S. policy on conventional arms transfers. The United States is the largest arms exporter in the world, and it is imperative that U.S. transfers of conventional arms are consistent with our laws, values, and interests.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* In April 2019, then-nominee to be Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed in writing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that “given Iran’s past noncompliance with both its safeguards agreement and its NPT obligations, its failure to fully address IAEA questions related to past activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device, and the emergence of new questions surrounding Iran’s motives for retaining and concealing documents, equipment, and personnel related to its past nuclear weapons program, Iran’s standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as ‘good.’” Do you agree with Mr. Eberhardt’s assessment? If not, why not?

*Answer.* If being in “good standing” means being in compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), then the United States has, including in the 2021 Compliance Report, indicated concern with regard to Iran’s compliance with Article III of the NPT. Given Iran’s past non-compliance with its obligations under the NPT and Iran’s NPT-required safeguards agreement and its present failure to fully address the IAEA’s current questions related to implementation of that safeguards agreement, Iran’s standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as “good.”

*Question.* Do you consider Iran’s past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why

*Answer.* In 2005, the United States found Iran to be in non-compliance with Articles II and III of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—as well as its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—and reported these findings to Congress. These findings concerned activities related to Iran’s pre-2004 efforts to develop a nuclear weapon, records of which were retained in the Iranian “nuclear archive” acquired by Israel in 2018. The IAEA is now seeking to resolve issues involving possible undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and still awaits the necessary substantive cooperation from Iran on its safeguards investigations. The IAEA Board of Governors has expressed serious concern regarding the lack of progress on these issues and has called on Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA without further delay.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran’s past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* In 2005, the United States found Iran to be in non-compliance with Articles II and III of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—as well as its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—and reported these findings to Congress. These findings concerned activities related to Iran’s pre-2004 efforts to develop a nuclear weapon, records of which were retained in the Iranian “nuclear archive” acquired by Israel in 2018. The IAEA is now seeking to resolve issues involving possible undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and still awaits the necessary substantive cooperation from Iran on its safeguards investigations. The IAEA Board of Governors has expressed serious concern regarding the lack of progress on these issues and has called on Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA without further delay.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran should be entitled to the use of civilian nuclear technology even if they are not a member in good standing of the NPT? If so, why? If not, why not?

*Answer.* Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligations under Article II of the NPT and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

**Answer.** Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

**Question.** Do you consider Iran to be specifically entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

**Answer.** Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

**Question.** Paragraphs 10-15 of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2231 describe a so-called ‘snapback mechanism’ which reverses the termination of sanctions on Iran described in paragraph 7(a) of that resolution. The resolution requires a “JCPOA participant state” to notify the U.N. Security Council of an issue it believes constitutes “significant non-performance” of commitments under the JCPOA. By no later than December 2019, the State Department had conducted a legal analysis which concluded that “there is a legally available argument we can assert that the United States can initiate the snapback process under UNSCR 2231 by submitting a notification to the Security Council of an issue that the United States believes constitutes significant non-performance.” Do you agree with that conclusion, i.e. that there is a legally available argument for the United States to initiate the snapback process? If not, why not?

**Answer.** The U.S. initiation of the “snapback” of previous U.N. sanctions on Iran in 2020 resulted in an impasse at the U.N. Security Council that, as a practical matter, undermined its ability to address Iran’s destabilizing activities. The United States will continue to use domestic authorities to address Iran’s proliferation activities—including Executive Order 13949, which authorizes blocking sanctions related to the supply, sale, or transfer of arms or related materiel to or from Iran.

**Question.** Do you believe that Russia would be in violation of INKSNA if Russia sold advanced weapons to Iran, including missile technology?

**Answer.** The Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA) requires reports to Congress identifying, and the discretion to impose sanctions against, foreign persons that transfer or receive items controlled by the four multilateral export control regimes, (the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement), as well as other sensitive items, involving the subject countries. I understand that the Department is committed to implementing sanctions under INKSNA. For example, in July 2021, sanctions were imposed against three Russian entities, Asia-Invest LLC, Charter Green Light Moscow (CGLM), and NPP Pulsar LLC (Russia), for transferring sensitive items to Iran’s missile program.

**Question.** Do you believe that China would be in violation of and INKSNA if China sold advanced weapons to Iran, including missile technology?

**Answer.** The Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act (INKSNA) requires reports to Congress identifying, and the discretion to impose sanctions against, foreign persons that transfer or receive items controlled by the four multilateral export control regimes, (the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement), as well as other sensitive items, involving the subject countries. I understand that the Department is committed to implementing sanctions authorities under INKSNA, and that, for example, in November 2020, sanctions were imposed against two PRC entities, Chengdu Best New Materials Co Ltd and Zibo Elim Trade Company, Ltd. for transferring sensitive items and technology to Iran’s missile program.

**Question.** Do you assess that China is in violation of its Article VI obligations?

**Answer.** The State Department’s most recent Compliance Reports does not find China to be in violation of its obligations under Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty’s. The AVC Bureau has the lead on compliance reporting to Congress.

**Question.** What leverage does the United States currently possess to dampen China’s nuclear buildup?

Answer. The answer to this question involves a range of national security instruments, but given the responsibilities of the position for which I have been nominated, I will respond from the perspective of nonproliferation. The PRC's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament, one of the pillars of the NPT. It is urgent for China to take on greater responsibility and demonstrate greater transparency and restraint with respect to its nuclear weapons arsenal. The United States will pursue those objectives both in bilateral engagements with China and in multilateral fora such as the NPT Review Conference.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. C.S. ELIOT KANG BY SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

*Question.* Do you agree that greater enforcement of international sanctions against North Korea would strengthen U.S. leverage in nuclear talks with Pyongyang?

Answer. Yes. The DPRK's unlawful weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missile programs constitute serious threats to international peace and security and the global nonproliferation regime. A series of United Nations Security Council resolutions have put in place sanctions to address the threat posed by the DPRK Government's weapons programs and proliferation activities and to deny it the means to advance its WMD and ballistic missile programs. If confirmed, I will continue to promote their full global implementation and look forward to supporting the administration's efforts to pursue calibrated and practical diplomacy with the DPRK.

*Question.* What steps would you recommend the administration take to pressure other countries, in particular China, to enforce international sanctions against North Korea?

Answer. DPRK-related sanctions implementation by other countries, including the PRC and Russia, has been uneven. I am clear-eyed that while our interests on the Korean Peninsula overlap at times, our priorities often differ significantly. If confirmed, I will continue to engage the PRC and Russia on DPRK issues and encourage both to play a positive role. I will continue to work with other U.N. Member States to promote full global sanctions implementation and enhance their capacity to fulfill their U.N. obligations.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to fully comply with the Otto Warmbier North Korea Nuclear Sanctions and Enforcement Act of 2019 (title LXXI of Public Law 116-92; 133 Stat. 2244)?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the Department's compliance with the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, including as amended by the Otto Warmbier North Korea Nuclear Sanctions and Enforcement Act of 2019.

*Question.* In your view, does cooperation on naval nuclear propulsion constitute an allowable peaceful use under the U.S.-Australian civilian nuclear cooperation agreement, submitted to Congress pursuant to section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended [P.L. 83-703; 42 U.S.C. §2153 et seq? If not, would such cooperation require congressional approval?

Answer. The 2010 U.S.-Australia Agreement Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy would not apply to cooperation on naval nuclear propulsion. Any cooperation will be undertaken consistent with requirements of the Atomic Energy Act, including with respect to any necessary agreements and requisite Congressional review in accordance with its provisions.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* China is growing its nuclear arsenal at an alarming rate. What impact will this have on the NPT? How should the U.S. address it, in the context of the NPT?

Answer. The PRC's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament, one of the pillars of the NPT. It is urgent for China to take on greater responsibility, transparency, and restraint with

respect to its nuclear weapons arsenal. The United States will pursue those objectives both in bilateral engagements with China and in multilateral fora such as the NPT Review Conference.

*Question.* How will you evaluate if the NPT Revcon is a success? If confirmed, what will you do to make it a success?

*Answer.* NPT Review Conferences are held every five years to review the operation of the Treaty. There are no fixed standards for success, and past RevCons have reached consensus on various forms of final outcome documents. At a minimum, I expect that NPT Parties will recognize the continuing importance of the Treaty and reaffirm their commitment to the Treaty. If confirmed, I will work to build the broadest possible consensus on principles, goals, and specific actions to strengthen the NPT regime.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* Are the provisions of the NPT still relevant over fifty years later? How do you assess the effectiveness of the treaty for U.S. nonproliferation policy?

*Answer.* I believe that the provisions of the Treaty are still highly relevant and vital to the preservation of U.S., as well as international, security. The NPT is the international legal foundation for efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, one of the greatest threats to our national security. Almost all countries have joined the Treaty, which has helped forestall the widespread proliferation of nuclear weapons predicted in the 1960s. The Treaty is among the most effective international regimes, contributing to the norm against nuclear proliferation as well as robust international nuclear safeguards, common nuclear supplier policies, and action on nuclear arms control.

*Question.* How do you view the NPT's three tenets, nonproliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy? Should one be prioritized over the others?

*Answer.* Each of these tenets—or “pillars,” as we often call them—represents a common interest of all NPT Parties. All states benefit from and can contribute to each. They should not be treated as competing interests. However, since some other Parties often emphasize the disarmament or peaceful uses pillars, we encourage all Parties to recognize that nonproliferation is an essential foundation for these other two. Further steps toward disarmament will be hindered if more nuclear proliferation occurs, and states are reluctant to supply nuclear wherewithal to others unless they are assured it will be used for solely peaceful purposes.

*Question.* How should the United States balance the goals of increasing states' access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the nonproliferation goals of preventing the further spread of sensitive fuel cycle nuclear technology (enrichment and reprocessing)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work within the context of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to make good on its objective of expanding access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, while promoting the highest standards of nuclear safety, security, and nonproliferation and continuing the United States' long-standing policy of limiting the spread of enrichment and reprocessing capabilities around the world. Proliferation of such technologies is not necessary to meet the NPT States Parties' peaceful uses needs.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The United Arab Emirates Ambassador to the United States earlier this year asked why under current U.S. policy an adversary—the regime in Iran—would be allowed to have an enrichment program while U.S. partners and allies were committed to nuclear programs without enrichment or reprocessing. How would you answer the ambassador's question?

*Answer.* The United States has long sought to limit the spread of uranium enrichment and spent fuel reprocessing capabilities. Under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran committed to strict limits on both the level and scale of its enrichment program and related research and development activities, as well as

limits on reprocessing. The administration believes that diplomacy and a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA are the best path to reestablishing limits on Iran's nuclear program and ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

I have long applauded the constructive decision by the United Arab Emirates in 2008 to voluntarily refrain from domestic enrichment and reprocessing-related activities. If confirmed, I will continue to urge other countries to follow in a similar path and will support using all measures at our disposal to limit the spread of these sensitive technologies both in the region and globally.

*Question.* How should the administration address Middle Eastern states seeking enrichment and reprocessing capabilities to match Iran's if Washington re-enters the JCPOA and accepts the continued existence and future growth of Tehran's enrichment program?

*Answer.* The United States has a longstanding policy of limiting the further spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies to the greatest extent possible, and we employ a range of tools to that end. The United States shares a common interest with regional partners in ensuring through diplomacy that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will urge regional states to rely on the existing international market for nuclear fuel and services, rather than seeking to acquire or develop such capabilities, and to apply the highest nonproliferation standards, including by bringing into force an IAEA Additional Protocol if they have not yet done so.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* What leverage do we still have with Iran to halt further development of their nuclear program and restrain their destabilizing actions in the region?

*Answer.* If confirmed as Special Representative, I would not have direct responsibility for these issues, but I believe the high priority Iran places on sanctions relief gives us leverage in the negotiations on a mutual return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). A mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA and to build on that basis are central to the administration's efforts to restrict Iran's nuclear program, secure diplomatic support for this goal, and address Iran's destabilizing activities in the region.

*Question.* I am pleased that the Biden administration has extended the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (new START) until 2026. However, I remain concerned about Russia's nuclear program, particularly given its continued malign actions near and far beyond its borders. What more can be done to ensure continued dialogue with Russia on this matter, and how will you, if confirmed, ensure that we are able to conduct inspections as agreed to in New START?

*Answer.* The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) Bureau is the lead on bilateral nuclear arms control with Russia. If confirmed, I commit to coordinating with AVC to ensure that Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) States Parties are appropriately informed of U.S. dialogue and bilateral treaty implementation with Russia. The administration has launched a Strategic Stability Dialogue with Russia to discuss strategic stability issues, including future arms control and risk reduction. The administration is also working with Russia to determine when New START inspections can be resumed safely.

*Question.* How can we build on the New START extension to cover tactical (i.e. short range missiles, nuclear artillery, etc.) and emerging nuclear weapon technologies (i.e. Skyfall, nuclear warhead unmanned subsurface vehicles, etc.)?

*Answer.* The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) Bureau is the lead on bilateral nuclear arms control with Russia. If confirmed, I commit to coordinating with AVC to ensure that Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) States Parties are appropriately informed of U.S. dialogue and bilateral treaty implementation with Russia. The administration will use the time provided by extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear arms.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* In April 2019, then-nominee to be Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed in writing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that “given Iran’s past noncompliance with both its safeguards agreement and its NPT obligations, its failure to fully address IAEA questions related to past activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device, and the emergence of new questions surrounding Iran’s motives for retaining and concealing documents, equipment, and personnel related to its past nuclear weapons program, Iran’s standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as ‘good.’” Do you agree with Mr. Eberhardt’s assessment? If not, why not?

*Answer.* The United States has, including in the 2021 Compliance Report, indicated concern with regard to Iran’s compliance with Article III of the NPT. Given Iran’s past non-compliance with its obligations under the NPT and Iran’s NPT-required safeguards agreement and its present failure to fully address the IAEA’s current questions related to implementation of that safeguards agreement, Iran’s standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as “good.”

*Question.* Do you consider Iran’s past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why

*Answer.* In 2005, the United States found Iran to be in non-compliance with Articles II and III of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—as well as its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—and reported these findings to Congress. These findings concerned activities related to Iran’s pre-2004 efforts to develop a nuclear weapon, records of which were retained in the Iranian “nuclear archive” acquired by Israel in 2018. The IAEA is now seeking to resolve issues involving possible undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and still awaits the necessary substantive cooperation from Iran on its safeguards investigations. The IAEA Board of Governors has expressed serious concern regarding the lack of progress on these issues and has called on Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA without further delay.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran’s past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

*Answer.* In 2005, the United States found Iran to be in non-compliance with Articles II and III of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—as well as its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—and reported these findings to Congress. These findings concerned activities related to Iran’s pre-2004 efforts to develop a nuclear weapon, records of which were retained in the Iranian “nuclear archive” acquired by Israel in 2018. The IAEA is now seeking to resolve issues involving possible undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and still awaits the necessary substantive cooperation from Iran on its safeguards investigations. The IAEA Board of Governors has expressed serious concern regarding the lack of progress on these issues and has called on Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA without further delay.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran should be entitled to the use of civilian nuclear technology even if they are not a member in good standing of the NPT? If so, why? If not, why not?

*Answer.* Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligations under Article II of the NPT and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.



Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be specifically entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Do you assess that China is in violation of its Article VI obligations?

Answer. I understand the State Department examined the issue of China's compliance with NPT Article VI in connection with the 2021 compliance report and determined it did not merit inclusion. If confirmed, I commit to follow up with the AVC bureau, which is the Department lead on compliance reporting, and to support and advocate for the administration's efforts to engage China in nuclear risk reduction talks.

*Question.* What leverage does the United States currently possess to dampen China's nuclear buildup?

Answer. The PRC's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament, one of the pillars of the NPT. It is urgent for China to take on greater responsibility and demonstrate greater transparency and restraint with respect to its nuclear weapons arsenal. The United States will pursue those objectives both in bilateral engagements with China and in multilateral fora such as the NPT Review Conference.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ADAM SCHEINMAN BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* In your view, has China exhibited good faith efforts to pursue nuclear negotiations with the United States or any other party of the NPT?

Answer. The PRC's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament. It is urgent for China to take on greater responsibility, transparency, and restraint with respect to its nuclear weapons arsenal. If confirmed, I would work to pursue those objectives both in bilateral engagements with China and in multilateral fora such as the NPT Review Conference.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to providing regular updates to the committee on the Biden administration's effort to determine whether or not China has violated Article VI of the NPT?

Answer. The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) Bureau has the lead on compliance reporting to Congress. If confirmed, I commit to working with them and Congress on matters related to the NPT.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*State Department Attrition*

*Question.* The Institute for the Study of Diplomacy recently released a report that found that almost a third of current foreign service officers are seriously considering leaving the Department. This finding reflects a broader trend of attrition within the foreign service over the past decade.

- What steps will you take, if confirmed, to improve foreign service retention and to ensure that the foreign service is motivated, engaged, and functioning to the highest degree of their professional capabilities? What steps will you take to en-

sure that the Department retains foreign service officers from a diversity of backgrounds?

Answer. On his first day in office, Secretary Blinken addressed the Department's workforce and underscored that our task "starts with rebuilding morale and trust" within our ranks. The Department is developing new approaches in support of the President's directive to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. As part of this effort, the Secretary appointed Ambassador Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley as the Department's first Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and, if confirmed, I plan to work closely with her to ensure that diversity and inclusion practices are integrated strategically into personnel-related policies. I also plan to promote workplace flexibilities and to highlight for the workforce resources available to assist employees: FSI workshops and engagements; 24/7 online access to WorkLife4You to address personal issues, including mental health; and TalentCare, the single touchpoint for resources for well-being, community, safety, and workplace flexibilities.

If confirmed, I am committed to strengthening our efforts to support, retain, and develop our already top notch Foreign Service and Civil Service employees to confront the foreign policy challenges of the 21st century.

*Question.* What steps will you take, if confirmed, to address foreign service officers' concerns regarding assignments, promotions, bias, and family matters?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ask Department experts to examine whether there is a significantly higher rate of attrition for certain populations, and I commit to further analyzing mitigation measures to ensure the Department remains an employer of choice for all of our employees. Understanding why employees leave the Foreign Service is a crucial step in increasing retention. The Department has launched a revamped centralized exit survey to better understand the reasons employees may decide to leave, and the Department has utilized the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey to drill down on bureau level issues that affect retention in support of the President's directive to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. I am committed to examining employee concerns, including assignments, promotions, bias, family member employment, education of dependents, and any other areas, which lead to a loss of our most valuable human resources. If confirmed, I will pursue programs and solutions that remove barriers to retention of our top talent.

#### *Diversity*

*Question.* I remain extremely concerned that the foreign service does not sufficiently reflect the makeup of this country and lags behind most of the rest of the federal government in hiring and retaining a diverse workforce. I appreciate that Secretary Blinken has made this a priority from day one. The fact remains, however, that much work lies ahead. Our diplomats and State Department personnel represent America to much of the world. It is critical that we have foreign service and civil service professionals who represent all the richness that our nation has to offer.

- How do you intend to ensure that the foreign service recruits and retains a diverse workforce?

Answer. If confirmed, I will lead GTM in its role to recruit and retain a workforce that represents America. I will ensure that GTM continues to integrate diversity and inclusion practices strategically into personnel-related policies in alignment with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer's vision and the Secretary's and administration's priorities. This includes fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, workplace flexibilities, and encouraging a culture of inclusion, including through professional development and advancement.

If confirmed, I am committed to listening to our members of the Foreign Service and ensuring we retain high performers by investing in their professional development and strengthening programs that mentor individuals for success, provide actionable feedback on performance, chart career progression, provide more inter-agency and other detail opportunities, and create more viable pathways to ensure professional growth.

*Question.* How do you plan to ensure that diversity is represented at all levels of the workforce, especially at senior levels? What specific steps do you plan to take with respect to mentoring young and mid-level professions, to eliminate bias in promotions, and to otherwise improve access to senior positions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will partner with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO) to ensure that the Department represents the diversity of the American people. The Department is developing new approaches in support of the President's di-

rective to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. GTM and the CDIO's office are working to track and ensure progress on performance metrics on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as outlined in the soon-to-be released Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. The Department has already taken steps to widen the candidate pool of applicants for senior-level positions through mentorship programs, outreach to employee affinity groups, and the inclusion of interviewing parameters to ascertain the candidates' commitment to diversity and inclusion. In addition, the Department ensures that every promotion board panel is racially and ethnically diverse, gender balanced, and that all panel members receive unconscious bias training. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts to develop our diverse workforce, reach a wider candidate pool, and include more candidates from underrepresented backgrounds for senior positions.

*Question.* How will you promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in your own hiring and leadership?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead GTM in its role to recruit and retain a workforce that represents America. I will ensure that GTM continues to integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility practices strategically into personnel-related policies in alignment with the Secretary's and administration's priorities. This includes fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, workplace flexibilities, and encouraging a culture of inclusion through professional development and advancement for both the Foreign Service and Civil Service.

If confirmed, I will partner with Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO) Ambassador Abercrombie-Winstanley to ensure that the Department represents the diversity of the American people. As the Secretary has said, diversity and inclusion make us stronger, smarter, more creative, and more innovative. The CDIO and her office are building on the efforts established by the Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM) and GTM will collaborate with the CDIO on the Department's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan which will lay out the framework to implement wide-reaching diversity and inclusion initiatives along with concrete benchmarks and performance metrics.

*Question.* Do you commit to establish and demonstrate inclusive leadership practices and to build and maintain a safe work environment? How will you each carry that out in practice?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to establish and demonstrate inclusive leadership practices and to build and maintain a safe work environment. If confirmed, I will expect everyone in the workforce to promote a culture of inclusion where every voice is heard, respected, and valued. As a senior leader at the Department of State and two-time Ambassador, I have led numerous teams comprised of employees from a wide variety of backgrounds and worked deliberately to foster inclusive work environments.

I previously served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Human Resources, now the Bureau of Global Talent Management, where I worked directly on accountability mechanisms. If confirmed, I will use this experience to work with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and Office of Civil Rights to strengthen these accountability mechanisms, which are a key component of a culture of inclusion.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I remain extremely concerned that the Department's response to attacks on personnel, so-called Anomalous Health Incidents, remains woefully inadequate and that the Department is not consistently providing prompt and equitable treatment for affected personnel and family members.

- Do you commit to making the response and treatment of personnel a top priority if confirmed?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to making the response and treatment of personnel a top priority of mine.

*Question.* Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of State personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of State personnel.

*Question.* What steps, specifically, will you take to improve communication with affected personnel, ensure the workforce is sufficiently aware of the symptoms to watch for and how to report suspected incidents, and ensure all medical treatment is covered and reimbursed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Care Coordination Unit and Health Incidents Response Task Force (HIRTF) team on communication with affected personnel and the workforce writ large, and ensure that employees are apprised of their benefits. The Senior Care Coordinator and her team will continue to meet regularly with the group of injured employees and will remain available for individual meetings with those employees. If confirmed, I will meet with these employees as well. I will ensure that the GTM team also works with HIRTF to establish a webpage with information for Department personnel and will help amplify the page in our DG Digest and other communications. DS and MED has and will continue to take every opportunity to remind members of the State Department family of the response protocols for all personnel under COM security responsibility.

#### *Assignment Restrictions*

*Question.* I remain concerned about how assignment restrictions are imposed, the limitations they impose on State Department personnel, and the ability for personnel to appeal restrictions. Such restrictions have historically had a disproportionate effect on communities of color, and can impede career advancement.

- Do you share these concerns, and how do you intend to address these concerns, if confirmed?

Answer. I share your concerns about assignment restrictions. If confirmed, I will support the Department's review of legally available options and broader policy reforms regarding this process, with the goal to better leverage the expertise and capabilities of our entire workforce as well as to increase transparency. Assignment restrictions are based on a number of factors and are intended to mitigate security concerns related to foreign preference and foreign influence, where security clearances for individuals with these circumstances would otherwise be denied, leaving them wholly unable to serve the Department. Individuals who are restricted from serving in one or more countries have capabilities and expertise that contribute to the Department's overall mission and vision. The Department is determined to leverage the diversity and skills of our workforce in ways that make our policy more robust and transparent, while ensuring our national security information remains protected and security concerns are mitigated.

*Question.* What steps will you take to help improve the promotion board process and ensure that promotions are based on merit and not unduly influenced by bias?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's efforts to increase the accountability for diversity & inclusion in evaluations.

Global Talent Management (GTM) makes every effort to make the Department's Selection Boards as diverse as possible, in accordance with the Foreign Service Act of 1980. The Department ensures that every promotion board panel is racially and ethnically diverse, gender balanced. Diversity of experience and perspective is also valued and this coming year, GTM will recruit Foreign Service Specialists to serve on Generalist Boards. Board members are also required to take diversity awareness and unconscious bias training, prior to beginning service. GTM has revised Selection Board procedures to focus on assessing potential for success at the next level versus past performance, valuing multifunctionality, and complexity of work over geography - and ensure that each Board member receives consistent guidance and training.

#### *Workforce Training*

*Question.* Workforce training is a key element to professional development, especially as it relates to improving management practices.

- Do you believe the Department should provide more opportunities for professional development training, particularly for management, and if so, what steps will you take to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I will fully support expanding professional development opportunities for our Civil and Foreign Service workforce, including for managers and supervisors, by increasing both the number of programs offered and the number of employees participating. This includes incentivizing supervisors to empower employees to take advantage of long-term training opportunities, developmental rotations, domestic and overseas TDY opportunities, and details, as well as filling gaps left behind due to staffing shortages. For example, creating "backfill positions," (which in and of themselves would also provide professional development experience) would support bureaus experiencing staffing gaps when Civil Service employees are pursuing career development opportunities.

*Question.* What steps will you take to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are incorporated into professional development training and mentorship opportunities?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are incorporated into training, professional development opportunities, and mentoring programs throughout the Department in support of the Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (DISP). This includes continuing to train and educate supervisors about the importance of recruiting and retaining diverse teams and emphasizing that creating an environment of inclusion is essential aspect of good leadership. While training alone cannot transform the Department, I fully believe that it plays a central role in promoting culture change. If confirmed, I look forward to building a stronger, more inclusive State Department.

#### *Mental Health*

*Question.* As you know, the recent events in Afghanistan will likely bear heavily on many State Department personnel, whether that be because they previously served in Afghanistan or because they worked closely on the evacuation efforts.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ramp up mental health services and to encourage State Department employees to seek counseling and support when needed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with our colleagues in the Bureau of Medical Services (MED) to ensure that we, as an organization, continue to hone processes to lower the barriers, perceived or otherwise, that stand in the way of our employees seeking and receiving the care they need. I will support the Department's efforts to communicate to employees that the act of seeking help from a counselor, psychotherapist, or other mental health professional to address grief, anxiety, family or marital issues, or other concerns, by itself, is not considered derogatory in a security clearance determination, and to dispel the perceived notion that seeking mental health care might adversely affect clearances and career trajectory.

*Question.* How will you communicate the availability of mental health resources and improve accessibility to them?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will meet State Department personnel on the channels and platforms they listen to and learn from. We will use all available conduits, including staff emails, internal webpages, internal TV channels (a.k.a. BNET), newsletters, handouts, webinars, and message boards to make mental health resources and mental health care part of the ongoing, daily discussion at the Department of State. These will complement the in-person communication of available resources already happening through MED's psychologists and social workers in Employee Consultation Services (ECS) as well as psychiatrists overseas.

If confirmed, I will aim to improve accessibility and destigmatize mental health care. I will support the Department in making resources easily available where and when they are needed, meeting State Department personnel where they are overseas and at home. The Department does this now in-person whenever possible through Regional Psychiatrists posted overseas or ECS clinicians domestically. ECS has also expanded capacity recently to travel to overseas sites to work collaboratively with our psychiatrists to address crises, deteriorating morale, or burnout at posts. If confirmed, I will ensure that we are able to maintain this valuable service. I will work with MED to ensure continued availability and leverage of technologies such as WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom for the benefit of our employees and families.

#### *Work-Life Balance*

*Question.* The Department has made significant improvements regarding work-life balance, but many aspects, particularly related to moving and living overseas, reflect an outdated reality.

- What steps can the Department take to improve work-life balance for all employees, including those balancing family obligations? What do you intend to focus on to further improve work-life balance, if confirmed?

*Answer.* As our community readies for a return to on-site work, I am committed, if confirmed, to preserving the workplace flexibilities upon which employees have come to depend. This includes supporting the ongoing implementation of the Mobility Assessment Tool (MAT) to assess telework eligibility for domestic positions based on job function, training needed for a more efficient hybrid and remote workforce, and further expanding the Domestic Employee Teleworking Overseas (DETO) program, which enables domestic direct hire Department employees under certain con-

ditions to telework from overseas in order to accompany their spouse to foreign posts of assignment. If confirmed, I will also listen to and assess workforce needs, including through Global Talent Management's (GTM) Innovation Portal.

*Civil Service*

*Question.* As you know, many have commented that a stark divide exists between the foreign service and the civil service, in part due to the opportunities that are available to foreign service officers, but not to those in the civil service.

- What is your assessment of the civil and foreign service divide? If confirmed, what steps will you take to help bridge this gap?

*Answer.* The strength of the Department's workforce is due in large part to the blending of unique but complementary skills and experiences among the various corps. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to strengthen our partnership and bridge any perceived gap. If confirmed, I'm committed to listening to the entire workforce and ensuring we develop and retain high performers. I support expanding professional development opportunities and increasing not only the number of programs, but the number of employees participating.

If confirmed, I will also invest in Civil Service professional development tools and training that chart career progression, prepare employees to take on leadership roles earlier in their careers, and create pathways for those aspiring to the Senior Executive Service.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to develop the State Department workforce capabilities with respect to strategic competition with China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the continued efforts of the Bureau of Global Talent Management, the Foreign Service Institute, and the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs to create stronger incentives for officers to increase their Chinese language skills and regional expertise. Concepts already in progress include a Trans-Pacific Fellowship program in Taipei; revamping language and hardship incentives; and revising the promotion precepts to place additional emphasis on super-hard language skills in promotion reviews. Currently, the Department has 24 additional Chinese Language designated positions worldwide that are not located in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs has several lines of effort with the Bureau of Global Talent Management, the interagency, and the Secretary to grow and develop our pool of China experts to coordinate State's policy, outreach and engagement with partners and allies on China, to implement cutting-edge policies with rapid interagency input, and to advise Department, interagency, and like-minded government partners on effective competition with China.

In 2020, the State Department stood-up a Mandarin Language Task Force to answer the continuing critical need for regional expertise and advanced Chinese language skills. The Task Force has already delivered an Advanced Mandarin Training Program, with students starting in-country, in-depth language training in Summer 2021.

If confirmed, I will also encourage deploying our employees with China expertise to Posts throughout the world to better track China's activities globally.

*Question.* What is your view on the assignments restrictions process? What steps can be done to conduct such a process with greater transparency and clarity?

*Answer.* Though assignment restrictions presently affect a small percentage of the Department's workforce, the Department is reviewing legally available options and broader policy reforms regarding this process. The aim is to better leverage the expertise and capabilities of our entire workforce as well as to increase transparency. Assignment restrictions are based on a number of factors and are intended to mitigate security concerns related to foreign preference and foreign influence, where security clearances for individuals with these circumstances would otherwise be denied, leaving them wholly unable to serve the Department. Individuals who are restricted from serving in one or more countries have capabilities and expertise that contribute to the Department's mission and vision. The Department is determined to leverage the diversity and skills of our workforce in ways that make our policy more robust and transparent, while ensuring our national security information remains protected and security concerns are mitigated.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Diversity*

*Question.* The Director General of the Foreign Service has traditionally played a significant role with respect to State Department diversity and inclusion programs.

- If confirmed, what specific knowledge and experiences from your time at the State Department will you apply to your work in diversity and inclusion?

*Answer.* As a senior leader at the Department of State and two-time Ambassador, I have built and led numerous teams comprised of employees from a wide variety of backgrounds, and worked deliberately to foster inclusive work environments. If confirmed, I will expect everyone in the workforce to promote a culture of inclusion where every voice is heard, respected, and valued.

I previously served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Human Resources, now the Bureau of Global Talent Management, where I worked directly to strengthen accountability mechanisms. If confirmed, I will use this knowledge to work with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and Office of Civil Rights to strengthen these accountability mechanisms, which are a key component of a culture of inclusion.

*Question.* How will you collaborate on these matters with the State Department's Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, who is occupying a newly created position? Please explain the intended contours of your working relationship.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will partner with Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO) Ambassador Abercrombie-Winstanley to ensure that the Department represents the diversity of the American people. As the Secretary has said, diversity and inclusion make us stronger, smarter, more creative, and more innovative. The CDIO and her office are building on the efforts established by the Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM) and GTM will collaborate with the CDIO on the Department's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan which will lay out the framework to implement wide-reaching diversity and inclusion initiatives along with concrete benchmarks and performance metrics.

If confirmed, I will lead GTM in its role to recruit, develop and retain a workforce that represents America in support of the President's directive to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. I will ensure that GTM continues to integrate diversity and inclusion practices strategically into personnel-related policies in alignment with the CDIO's vision and the Secretary's and administration's priorities. This includes fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, workplace flexibilities, and encouraging a culture of inclusion through professional development and advancement for both the Foreign Service and Civil Service, as well as our Locally Employed Staff.

*Professional Education and Training*

*Question.* Many stakeholders, including former State Department officials, have long expressed concern that the State Department values and emphasizes the professional education and training of its personnel to a much lesser degree than not only other U.S. agencies, but also the diplomatic corps of other countries such as China. Some note that this issue partially reflects agency culture and management practices, observing that there are widely-held views in the State Department that education and training programs do not enhance one's career and may damage promotion prospects.

- Please share your views on whether the State Department's agency culture and management practices discourage personnel from pursuing training and professional development opportunities, especially in the Foreign Service. What changes, if any, should the State Department consider with respect to Foreign Service promotion criteria, time-in-class restrictions, or other policies to provide more incentives for personnel to seek out such opportunities?

*Answer.* The Department of State recognizes that our greatest asset is our people. Both Civil Service and Foreign Service employees are encouraged to participate in details and long-term professional development opportunities, many of which are highly sought after and prestigious. Time-in-class extensions are granted for periods of long-term training, including language training, to ensure employees will not be penalized by pursuing opportunities that enhance their skills. Foreign Service Selection Boards are instructed to place an emphasis on continued development of professional expertise and multifunctionality and to consider positively the successful acquisition and/or use of a foreign language. If confirmed, I will continue to explore incentives for Department personnel to pursue training and professional develop-

ment to ensure our workforce has the skills and expertise needed to further U.S. security.

**Professional Education and Training.** Many stakeholders, including former State Department officials, have long expressed concern that the State Department values and emphasizes the professional education and training of its personnel to a much lesser degree than not only other U.S. agencies, but also the diplomatic corps of other countries such as China. Some note that this issue partially reflects agency culture and management practices, observing that there are widely-held views in the State Department that education and training programs do not enhance one's career and may damage promotion prospects.

*Question.* As Director General, what changes would you propose to training and professional development programs for Foreign Service and Civil Service staff?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will fully support expanding professional opportunities for our Civil and Foreign Service workforce by increasing both the number of programs offered and the number of employees participating. The Department is developing new approaches in support of the President's directive to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. This includes incentivizing supervisors to empower employees to take advantage of long-term training opportunities, developmental rotations, domestic and overseas TDY opportunities, and details, as well as filling gaps left behind due to staffing shortages. For example, full-time professional development and training/backfill positions would support bureaus experiencing staffing gaps when Civil Service employees are pursuing career development opportunities.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* For years now, Government Accountability Office reports have pointed out the lack of diversity in the Department of State, and in particular at higher levels of leadership. These recommendations were repeated again in the latest report last year, which Secretary Blinken acknowledged, and yet we have not seen the numbers change.

- If confirmed, what will be your first steps as Director General to truly address diversity at the State Department? Will you commit to ensuring a fair assignments process, and to making data on diversity in the various bureaus and posts widely available?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead GTM in its role to recruit and retain a workforce that represents America in support of the President's directive to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. I will ensure, if confirmed, that GTM continues to integrate diversity and inclusion practices strategically into personnel-related policies in alignment with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer's vision and the Secretary's and administration's priorities. This includes fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, workplace flexibilities, and encouraging a culture of inclusion through professional development and advancement. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring the continuation of a fair assignments process, and to making data on diversity in the various bureaus widely available consistent with applicable law, including PII privacy laws, and the EEOC's regulatory requirements.

*Question.* Is the State Department still deploying Foreign Service Officers to posts where reports of directed energy attacks have taken place? If so, what assurances are you providing to these individuals? If confirmed, how will you prepare our Foreign Service officers accordingly?

*Answer.* The interagency community is actively examining a range of hypotheses but has made no determination about the cause of these incidents or whether they can be attributed to a foreign actor. All Foreign Service employees receive regular updates about anomalous health incidents (AHI) through various means of communication. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF) to strengthen the Department's communication with the workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as the Department continues to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHI. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the workforce. HIRTF is actively working to communicate response protocols to the field, in the form of ALDACs, via Regional Executive Directors to their respective bureaus, and workforce messaging from the desk of the Secretary. Regional Security Officers cover AHIs during their newcomer and regular security



briefings at overseas posts. Further, if confirmed, I will collaborate with HIRTF and the Foreign Service Institute to deploy AHI-related content into the Security Overseas Seminar (SOS). The SOS is mandatory for all direct-hire federal employees posted overseas and highly recommended for Eligible Family Members (EFMs) and Members of Household.

*Question.* Can I get your commitment that, if confirmed, you will ensure that it will be State Department policy for all individuals who desire it to have access to the Walter Reed medical facility?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make it a priority to ensure all our employees have access to the best medical care available. The Department has established relationships with several centers of medical excellence including Walter Reed Medical Center. I will continue to advocate for access to Walter Reed along with other health care centers recommended by the Bureau of Medical Services or preferred by the individual.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. MARCIA STEPHENS BLOOM BERNICAT BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Promoting Diversity*

*Question.* Prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility at the State Department is essential. Ensuring that the Department's personnel is representative of the American people is critical to ensuring the effectiveness of our diplomacy and ensuring that the United States leads by example when championing human rights around the world. To remove barriers low-income students and students of color face to participating in internship opportunities and help foster a more diverse Foreign Service and workforce at the Department of State, I have introduced a bipartisan bill, the Department of State Student Internship Program Act, to ensure that internships at the State Department are remunerated. This is just one of many steps that can be taken to improve diversity.

- What other changes do you think could be made to help increase diversity in the State Department's recruitment?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to continuing conversations with you and others in Congress on the one-semester paid internship program in your bill and the House-passed Department of State Authorization Act of 2021.

The Department's top recruitment priority is enhancing diversity among career candidates, in support of the President's directive to revitalize the foreign policy and national security workforce. If confirmed, I will review proposals to continue the Department's efforts to build a more diverse workforce. The recruitment team created a new Volunteer Recruitment Corps which leverages the Department workforce, particularly members of the Department's employee affinity groups, to augment outreach to prospective applicants. The team added virtual private sector recruitment best practices, including candidate sourcing via national networks and databases.

The Department expanded the Pickering and Rangel Fellowships by 50 percent, starting with the 2021 program year, and recruited record numbers of outstanding, diverse candidates for both. The Department is considering new Fellowships to meet Specialist career track hiring needs and diversity and inclusion initiatives, as we have done for Information Specialists with the Foreign Affairs IT Fellowship (FAIT).

*Question.* My internship bill will help to address recruitment, but retention of employees of color has been another major problem at the State Department. What do you believe are the most important steps the State Department can take to increase retention?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead GTM in its role to recruit, develop and retain a workforce that represents America. I will ensure that GTM continues to integrate diversity and inclusion practices strategically into personnel-related policies in alignment with the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer's vision and the Secretary's and administration's priorities. This includes fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, workplace flexibilities, and encouraging a culture of inclusion through professional development and advancement for both the Foreign Service and Civil Service.

If confirmed, I am committed to listening to the workforce and ensuring we retain high performers by investing in their professional development and strengthening programs that mentor individuals for success, provide actionable feedback on performance, chart career progression, provide more training and interagency and other detail opportunities, and create viable pathways for those in the Civil Service and Foreign Service as they aspire to advance their careers.

*Question.* My internship bill will require additional financial resource. What initiatives can the State Department pursue immediately to increase diversity that do not require additional resources?

*Answer.* Currently 16 regional Diplomats in Residence are based around the country, hosted by universities but responsible for recruitment of professionals and students in a geographic region, not just on campus. Seven are hosted by Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions. The all-virtual environment enabled our Diplomats in Residence and recruiters to attend more virtual career fairs, host online information sessions, intensify activity on social media platforms to include working professionals, and reach far more people across the country in FY 2020 than in the previous years, including a 39 percent increase in participation in diversity-focused events. If confirmed, I will encourage even more digital engagement with diverse, prospective candidates with skills sets that will enhance our national security.

The State Department encourages all employees to recruit diverse talent by using their professional affiliations and networks to amplify Department career opportunities. The new Volunteer Recruiter Corps, launched in January 2021, has opened recruitment activities to more Department employees, leveraging the Department's existing talent and diversity. Half of the initial 500 participants are members of the Department's 17 Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs) and all EAGs are represented in the Volunteer Recruiter Corps. If confirmed, I will consult with the recruitment team on broadening and further engaging the Corps.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees*

*Question.* As the U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) marks its 70th anniversary, global displacement is at an all-time high. Demands for life-saving assistance will only increase as the disaster in Afghanistan, exacerbated by a hasty U.S. withdrawal, continues to unfold, forcing hundreds of thousands of vulnerable Afghan to seek safety and shelter as refugees.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you approach ameliorating conditions for the existing 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees (2.2 million of whom are registered in Iran and Pakistan, which presents extraordinary challenges), in addition to the inevitable exodus of hundreds of thousands more Afghans feeling rule by the Taliban?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage actively with the leadership of the key U.N. humanitarian agencies in Geneva as well as NGOs to ensure coordination and help monitor evolving needs inside and outside Afghanistan. The United States is currently working with these and other partners to review and strengthen humanitarian preparedness and priority interventions in the region in the event of new refugee outflows from Afghanistan, and the Geneva-based agencies will be crucial to this ongoing effort. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. mission in Geneva coordinates closely across the interagency and engages regularly with the Geneva-based humanitarian agencies, including UNHCR, and with key donors and other partners to ensure the U.N. system is appropriately responding to Afghan's evolving needs, inside and outside Afghanistan.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that U.S. assistance for Afghan refugees provided through U.N. agencies, including UNHCR, reaches its intended beneficiaries and does not materially benefit the Taliban?

*Answer.* The United States is the largest single donor of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, and we will continue our life-saving support for vulnerable populations in Afghanistan and in the region. If confirmed, I will support all efforts to ensure humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan directly benefits the people of Afghanistan. U.S. humanitarian assistance is provided on the basis of need through our international and non-governmental partners, and not through the Taliban. U.N. agencies that deliver U.S. humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan follow similar risk mitigation requirements as other implementers of U.S. assistance. These risk mitigation measures include extensive vetting to reduce the risk of the diversion of funds and other resources. Monitoring and strict notification requirements are in place to flag issues that could impact assistance delivery.

If confirmed, I will support the Department's close coordination with international partners to stress the importance of remaining united in our approach to Afghanistan and delivering humanitarian assistance with impartiality, neutrality, and inde-

pendence. If confirmed, I will also support the Department's work with the international community to encourage unhindered humanitarian access, freedom of movement and employment opportunities for aid workers of all genders, and the safety and security of humanitarian staff.

At the same time, humanitarian access in places like Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen remains highly constrained. With humanitarians increasingly under attack, these areas have become the most dangerous places in the world for aid workers. To further complicate matters, some UNHCR-supported camps (most notably in the DRC following the Rwanda genocide in 1994, but also more recently in the displaced persons camps in South Sudan), have served as hotbeds for recruitment by armed actors and other abuses, including extreme violence against women and girls.

*Question.* What more can UNHCR do to facilitate and secure humanitarian access, prevent diversion by malign actors, protect humanitarians and beneficiaries from attack and abuse, and promote accountability?

*Answer.* As the world's largest single donor to global humanitarian response efforts, the United States has a longstanding commitment to ensuring appropriate access and effective delivery of assistance. By working with partner nations and through important international mechanisms, including, *inter alia*, the U.N. Security Council, the United States has always been a leading voice to reinforce the crucial principle of U.N. neutrality and push for all appropriate access.

If confirmed, I will work with UNHCR, other U.N. humanitarian agencies, NGOs, and other member states to identify, highlight, and address factors that hinder humanitarian access and accountability, from risks to humanitarian staff to bureaucratic obstacles imposed by governments that delay or divert assistance, as well as mechanisms, such as biometrics, that could be used to strengthen accountability around assistance. While the United States is the largest single donor to UNHCR, close coordination with other like-minded actors also supports the effective delivery of life-saving assistance to those in need with the safety and security of aid workers at front-of-mind. If confirmed, I will prioritize U.S. leadership on these issues through engagement with diplomatic counterparts, U.N. humanitarian agency leadership, public facing engagements, and through governing and other executive bodies on which the United States sits.

*Question.* Under what circumstances, if any, should assistance to camps for displaced persons be halted?

*Answer.* Considerations for halting assistance to camps is a complex process and must take into account the context of the camps and the conflict. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the U.S. continues to provide support on the basis of need, whether those in question are in camps or are integrated with host communities, and that assistance to refugee camps is delivered according to international standards. If confirmed, I will actively pursue burden-sharing with other donors, national refugee inclusion policies with refugee host countries, and work to advance relief to development coherence where possible.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to impressing upon the U.N.'s Geneva-based humanitarian assistance agencies, and UNHCR in-particular, the importance of establishing and utilizing biometrics and other verification mechanisms that will enable the agencies to track refugees and internally displaced persons throughout the life of their displacement, improve operational planning, eliminate redundancies, and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of donor contributions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these methods are implemented in an effective and transparent manner that improves accountability for donor contributions and contributes to the larger goal of providing quality assistance to beneficiaries. If confirmed, I will also urge reluctant states to conduct joint biometric registrations with UNHCR, where possible, with the aim of building the capacities of host nations to eventually take over the responsibility for registering refugees on their territories. Finally, if confirmed, I will encourage other states to utilize biometric registration and identity management for refugees, particularly those unwilling or unable to do so, while attentive to the risk of such data falling into the hands of those who might misuse it.

*Question.* What concrete steps do you plan to take to reform the U.N. Human Rights Council in order to eliminate Agenda Item 7 and improve council membership?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. When the U.S. has had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate

on Israel's behalf, and have seen changes, such as a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep off some of the countries with the worst human rights records and to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats. More broadly, if confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's efforts to erode respect for human rights in favor of its authoritarian aims and will work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years.

*Question.* What points of leverage will you use to secure reforms at the U.N. Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* I am committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, if confirmed. U.S. engagement at the HRC can be a force for positive change, and we must continue to prioritize needed reforms as part of our re-engagement. If confirmed, I will ensure U.S. leadership on a robust reform agenda. Past experience has shown that when the United States is at the table, working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, we can make progress on addressing the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias. If confirmed, I will also press for U.N. member states to more carefully consider the human rights records of countries running for election to the Council and encourage countries with good records to run. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. expectations around Council reforms are prioritized in our diplomatic engagements in Geneva.

*Question.* What would you define as "success" for U.N. Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* The United States firmly believes that we advance America's national interests best when we have a seat at the table in the multilateral system, including the Human Rights Council (HRC). Through robust U.S. advocacy since our return to the Council as observers in February, we have pushed to ensure the Council has shined a powerful light on Beijing's human rights abuses in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Hong Kong; pressured regimes around the world, such as Belarus, Burma, Eritrea, Syria, and Venezuela, by sharpening investigative mechanisms into their human rights violations and abuses; and worked to advance equality for all, protecting women's human rights, advancing the human rights of LGBTQI+ individuals, and assuming a leadership role on racial justice.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure the Council focuses on its core mission—to shine a light on the world's worst human rights abusers—and on the need to protect civilians. I will also work closely with other member states to improve the Council's record through a considered reform effort and to address the Council's credibility gap due to its anti-Israel bias and its poor membership.

*Question.* If the Council does not eliminate Agenda Item 7, will the United States continue to run for election at the UNHRC?

*Answer.* Yes. U.S. membership on the Council puts us in a much stronger position from which to continue to push against anti-Israel actions at the HRC and pursue our broader human rights agenda, including ensuring the HRC addresses other serious human rights situations around the world. If confirmed, I will prioritize continued efforts to eliminate Agenda Item 7 as well as other needed reforms of the HRC.

*Question.* In May, the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) created a new commission of inquiry to investigate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The new commission's mandate is much broader in scope chronologically, geographically, and substantively than the mandates of its predecessors.

The Biden administration has chosen to reengage with the UNHRC, with Secretary Blinken asserting that despite the Council's flawed record on Israel "the best way to improve the Council is to engage with it and its members in a principled fashion." Blinken committed that the U.S. would be at the Council "table using the full weight of our diplomatic leadership" and said we "strongly believe that when the United States engages constructively with the Council, in concert with our allies and friends, positive change is within reach." Yet the mandate and membership of the new UNHRC commission of inquiry represents a change for the worse rather than the better.

*Answer.* The United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the conflict in Gaza in May, 2021. The session ex-

emphasizes the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with other U.N. member states. If confirmed, I will also engage regularly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to the Commission. The United States does not intend to cooperate with the Commission.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you use the full weight of our diplomatic leadership to stop the UNHRC from attacking Israel?

*Answer.* Yes. I am committed to working with Israel and our other allies and partners to reduce and eventually eliminate the HRC's attacks on Israel. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States uses the full weight of our diplomatic leadership, in Geneva and in our bilateral and multilateral missions around the world, to address the Human Rights Council's longstanding anti-Israel bias.

*Question.* How specifically would you plan to defend Israel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. If confirmed, I will work to reduce the number of Israel-related resolutions at the Council, make clear U.S. opposition to all anti-Israel mandates and aim to reduce the impact of such mandates, and bolster the number of countries aligned with U.S. views on the need to permanently tackle the Council's bias against Israel. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States uses its voice and position in Geneva to push back on efforts to unfairly single out Israel, works to counteract existing mechanisms that are biased against Israel, and consistently makes clear U.S. opposition to anti-Israel efforts.

*Question.* Will you ensure that no U.S. taxpayer dollars are used to fund this UNHRC commission of inquiry?

*Answer.* The Commission of Inquiry, like all other HRC mandates, is funded by the U.N. regular budget. As such, there is no means to ensure that no funding for this mandate comes from the United States regular contributions to the U.N. budget. However, if confirmed, I will ensure that the United States uses its voice strongly at all opportunities to register our opposition to this commission.

*Question.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) Government is actively trying to reshape international institutions to advance its malign economic and governance model, including the United Nations. If confirmed, how will you work with our democratic allies and partners to build resiliency to attempts by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to undermine the integrity of multilateral institutions and longstanding, widely held democratic values, including with regard to the important work of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organization, and the World Intellectual Property Organization?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the Department to strengthen our alliances and partnerships as well as improve outreach to other countries based on shared multilateral priorities, both in Geneva and through bilateral channels. The United States has had success coordinating with allies and partners to advance an affirmative vision that supports and defends the rules-based international order and deters the PRC's attempts to undermine core U.N. principles. As part of this effort, if confirmed, I will ensure we make clear through our diplomatic engagements that the PRC's actions to bully and coerce undermine the U.N.'s foundational principle of sovereign equality. If confirmed, I will also prioritize working with allies and partners to support qualified and independent candidates for senior leadership positions at the Geneva-based organizations and counter the PRC's attempts to set the agenda in standard-setting bodies and to include ideological language in U.N. documents. This will enable us to better defend and improve the work of U.N. institutions in Geneva, including the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organization, and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

*Question.* Do you commit to monitoring such attempts and taking appropriate actions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, this will be one of my top priorities. The United States is best able to address these issues when we are actively engaged and leading at the U.N. and its specialized agencies and related organizations. If confirmed, I will use our re-engagement with the U.N. system to reassert U.S. leadership and work with our allies and partners to defend the foundational values of the U.N. and international rules, standards, and norms. If confirmed, I will seek to improve the U.N.'s effectiveness, transparency, and impartiality; take targeted actions to oppose harmful PRC efforts, such as its use of the U.N. and international organizations to promote the Belt and Road Initiative or incorporate its ideology into U.N. documents. If confirmed I will also support qualified and independent candidates for key positions and ensure that we advance our priorities on issues ranging from human rights to emerging technologies, including in standard-setting organizations.

*Question.* China has focused intensely on securing leadership roles in various U.N. agencies, particularly those overseeing technical standards that will shape the future. In many cases, these leaders have overtly advanced CCP goals, instead of acting independently to advance the global good. It is clear the United States has had mixed success with elections for heads of International Organizations in the past and is taking more robust and coordinated steps to advocate for qualified and independent candidates in U.N. bodies. If confirmed, will you prioritize robust strategies to secure the election qualified and independent candidates to lead the highly specialized U.N. agencies based in Geneva?

Answer. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be the election and appointment of qualified, independent candidates to leadership positions in the U.N. system. Such personnel are critical to ensuring the U.N. operates effectively and in line with its foundational principles and values. They also bring strong technical and policy skills that enhance the performance and outcomes within the U.N. system, which, in turn, bolster U.S. efforts on U.N. reform and good governance. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs has established a new office focused in part on managing, supporting, and coordinating elections and appointments for qualified U.S. and like-minded candidates for leadership roles in the U.N. system. That office works closely with our multilateral missions, including Geneva, to ensure the United States identifies and advocates on behalf of interested candidates for key positions across U.N. organizations and agencies. If confirmed, I will prioritize engaging with top U.N. leadership and our partners and allies to advocate for the placement of qualified applicants and candidates, including U.S. citizens, at the U.N. and in specialized and technical agencies.

*Question.* How do you propose to counter China's malign influence at the WHO? Please be specific.

Answer. The United States is best able to respond to this challenge when we are engaged and leading at organizations, including the WHO. If confirmed, I will use our re-engagement with the WHO to reassert U.S. leadership and work with allies and partners to push back against the PRC's attempts to reshape international institutions, rules, standards, and values.

The United States is taking a leadership role in discussions on strengthening and reforming the WHO as an opportunity to push forward critical reforms that will, *inter alia*, focus on better pandemic preparedness and response, efficiency and effectiveness, transparency, and accountability. This includes working to improve WHO transparency and accountability through more effective implementation of the International Health Regulations and insulating the WHO Director-General from political influence and pressure. If confirmed, I will prioritize U.S. leadership on these and other reforms to improve WHO's performance and accountability and bolster global health security. U.S. leadership on these issues at the WHO is critical both to ensuring progress on strengthening global health security and rebuilding WHO credibility but also to pushing back on the PRC's efforts to undermine the organization's accountability, transparency, and governance. If confirmed, I will also ensure close engagement with like-minded partners and WHO leadership to push for Taiwan's meaningful participation at the WHO, including participation at the World Health Assembly.

*Question.* How will you ensure that COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the WHO-supported Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, does not become a vehicle for subsidizing and distributing substandard Chinese vaccines?

Answer. Gavi will not use funds from the generous U.S. contribution supporting COVAX to purchase vaccines produced by Chinese companies. U.S. funds have either already been spent down to purchase vaccines made by non-Chinese manufacturers or are being used to support the purchase of Pfizer vaccines or vaccine readiness efforts in recipient countries. Given the immense need for vaccines around the

world to help control and end the COVID–19 pandemic, the U.S. Government is supportive of COVAX’s efforts to rapidly roll-out vaccines authorized by the World Health Organization (WHO) as safe and effective. We understand that a condition for distribution via COVAX is a WHO authorization via an emergency use listing (EUL). If confirmed, I will ensure close engagement with Gavi to understand its current and future plans for vaccine roll-out and work with the organization as it tries to identify additional sources of vaccine to address its supply challenges, with more vaccines made by non-Chinese companies expected to come online in the coming months.

*Question.* What are the top five reforms that you believe the United States should pursue at the WHO?

Answer. The World Health Organization is in need of reform and, if confirmed, I will support U.S. efforts to make the WHO stronger, more independent, and fit for purpose. The United States is using its leadership role on WHO strengthening and reform efforts to focus on improving WHO’s ability to prevent, detect, and respond to future pandemics by:

- Improving surveillance and alert systems, including through partnerships with Member States and nonstate actors;
- Increasing transparency and the ability of the WHO and Member States to quickly and effectively respond to outbreaks, especially through strengthened implementation of and compliance with the International Health Regulations; and
- Increasing the WHO’s cost effectiveness and sustainability.

The May 2021 World Health Assembly (WHA) established a Member State Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness for and Response to Health Emergencies (WGPR) to propose actions for WHO reform based on the recommendations by three independent review panels and Member States for consideration at the next World Health Assembly. If confirmed, I am committed to energetically supporting these efforts, ensuring strong U.S. leadership to push for a set of practical and meaningful reforms that will address performance, management, and accountability issues at the organization.

*Question.* Do you believe the WHO should lead emergency health operations, or would it be better placed to focus on the technical and normative aspects of its mission?

Answer. The WHO engages in vital emergency health work around the world, including, for example, the work it is doing to provide critical healthcare assistance, including to combat the polio epidemic in Afghanistan. But the COVID–19 pandemic revealed troubling gaps in global public health investments, capacities, and norms. The United States reengaged in the World Health Organization in January in order to advance critically needed reforms, reassert our role as a leader in global health security, and help the world combat the COVID–19 pandemic. The United States took an active role in working with G7 and other partners to lay the groundwork to strengthen WHO’s global health emergency preparedness and response. If confirmed, I will support a more transparent, effective, and agile WHO that will be better placed to detect, report, and respond to emerging health emergencies.

*Question.* In preparing for the next World Health Assembly, do you agree that diplomatic engagement, including with regard to negotiating governance reforms at the WHO, would be best left to competent diplomats reporting to the Secretary of State while the technical aspects of the International Health Regulations are left to the Department of Health and Human Services? Do you see a difference?

Answer. The Department of State continues to advance WHO reforms in close collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). We take a whole-of-government approach that leverages all agencies’ competencies. For example, the U.S. delegation to the WHO Working Group on WHO Strengthening for Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies includes key representatives with subject matter expertise and multilateral skills from State, HHS, USAID, and the National Security Council. The strong cooperation between State, HHS, and other relevant agencies will ensure that the United States achieves the best possible results from the WHO reform process. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. brings to bear the full weight of its diplomatic and technical leadership to drive WHO reform efforts and the ongoing work and oversight of the organization.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work to ensure that Taiwan is granted full observer status at the WHO and the World Health Assembly, regardless of Chinese obstructionism?

Answer. It is deeply unfortunate that Taiwan's expertise and experience on COVID-19 were missing from the 2021 World Health Assembly and for the previous several years. The United States has continued to express its concern to the World Health Organization leadership, and if confirmed, I will continue U.S. efforts to build support for Taiwan's participation at the World Health Assembly through diplomatic engagement with WHO member states, WHO leadership, and media and other outreach to raise public awareness.

If confirmed, I will continue U.S. policy to work closely with like-minded partners to counter the PRC's efforts to restrict Taiwan's meaningful participation at the WHO, World Health Assembly, and other U.N. bodies, as well as its efforts to shrink space for civil society's meaningful participation in U.N. fora.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* As we know, women's access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care like modern contraceptives, plays a significant role in their empowerment. It also dramatically reduces maternal and newborn deaths. Yet the previous administration undertook a campaign against inclusive policies and language that has undermined U.S. credibility on gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Can you speak to how you will work within the U.N. system in Geneva to promote access to health care for women?

Answer. The United States is best able to promote access to health care for women when we are engaged and leading in international organizations. If confirmed, I will contribute to the administration's re-engagement across the multilateral system by working with partners and allies to improve global health capabilities and equitable access to health care for women and girls. The administration has prioritized the promotion of women's global health and equity, and that action is evident in U.S. efforts to increase access to comprehensive health care for women and girls; to restore appropriate references to gender in U.N. documents; to address health disparities; to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights; to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV); and to address the gender-specific health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If confirmed, I will advance these priorities across the U.N. organizations in Geneva, including through raising these priorities with leadership of key U.N. humanitarian organizations, working with likeminded partners, and ensuring the United States uses its voice in governing and executive boards to ensure continued progress and to make clear the strong U.S. support for women's health and gender equity.

*Question.* Will you commit to ensuring that the United States talks about gender—both by once again using the word and promoting the idea—in our engagement with the United Nations?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will promote gender equity and equality and women's empowerment across the full spectrum of Geneva-based agencies and in all the work they conduct. This will include promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTQI+ persons and the return of U.S. use of and support for the term "gender" in our statements at the U.N. and in negotiated U.N. documents.

If confirmed, I will also restore the U.S. voice in support of women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights, including access to voluntary family planning, as a key element of the Biden-Harris administration's broader commitment to promoting women's health and advancing gender equity and equality in the United States and around the world.

*Question.* Women's access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care like modern contraceptives, plays a significant role in their ability to advance their education, participate in the economy and support their families and communities.

- Can you speak to how you will work in this post to promote access to comprehensive health care across U.N. offices in Geneva?

Answer. The best way to promote equitable health care access, including for women, is for the United States to demonstrate leadership on these issues on the global stage, including within international organizations such as the U.N. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's determined reengagement and leadership by working across the U.N. agencies in Geneva and with likeminded



partners to identify and pursue all appropriate means of promoting equitable and comprehensive access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care.

This means not only strengthening actions through bodies such as the World Health Organization, but also ensuring that women's and girls' health remains a central objective for organizations such as the U.N. Refugee Agency, U.N. Women, UNICEF, the U.N. Population Fund, and others charged with supporting human health and wellbeing. If confirmed, I look forward to invigorating U.S. diplomatic engagement in Geneva to focus on these crucial needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you approach restoring relationships with U.S. allies and U.S. leadership within the U.N. system?

Answer.

The Biden-Harris administration has charted a course to mend and, where needed, modernize America's alliances. If confirmed, I will support those efforts by strengthening U.S. leadership at the Geneva-based international organizations, rebuilding partnerships, advocating for qualified and independent U.S. and likeminded candidates for U.N. positions, and pushing for necessary reforms. I firmly support the administration's belief that the United States is most influential when it is at the table, working in partnership with allies, and when it is engaged across the multilateral system from a position of strength and leadership.

That is the intent in seeking election to the U.N. Human Rights Council, and in returning with renewed vigor to dozens of other multilateral bodies. If confirmed, I will prioritize reestablishing strong relationships with likeminded partners and allies to advance common priorities and forming relationships with non-traditional partners that can be critical to U.S. efforts to ensure the U.N. system remains grounded on its foundational principles and aims and is not co-opted by those who seek to undermine the rules-based international order.

*Question.* In your opinion, has the lack of U.S. leadership at the U.N. allowed for countries that seek to overturn democratic norms to push their agendas within the U.N. system? Where should we be most concerned about this, and what are the first steps to undoing these efforts?

Answer. The United States is best able to address efforts to undermine and weaken the U.N. system when we are engaged and leading at the U.N. and its specialized agencies and related organizations. If confirmed, I will use our re-engagement with the U.N. system to reassert U.S. leadership and work with our partners and allies to push back against attempts to reshape the U.N. and international rules, standards, and values. We are seeing these attempts play out in different ways across the U.N. system, including in the human rights space, in specialized and technical organizations, and in standard-setting bodies.

If confirmed, I will seek to improve the U.N.'s effectiveness, transparency, and impartiality; take targeted actions to oppose efforts by some countries to use the U.N. and international organizations to promote signature foreign policy platforms or insert national ideology and policy into U.N. documents; support qualified and independent candidates for key positions; and ensure that we advance our priorities on issues ranging from global health security to humanitarian assistance and human rights to emerging technologies, including in standard-setting bodies.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* The U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has a long history of anti-Israel bias. The Council has repeatedly chastised Israel and held it to a double standard, while ignoring gross human rights abuses around the world. To this day, Israel is the only country subject to a permanent spot on the Council's agenda.

- If confirmed, how will you counter anti-Israel bias at the U.N. Human Rights Council and other U.N. agencies?

Answer. The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC), particularly with respect to the HRC's disproportionate focus on Israel and the HRC's problematic membership. When we have had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and we have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the HRC's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. If confirmed, I will ensure that

the United States uses its voice and position in Geneva to push back on efforts to unfairly single out Israel, works to counteract existing mechanisms that are biased against Israel, and consistently makes clear U.S. opposition to anti-Israel efforts.

*Question.* Following the launching of thousands of rockets toward Israel from Gaza this May, the Human Rights Council took the ridiculous step to establishing a permanent commission of inquiry to investigate Israel. What are your thoughts on the commission? Should the U.S. cooperate with commission?

*Answer.* The United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC) following the conflict in Gaza in May 2021. The session exemplifies the HRC's disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will work to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with other U.N. member states. The United States does not intend to cooperate with the Commission.

*Question.* The Biden administration has chosen to reengage with the UNHRC in the hopes of improving the council's record. Yet this mandate and membership of the new UNHRC commission of inquiry represents a change for the worse rather than the better.

- If confirmed, will you use the full weight of American diplomatic leadership to stop the UNHRC from engaging in anti-Israel bias?

*Answer.* I am committed to working with Israel and our other allies and partners to reduce and eventually eliminate attacks on Israel by the Human Rights Council. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States uses the full weight of our diplomatic leadership, in Geneva and in our bilateral and multilateral missions around the world, to address the HRC's longstanding anti-Israel bias.

*Question.* The Chinese Communist Party has sought to use U.N. bodies—including the UNHRC—to aggressively promote a new definition of human rights. For instance, in 2017 and 2018, the CCP was able to offer resolutions that called for “people-centered development,” building a “community of common human destiny,” and “mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of human rights.” These resolutions—which passed—downplay an individual's inherent human dignity and gives authoritarians around the world tacit acceptance for abuse.

- If confirmed, how will you combat the CCP's sophisticated efforts to revise international human rights norms at the U.N.?

*Answer.* The United States will continue to be vigilant and work with others to ensure we have the broadest possible defense of the multilateral system's values and norms and are best placed to counter the PRC's efforts to erode global human rights norms and pursue its authoritarian aims. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the Department to strengthen current alliances and partnerships as well as improve outreach to other countries based on shared human rights priorities, both in Geneva and through bilateral channels. As part of this effort, the U.S. will also make clear that the PRC's actions to bully and coerce undermine the U.N.'s foundational principle of sovereign equality. If confirmed, pushing back on the PRC's efforts to reshape global human rights norms at the U.N. will be one of my top priorities, and I will use the full weight of U.S. diplomatic leadership toward these efforts.

*Question.* One of the many consequences of the Biden administration's disastrous Afghanistan decision is that the Taliban is now in a position to appoint a new envoy for Afghanistan at the U.N. If appointed, this envoy will assume Afghanistan's membership on the Commission for the Status of Women. This is ludicrous considering the Taliban has been and still is, one of the worst oppressors of women's rights.

- If confirmed, how will you encourage the U.N. to invoke Rule 29 to ensure a Taliban appointee does not become Afghanistan's envoy to the U.N.?

*Answer.* The United States has consistently emphasized the importance of any future government in Afghanistan to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Afghans. This includes the rights of women, children, and minority groups. The United States is closely watching the Taliban's actions across the country in this regard, and we will judge them by their actions, including with respect to their representational efforts at the U.N.

As Secretary Blinken has said, the Taliban want international legitimacy. It is vital that the international community work in unison to send a clear message that

legitimacy is earned through concrete actions. If confirmed, I will work to reinforce these efforts across the Geneva-based organizations, including ensuring appropriate focus of the U.N. Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you use your position to ensure that U.N. humanitarian assistance does not benefit the Taliban?

*Answer.* The United States is the largest single donor of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, and we will continue our life-saving support for vulnerable populations in Afghanistan and in the region. If confirmed, I will support all efforts to ensure humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan directly benefits the people of Afghanistan. U.S. humanitarian assistance is provided on the basis of need through our international and non-governmental partners, and not through the Taliban. U.N. agencies that deliver U.S. humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan follow similar risk mitigation requirements as other implementers of U.S. assistance. These risk mitigation measures include extensive vetting to reduce the risk of the diversion of funds and other resources. Monitoring and strict notification requirements are in place to flag issues that could impact assistance delivery.

If confirmed, I will support the Department's close coordination with international partners to stress the importance of remaining united in our approach to Afghanistan and delivering humanitarian assistance with impartiality, neutrality, and independence. If confirmed, I will also support the Department's work with the international community to encourage unhindered humanitarian access, freedom of movement for aid workers of all genders, and the safety and security of humanitarian staff. If confirmed, I will engage regularly with U.N. humanitarian leadership in Geneva in support of these efforts, as well as with other donor countries.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

*Re-establishing U.S. Leadership in U.N. Bodies*

*Question.* China has secured leadership roles in a number of U.N. bodies over the last few years, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (elected in 2019), International Telecommunication Union (re-elected in 2018), International Civil Aviation Organization (re-appointed in 2019 and leaving office in August 2021), and U.N. Industrial Development Organization (re-appointed in 2017), at the time when the prior administration withdrew the United States from a number of U.N. bodies, dealing a double blow to our influence with the U.N. system. The Biden administration has taken steps to rejoin a number of bodies.

- What further steps does the administration plan on taking to re-establish U.S. leadership with the U.N. system and to ensure that either the United States or our allies regain leadership roles in important U.N. bodies?

*Answer.* The election and appointment of qualified and independent candidates to positions in the U.N. system are critical to ensuring that the U.N. operates effectively and in line with its foundational principles and values. Qualified U.S. citizens and nationals from like-minded countries bring strong technical, policy, and management skills that enhance the performance and outcomes within the U.N. system, which, in turn, bolster our efforts on U.N. reform and good governance.

The Bureau of International Organization Affairs has established a new office focused in part on managing, supporting, and coordinating elections and appointments for qualified U.S. and like-minded candidates for leadership roles in the U.N. system. That office works closely with posts such as Geneva to ensure the United States is well-positioned to identify and advocate on behalf of interested candidates for key positions across multiple U.N. organizations and agencies. If confirmed, I will prioritize engaging with senior U.N. leadership as well as our allies and partners to advocate for placement and election of qualified and independent applicants and candidates, including U.S. citizens, at the U.N. and in its specialized and technical agencies. If confirmed, I will also prioritize working closely across the inter-agency, with U.S. bilateral and multilateral missions, and with Congress to ensure that we dedicate robust diplomatic efforts to leadership election and appointment campaigns.

*Question.* What can the State Department do to counter China's growing influence within the U.N. system?

*Answer.* The United States is best able to respond to this challenge when we are engaged and leading at the U.N. and its specialized agencies and related organiza-

tions. If confirmed, I will use our re-engagement with the U.N. system to reassert U.S. leadership and work with our allies and partners to push back against the PRC's attempts to reshape international institutions, rules, standards, and values. I will seek to improve the U.N.'s effectiveness, transparency, and impartiality; support qualified and independent candidates for key positions; ensure that we advance our priorities on issues ranging from human rights to emerging technologies, including in standard-setting bodies; and take targeted actions to oppose harmful PRC efforts, such as its use of the U.N. and international organizations to promote the Belt and Road Initiative or its incorporation of PRC ideology and policy into U.N. documents. If confirmed, I will also work closely with like-minded partners to counter the PRC's efforts to restrict Taiwan's meaningful participation in U.N. bodies and its efforts to shrink space for civil society's meaningful participation in U.N. fora.

*Question.* The African bloc within the U.N. is a large bloc of countries that tends to vote together and can be decisive with respect to votes at the United Nations. China has done a lot economically and diplomatically to successfully court this bloc, for example convincing almost all African countries to abandon Taiwan in favor of China.

- What can the State Department do to work with this bloc to better explain U.S. positions and have it vote with the United States at the U.N.?

*Answer.* The United States shares many priorities with countries in Africa, yet too often in multilateral fora our votes do not align. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the Department to improve outreach and partnerships with African and other G-77 countries on our shared multilateral priorities, both in Geneva and through our bilateral channels. As part of this effort, we will also make clear that the PRC's actions to coerce and bully countries to support its positions at the U.N. undermine the U.N.'s foundational principle of sovereign equality and work with those countries to defend our shared interests at the U.N.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific reforms will you push for at the Human Rights Council? How will you fight anti-Israel bias at the U.N. Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and the Council's problematic membership. When we have had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and we have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

We have also seen that when the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep off some of the countries with the worst human rights records and to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats. More broadly, if confirmed, I would work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's efforts to erode global human rights norms in favor of its authoritarian aims and will work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States prioritizes these specific reforms.

*Question.* Following the launching of thousands of rockets at Israel from Gaza this May, the Human Rights Council took the step of establishing a permanent commission of inquiry to investigate Israel, the only such permanent agenda item of the council. What are your thoughts on the commission? Should the U.S. cooperate with commission?

*Answer.* The United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the conflict in Gaza in May, 2021. The session exemplifies the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel

is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with other U.N. member states. The United States does not intend to cooperate with the Commission, and if confirmed, I will make clear U.S. opposition to the Commission through regular engagements with the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and diplomatic counterparts.

*Question.* As you know, China continues to seek leadership posts and influence inside key standards-making bodies like the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), World Intellectual Property Organization, and International Organization for Standardization. What do you believe is required to effectively push back on Chinese efforts to codify CCP-friendly international standards?

*Answer.* The United States has consistently participated in the activities of key standard-setting bodies to ensure U.S. interests are represented, while standing as a bulwark against PRC interests. This is achieved by ensuring that organizations are transparent and accountable to membership, focused on mandates and core competencies, and led by independent, qualified candidates.

Strong leadership and engagement in international technology standards development activities are essential to the national security and economic security of the United States. If confirmed, I will prioritize electing qualified and independent candidates to lead important standard-setting bodies, including the election of American citizen Doreen Bogdan-Martin as Secretary-General of the ITU, and robust strategies to work with our allies and partners to strengthen the international standards development process in alignment with our shared values and principles. I will also work to ensure the U.S. private sector can appropriately engage in standard-setting processes and will strengthen relationships with leadership of the Geneva-based standard-setting bodies so that the U.S. can most effectively advance our interests.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
HON. BATHSHEBA NELL CROCKER BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has been subject to bipartisan criticism for endemic anti-Israel bias. It has in recent years taken a leading role in promoting economic measures against Israeli Jews and in territories where Israeli Jews live. The Human Rights Council has published a blacklist of companies doing business in the West Bank and East Jerusalem—including American companies. The move puts these companies at severe reputational and potentially even legal risks, pursuant to American statutes prohibiting participation in such boycott efforts.

- What specific steps do you intend to take to ensure that the Council retracts databases and other lists seeking to pressure companies into curtailing activities with Israel?

*Answer.* The United States opposed the creation of the database and release of the report, as mandated by the Human Rights Council in 2016, and continues to oppose any work to update it. The United States has not provided and has no intention to provide any information to OHCHR for the database. If confirmed, I will also encourage other countries not to provide any information for the database. The United States continues to engage with the High Commissioner in Geneva to make its views and opposition clear and to push for retraction of the database. If confirmed, I will continue this effort.

*Question.* How long do you assess it will take you to ensure that the Council retracts all such databases and other lists?

*Answer.* I cannot offer a specific timeline. However, I can assure you that, if I am confirmed, the United States, and I personally, will continue to engage regularly with the High Commissioner in Geneva to urge the retraction of this database and push to ensure that the database is not further updated.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*Question.* What are your views on the future of the Minsk Group and how we can promote a better future in the region amid increased Azeri and Turkish aggression?

**Answer.** The United States takes its role as one of the three OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs—with France and Russia—very seriously. If confirmed, I will support the mandate of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs to help Armenia and Azerbaijan negotiate a peaceful, comprehensive settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and will support efforts invigorate the Minsk Group Co-Chair process to find a lasting solution that brings peace and stability to the South Caucasus region. If confirmed, I will also look for opportunities for broader OSCE engagement in the South Caucasus region to promote peace, security, and stability.

**Question.** So how will you use the OSCE platform to draw attention to human rights abuses and the erosion of the rule of law in Turkey?

**Answer.** I share your concerns about democratic backsliding and the erosion of the rule of law in Turkey. If confirmed, I will speak frankly about democracy and human rights concerns with my Turkish counterparts. I will also raise these concerns in statements at the Permanent Council and other OSCE venues to ensure that all participating States are held accountable for their OSCE commitments.

**Question.** What would you do as ambassador to make sure that Turkey is unable to derail the OSCE's work on these important issues?

**Answer.** All participating States, including Turkey, freely adopted OSCE commitments on respect for human rights, the rule of law, and democracy. If confirmed, I will use OSCE platforms to hold Turkey and other states accountable for their failures to uphold these commitments. I share your concern that countries could seek to evade criticism of their records by obstructionist tactics, as is currently the case with Russia's blocking of procedural decisions regarding the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. If confirmed, I will continue to take the firm U.S. position that such tactics are unacceptable and work with allies and partners to uphold the principle that the human rights record of all participating States is subject to review.

**Question.** Given the Kremlin intransigence, what steps will you take within the OSCE to ensure that the Kremlin is held accountable for abuses against its own people?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will continue spotlighting Russia's failures to uphold its freely made commitments on human rights, rule of law, and democracy. I will amplify the voices of embattled civil society activists, human rights defenders, and independent journalists. I will raise the cases of political prisoners and call out abuses. I agree the Kremlin has obstructed the work of the OSCE inside Russia for many years, including in the runup to this year's parliamentary elections. After obstructing independent media coverage and genuine opposition participation, and after imposing unjustified restrictions on OSCE observation, the OSCE rightly decided not to observe this year's elections. However, that does not mean Russia will evade the spotlight or international accountability. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Mission to the OSCE's efforts to call out the Kremlin's failures to abide by its OSCE commitments.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Nontransparent Behavior with Respect to Its War Games*

**Question.** Russia's history and continued practice of under-reporting, mischaracterizing, or permanently repositioning forces under the rubric of exercises is dangerously destabilizing. Many of the confidence- and security-building measures contained in the OSCE's Vienna Document are designed to provide transparency regarding military activities, including military exercises in the field. If it chose to, Russia could demonstrate its commitment to international stability by ensuring it is transparent before, during, and after military exercises. This would give other OSCE participating States greater confidence that Russia will refrain from an unlawful threat or use of force. Unfortunately, Russia does not consistently fulfill the transparency measures it committed to in the Vienna Document. If confirmed, I will continue to call upon Russia to meet its international obligations and its commitments under the Vienna Document and will use the OSCE platform to call out its destabilizing military activities while keeping our allies and partners united.

- Is the Vienna document still relevant given how frequently Russia violates its spirit and intent? What reforms are most pressing to maintain OSCE as a relevant institution?

Answer. The Vienna Document remains a pillar of military transparency and confidence-building in Europe and Eurasia. If confirmed, I will work to build support for Vienna Document modernization so its provisions are better adapted to new military realities, including by working with allies and partners to push Russia to participate constructively in results-oriented negotiations. Russia's repeated failures over the years to fulfill certain of its Vienna Document commitments in good faith undermines other states' confidence in Russia's commitment to international stability. However, the United States and our allies are better off with these commitments in place, in part so we can hold Russia to account.

The OSCE's comprehensive security concept linking respect for human rights within states to cooperation and peace among states helps the United States advance its interests within the organization, and this concept remains highly relevant today. Useful reforms would include those mandating a timely adoption of the Unified Budget and steps to facilitate OSCE's core functions, including holding all three implementation/review meetings annually. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on the question of reforms and will steadfastly defend the continued independence of OSCE institutions and field missions, which do invaluable work to advance our interests.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you engage with OSCE to counter the growing belligerence of Russia and its encroachment into Belarus?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by Russia's malign activities in Belarus, including its insertion of Russian propagandists into Belarusian state-controlled media outlets to replace Belarusian journalists and Belarusian technical personnel, who were either fired due to their participation in the pro-democracy movement or quit in peaceful protest. Other Russian "advisors" have also been deployed to Belarus to assist the regime with consolidating power.

The United States, together with 16 other participating States, invoked the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism in September 2020 to investigate human rights abuses in Belarus. The Moscow Mechanism is a unique OSCE tool that allows for an investigation to be launched without consensus and independently of the OSCE Chairmanship. The resulting OSCE Rapporteur's report on Belarus thoroughly documented ongoing human rights abuses and made specific recommendations, such as calling for an end to torture, the release of all political prisoners, the launch of an inclusive national dialogue, and new, free and fair elections. If confirmed, I will use all applicable OSCE platforms and tools to support the human rights and democratic aspirations of the Belarusian people and the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Belarus.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Human Rights*

*Question.* Over the past year, the world has suffered the crippling impact of COVID-19, which has disproportionately affected our most vulnerable citizens and allowed some governments to exploit the pandemic to limit fundamental freedoms. Corruption threatens peace, prosperity, and human rights across the region, and the Kremlin remains intransigent in its overt violence against its neighbors as well as its covert attempts to undermine democratic institutions elsewhere.

- As Ambassador, what would be your top priorities for the U.S. Mission to the OSCE?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize respect for democracy and human rights and continue efforts to push back on Russian and PRC malign influence across the OSCE region, particularly Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and redouble U.S. engagement to resolve protracted conflicts in Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Nagorno-Karabakh. I will focus on addressing conventional military concerns and updating the Vienna Document, as well as addressing "hybrid" threats such as election interference, energy coercion, disinformation, cyber operations, and transnational repression. I will prioritize establishing stronger anti-corruption measures, and work with allies and partners to strengthen the resilience of frontline democracies. Finally, I will use OSCE platforms and institutional tools to defend human rights and human dignity, promote democratic reforms, and push back against growing restrictions on civil society, media and internet freedom, judicial independence, and the rising tide of intolerance.

*Question.* How can the OSCE contribute to its mission of promoting human rights and democracy in Belarus and countries undergoing similar situations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available OSCE platforms and tools to shine a light on the appalling human rights situation in Belarus while affirming our support for democratic norms and institutions. While it is up to the people of Belarus to decide their political future, the OSCE must continue to hold the authorities in Belarus accountable for their actions. The successful invocation of the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism by the United States and 16 other countries in 2020 resulted in the issuance of a report documenting ongoing human rights abuses and offering policy recommendations, such as calling for an end to torture, the release of all political prisoners, the launch of an inclusive national dialogue, and new, free and fair elections. If confirmed, I will continue calling Belarus and other participating States to account when they violate their human rights obligations or disregard the OSCE commitments they freely pledged to uphold. Additionally, I will continue support for the OSCE's independent institutions, which conduct invaluable human rights programming, spotlight repressions against journalists and human rights defenders, and provide support to vulnerable populations.

*Rise in Violence:*

*Question.* Since 2015, I have served as the Special Representative on Anti-Semitism, Racism, and Intolerance for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. We've seen, in recent months, current events trigger latent bias in our communities. We go back to 9/11 where we saw the rise of hate against the Muslim community, which was translated into violence against Muslim Americans. We saw during COVID-19 latent bias against the Asian American community. Once again, as a result of recent violence in the Middle East, we see a rise of anti-Semitism here in the United States and around the world.

- The center's Early Warning Project provides an innovative risk assessment tool using methods to spotlight countries where mass atrocities have not begun, but where the risk of such violence is high. The warning signs are there. As Ambassador, how are you planning on addressing this issue with many OSCE participating states?

*Answer.* I share your alarm at the rise of anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred, xenophobia, and other forms of intolerance in the OSCE region that, if left unchecked, can lead to mass atrocities. Whole-of-government approaches, such as efforts to implement the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act and the Global Fragility Act, provide the Department, in collaboration with other agencies, opportunities to innovate, leverage and utilize valuable tools for early warning and early action regarding mass atrocities. Various nongovernmental organizations also provide useful metrics for assessing risk of mass atrocities. At the OSCE, the Conflict Prevention Center staffs a round-the-clock Situation Room to look for early warning signs and bring them to the attention of participating States.

If confirmed, I will condemn hate in all of its forms, and use the OSCE's diplomatic, educational, and programmatic tools to build international coalitions to act swiftly whenever and wherever there is a risk of violence or mass atrocities. In this regard, preventative diplomacy is critical. If confirmed, I will also continue U.S. support for the tolerance projects of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and encourage active engagement by the High Commissioner on National Minorities to address the triggers of inter-ethnic conflict and engage in conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Nord Stream 2*

*Question.* The Nord Stream 2 pipeline is opposed by OSCE countries. In 2019, the OSCE passed a resolution "expressing particular concern about the Nord Stream 2 and TurkStream pipeline projects and their potential to be used for the political or economic coercion of supply-dependent participating State."

Congress has of course mandated the use of sanctions to stop Nord Stream 2 from coming online, and on September 15 you testified "I think it's very important that the U.S. continues to be ready to use all of the authorities contained within PEESA and CAATSA which are the laws of the land when it comes to this." The statement is in tension with statements from other Biden administration officials, who have publicly said that the pipeline cannot be stopped, in part because it has been phys-



ically completed. European allies that believe the pipeline should be stopped have, in turn, emphasized that there are still several months to prevent its certification and activation.

- Please clarify your September 15 testimony by describing what authorities within PEESA and CAATSA should be used.

Answer. The Protecting European Energy Security Act (PEESA) and the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) both provide the administration with authorities to sanction foreign persons who engage in certain activity related to the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. I understand the administration remains committed to implementing CAATSA and PEESA, as amended, and that work continues to examine entities involved in potentially sanctionable activity.

*Question.* Please assess whether you believe the Nord Stream 2 pipeline can still be stopped from coming online.

Answer. It is my understanding that while the physical work required to construct the Nord Stream 2 pipeline is either finished or close to being finished, it could take several more months before German authorities are ready to certify the pipeline for use. If confirmed, I will continue to oppose the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and work to strengthen the energy security of our allies and partners.

If confirmed, I will use OSCE platforms and tools to push back against the Kremlin's coercive energy policies and advance a more secure and sustainable energy future for Ukraine and other frontline European countries. I would continue to support the OSCE's work to build the capacity of participating States to protect their energy networks, diversify their energy mixes, improve the investment climate in the energy sector, and reduce the environmental footprint of energy production, use, and transport.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. MICHAEL CARPENTER BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* How can we apply more pressure in Belarus within the OSCE context? Can we do more to support the democratic movement led by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use all available OSCE platforms and tools to spotlight the appalling human rights situation in Belarus, urge the Lukashenka regime to engage in a facilitated dialogue with the democratic opposition and civil society, and support the Belarusian people's democratic aspirations. The OSCE must continue to hold Belarus' authorities accountable for their severe human rights abuses and allow for the voices of civil society and democratic leaders to be heard. The 2020 invocation of the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism by the United States and sixteen other countries resulted in a report documenting human rights abuses and making policy recommendations supported by the United States, such as an immediate end to violence and torture, unconditional release of all political prisoners, launch of an OSCE-facilitated national dialogue inclusive of civil society and the political opposition, and new, free and fair elections under international observation.

*Question.* I was able to visit Georgia earlier this summer and was initially encouraged by the progress undertaken by the April 19 agreements. However, recent events over the course of the summer indicate that there is still insufficient political will to advance the April 19 agreement.

- The next round of elections is scheduled for early October—what role will the OSCE take in observing these elections?

Answer. The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has deployed an election observation mission (EOM) for Georgia's October 2 local elections. The EOM will consist of 12 international experts, 30 long-term observers, and 350 short-term observers. Observers will monitor all aspects of the election, including implementation of electoral reforms, the campaign environment, media coverage, and election dispute resolution. Short-term observers will monitor the opening of polling stations, voting processes, the counting of ballots, and tabulation of results. The EOM will assess the elections for compliance with OSCE commitments and standards, and international obligations related to the holding of free and fair elections.

*Question.* What can be done to ensure that the elections are free and fair, and that if so, all parties accept the results to allow Georgia to move forward politically?

Answer. The Georgian Government, all political parties, all candidates, and election officials have an important role in upholding the highest standards of integrity before, during, and after Election Day. A robust OSCE election observation mission in Georgia will help establish a clear factual record of election processes and conduct, as will nonpartisan domestic election monitoring. The United States has provided substantial bilateral assistance over the years to promote professional and transparent election administration and nonpartisan domestic election monitoring. If confirmed, I will continue efforts in support of democratic reforms and encourage enhanced OSCE engagement in Georgia. Timely implementation of inclusive and transparent democratic reforms can reduce political polarization and help Georgia advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

---

## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:20 a.m. in Room SD-G50, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, and Hagerty.

Also Present: Senators Klobuchar, Casey, Toomey, Padilla, Feingold, Heinrich, and Lujan.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider nominations for five very important positions. On the first panel, we will hear from Mr. Thomas Nides to be the ambassador to Israel, Mr. David Cohen to be the ambassador to Canada, and Dr. Cynthia Telles to be ambassador to Costa Rica.

We are also pleased to have a number of our colleagues here to introduce some of these nominees. I will turn to them in order.

Senator Klobuchar, I understand you will be introducing Mr. Nides.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA**

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much, Chairman, and to Ranking Member Risch as well. The work this committee does touches the lives of people all over the world and we thank you for that.

Right now in the wake of new leadership in Israel, it is a critically important moment in our alliance with our friend and ally, and we have with us today someone with the experience, credibility, and respect to serve as our ambassador to Israel and he just happens to have been born in Minnesota, as usual.

And I am so proud to introduce my good friend, Tom Nides. With Tom today is his son Max, who will testify to the fact that his dad is wise and patient all the time, right, Max? Okay, good.

And I want to tell you a little bit about Tom. He grew up in Duluth as the youngest of eight siblings. His father, Arnold, served as

the president of Temple Israel and of the Duluth Jewish Federation, and his mother, Shirley, was a teacher. His sister, Jane, told the Duluth News Tribune that their parents would be going crazy with joy if they were alive to see their son nominated to serve as ambassador to Israel.

I was amused the day that Tom was nominated to read the headline in the Duluth News, which said simply this: "Man who grew up in Duluth nominated Ambassador to Israel."

Tom was innovative from a young age. As a senior at Duluth East High School, he was tasked with finding a speaker for his high school graduation. Being the proud Minnesotan he was, he wanted Walter Mondale, who just happened to be Vice President of the United States.

He learned that the best time as a high schooler to catch the Vice President's Chief of Staff was at 5:30 in the morning. He reached out and Walter Mondale agreed to speak at his high school graduation.

A year later, Tom and I met as interns for the Vice President and I remember walking in and seeing him sitting at the desk as a 20-year-old, his legs sprawled up on the desk above him, sitting on the chair with a vice presidential pin on his lapel.

And I watched him answer the phone and say, "Tom Nides with the Vice President's office" in a tone that would convince anyone that he was no 20-year-old intern but he was, in fact, the chief of staff.

While I was assigned to do the furniture inventory and write down the serial number of every lamp and desk, Tom got to save the Lake Superior foghorn for the city of Duluth, and just like everything else, he got it done.

Since then, he continued to serve ably and, most importantly for our work here, optimistically in many leadership positions, including in the halls of Congress and in two presidential administrations.

He was a trusted adviser to Congressman Tony Coelho and to Speaker Tom Foley. He worked for Mickey Kantor in the office of the United States Trade Representative and he later served as Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources with Secretary Clinton under President Obama.

During that time, he distinguished himself as a key voice on Israel and an advocate for humanitarian support for our U.S. allies. For his outstanding service, he was awarded the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award, our country's highest diplomatic honor.

His private sector and trade background as well as his strong background in Middle Eastern policy makes him the perfect choice to serve as our ambassador to Israel, one of our strongest and most enduring allies.

Members on both sides of the aisle understand that the deep friendship between our two countries is based on shared values and that Israel's interests in the Middle East are strongly aligned with our own. Support for Israel can never ever become a partisan issue.

Now more than ever, we need an ambassador dedicated to fostering lasting peace and stability. I am confident that as ambassador Tom will further the close alliance between our two nations

and our commitment to prosperity in the region for generations to come.

He will do a phenomenal job, Mr. Chair, and I strongly urge the committee to support his nomination. Thank you to the members of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Casey, Senator Toomey, I understand you will be introducing Mr. Cohen. I will ask Senator Casey to go first and then Senator Toomey.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY JR.,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA**

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thanks very much. I am honored to be here with you and appreciate this opportunity as well as thanking the ranking member for this opportunity to say a few words about my friend, David L. Cohen, to serve as ambassador to Canada.

I am especially grateful to be joined by Senator Toomey. We do not always appear together on big issues. But today, we are united in our recommendation and our commendation of the work of David Cohen.

I have known David for more than a quarter of a century and I have seen him in all kinds of circumstances, most of them in connection with public service.

Many of you know that in addition to being a very successful lawyer and doing the work of a lawyer and an advocate, he served as chief of staff to the mayor of Philadelphia, Ed Rendell.

To be chief of staff of a mayor of one of America's largest cities is about as difficult a job as anyone can imagine. But he did it well and he served the people of Philadelphia with distinction.

I think it also bears repeating that sometimes the most difficult jobs in public service also are the jobs that teach you a lot about what public service is. David understands the commitment you have got to make to be a public servant and I think he has demonstrated that over and over again.

In addition to his work for the city and his work as a lawyer, later, of course, he joined Comcast, and I tried to itemize or list all of the roles he played at Comcast and I will just give you just a partial list of the work that he did serving in major leadership positions at Comcast, whether it was legal work or government affairs, communications, administration, real estate, did a lot of work in diversity and inclusion to help lead a major corporation in the city of Philadelphia and, of course, charitable giving.

All of those roles he played. All of that work he did and more helped Comcast to grow and to be such an important corporate partner in Philadelphia for so many institutions in the city.

His community service, I think, is unparalleled, and whether it is at Penn Medicine, the work he did at the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the work he has done with organizations like the Urban League and on and on. We could list many more.

I do not think I have to remind members of this committee, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, about the importance of our relationship with Canada, our second largest trading partner, ever more so important in the context of the challenges we face today,

whether it is fighting COVID-19 or future viral security challenges, managing climate change, addressing the opioid crisis, trade issues, economic issues, on and on.

A lot of those issues, of course, involve many, many Pennsylvania businesses and businesses across the country that rely upon the stability and the strength of this relationship.

I would say this in conclusion, Mr. Chairman. This is my fifteenth year serving in the Senate and in those years I have seen David commit himself to excellence in every task that he was presented with.

I also got to know over those quarter century or more his wife, Rhonda, who, in her own way, has contributed so much to public service. I asked Rhonda just before this hearing—I said, Rhonda, is David ready? And she said, yes, and that is all I needed to know. He is ready to do this job in a critically important time in our nation's history.

The last thing I will say is this. There is a line in the Scriptures, "To whom much has been given, much is expected." The good Lord gave David a lot—an intellect, a strength of character, a commitment to helping people, and we have asked him to do a lot, and much is and has been expected of him and he has never failed to deliver. I have no doubt that will be the case when he serves as our ambassador to Canada.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Senator Toomey?

**STATEMENT OF HON. PAT TOOMEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA**

Senator TOOMEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Thank you for allowing me to introduce briefly my friend, David Cohen, and express my enthusiastic support for his nomination to be our next U.S. Ambassador to Canada.

And thank you, David, for your willingness to serve. I was delighted to see your wife, Rhonda, is here with you and I appreciate the sacrifices required of individuals but also their families when they choose to go into public service and I am glad to see that you are up for this challenge.

There is a passage about David in Buzz Bissinger's excellent book, "A Prayer for the City." It is a book that chronicles the administration of Philadelphia Mayor Ed Rendell, which, as Senator Casey pointed out, it is an administration in which David Cohen served as chief of staff.

I think the passage is relevant for today's hearing so I am going to read it briefly. It is about David Cohen and it says, and I quote, "It wasn't just his prodigious capacity for work that made him so good at what he did. It was his patience as a negotiator, the way in which he determined the result he wanted, and then, as Macedon put it, exhibited a willingness to stay with something forever until he got there.

In the meantime, he never got frustrated. He never personalized or railed or sought vendettas. Once again, the normal human im-

pulse to get angry and become agitated that never even surfaced,” end quote.

Mr. Chairman, I think there is a word for this kind of quiet, thoughtful, persistent approach to getting things done. It is called diplomacy. David is a longtime resident of Pennsylvania, a very active member in the community, as Senator Casey pointed out.

I think it is important to point out that while serving as chief of staff to Mayor Ed Rendell through the '90s he played a central role in pulling the city out of really dire fiscal circumstances and placing it on a stable footing.

He led a prestigious U.S. law firm prior to joining Comcast Corporation in 2002. Senator Casey mentioned some of the many roles that David has played at Comcast.

I would just point out that in addition to helping to forge Comcast into a telecommunications powerhouse, David also helped to establish Comcast as a really exceptional corporate citizen for Philadelphia and Pennsylvania and our country including, among many other things, donating millions of dollars to myriad charitable causes across the country.

David's many career accomplishments are accompanied by an extensive record of service. As Senator Casey pointed out, he has long served on many, many boards and advisory panels supporting Philadelphia in particular in its academic, athletic, arts communities.

Just to name two, he was for over a decade the chairman of the Board of Trustees for the University of Pennsylvania, and currently he sits alongside Senator Casey and myself on the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission.

All the members of this committee understand full well how important Canada is as one of America's allies and neighbors. We rely on Canada as a major trade, energy, and security partner.

Frankly, Pennsylvania's proximity to Canada gives us a particularly strong tie to that country and our representation of Canada is all the more important for folks in the Commonwealth.

The fact is President Biden made an outstanding choice in choosing David for this post. David Cohen's very strong business background, his deep understanding of government at all levels, and his passion for service prepared him well for this role.

Mr. Chairman, I enthusiastically support his nomination and encourage my colleagues to do likewise. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And last but not least, our distinguished colleague from California, who is going to introduce Dr. Telles.

Senator Padilla?

**STATEMENT OF HON. ALEX PADILLA,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA**

Senator PADILLA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee.

It is my honor to introduce Dr. Cynthia Telles this morning from the great state of California, and President Biden's nominee to serve as ambassador to Costa Rica.

As a clinical professor in the UCLA School of Medicine's Department of Psychiatry and a widely published researcher, Dr. Telles

is widely recognized for her work in health care and especially in improving the lives of those with mental illness.

For more than three decades, Dr. Telles has directed UCLA's Spanish-speaking psychosocial clinic, where she has helped train a generation of clinicians to provide culturally-competent mental health services for Latino communities.

In addition to her work in health care, Dr. Telles brings life experience from the region and from serving on a number of nonprofit organizations and government commissions.

As a longtime member of the board of directors of the Pacific Council on International Policy, she has worked closely with industry and governmental actors to promote global engagement in Los Angeles, throughout California, and beyond.

She has served as a commissioner in the city of Los Angeles, America's second largest city, for almost 20 years, as well as having served on the board of the California Community Foundation and for nearly a decade serving on the board of the California Endowment, California's largest health foundation.

Dr. Telles also continues a family legacy of public service, including deep ties to Costa Rica. Her father, Raymond Telles, was the first Latino to serve as a U.S. ambassador, appointed by President Kennedy in 1961. Dr. Telles grew up determined to fight for the world's inequities from a young age.

During her father's ambassadorship, she lived in Costa Rica, where she found her calling for both public service and public health. Dr. Telles is a uniquely well-qualified person to represent the United States and Costa Rica, an important regional partner.

She brings a wealth of experience, dedication, and compassion to her role representing the United States and Costa Rica.

I strongly support her nomination, and I urge for her swift confirmation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Padilla.

With that background, maybe we should have Dr. Telles work with us here in Washington to solve a few things.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you to all the senators who made presentations.

Let me turn now, first, to a little bit of committee business before I get to the nominees. I want to appreciate the ranking member's willingness to move forward with nine nominees that the committee was scheduled to consider today.

We postponed the hearing this afternoon out of a deference to one of our members, but that has been rescheduled for next week.

I am also glad that you agreed to a few of the nominees that I proposed for hearings next week and that you indicated, albeit with many caveats, that you may be ready to notice more. I, certainly, hope that materializes.

I remain deeply concerned, however, by the delays and obstacles facing the bulk of nominees when it comes to securing your approval for their hearings.

It is inexplicably taking an average of six weeks, almost 40 days, from the time a nominee's file is complete to the time that the minority is willing to move forward, and that is just for a hearing.



This is almost four weeks slower than it took during a similar period in 2009.

I ask how that is possible. As you know, we have a massive backlog at the State Department, USAID, and other nominations pending before the committee. We have almost reached 80 and the number continues to grow.

The nominations pending include ambassadorships to China, Japan, and countries throughout Latin America, Africa, and Europe, places where competition with China and Russia is real, where we need ambassadors in place to project U.S. power, to assist our citizens, and to promote our companies.

I would just ask Senator Risch, I appreciate the work we have done so far. I need your full cooperation and participation to tackle this backlog.

I would just note that when faced with similar numbers in 2009, the majority and the minority worked together to move 57 nominees in just one month.

There is no reason we cannot do that if we work together. To date, I have noticed only nominees who the ranking member has agreed to. In fact, I have bent over backwards to restore the tradition of comity that was abandoned in the last Congress.

But the slow pace and many obstacles to moving nominees is unacceptable. It is dangerous. We are less safe when our national security agencies are so short staffed.

We have to fix this problem. We owe it to the Senate and we owe it to all Americans, and I look forward to working with you to try to achieve that.

Let me turn to our nominees. Welcome, and thank you and your families for your willingness to serve the country in this capacity. I will briefly address each of the positions that you have been nominated for.

Mr. Nides, welcome back to the committee. I am pleased to see such a qualified and capable nominee for one of our most vital allies. Your extensive experience in management, including as the Deputy Secretary of State, will surely serve you well in navigating the particulars of our embassy in Jerusalem.

As Israel settles into its new government, it is critical that we have an experienced diplomat in place to help pursue many of our shared U.S. and Israeli interests across national security, technology, cultural, and religious exchanges.

And while some may try to exploit any small fissures or differences in policy opinions between our two countries, this committee, the Senate, and the Congress as a whole have repeatedly confirmed our unwavering support for Israel's security, its right to defend itself in the face of neighbors who continue to threaten to wipe it off the map.

Finally, to all our friends who may or may not be watching in Israel and here, let me wish you all a Hag Sukkot Sameah, and I look forward to hearing from Mr. Nides.

I am also pleased that we are reviewing the nomination of our next ambassador to Canada. Our alliance with our northern neighbors, one of the most important partnerships that we have united by shared security interests and strengthened by expansive economic ties, our nations are linked by a common commitment to

democratic principles and to tackling the most pressing challenges on the global stage.

It is with the deepest respect that we also remember that our Canadian brothers and sisters fought alongside our men and women for decades, most recently in Afghanistan.

Yet, during the last administration this most essential alliance was too often marked by tensions and tariffs, marred by insults aimed at Canadian leaders, and neglected by an absentee U.S. ambassador.

It is imperative that we rebuild our relationship with Canada, deepen our collaboration to address the challenges posed by China and Russia, and work together to address the threats posed by climate change.

Mr. Cohen, I have no doubt you are the right person to tackle these challenges and, upon confirmation, will be a strong and effective ambassador.

I am also pleased that we are considering the nomination of our next ambassador to Costa Rica. As it celebrates its bicentennial, Costa Rica stands out for its consistency on the global stage and leadership on environmental stewardship.

Costa Rica is also an example of democratic resiliency in Central America at a time when the region is plagued by weak rule of law and leaders who have embraced authoritarian tactics.

It is also unique that we are considering a candidate whose father served as ambassador to Costa Rica under President Kennedy.

I am pleased that Dr. Telles, if confirmed, will carry forward a family commitment to strengthening our partnership and advancing U.S. interests in Costa Rica. We look forward to hearing your testimony.

Let me now turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Risch, for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your comments regarding nominations. They are always difficult, and as I have said publicly and privately to you, having been a governor I know how important nominations are and it is impossible to govern if you do not have your team in place.

I do want to review, however, the record on the numbers. First of all, I am going to compare the 116th Congress to the 117th Congress.

In the 116th Congress, the average Senate Foreign Relations Committee nominations processing time with you as the ranking member was 94 days.

On the average, Senate Foreign Relations Committee nomination processing time in the 117th Congress so far with me as the ranking member it has been 44 days, 50 days less. The average processing time, obviously and clearly, is 50 days less, and the numbers do not lie.

On some specifics, take for instance, the Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, Labor. Under the Trump nominee, Robert Destro, was 276 days. The Biden nominee, Sarah Margon, was 76 days.

The U.S. U.N. representative, Andrew Bremberg was 245 days as the Trump nominee, and under this administration, the Biden nominee, Bathsheba Crocker, was 56 days.

The Assistant Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights at Justice—excuse me, Assistant Secretary—Civilian Secretary of Security, Democracy and Human Rights, Marshall Billingslea, was 378 days. Uzra Zeya was 34 days.

U.S. for Arms Control under President Trump, Marshall Billingslea, was 244 days. Bonnie Jenkins under this administration was 34 days.

Ambassador to Mexico, Chris Landau, was 57 days under Trump. Ken Salazar under this administration for ambassador to Mexico was 17 days.

The number of days from file complete to business meeting for U.S. management—the department Secretary of Management, Brian Bulatao, was 319 days. The Biden nominee, Brian McKeon, was 18 days.

The Assistant Secretary for Political Military Affairs, Clarke Cooper, under Trump, nominee was 260 days, whereas Jessica Lewis was 49 days as the Biden nominee.

The Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, David Schenker, the Trump nominee, was almost one year, 358 days. Barbara Leaf was 68 days.

Other key positions held by Democrats during the Trump administration, the legal advisor to the Department of State, CJ Mahoney, was 187 days from file complete to hearing. Sarah Cleveland, the file has not been complete.

The ambassador for Pakistan, Bill Todd, the Trump nominee, was 180 days from file complete to hearing. Of course, there has been no nominee.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent that this matrix be entered into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

---



---

### **Nomination Processing Time (116th Congress vs. 117th Congress)**

(As of September 22, 2021)

- Average SFRC nomination processing time in the 116th Congress (with Sen. Menendez as Ranking Member): **94 days**<sup>1</sup>
- Average SFRC nomination processing time in the 117th Congress so far (with Sen. Risch as Ranking Member): **44 days**
- Average processing in 117th Congress = 50 days faster than 116th Congress

---

<sup>1</sup>(conservative estimate based on staff research)

**Number of Days from File Complete to Hearing Date**

	<b>Trump Nominee</b>	<b>Biden Nominee</b>
A/S Democracy, Human Rights, Labor (DRL)	Robert Destro 276 days	Sarah Margon 76 days
U.S. U.N. Representative	Andrew Bremberg 245 days	Bathsheba Crocker 56 days
U/S for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights (J)	Marshall Billingslea 378 days (NOT CONFIRMED)	Uzra Zeya 34 days
U/S for Arms Control (T)	Marshall Billingslea 244 days (NOT CONFIRMED)	Bonnie Jenkins 34 days
Ambassador to Mexico	Chris Landau 57 days	Ken Salazar 17 days

**Number of Days from File Complete to Hearing Date**

	<b>Trump Nominee</b>	<b>Biden Nominee</b>
U/S Management/Deputy Secretary for Management	Brian Bulatao 319 days	Brian McKeon 18 days
A/S for Political Military Affairs (PM)	Clarke Cooper 260 days	Jessica Lewis 49 days
A/S for Near Eastern Affairs (NEA)	David Schenker 358 days	Barbara Leaf 68 days from hearing date (Business Meeting expected in September)

**Number of Days from File Complete to Hearing Date**

	<b>Trump Nominee</b>	<b>Biden Nominee</b>
Legal Adviser to the Department of State (L)	CJ Mahoney 187 days from file complete to hearing (NOT CONFIRMED)	Sarah Cleveland (FILE INCOMPLETE)
Ambassador to Pakistan	Bill Todd 180 days file complete to hearing (NOT CONFIRMED)	NONE

Senator RISCH. I commit to you to continue to work as best I can, again, realizing that there is always stress on these. We take our vetting responsibilities seriously just as you did when the President was another party.

I respect that. I appreciate it, and we are going to continue to do the best we can to vet these people and as quickly as we possibly can.

Moving to the panel that we have before us today, I want to thank the nominees and, of course, their families for the sacrifice that they will share.

On the nomination for ambassador to Israel, Israel is America's most vital ally in a very turbulent region. It faces serious threats and it is in the national security interest of the United States to ensure Israel is adequately equipped to meet these challenges.

I am deeply disappointed that the House of Representatives have attempted to pull the Iron Dome funding from the Continuing Resolution. I expect the Senate will remedy that issue very quickly.

Since the Biden administration took office, we have seen no movement to expand or strengthen the Abraham Accords. I think most everyone that moves in the area of foreign relations agrees that the Abraham Accords were tremendous steps forward in the relationship we have and others have in the Middle East.

Many of us have concerns that the administration has instead doubled down on the failed Palestinian policies of the past. I am also disappointed the administration continues to provide assistance to the Palestinians without securing any concessions on the egregious "pay to slay" program.

Instead of normalizing this appalling practice through deeper relationships with the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the administration should pursue changes in Palestinian policies that glorify and promote violence and terrorism.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these important issues.

On the nomination for the ambassador to Canada, first of all, I appreciated the opportunity to meet personally with the nominee and we discussed the importance of a couple of issues that are important to me and important to America.

One is the Columbia River Treaty. The other is the opening of the Canadian border, and I was pleased to hear his thoughts on that and appeared to be on board as far as both issues are concerned.

The Columbia River Treaty remains an important issue to the entire Northwest delegation. I expect that you will prioritize these negotiations, should you be confirmed, as we discussed.

As for the U.S.-Canadian border, I am disappointed in the administration's decision on Monday to extend restrictions on non-essential travel from Canada to the United States at land ports of entry.

These restrictions are causing significant economic and emotional distress to communities such as those in north Idaho that depend on well-regulated cross-border traffic. The administration should reconsider this decision and reopen our land border with Canada as soon as possible.

Finally, the nomination of ambassador to Costa Rica. Costa Rica is an outpost of democratic governance in Central America and a valuable trade, security, and diplomatic partner.

As many as 50,000 Americans call Costa Rica home, in large part due to its political and economic stability. Nevertheless, Costa Rica's democratic model has come under acute pressure due to instability generated by the Ortega regime in Nicaragua and the COVID-19 epidemic.

Costa Rica has also sought deeper relations with China, which comes with its own set of challenges. I hope to hear how you plan to manage those U.S. relations with this strategic partner in Central America.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

Just very briefly, I must say that, of course, one has to compare apples with apples and oranges with oranges in terms of dates.

The reality is, is that for the first nine months of the Trump administration it took an average of just 22 days—22 days—to get a nominee scheduled for a hearing, despite many serious and well-documented vetting issues.

It is currently taking an average of 36 days, over three weeks longer than that period of time, for the minority to clear nominees with completed files for hearings. That is a challenge, and bottom line is we have nearly 80 people.

The final thing I will say is that, unfortunately, the previous administration did not vet nominees so looking at numbers was extremely meaningless.

We had nominees that had unprecedented vetting issues, lying to this committee, lying to the IRS, indictments, racism, #MeToo issues that all came out as a result of the vetting. That is why it took time.

I do not want to belabor it. But I do want to work with the ranking member because, as I have heard him say and he said again today, that as a governor he understands the importance of having people in place in the executive branch to execute. I agree with him in this context as well, and hopefully, we can get to a point where we are promoting the number of nominees for the process.

We still have the floor issues that have been vexing us, which is maybe beyond this committee's pay grade but, nonetheless, is a critical issue where Republican members exclusively are holding up nominees on the floor to the detriment of the national security and interests of the United States.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I hope we do not mix the issue of what is happening on the floor versus what is happening in the committee. Like you, I am likewise frustrated with what is happening on the floor and, certainly, this is an issue that should be tackled by the senior members of leadership of both of our teams and get this removed so we can move forward on that.

I am not going to debate the quality of the appointments. Obviously, that would take many, many more days than what we have here. I will just say that I do commit that I am going to continue to work with you to move as rapidly as we can.

I have no doubt that we will wind up with similar frustrations but we will work through them as best we can.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We ask each of you to summarize your testimony in about five minutes or so. Your full statements will be included in the record, without objection.

And we will start with Mr. Nides to make his presentation.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS R. NIDES OF MINNESOTA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE STATE OF ISRAEL**

Mr. NIDES. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee. It is a privilege to appear today. It is an honor to be asked to serve as the ambassador to the State of Israel.

I want to thank President Biden, Secretary Blinken for the confidence in me, and I am grateful to share this day with my family.

I would like to thank Senator Klobuchar for her kind words of introductions. As the Senator mentioned, she and I have been friends for over 40 years having served as interns together for Vice President Walter Mondale. I am so, so grateful for her friendship.

As Senator Klobuchar mentioned, I grew up in Duluth, Minnesota, the youngest of seven children. My parents were leaders in a vibrant but small Jewish community. My dad was the president of our temple, our chairman of our local UJA. My mom was a leader of both Hadassah and Sisterhood, who grew up believing being Jewish was more than a religion but a way of life.

Most importantly, my parents have pressed upon my siblings and me the importance, as they say in Hebrew, tzedakah, or charity, giving to your community and caring about others.

During my first trip to Israel, I worked on a kibbutz where I discovered the importance of this very young and vulnerable nation. As Jews everywhere are celebrating the holiday of Sukkot, there is no greater honor than to be asked to strengthen the ties between the United States and the State of Israel.

My many trips to Israel, both in the Government and the private sector, have strengthened my commitment to sustain Israel as a democratic and Jewish state.

The U.S.-Israel relationship has long been based on both common values and strategic interests to remain united in our shared commitment to democracy, economic prosperity, and regional security.

Should I have the honor of being confirmed, let me just spend a moment on a few of the priorities that will guide me.

First, the United States remains unwavering in its commitment to Israel's security supported by a 10-year/\$38 billion Memorandum of Understanding. Israel is one of our closest security partners in countering the broad spectrum of threats.

Chief among them is the critical threat that Iran poses. President Biden has made clear his commitment to ensure that Iran will never develop a nuclear weapon. Upholding Israel's security serves America's national security interests, ensures that we will always have a strong, reliable, and secure partner.

Second, United States remains committed to advancing the depth and breadth of our bonds between our people, including our ever-expanding economic relationship.

Israel's startup nation economy is welcoming for U.S. businesses, with U.S. companies establishing two-thirds of the more than 300 foreign investment research and development centers in Israel. And, as importantly, President Biden has announced he will work with Israel in hopes of them joining the Visa Waiver Program.

Strategic competition with the People's Republic of China is a defining feature of the 21st century, and the United States views close cooperation with Israel on foreign investment as critical to our security and intelligence partnership.

Third, the United States values working with fellow democracies to oppose international institutional biases towards Israel, and I look forward to working with Israel to protect the freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, creating an atmosphere all voices can be heard.

Equally, we must continue to oppose all efforts to isolate and delegitimize Israel. If confirmed, while respecting the rights of all Americans for free speech, I will continue the tireless work of this administration to firmly reject the BDS movement and boycott laws which unfairly single out Israel.

Fourth, the Abraham Accords. Yes, the Abraham Accords are critical to the region's stability and prosperity. I will personally support every effort to expand cooperation among Israel and the countries of the Arab and Muslim world, and I hope to strengthen the Abraham Accords and identify opportunities to expand Israel's relationship in additional countries in the Arab and Muslim world.

While we support the normalization between Israel and other countries, it is not a substitute for Israel-Palestinian peace, and we seek to harness existing and future agreements and make tangible improvement for the Palestinian people with a view of preserving the vision of a negotiated two-state solution.

I am committed to doing so my part to rebuild the partnership between the Americans and the Palestinian people.

The priorities listed above are only some of the key issues that face any diplomat serving in Israel. Frank and fruitful dialogues only strengthen our partnership and deepen the bonds between Americans and Israelis.

Before I close, I would like to say something, that if I am fortunate to get confirmed, this will be my second time working at the State Department with some of the most talented and dedicated individuals I have ever had the honor to be with.

I would be remiss in not thanking every one of them for their service. I am humbled and grateful to serve this country and to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israeli partnership.

And thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

Thank you, Senator.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Nides follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS R. NIDES

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today.



It is an honor to be asked to serve as Ambassador to the State of Israel. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. I am grateful to share this day with my family.

I would like to thank Senator Klobuchar for her kind words of introduction. As the Senator mentioned, she and I have been friends for over 40 years, having served as interns together for Vice President Walter Mondale. I am grateful for her friendship.

As Senator Klobuchar mentioned, I grew up in Duluth, Minnesota the youngest of seven children. My parents were leaders in a vibrant but small Jewish community. We grew up believing being Jewish was more than a religion, but a way of life. Most importantly, my parents impressed upon my siblings and me the importance of giving back to our community and caring about others.

There is no greater honor than to be asked to strengthen the ties between the United States and the State of Israel. My many trips to Israel, both in government and the private sector, have strengthened my commitment to sustain Israel as a democratic and Jewish state at peace with its neighbors.

The U.S.-Israeli relationship has long been based on both common values and strategic interests. We remain united in our shared commitment to democracy, economic prosperity, and regional security. Should I have the honor of being confirmed, some of the priorities that will guide my efforts include:

*First*, the United States remains unwavering in its commitment to Israel's security, supported by our 10-year, \$38 billion Memorandum of Understanding. Israel is one of our closest security partners in countering a broad spectrum of threats ranging from climate change to cyber-attacks to nuclear proliferation. Chief among these is the critical threat that Iran poses.

President Biden has made clear his commitment to ensure that Iran never develops a nuclear weapon. Upholding Israel's security serves America's national security interests and ensures that we will always have a strong, reliable, and secure partner.

*Second*, the United States remains committed to advancing the depth and breadth of the bonds between our people, including our ever-expanding economic relationship. Israel's start-up economy is safe and welcoming for U.S. businesses, with U.S. companies establishing two-thirds of the more than 300 foreign-invested research and development centers in Israel and President Biden announced we will work with Israel in hopes of them joining the Visa Waiver Program. Strategic competition with the People's Republic of China is a defining feature of the 21st century, and the United States views close cooperation with Israel on foreign investment risk management as a down payment on our security and intelligence partnership.

Third, the United States values working with a fellow democracy to oppose international institutional bias and promote human rights at home and abroad. I look forward to working with Israel to protect the freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, creating an atmosphere where all voices can be heard and highlighting efforts to advance the rights of members of vulnerable communities. Equally, we must continue to oppose all efforts to isolate and delegitimize Israel internationally. If confirmed, while respecting the rights of all Americans to free speech, I will continue the tireless work of this administration to firmly reject the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement and boycott laws which unfairly single out Israel.

*Fourth*, the Abraham Accords are critical to regional stability and prosperity. I will personally support every effort to expand cooperation among Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world, and I hope to strengthen the Abraham Accords and identify opportunities to expand Israel's relations with additional countries in the Arab and Muslim world.

While we work to support normalization between Israel and other countries, it is not a substitute for Israeli-Palestinian peace, and we seek to harness existing and future agreements to make tangible improvements for the Palestinian people with a view to preserving the vision of a negotiated two-state solution. I am committed to doing my part to rebuild the partnership between the American and Palestinian peoples.

The priorities listed above are only some of the key issues that face any diplomat serving in Israel. Frank and fruitful dialogues only strengthen our partnership and deepen the bonds between Americans and Israelis.

Before closing, I would like to thank the very talented, dedicated cadre of public servants who represent the United States faithfully both here in Washington and abroad. It goes without saying that, if I am confirmed, the safety and security of

all Americans, and not just those in the Embassy, but all those in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza, is my top priority.

I am humbled and grateful to serve this country and to work to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israeli partnership. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Mr. Cohen?

**STATEMENT OF DAVID L. COHEN OF PENNSYLVANIA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO CANADA**

Mr. COHEN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch—

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Cohen, if you could put your microphone on.

Mr. COHEN [continuing]. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am proud and humbled to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Canada.

I want to thank the President for his nomination, Senators Casey and Toomey for their kind introductions, and this committee for its courtesy.

I also would like to acknowledge my wife, Rhonda, who has joined us here today. She has supported me—maybe it would be more accurate to say that she has put up with me—through 44 years of marriage. I deeply appreciate her remarkable partnership and commitment to my career.

Canada is one of our most important allies and a partner for our economic prosperity and our national security.

If confirmed, I pledge to devote my full efforts to strengthening our unique bilateral partnership. As President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau stated this year in their roadmap for a renewed U.S.-Canada partnership, and I quote, "It is in the shared interest of the United States and Canada to revitalize and expand our historic alliance and steadfast friendship to overcome the daunting challenges of today and realize the full potential of the relationship into the future," unquote.

In navigating the confirmation process, including meetings with members of this committee, I have heard many recommendations for expanding and improving the already strong relationship between Canada and the United States.

Based on these discussions, if confirmed, some of my key priorities would be, first, preserving and growing the trade relationship between Canada and the United States, including as detailed in the USMCA.

At nearly \$1.7 billion a day, Canada is our largest trading partner and the top export market for more than 30 of our states.

Second, easing border restrictions while protecting public health in both countries. As Canada and the United States share the world's longest land border with 120 ports of entry and a pre-pandemic daily rate of 400,000 people, crossing over a safe and vibrant border is important for bilateral relations, trade, tourism, and the personal and family relationships that form the bedrock of our cultures.

I understand that the impact of today's restrictions on the many communities along the border, but I also appreciate the health sensitivities and concerns that have led to the current regulations.

Third, Canada and the United States cooperatively manage multiple watersheds through complex arrangements, several of which would benefit from modernization.

A modernized Columbia River Treaty regime, for example, could enhance hydropower and flood risk management in both countries. I know that many members share this high priority.

Fourth, continue to respect and fortify the trusted and valuable alliance with Canada on multiple defense relationships, including NATO and NORAD.

We also must honor our commitments to make the necessary investments to meet those needs and, of course, our policy toward China is a key priority today.

Finally, continue to advance common priorities of our countries on the global stage on issues such as combating climate change, anti-corruption, and building more diverse and inclusive societies, including for women and girls.

My varied professional career has been rewarding and, ultimately, enhanced by leadership roles in multiple nonprofit organizations. One important theme running through my career has been the opportunities I have had to serve.

I am also proud of my success in tackling big complicated issues and in bringing people together to solve problems. I am excited by the possibility of extending my passion for service and applying my collaborative and solutions-based approach in the role of ambassador to Canada.

If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with the members of this committee as I represent the President, the Secretary of State, and this country in Canada.

It would be the ultimate honor to work alongside the 1,200 members of the United States mission in Canada and with the Canadian Government to advance our shared priorities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Cohen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID L. COHEN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am proud and humbled to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Canada. I want to thank the President for his nomination and Senators Casey and Toomey—two extraordinary public servants who I have had the privilege of working closely with over many years—for their kind introductions of me, and I thank this committee for its courtesy.

I also would like to acknowledge my wife, Rhonda Cohen, who has joined us here today. She has supported me—maybe it would be more accurate to say that she has put up with me—through 44 years of marriage. I can say with absolute certainty that I simply would not be here today were it not for her remarkable partnership and commitment to my career.

Canada is one of our most important and committed allies and a partner for our economic prosperity and our national security. But I understand the significant challenges that lie ahead for both of our countries. If confirmed, I pledge to devote my full efforts to strengthening our unique bilateral partnership, to enable both countries to take advantage of our shared economic and political interests.

As President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau stated in their Roadmap for a Renewed U.S. Canada Partnership in February of this year, "It is in the shared in-

terest of the United States and Canada to revitalize and expand our historic alliance and steadfast friendship to overcome the daunting challenges of today and realize the full potential of the relationship into the future.”

In navigating the nomination and confirmation process, including meetings with members of this committee, I have heard many recommendations for expanding and improving the already strong relationship between Canada and the United States.

Based on these discussions, if confirmed, some key priorities for me are:

- Preserving and growing the trade relationship between Canada and the United States, including as detailed in the USMCA. At nearly \$1.7 billion a day, Canada is our largest trading partner and the top export market for more than 30 of our states.
- Easing border restrictions while protecting public health in both countries. As Canada and the United States share the world’s longest land border, extending 5,525 miles, with 120 ports of entry, and a pre-pandemic daily rate of 400,000 people crossing over, a safe and vibrant border is important for bilateral relations, trade, tourism, and the personal and family relationships that form the bedrock of our cultures. I understand the impact of today’s restrictions on the many communities along the border, but also appreciate the health sensitivities and concerns that have led to the current regulations.
- Canada and the United States cooperatively manage multiple watersheds through complex arrangements, several of which would benefit from modernization. A modernized Columbia River Treaty regime, for example, could enhance hydropower, flood risk management, and ecosystems in the United States and Canada. I know that many Members share this high priority.
- Continue to respect and fortify the trusted and valuable alliance with Canada on multiple defense and foreign affairs relationships, including NATO and NORAD. We also must honor our commitments to make the necessary investments to meet current and future challenges to our collective security and preserve our ability to successfully promote peace and human rights globally.
- Continue to advance common priorities of Canada and the United States on the global stage on issues such as combating climate change, anti-corruption, energy independence, and building more diverse and inclusive societies, including for women and girls around the world.

My varied professional career has included the practice of law, government service, and a senior executive business role. That career has been rewarding, enriching, and ultimately enhanced by leadership roles in multiple nonprofit organizations. For me, one important theme running through my career has been the opportunities I have had to serve. I am proud of my success in tackling big, complicated issues, and in bringing people together to solve problems.

I am excited by the possibility of extending my passion for service and applying my collaborative and solutions-based approach in the role of United States Ambassador to Canada. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with the members of this committee as I represent the President, the Secretary of State, and this country in Canada. It would be the ultimate honor to work alongside the 1,200 members of the U.S. Mission in Canada for our Government and with the Canadian Government to advance our shared priorities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Dr. Telles?

**STATEMENT OF DR. CYNTHIA ANN TELLES OF CALIFORNIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA**

Ms. TELLES. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor for me to appear before you today as President Biden’s nominee to be the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica.

I am grateful and humbled by the trust placed in me and, if confirmed, I really look forward to working with all of you to advance our nation’s interests in the region.

With your indulgence, I would like to introduce my husband, Joe Waz, and my son, Raymond Jimenez, who are here with me today. Their unequivocal love and support mean the world to me.

Also, I would like to thank my beloved parents, Raymond and Delfina Telles, who are with us in spirit. My father taught me by example that public service is a noble cause to which he dedicated his entire career, having served as the first Hispanic elected mayor of a major U.S. city in 1957 and also having served as the very first Hispanic U.S. ambassador when President Kennedy appointed him to serve in Costa Rica in 1961.

If confirmed, it would be my life's greatest honor to follow in his footsteps.

I spent several years of my youth in Costa Rica, which came to have a special place in my heart. I became very familiar with its people, its culture, and its challenges. I also was able to witness firsthand the formation of the Alliance for Progress with its great dreams of shared prosperity and democracy.

My father was able to organize a summit for President Kennedy and all the Central American presidents at the U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica. I am committed to using that experience to deepen the enduring bonds between Costa Rica and the United States and, thereby, to further our mutual interests.

The United States and Costa Rica have shared an exceptional partnership across decades, one that is based not only on mutual interests but on shared values of democracy, of good governance, of human rights. This strong partnership is critical now more than ever.

We face an unprecedented convergence of challenges in Central America: increased drug trafficking by transnational criminal organizations, economic downturn exacerbated by the pandemic, disruption to the region due to climate change, uptick in irregular migration, and also foreign influences that threaten to undermine democracy and our priorities in the region.

If confirmed, I will work closely with Costa Rica to promote our shared interests throughout the region. Costa Rica has been a strong ally in migration management and a regional leader in welcoming vulnerable migrants and providing international protection for refugees and asylum seekers.

If confirmed, I will, certainly, work to strengthen its asylum protection and temporary worker programs, and to expand its capacity in general to deal with migration, including border protection.

Very importantly, I will work with Costa Rica to address root causes of migration in the region.

The U.S. and Costa Rica collaborate closely to combat transnational crime organizations. Costa Rica is actually crucial to this shared mission, given its strategic location which positions it at the largest transshipment hub from South America to the U.S. for narcotics bound to our country.

The good news is that in 2020 Costa Rica interdicted a record 71 metric tons of narcotics, mostly cocaine, demonstrating not only its commitment and capacity but also, very importantly, the huge challenges it faces in the region.

If confirmed, I commit to strongly support Costa Rica's counter narcotics efforts in every way possible.

For decades, Costa Rica has been a champion of democracy and recently demonstrating this by calling out that Ortega-Murillo regime in Nicaragua and the Venezuelan Government to return to peaceful democracy, to hold free and fair elections, to release political prisoners, to hold people accountable for corruption.

Certainly, I will gladly support Costa Rica's efforts to promulgate our shared values in the region.

Although Costa Rica has enjoyed a relatively stable economy across time, there are recent troubling signs evidenced by high unemployment, by a large public debt, and by stress in the public health system due to COVID-19 and increased migration from Nicaragua.

In addition to the human toll that these pose, these vulnerabilities can be exploited by our adversaries and competitors. If confirmed, I commit to strengthening economic partnership with Costa Rica and to promote mutual prosperity. Importantly, I will support Costa Rica's efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading the embassy team in San Jose where my highest priorities will be the protection of U.S. citizens and our interests. I will look forward also to seeking consultation from this committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am happy to answer your questions.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Telles follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. CYNTHIA ANN TELLES

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica. I am grateful and humbled by the trust placed in me.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to advance our nation's interests.

I would like to introduce my husband, Joe Waz, and my son, Raymond Jimenez. Their invaluable support and love mean the world to me.

I would like to thank to my beloved parents, Raymond and Delfina Telles, who are with us in spirit. My father taught me by example that public service is a noble cause to which he dedicated his entire career. He served as the first Hispanic elected mayor of a major American city in 1957 and, subsequently, as the first Hispanic United States Ambassador when President Kennedy appointed him to serve in Costa Rica in 1961. If confirmed, I will be deeply honored to follow in his footsteps.

I spent several years of my youth in Costa Rica, which came to have a special place in my heart. I became very familiar with its people, its culture, and its challenges. I am committed to using that experience to enhance America's enduring bonds with Costa Rica and, thereby, to further our mutual interests.

The United States and Costa Rica have enjoyed an exceptional partnership across decades—one based, not only on mutual interests, but on shared values of democracy, good governance and human rights. This strong partnership is critical—now more than ever. We face an unprecedented convergence of challenges in Central America: increasing drug trafficking by transnational criminal organizations; disruption from climate change; economic downturn exacerbated by the pandemic; a related uptick in irregular migration; and foreign influence that threatens to undermine democracy and our priorities in the region.

In addressing these challenges, Costa Rica has been, not only a reliable partner, but an effective role model. If confirmed, I will work closely with Costa Rican people to promote our shared interests throughout the region.

Costa Rica has been a strong ally in migration management through participation in our Comprehensive Regional Solutions Framework. It has been a regional leader in welcoming vulnerable migrants and guest workers and providing international protection for refugees and asylum seekers, including more than 80,000 Nicaraguans and 30,000 Venezuelans in recent years. Through the U.S. funded Protection Transfer Agreement, Costa Rica hosts individuals with urgent protection needs from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, while they undergo refugee processing

for resettlement. If confirmed, I will work with the Government to help strengthen its asylum system, support temporary worker programs, expand its efforts to deal with migration and protection issues and, very importantly, to address the root causes of migration.

The United States and Costa Rica collaborate closely to combat transnational criminal organizations that move illicit drugs to the U.S. and engage in human trafficking. Costa Rica is critical to this shared mission, given its strategic location, which positions it as the largest transshipment hub for South American cocaine bound for the U.S. In 2020, Costa Rica interdicted a record 71 metric tons of narcotics, demonstrating, not only its capabilities, but also the enormous challenges it faces. If confirmed, I commit to strongly support Costa Rica's counter-narcotics efforts.

For decades, Costa Rica has been a strong champion of democracy. Recently, its Government demonstrated a commitment to pressure Nicaragua's Ortega-Murillo regime to hold fair and free elections and to release political prisoners. Costa Rica has repeatedly called for a peaceful return to democracy in Venezuela and accountability for corruption.

In addressing the climate crisis, the United States has no stronger ally in this hemisphere than the Costa Ricans with their longstanding commitment to protecting the environment, conserving biodiversity, and reducing carbon emissions, in fact, outlining a pathway toward net zero emissions by 2050. If confirmed, I look forward to partnering with them to advance these shared goals.

Although Costa Rica has enjoyed a relatively stable economy, there are recent signs of strain evidenced by high unemployment, untenable public debt, and stress on the public health system due to COVID-19 and increased migration from Nicaragua. In addition to the human toll, these vulnerabilities can be exploited by our competitors and adversaries. If confirmed, I commit to strengthening our economic relationship with Costa Rica to promote mutual prosperity. In the near term, I will support Costa Rica's efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, which has greatly impacted the country, now in its fourth major surge. U.S. support to date has included a donation of half a million Pfizer vaccines.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading our Embassy team in San Jose and to working closely with you.

My highest priority will be to protect U.S. citizens and to champion our interests in cooperation with our strong partners in Costa Rica.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I'm happy to answer your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Before we start a round of five-minute questions with members, there are a series of questions we ask each nominee on behalf of the full committee and they, really, require a simple yes or no answer.

I would like to ask each question and get a verbal response from each of the nominees. These are questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you. I would ask each of you to provide just a yes or no answer.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[Witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you. All of the nominees have responded yes verbally.

I will recognize myself for a series of questions.

Mr. Nides, this is one of the most important relationships we have. It is long-standing, enduring, and incredibly bound by common values that we share with the people of Israel.

I think these are self-evident but I just want to make sure. You are committed to Israel's right to self-defense, are you not?

Mr. NIDES. Yes, I am.

The CHAIRMAN. Under U.S. law, there is a question of Israel's qualitative military edge. You are committed to continuing to pursue that under the law, right?

Mr. NIDES. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you support replenishment of the Iron Dome missile defense system—

Mr. NIDES. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Which has saved countless Israeli and Palestinian lives as well?

Mr. NIDES. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And you spoke to the Abraham Accords, which we all cherish that other countries have finally come together in recognizing Israel and we hope that that can be pursued even more significantly.

Those are all key elements and you have covered many other things in your opening statement.

Let me turn to Mr. Cohen. Since Canadian authorities detained the CFO of Huawei in December of 2019, China's Government has engaged in numerous forms of retaliation, including the imposition of tariffs and cutting imports of Canadian products.

However, the most egregious case is the PRC's arbitrary detention of two Canadian citizens, Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig, as well as the seemingly political conviction of Mr. Kovrig last month. These tactics by China require the international community to respond with a united purpose. I have spoken about this quite a bit.

What steps will you take to deepen coordination with our Canadian allies and ensure that our two countries formulate a joint response to the challenges posed by China's coercive diplomacy?

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I think the good news is that we start from a proposition, as you observed in your opening comments, where Canada and the United States share a commitment to democratic values and I think they share an abhorrence of much of the behavior of the People's Republic of China.

I think the United States has joined Canada in the condemnation of the treatment of the two Michaels. I think Canada almost seems to prefer working in multilateral ways in its foreign affairs, which sometimes may make it appear that they are less outspoken than you might otherwise think.

In the case of the two Michaels and arbitrary detention, they have been very outspoken and the United States has been very



supportive. I think we are all waiting for Canada to release its framework for its overall China policy, and I think as ambassador, if I am confirmed, it is an appropriate role to be engaged in discussions and make sure that Canada's policies reflect its words in terms of the treatment of China, and that we do improve the collaboration and coordination between our two countries in taking on the existential threat that is China politically, economically, diplomatically, et cetera.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

The Congress, as a whole, which is a rarity these days, but in a bipartisan way put out legislation, including legislation from this committee that became part of the overarching legislation on China, recognizing China as our most significant geostrategic challenge in the world. Our allies are going to be incredibly important to this.

You and I had an opportunity to speak yesterday. I appreciate you coming by the office.

I hope also upon your confirmation you can work with our Canadian partners, who we have a great deal of respect for. We honor the service and the sacrifices that they have made alongside of us in Afghanistan and other places as a NATO ally.

But I would hope that they would be more forthcoming on democracy and human rights issues in the hemisphere. They are a key hemispheric partner. They sit in the OAS with us.

And yet, I get disappointed at times when, for example, the Canadians do not join us, for example, on human rights and democracy in Cuba. It is pretty amazing to me.

I understand Canadians have economic interests in Cuba, but those should not overcome the human rights and democracy issue. It is something I hope you will work on upon your confirmation.

Dr. Telles, you mentioned Costa Rica and some of the challenges that it has now in COVID and some of the economic impacts on it. How do you think we can work together? What would be some of your top priorities to work with Costa Rica to help it meet these present challenges so it can continue to be what it has been on both refugees, democracy, a stalwart in the hemisphere?

Ms. TELLES. Chairman, thank you for your question. Very timely and relevant at this point.

And, certainly, as you mentioned, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the economic circumstance in Costa Rica as it has throughout the region and also globally.

One of the things that I would hope to do is to assist the Government in addressing the issues right now which are currently plaguing it, including high unemployment, also issues related to increasing public debt and also the strain that COVID-19 has placed on its health system.

And I would also suggest in dealing with these shorter-term issues that may require some financial assistance that we look to supporting Costa Rica and it's kind of a long-term economic resilience. And that would, certainly, mean to kind of strengthening our economic partnership with Costa Rica through trade and investment.

I would, certainly, reach out very proactively to American businesses to consider investing in Costa Rica, which has a very favorable business climate.

Additionally, I think that in terms of the longer-term resilience issues it will be important for Costa Rica to continue down the path it has begun already through its accession to the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation, which has, certainly, suggested certain reforms—economic and governmental reforms—which they are embarking on.

I believe that we also need to get the assistance of multinational organizations as well as international financial institutions to assist with long-term recovery.

In terms of your question about refugees, as you know, as I mentioned, Costa Rica has been an incredible partner, a regional leader, in terms of providing protection for refugees and asylum seekers.

And just very recently it, actually, has provided a home as it welcomed refugees from Nicaragua, in the last three years probably about 100,000 and from Venezuela close to 40,000 in the last—it just varies in terms.

I believe—and even though they are very willing and welcoming, it has, certainly, strained to some extent its public health system and its infrastructure.

I think that we need to look at some additional humanitarian assistance to Costa Rica and also to figure out how we can expand its capacity to receive migrants by supporting its temporary worker programs, its asylum protection programs also.

Again, I look forward, if confirmed, to working with the Government of Costa Rica to address these issues.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me let start with Mr. Nides. First of all, thank you for your enthusiastic condemnation of the despicable and anti-Semitic Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement. I really appreciate your enthusiasm for that position, which I share and many others share.

We have another member on the next panel who, I think, has less enthusiasm for that. But we are going to test that when we get there.

I also want to acknowledge your enthusiastic support for the Abraham Accords. That is the most enthusiasm I have heard from anyone from this administration regarding the Abraham Accords, even though almost everyone agrees that this was one of the most significant steps that has happened in the Middle East in decades.

I appreciate that and I also appreciate your personal commitments to expand the Abraham Accords where possible. That is a game changer in that region. Certainly, the more relations that the countries have with each other in the region is good for them and it is good for the world. Thank you for that.

The Palestinian issue that I am most concerned with is the “pay for slay” program, which I assume you are familiar with, and I would ask your thoughts on that, please.

Mr. NIDES. Senator, thank you very much, and I share your concern about this abhorrent behavior as it relates to the “pay for slay.” Obviously, legislation was passed the Taylor Force Act, which, we are quite focused on, and if I am fortunate enough to get confirmed, I have every intention of working with the Palestinians to try to get progress on this.

But I do not think there is anyone in this administration that would disagree with you about what has happened there, and we need to work to get it resolved.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that. I was one of the primary sponsors on Taylor Force. I had hoped that it had been more successful than it has been.

But if it is followed closely, it certainly makes inroads in that and I, along with others, are criticized sometimes because we are tough on the Palestinians and particularly when you are talking about money flowing to them because of the corruption and the way that the terrorists have a way of siphoning money from our money that is going there to help people in the country.

I think this is something that really deserves our continued attention and I am, certainly, going to be tough and I think everybody is going to be tough on this “pay for slay” program, and I hope you will enthusiastically join us as we continue that battle. Thank you.

Turning to Mr. Cohen, thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me on the issues with Canada. I, certainly, wish we had the same relationship with all countries.

Like the Chairman, I am not completely satisfied with their view on everything. But that is not unusual. There is virtually no country that we are in complete concurrence with.

Two of the real important issues for me are the Columbia River Treaty. It is important to all of us on a bipartisan basis who serve from the Pacific Northwest.

Senator Cantwell and I have been the two leading people on the negotiations that are going on. She is a very good partner in that regard. We are in complete agreement on where we need to go with this.

We talked about the heavy lift that it is and I know you are ready for that challenge, and we expect to continue that as it is going and we look forward to your help in that regard.

On the second issue, and that is the opening of the northern border, we share—my state shares a border with Canada and we are very painfully and personally aware of the cost of this closing.

I appreciate your commitment to work on getting that open as quickly as we can.

For Ms. Telles, the Costa Ricans switched their diplomatic relations from Taiwan to the PRC in 2007, and ever since then we have seen the slow creep of Chinese influence in that country.

Could I have your thoughts on that?

Ms. TELLES. Absolutely. Thank you for your question, Ranking Member Risch.

It is something of great concern, quite frankly. China has sought for some years now to expand its sphere of influence, politically and economically, and it would love nothing better than to have a beachhead in Costa Rica.

And in recent years, in the last few years or so, these efforts have become much more aggressive. Whether it is through promises of investment and trade or public diplomacy, they built them some time ago, as you know, a stadium and a police academy, but there are more recent offers of a similar nature.

Additionally, they attempted vaccine diplomacy. It did not work at this point, and they are now very interested, very aggressively, actually, pushing, trying to further infiltrate the Costa Rican telecommunications system through the sale at very good terms of their equipment for cellular phones.

I would say that I think the biggest, I think, or the most important strategy here would be, really, to strengthen our economic relationship with Costa Rica in terms of trade and foreign direct investment, and as I mentioned, I really want to urge the American companies to really invest in Costa Rica.

That, I think, will be probably one of the biggest leverages that we will have over time. Right now, we are their top trading partner and the largest contributor to foreign direct investment. I would want to preserve that and expand that.

But also, very importantly, I think it would be important, certainly, to urge the Costa Ricans to be mindful of our shared values of democracy and human rights, and also to encourage them when entering into contracts and list agreements to prioritize trusted partners and entities that will not compromise their long-term security.

But I am confident that in working with Costa Rica—it has been a great partner over many years—that we can achieve these goals.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. I appreciate that clear-eyed view. Your reference to the relatively small amount of money that China spends in these countries gets them tremendous leverage at times, whether it is here, whether it is in the Small Pacific nations. We have seen that over and over again.

I appreciate your attention to that and we will all be watching it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand Senator Cardin is with us virtually.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me start by thanking all of our nominees for their willingness to serve our country. We thank you. We thank your families.

These are critically important positions for the United States and we thank you for being willing to step up in this responsibility.

Mr. Nides, let me start with you. Thank you for the opportunity that we had to chat. I know your record over many, many years and I know your strong support for the importance of the U.S.-Israel relations.

We have already covered the issue about Israel's right to defend itself. We have already covered the partnership with the United States under a Memorandum of Understanding and the replenishment of the Iron Dome funds, and we have covered also the dangerous efforts that are made to isolate Israel through the BDS movement.

I want to talk in a positive note. We recognize that the need for peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis, that is in the in-

terest of both Palestinians, Israelis, and the United States and the region for security.

There have been many opportunities in the past where we came close but we were not able to complete the negotiations. It seems to me that we have two things at this moment that give signs of encouragement. We have already talked about one, the Abraham Accords, with countries normalizing their relations with Israel, and, as you point out, additional countries that are candidates for the Abraham Accords.

And we also have a broad coalition government in Israel right now that gives us maybe the political opportunity within Israel to be more aggressive on peace. We recognize the challenges among the Palestinians and their leadership.

But could you just share with us your thoughts as to whether this might be the right time to pursue peace between the Palestinians and Israelis?

Mr. NIDES. Senator Cardin, thank you for your question.

I think as President Biden said, I think, yesterday at the U.N. there is a view that a two-state solution, clearly, is a goal to try to attempt to achieve. I do not think any one of us believe that that is achievable in the next couple of weeks.

But I do believe that we need, as a government, to continue to create the pathway to achieve that and I think we are doing that through a variety of ways. One, talking about the importance of a two-state solution. Number two, adding to the assistance to the Palestinian people.

I think there is \$400 million of assistance for the Palestinian people through a variety of programs to send a strong message to the Palestinian people and to encourage both the Palestinians and the Israelis not to take unilateral action that will make the path towards a two-state solution impossible.

I, obviously, believe that Prime Minister Bennett's visit here was a successful one. I think the relationship between the prime minister and the foreign minister with the Biden administration is strong.

I hope that relationship will continue to grow as we and, hopefully, when I have the opportunity potentially to be confirmed I will reach out to the Palestinian people to continue to send the message that we not only care, we believe in the importance of the same freedom and security and prosperity that the Israelis want to achieve.

Senator, I am, generally, an optimist. You would not take these jobs if you were not. I am also a realist. But I hope we are beginning the process to create the environment for that to happen.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that response.

Mr. Cohen, let me just ask quickly a question in regards to U.S.-Canadian relations. We know it is our closest ally from the point of view of regional. A great relationship between our two countries.

But I think we have to recognize that there is damage that has been done. The Canadian Globe and Mail reported on July 22nd that, and I quote, "The political discord in the United States remains dangerously deep."

And although Canada-U.S. relations are improving now that Donald Trump is no longer President, it will be a long time before things return to normal, if they ever do.

Now, I do not want to rehash what happened over the past four years. But I do want to just emphasize the fact, and we talk to Canadians all the time, there has been damage done in our relationship.

What is your strategy in order to strengthen the ties as far as the feelings among the people in Canada and the United States towards each other?

Mr. COHEN. Senator, I agree with the premise of your question quite strongly, and I think that it plays to one of my strengths over the course of my career.

I am going to start with the simplest thing. I am going to show up. I am going to be there. I am going to reach out.

One of the outcomes of the election on Monday is there are going to be a number of new cabinet ministers and I want to make sure that I try to create a relationship and a communication channel with the Government and make it clear that I am there to listen. I am there to, obviously, represent the United States interests, that I am there to be communicative and two ways communicative, to communicate our desires and our positions, for example, on issues like China, as the Chairman raised.

But I am also there to listen to Canadian concerns and to bring them back and to make sure that I create a reality that the United States cares about Canada as a strong ally, cares about what they think, and wants to be a true partner in trade and diplomacy, in defense, in energy and climate change, in all of the issues that we share values on and that we work closely together.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

The next available member is Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, and thank you to all three of our nominees today. Thank you for your willingness to continue to support our nation and to serve overseas and for your families, who are with you today.

It is my honor to work with you and to question you today, and I intend to support your confirmation before the Senate of the United States and to welcome and express my appreciation, Max, to you—Rhonda, it is great to see you again—to Joe and to Raymond.

All of us are able to sustain our careers in service because of the support of our families. Thank you for that.

If I might, Mr. Nides, I join many others in saying the Abraham Accords enjoy bipartisan support. I look forward to partnering with you and figuring out how we can more fully implement them.

As the Chairman of the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee, I am committed to working with you on ensuring Israel's security and the continued strengthening of that long, deep, and important partnership.

I want to ask you about a specific program that was funded, the Nita Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act. It has \$250

million over five years to support venture capital investment in the West Bank and people-to-people programs.

Are you familiar with this? How do you think it might contribute to the very difficult work of developing an environment for partnership and for peace?

Mr. NIDES. Thank you very much, Senator, for the question.

Yes, I am quite knowledgeable about this and I congratulate the Congress for doing this program in a bipartisan way with your leadership and many of the Republicans who signed on for this legislation.

I happen to have gone out to see former Congresswoman Lowey in Westchester a few weeks ago to talk to her specifically about the program. The program, as you know, is a \$250 million program over a five-year period of time that marries both the DFC and USAID to do exactly what needs to be done, which is not only people-to-people growth but, more importantly, trying to use these monies to improve both the Palestinian and Israeli relationships.

Congresswoman Lowey, someone who I have known for a long time, it was an honor for her, clearly, but shows the importance of her commitment to the U.S.-Israel-Palestinian two-state solution idea and for us to focus on that.

I am quite familiar with it. I have already had some preliminary discussions with folks as I got briefed up on it. But I think it has got an enormous amount of potential and I look forward to working with you as we implement programs if I am fortunate enough to get confirmed.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Tom.

Mr. Cohen, it is great to see you before us and to be with you again, and I think you will serve as an excellent ambassador to address some of the issues Senator Cardin just raised.

Senator Udall and I actually were part of a bipartisan delegation that went to Latvia a number of years ago where we visited with a Canadian battalion that was helping lead NATO security presence in that Baltic country. Just one of many reminders of the ways in which Canada is not just a critical trade partner, not just a critical values partner, but is a real security partner.

How will you work with Canada to advance our shared security goals through NATO, through NORAD, through their vital work in peacekeeping and other partnerships that are essential to our security?

Mr. COHEN. Again, I think I will have the advantage of starting with the foundation of a long-term friendship and partnership.

There isn't any resistance to the importance of Canada and the United States working together on defense arrangements, including the ones that you have identified.

But as the Chairman pointed out in one of his questions, there is always room for improvement. Let me put it that way. When I look at the side of our relationships about benefit sharing and about making sure that we are all investing appropriately in these defense partnerships, in NORAD, Canada has not appropriated the sum of money that is necessary to fund the modernization and improvement of NORAD that we have agreed to conceptually.

And although the percentage of the Canadian defense budget is creeping upwards, it is only at about 1½ percent and it is projected to drop to as low as 1 percent over the next decade or so.

I think that is an opportunity for dialogue. It is an opportunity for conversation. It is an opportunity to say if we really believe in the importance of NATO, if we really believe in the importance of NORAD, we have to invest appropriately to make sure that we can deliver on the defense benefits to both of our countries and to the free world.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

And if I might, Dr. Telles, just a question to follow up on your previous exchange about foreign direct investment.

I was very encouraged to see Intel's announcement in July that they will invest \$600 million in a long-idled semiconductor microchip plant in Costa Rica.

How can partners like Costa Rica help partner with us to support the near shoring of critical technologies as we look to develop supply chains that are more robust and independent?

Ms. TELLES. That is an excellent question, Senator, and I do think that that Costa Rica could play a very important role in partnering with us in this respect.

As you know, they have a relatively well-educated well-trained workforce. They also offer a very positive business environment, open economy, relatively low levels of corruption and such.

And so given that they have already—as you know, one of their main exports is medical equipment, but aside from that they have a capacity to engage in broader production, and I do believe that we could certainly encourage this particular partnership even further.

Senator COONS. Thank you, and I look forward to working with you to support and strengthen the ability of the Costa Rican people to both welcome refugees and to be a wonderful development and security partner with the United States.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand that Senator Young is with us virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, Chairman. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Nides, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has made it clear that his government opposes the Biden administration's efforts to revive the Iran deal, and they would ensure Israel has the ability to go it alone in securing itself from Iranian terror.

I do not necessarily doubt your commitment to the U.S.-Israel relationship, especially having visited with you, sir. But this administration seems intent on pursuing certain policies that, I believe, will only undermine it.

Mr. Nides, how can an administration that claims to be unequivocal about Israel's security continue to press for revival of a deal with Iran that Israel's own government opposes due to the security risks that it presents?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, thank you for the question, as you and I discussed in your office.

I will make two points. One is, as you know, the President has been quite clear that he is attempting to use diplomacy to resolve the Iran nuclear situation. He has also made it clear, as Secretary



Blinken has, that he will not stand by to allow the Iranians to obtain a nuclear weapon.

Obviously, I am not a party, since I have not been confirmed, to the level of negotiations, but those are the binding facts of this relationship and the position of this administration.

Senator YOUNG. If you believe the JCPOA, sir, does enhance Israel's security—let us just take that as a premise because you would almost have to in order to reconcile the commitment to U.S.-Israel relationship and their intent on making sure that Israel can defend itself with this JCPOA negotiation.

Let us just assume the JCPOA enhances Israel's security. How do you square that with Israel's opposition to the agreement and the prime minister's commitment to do whatever is necessary to secure the people of Israel?

Mr. NIDES. Again, Senator, I am not, obviously, currently involved in the discussions and negotiations, obviously, with Israel or the conversations going on in Vienna.

I will only say that I think the President has been quite clear both in his statements yesterday at the U.N. and the public statements that he and the Secretary of State have said, is obviously they want to, if possible, use diplomacy to resolve the situation.

And I think, as this process plays out, and if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, obviously, I will be more informed about the details of that. But that is, certainly, the policy of the administration and I do believe that there are ongoing communications between the Israeli Government and the American Government as it relates to whatever discussions are going on around the diplomatic channel and non-diplomatic channel through the conversations among the parties.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Mr. Nides.

Mr. Cohen, the United States and Canada are close trade partners, especially evident in the symbiotic relationship between my state of Indiana and the Canadians.

As a leader in the automotive industry, Indiana exports over \$7 billion in motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts to Canada. Canada is also Indiana's largest export destination, followed by Mexico, according to 2019 statistics.

It is safe to say that we rely on access to partners in Canada in order to export products all across the globe and keep our industries humming, and that access was solidified by the landmark USMCA agreement.

As ambassador, Mr. Cohen, how will you work to mitigate supply chain disruptions that business continuously faces as they emerge from the pandemic, and do you see value in diverting supply chains out of China and closer to U.S. soil?

Mr. COHEN. Good morning, Senator. Good to see you.

I think the problem you have put your finger on is something I alluded to in my opening statement, which is the pandemic has, clearly, been disruptive to supply chains and the limitations on travel have complicated things.

I think, in the automotive world, by the way, we are working through the processes of USMCA to try and deal with some of the automobile industry issues that were—frankly, were one of the reasons for USMCA being passed.

If I am confirmed, though, I think this is another case where my role as ambassador is to help encourage these types of discussions and, obviously, anytime we can divert supply chains to our hemisphere as opposed to China is an economic benefit to the hemisphere and to the United States.

And to the extent that we can accomplish that, I think that is good policy for the United States and for Canada.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you. I am out of time. I appreciate your desire to serve, all of you.

Senator SCHATZ. [Presiding.] Thank you, Senator Young.

Mr. NIDES, in my view, we have a moral obligation to help the Palestinians that are suffering, and I understand that there are those who do not share that view.

But could you talk about why U.S. humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians is not just morally right but good for us and for the Israelis and serves the long-term interests of a two-state solution?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, thank you very much, and I wholeheartedly agree with that.

The moneys going to the Palestinians are going to the Palestinian people, and making life better for the Palestinian people has been a bipartisan issue. It has not just been a Democratic issue.

For many years, this committee and the appropriators have appropriated money for the Palestinian people from everything from water to education to health care.

I think it makes our national security interests because that is who we are as a country. I think it helps the Israelis by keeping things calm not only in the West Bank, which I think is important for the security, and I think it is important for us if we believe, ultimately, that the solution is a two-state solution it provides them an opportunity and a guide path for that.

I am in complete concurrence and I think it is important with all the caveats that we all understand and all the rules which are in place, but giving assistance to the Palestinian people—not to the Palestinian Authority, but to the Palestinian people—is in our national security best interests, and I think and I believe that also in Israel's national security interest as well.

Senator SCHATZ. Can you flesh out that last part for us? Can you talk about the work that the U.S. Government and the NGO community does to make sure that our assistance goes to support the needs of the Palestinian people and what guard rails we will have in place to ensure that the U.S. funding does not get diverted from a humanitarian mission?

Mr. NIDES. Sir, I think we are using our trusted partners. The auditing that goes on through USAID and our other development partners is focused on that.

We are very aware and very focused on the Taylor Force Act. Those monies will be to the Palestinian people. These are programs that help healthcare, education, water purification, a variety of programs, and I believe, if I am fortunate enough to get confirmed to speak for USAID, but I know they are very much focused on how those monies are being spent and all the guard rails that are put up in conjunction with the laws and regulations that are in place.

Senator SCHATZ. I will submit this question for the record because I want to get to Mr. Cohen.

But I do want to ask you about the potential for clean energy partnerships between the United States and Israel.

Mr. Cohen, the Canadian Government passed a law this summer ratifying its commitment to clean energy by the year 2050. It still has a lot of work to do. Everybody has a lot of work to do to flesh out its plan and put funding behind it.

But we do need this kind of ambition and commitment from our allies if we are going to combat the climate crisis. Can you talk about how we can make climate action more of a main part of our bilateral relationship with Canada?

Mr. COHEN. Good morning, Senator. Good to see you.

And I think the premise of your question provides some of the answer. When we deal with Canada, we are dealing with a friend that shares our values and that includes around climate issues.

You have the legislation. You also have Prime Minister Trudeau's federal carbon pricing, which was layered on top of that legislation and which was just upheld by the Canadian Supreme Court. You have got real action being taken by Canada.

I think the best ways to align is better coordination and continued communication. We have got two current examples of that. One is the roadmap that I referenced in my opening statement, which identifies climate and fighting climate change as one of the priorities of Canada and the United States working together. That is a statement from the highest levels of both governments, the president and the prime minister.

And the second thing I would point to is the recent convening that Climate Secretary Kerry had with Canada and promised a periodic high-level convening around climate change-related issues to keep the two countries aligned and to keep this issue front of mind.

I mean, I think that both are consistent with my sense that we need coordination, communication, at the highest levels of our governments.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, and thanks to all of you for your willingness to serve.

Senator Barrasso?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Nides, congratulations on your nomination. I just had a chance to talk with Senator Klobuchar, who gave you such a nice introduction, and congratulations.

I want to talk about Iron Dome. The U.S.-Israel relationship has long been the cornerstone of America's strategy in the Middle East. Israel constantly faces terrorist attacks. We have seen it again recently, threats including the rocket attacks by Hamas in Gaza, attacks from Iranian-backed groups in Lebanon and Syria.

Iron Dome is the first line of defense for Israel. In May, Israel faced over 4,000 rockets and attacks by the Iranian-backed terrorist group Hamas. The Iron Dome system intercepted more than 90 percent in terms of being effective in intercepting the rockets threatening civilians and critical infrastructure. It saved lives.

Yet, what we just saw is the House Democrats removed funding for the Iron Dome that had been included in their Continuing Resolution funding bill. This just happened within the last day.

Do you support funding to replenish the Iron Dome defense system?

Mr. NIDES. Absolutely.

Senator BARRASSO. And how important is continued U.S.-Israel cooperation on the Iron Dome and other cooperative defense programs?

Mr. NIDES. Very.

Senator BARRASSO. In terms of Jerusalem, is Jerusalem the capital of Israel?

Mr. NIDES. Yes.

Senator BARRASSO. Do you believe it should be the permanent place of the U.S. Embassy in Israel?

Mr. NIDES. Yes.

Senator BARRASSO. In 2019, the United States formally recognized Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. Do you view the Golan Heights as part of Israel?

Mr. NIDES. We support the current position vis-a-vis the threats that we have in Syria with Assad and it is a strategically very important strategic position for the Israelis.

Senator BARRASSO. In 2018, Congress passed into law the Taylor Force Act. It prohibits U.S. economic assistance that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority as long as the Palestinian Authority continues to pay financial rewards for terrorism.

I know Senator Risch talked about the importance of this issue a little earlier in this hearing. Does the Palestinian Authority continue to subsidize and pay financial reward to terrorists?

Mr. NIDES. I believe they have not stopped these payments.

Senator BARRASSO. If confirmed, are you fully committed to stopping the terror incentive payments by the Palestinian Authority?

Mr. NIDES. If I am confirmed, absolutely will work to achieve that goal.

Senator BARRASSO. There is a new Palestinian Authority law that, effectively, nationalized all what were once independent civil society groups. These groups need to now submit plans and budgets to the Palestinian Authority to review their conformity with the, quote, "work plan of the relevant ministry."

The law also gives the Palestinian Authority power to dissolve any organization and then seize or transfer its assets to a similar Palestinian association or institution.

You look at that, the way that they are going to do this, looking at this and saying would you support the United States providing taxpayer resources to these organizations if they can be seized by the resources can be seized by the Palestinian Authority, which the United States is legally prohibited from funding directly?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, I am not totally aware of exactly the program you are speaking of but, clearly, the Taylor Force Act is the law of the land and, obviously, we will abide by any laws, obviously, on the books.

On that particular one, I am not particularly aware of that piece of—or that Palestinian legislation or whatever law that may be in place. But I will, certainly, look into it.

Senator BARRASSO. I appreciate your willingness to look into it. Israel continues to face direct threats from Iran and its terrorist proxies. The administration's budget request includes \$3.8 billion in U.S. security assistance to Israel.

President Biden has clearly stated, "I am not going to place conditions for the security assistance given the serious threats that Israel is facing, and this would be, I think, irresponsible."

Do you oppose placing conditions on U.S. security assistance to Israel?

Mr. NIDES. Yes, sir.

Senator BARRASSO. And how would reducing or conditioning security assistance to Israel hurt Israel's ability to defend itself from threats?

Mr. NIDES. The reality is the administration does not support conditionality on the assistance and, as you know, we are at a \$38 billion tenure MOU, and the position of the administration is we do not support conditionality.

Senator BARRASSO. Last week marked the one-year anniversary of the Abraham Accords, the historic diplomatic U.S.-brokered agreements between Israel and several of the Arab neighbors.

The Trump administration helped negotiate several historic developments between Israel, its regional Arab neighbors—the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan. They joined Egypt and Jordan in establishing relationships diplomatically with Israel.

These agreements have created a path to peace through recognition and engagement rather than isolation and boycotts of Israel.

Israel's foreign minister recently said the Abraham Accords club is open to new members as well. Secretary Blinken pledged the administration will continue to build on the successful efforts of the last administration to keep normalization marching forward.

As the ambassador, what role would you play in fostering peace with Israel in the Arab world?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, as I said in my opening statement, I am quite focused on the Abraham Accords. I think they are good for Israel. If my North Star is a democratic Jewish state, I think this makes it stronger.

Obviously, my hope is that as we operationalize the current Abraham Accords countries and then expand it, it will also benefit the Palestinians as well. I think, obviously, it is something that is good for Israel. It is, certainly, good for the United States' national security interests, and we would love to, at the time, make sure it is also good for the Palestinians as well.

But I will work closely with the implementation, work to strive to get the new additional countries into the Abraham Accords, and I look forward to working with you on that.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SCHATZ. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations to the witnesses. What a great panel.

I am fortunate to have two friends on this panel, Tom Nides and David Cohen, and Dr. Telles, while we do not know each other enough for me to call you a friend, your husband, Joe, is a friend.

I am an admirer of yours, but a friend of your husband. What a good panel. I am really excited to be with you.

I have two questions. Sometimes I ask questions to make a point, but these are questions because they are things I am puzzled about. One is for you, Mr. Nides, and one is for you, Dr. Telles.

Mr. Nides, your opening testimony talks about long-time U.S. policy dating back to President Truman supporting two-state, a peaceful Israel, peaceful Palestine living side by side, and that has always been my thought about the best outcome there.

But I will say, I have been to Israel and Palestine now probably more than any other country in the world—I do not consider myself an expert but I have been a lot—I look for evidence that Israeli or Palestinian leadership want a two-state solution and I am not sure I see it.

I do not necessarily see it in the current government of Israel that they really want a two-state solution. And when I am talking to Palestinian leadership, they sort of suggest that they want it but I do not see a capacity to carry it out.

And when I talk to just everyday people, I often hear two-state, one-state, that is for politicians. On the Palestinian side, what I often hear is, we just want equal rights to water and to voting—equal rights.

I detect a troubling lack of interest in the two-state solution in Israel and Palestine, and it makes me wonder whether the U.S. can have a policy for a nation that it does not necessarily have for itself.

My question to you is what evidence is there right now that Israeli or Palestinian leadership want a two-state solution?

Mr. NIDES. Sir, it is a great question, obviously. We can only control what we can control and, in our view—this is the United States' position and this administration's position—is to set the table, keeping the parties not doing unilateral action that makes that impossible to achieve and we do that by a variety of things: assistance to the Palestinians, clear support to Israel for their own defense, the MOU, providing opportunities on the Abraham Accords, making sure that we articulate to the Palestinians that we care about their freedom and their prosperity and their security.

We, as the United States, can only set the table, potentially giving us the opportunity to achieve it at some point, as the President has articulated.

I cannot, obviously, speak for the Israelis or, obviously, the Palestinians. But, hopefully, if I am confirmed, I can speak for the United States and we will at least not to exasperate and divide but encourage the parties coming together.

Senator Kaine. I think that is about as good an answer as anyone could give, because I am just not sure there is a lot of evidence out there right now.

We should do what we can to, hopefully, create opportunities for progress. But it really troubles me, and we are in the midst of a painful analysis right now of the last chapter of U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan, and one of the questions we are having to ask ourselves is did we want something, a set of things, for Afghanistan that the Afghan leaders did not want for themselves,

and we have to be humble in asking that question and getting to the bottom of it.

Dr. Telles, here is my question for you. I lived in Honduras for a while, and when I lived in Honduras in 1980 and '81, Costa Rica was sort of a real island of stability and a very tough Honduras was a military dictatorship. There was a Contra war going on against the Government of Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador in the midst of brutal civil wars.

Why has not Costa Rica's success had a little positive infection throughout the Americas? It has always puzzled me that they have been able, and thank God, they have been able to be—they have got challenges, too—but an island of stability.

But that was 40 years ago that I was in Central America. Honduras is not a military dictatorship now but it is equally troubled, maybe more violent and killing of journalists and activists.

What is it about Costa Rica that enables it to be successful? Why has not that model been attractive to its neighbors?

Ms. TELLES. Thank you for your question, Senator, and also I appreciate your interest in Central America, knowing that you lived there for a bit and were involved in humanitarian efforts.

It is a very good question. It is a fact that Costa Rica has really enjoyed a stable democracy and a relatively prosperous economy over the years, and it could be a part of its roots go back to 1949 when, after almost a year of civil strife a constitution was adopted that really emphasized democracy but also, importantly, I think, took certain actions to invest in the people of Costa Rica.

They eliminated their army and they put most of their resources into public health and into education, and I think that that went a long way, I think, towards helping to create a middle class, helping to stabilize its long-term interests.

Why has that not been exported successfully to other countries? That is a very good question. If you look at some of the history of Central America, some instability has been related to military actions which have engaged in coups and also repression of the people. And so that is just one simple answer.

But I do hope that Costa Rica can increasingly through its leadership in the Central American region and its recent presidency, actually, of the Central American Integration System will continue to promulgate our shared values of democracy and human rights, which are very necessary right now in Central America.

Senator KAINE. I am well over my time, but I really appreciate both of you for offering good insights into two very tough questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I yield back.

Senator SCHATZ. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to each of you, I want to congratulate you on your nominations. It is a tremendous honor to be nominated to represent your nation in this way and I wish you the best as you move through the hearings process.

I would like to start with an area that is of particular strategic concern, although all of your countries are terribly important—the countries that you are hoping to represent the United States to—but that is Israel.

And Mr. Nides, I wanted to reach out to you. Earlier this year on a 97 to 3 vote, an amendment that I co-authored with Senator Jim Inhofe was passed to ensure that Jerusalem continues to be recognized by the United States as the capital of Israel.

That is pursuant to the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995. The Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 codified U.S. policy, first, ensuring that Jerusalem would be the capital of Israel and that Jerusalem should remain an undivided city.

Mr. Nides, as nominee to be our ambassador to Israel, do you support the Jerusalem Act of 1995 and, in particular, do you agree that Jerusalem should continue to be recognized as the capital of the State of Israel by the United States, that Jerusalem should remain an undivided city, and that the United States should maintain its embassy to Israel in Jerusalem?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, thank you for your question, and the answer is yes. The capital of Israel is Jerusalem. The embassy is in Jerusalem. If I am confirmed, I will be living in Jerusalem. Obviously, that is something that I will be looking forward to.

Obviously, at a certain point, if there is a negotiation between the Palestinians and the Israelis as it relates to a final status, long from now, that will be up to the parties. But from the United States' perspective, Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.

Senator HAGERTY. With respect to the Palestinian negotiations, I would like to probe further on that.

Mr. NIDES. Please.

Senator HAGERTY. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett recently visited here, met with our president.

President Biden told him, told Prime Minister Bennett that he intends to open a U.S. consulate for Palestine in Jerusalem. Prime Minister Bennett's response was not positive to that. In fact, he indicated publicly his opposition to President Biden's proposal.

Foreign Minister Lapid called Biden's proposal a bad idea. Indeed, the U.S. embassy currently has a Palestinian affairs unit at Agron. I visited that facility in June of this year.

If the U.S. Government were to open and maintain an embassy, a consulate, a legation, some type of function like that, some type of diplomatic facility in Jerusalem besides the one that exists inside the U.S. embassy to the State of Israel, do you think that that course of action is consistent with the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995?

Do you think that that supports the philosophy of that law that Jerusalem is the undivided capital of the State of Israel?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, yes, I do. I, fundamentally, believe that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. The embassy will be in Jerusalem. As you know, the issue around the consulate, that consulate has existed in one form or another for almost 130 years in one form or another.

Obviously, the opening of the consulate if it occurs—and as you know, the President has indicated, as well as the Secretary, that we would like to open the consulate—it will have no impact upon the capital of Israel being Jerusalem.

This is something, obviously, if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed I will be, obviously, addressing but, obviously, taking my direction from the President and the Secretary of State.



Senator HAGERTY. I appreciate the position you are in. I just hope that we take into account the position of our ally, Israel, our strongest ally in the Middle East, and their concerns, I think, are very relevant and pertinent to this discussion.

I would like to turn to another point, very quickly, and that is yesterday the House decided to remove funding to resupply and replenish the Iron Dome rocket defense system.

I was very disappointed to see it. I am also happy that Leader McConnell and Appropriations Committee Vice Chairman Shelby are proposing a Continuing Resolution that will include a billion dollars to replenish the Iron Dome.

In fact, earlier this year, I introduced the Emergency Resupply for the Iron Dome Act of 2021 to immediately resupply the Iron Dome. I did that along with our colleagues, Senator Cruz and Rubio, here.

I also visited Israel with Senator Cruz immediately after the 11-day war. I saw the benefit of having a technology like that that saved both Israeli and Palestinian lives.

And I want to ask you if you agree that that defensive capability that we provided through the Iron Dome is actually a benefit to our relationship with Israel and to their position there?

Mr. NIDES. Absolutely. Senator, I will make just one quick point.

Number one, the President has been very clear that he supports the replenishment of the Iron Dome.

Number two, obviously, it is in our national security interest to support a very, very important ally in the region, and this is a defensive mechanism. It is to stop rockets from raining in on Israel.

We are supportive of the replenishment and it is in our national security interest, and it is our desire and hope that those funds will be provided to replenish the Iron Dome.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you. I am very pleased to hear that position. Thanks very much.

Senator SCHATZ. Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just a few quick comments and then a couple of questions.

Senator Van Hollen and I just returned from a trip to Israel to meet with the new Government. Incredibly impressive, this coalition that has come together, an unlikely one.

The United States is at our best when we are a helpful and active broker for peace, when we are a friend of Israel but when we are also acting to try to bring the Palestinians to the negotiating table. We abdicated that responsibility for the last four years.

And as you mentioned, Mr. Nides, there was a consulate in Jerusalem for 150 years. This was a effective nonissue prior to the closure of that consulate during the Trump administration.

It is an easy thing to do to just go back to the status quo of a century-plus. But it is important to the Palestinians because they see it as a way for this administration to signal that we care about the plight of Palestinians just like we care about the security of Israel.

Similarly, I support Iron Dome funding. I think we should telegraph right now that we are going to continue to be a full partner with Israel in making sure that they can defend themselves.

But I also think we need to send a message that we are going to restart our partnership with the Palestinians to try to address their legitimate humanitarian needs. This committee has at times not been helpful in allowing the administration to get money to the Palestinian Authority. There are desperate reconstruction needs in Gaza right now.

And so my suggestion is that we should move ahead with Iron Dome funding, but we should partner it with some significant humanitarian relief to the Palestinian people. I think that is just the right thing to do.

Mr. Nides, I wanted to ask you a specific question about the Palestinian elections that have been postponed now. I think it is really important for there to be elections in the PA, in particular, because we need a shot at new leadership. We need the ability of some new voices to be able to break through.

They were postponed, and the reason given was that there was not a commitment by the Israeli Government to allow for elections to happen inside Jerusalem.

I do not know if that is the real reason or not, but I, certainly, know it would be a lot better if the Israelis made that commitment. And while we were there, the prime minister and the PA made a commitment that if the Israelis allowed for elections to go forward amongst Palestinians in Jerusalem, they would schedule them within six months.

How important do you think it is that these elections take place and what role can you, as an ambassador, play in trying to make sure that they occur?

Mr. NIDES. Senator, first of all, thank you for your question and your statement, and I wholeheartedly agree with you.

As I said to Senator Kaine a few minutes ago, we, as Americans, need to set the table for the potential of a two-state solution through assistance and through strong support for Israel and the MOU so we can actually walk and chew gum at the same time as it relates to doing both at the same time.

As it relates to the elections, I agree with you elections would be good for the Palestinians. If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will work with the Israeli Government to assure that that issue is not an obstacle to achieve elections.

And as you and I both know, we are not sure how much of that was the reason. But I would, certainly, work to make sure that is taken off the table as an issue or an obstacle for elections in the— with the Palestinians.

Senator MURPHY. Yeah, I think that is the right approach. Let us eliminate all of the excuses to not go forward with this election.

I understand the danger of this election. Hamas is, obviously, now in the wake of the latest conflict more politically potent in the West Bank than ever before. But that in and of itself is not a reason to try to give a new generation of leaders the chance to step up.

Mr. Cohen, just very quickly, sanctions coordination between the United States and Canada. We are best when we do things together. We worked together, for instance, on sanctions on Belarus.

What is your analysis of the willingness of the Canadian Government to be able to continue to work with us on sanctions? How important do you think that will be in your new role?

It seems like an area where we can do more, where we can communicate earlier. We are stronger when the United States and Canada speak together on issues of pro-democracy and pro-human rights sanctions policy.

Mr. COHEN. Senator, good to see you. Good afternoon.

I think your question is absolutely correct and whenever Canada and the United States can work together we are more powerful. We speak with a greater voice.

The issue of sanctions coordination and sanctions policy is an issue that this committee has dealt with and there is legislation now for a sanctions coordinator position within the State Department, and I think the work was started on creating that. The plug was pulled during the Trump administration.

It is my understanding that work is being done to identify a candidate to be nominated for that position, which would report to the Secretary of State, and I think that is an important tool to improve the coordination of sanctions, which will improve the effectiveness of sanctions and will be another example of Canada and the United States being able to work together to advance our mutual goals.

Senator MURPHY. Great. Thank you very much. I look forward to working with you on that.

The CHAIRMAN. [Presiding.] Thank you.

I understand Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually.

Senator Van Hollen: Yes. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, thank you.

To all of our nominees, congratulations on your nominations.

Mr. Cohen, great to see a fellow Swarthmore alum nominated to be our ambassador to Canada. I do have some serious concerns with the current disconnect in our policy with respect to Canada and travel to the United States.

If you are vaccinated as a Canadian you can fly to the United States but cannot cross the border by car, and this is despite the fact that Canada has a higher vaccination rate than the United States.

If I have time at the end of my question, I may circle back with you on that issue.

Mr. Nides, congratulations on your nomination. Great to see you. I agree with the points that you made in your opening statement.

I recently traveled to Israel and the West Bank with Senator Murphy and two of our colleagues, and you have heard some of the report just now from Senator Murphy. We had positive visits in both stops. We very much and warmly welcomed many of the new steps being taken by the Government in Israel.

We discussed the importance of our relationship, including the continuation of the MOU, which you reference in your opening remarks. And I fully support replenishment of the Iron Dome, which helped save lives in the recent conflict between Israel and Hamas.

You say in your statement that we need to work to preserve the vision of a two-state solution. I agree with you. As you know, the President agrees with you.

If you could just say in your own words why you think that that is important for the future, both for Israel and for the Palestinians, and what you will do as ambassador to preserve that option, as you say, in your statement.

Mr. NIDES. Senator, thank you for the question.

If my North Star is a democratic Jewish state, I believe to preserve that—to preserve that, having a two-state solution preserves that. I think it creates the environment for the Palestinians to live with the same freedom and security and prosperity that the Israelis have.

I believe that us providing the assistance for the Palestinian people is critically important. It is not just the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do for our own security.

I think providing security assistance is the right thing to do for not only Israel and the Palestinians but for the Americans as well.

Israel is our most, if not one of the most, important allies that we have in the region and in the world and keeping that safe is relatively and exceptionally important for their security and for our national security.

I just think if you fundamentally believe, as I do, that a two-state solution provides that security for the long haul, I think it is the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do, and if I am fortunate enough to get confirmed, I will work towards that goal.

Senator Van Hollen: And what specific measures would you take as ambassador to preserve that option? Because as you know, the door is rapidly closing through changes on the ground with respect to a two-state solution. What measures do you think need to be taken to keep that option open?

Mr. NIDES. If I am fortunate enough to get confirmed, the most important thing is for neither parties, the Israelis or the Palestinians, to take unilateral action that prevents that from happening.

And so if I am fortunate enough to get confirmed, I will work with the parties to avoid that, and we all know those issues that create the environment that allows for conflicts to occur.

I think the goal of the ambassador is to articulate the vision of the President and the Secretary of State, but to try to keep the parties not creating an atmosphere that we cannot move forward on a vision of a two-state solution.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you.

We also, as Senator Murphy said, met with Prime Minister Shtayyeh in the West Bank, who said and acknowledged the importance of opening up the Palestinian Authority to elections.

As you probably saw, they just announced municipal elections this December. But there is the issue of the Legislative Assembly elections. I am pleased to hear your response to Senator Murphy with respect to working with our Israeli partners to make sure that Palestinians in East Jerusalem can vote and make sure that that is not an excuse for not going forward with the legislative elections.

Finally, as you know, the President has said that he wants to reverse the decision by the Trump administration that shut down our consulate in Jerusalem.

Do you support reopening that consulate as the President has committed to do and what do you think the timetable for that will be?

Mr. NIDES. I, certainly, support that, as the President has indicated and the Secretary of State has announced.

Until I am confirmed I am not privy to the conversations that are happening between the State Department or the administration with the Israelis. But, obviously, that is something that, once I am fortunate enough to get confirmed, will work on and be able to report back to you on a timing.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot see the clock. Has my time run out?

The CHAIRMAN. It ran down a while ago.

[Laughter.]

Senator Van Hollen: All right. Thank you all very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

This particular part of the hearing is now over. This record is going to remain open to the close of business tomorrow for questions to the record.

I would urge the nominees if they get a question to respond to it expeditiously and fully so that we can consider your nominations for a business meeting.

And with the thanks of the committee, we will now move to our second panel.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. Let me introduce our second panel as they get themselves adjusted to their positions.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. We have two nominations on the second panel: our former colleague Senator Tom Udall to be an ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa, and Ms. Sarah Margon to be the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. I would ask our other nominees to please take your conversations outside of the chamber so we can move on.

I know that Senators Heinrich and Lujan have expressed their interest in introducing Senator Udall but they have not yet arrived. We will wait for them in the moment.

I also understand that our former colleague and member of this committee, Senator Feingold, is going to introduce Ms. Margon virtually today.

Is Senator Feingold with us?

Senator Feingold, welcome back to the committee even if it is virtually. We will recognize you to give an introduction of Ms. Margon.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL FEINGOLD,  
FORMER U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN**

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Risch and members of the committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today to introduce Sarah Margon, a nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, which is known as DRL.

I worked closely with DRL during my tenure at the State Department when I was the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes region of Africa. I would argue the DRL's work has never been more im-

portant than it is right now, with democracy going head to head with the growing threats of kleptocracy and authoritarianism around the globe.

Right now, democracy is losing some ground in several countries with devastating consequences for human rights, the rule of law, independent judiciaries, and other democratic principles.

President Biden has stressed repeatedly that human rights must be at the center of our foreign policy, and I could not agree more. Democracy and human rights go hand in hand, and DRL is at the forefront of implementing President Biden's commitment to human rights and to crafting and implementing policy aimed at strengthening and preserving the democratic values and principles that we so staunchly believe in and cherish.

Sarah is an exceptional candidate to lead DRL at this time and to help inform and guide human rights and democracy-focused U.S. foreign policy. It is a true honor for me to introduce her.

She came to work for me many years ago when I was a member of this committee. At the time, she was coming not just from Oxfam America but she came into the office almost literally right from a trip she had taken to Eastern Chad.

I mention this because it is indicative of Sarah's lifetime commitment to an approach to addressing conflict and crises across the globe. Her policy perspectives are continuously informed and driven by her experiences traveling to these countries and working directly with affected communities and through that and her experience and commitment would help develop meaningful legislation and policy change as it has throughout her career and will in her new role as Assistant Secretary of State, if she is confirmed.

I will just highlight a couple of things that make her unique. She has a strong commitment to bipartisan foreign policy. I saw this firsthand when she worked in my office and worked closely with senators on both sides of the aisle to advance meaningful foreign policy.

This included working with Senator Isakson on many democracy issues, Senators Inhofe and Brownback to pass legislation to help protect civilians in northern Uganda, and Senators McCain and Graham on issues relating to Egypt's growing repression and election concerns in 2010, of course, just before the Tahrir Square protests in 2011.

She takes the time to listen to all sides and stakeholders, including those whom she disagrees with, so she can ensure that she is fully informed. She regularly made time to speak to my constituents in Wisconsin and hear their concerns about everything from Indonesia and East Timor and Sri Lanka. She believed they had important contributions to make to our policy work.

If she is confirmed, I know that Sarah will be committed to engaging the American public beyond the Beltway on America's role in the world, and she will never lose sight that her principal job is to serve the American public.

Sarah believes fiercely in the important role of Congress when it comes to foreign policy. I will state this is particularly important to me and one of the reasons that I hired Sarah.

She firmly believes that Congress must play an active and assertive role in foreign policy, both in terms of helping to build and

support an agenda that represents all of America and in terms of oversight of the executive.

She understands the experience and tools to make good policy. Her rich experience makes her an expert on the full toolkit deployed by our State Department, from punitive measures like economic sanctions to incentivizing and relationship building.

She understands that meaningful and impactful policy cannot be made in a vacuum, and I saw her demonstrate this as we traveled all the way from Eastern Congo to Djibouti and even Peshawar, Pakistan, where we were working on these issues.

Sarah is driven by a deep belief and a commitment to ensuring that the United States is a force for good in the world. This translates to a fierce commitment to diplomacy and the necessary work to build and maintain positive constructive relationships across borders.

I want to close by underscoring Sarah's values, which drive her work every day. She brings sincere integrity to her work. She is solution oriented, which is exactly what we need at this time when democracy is on the back foot around the world and when basic fundamental liberties are under attack.

I think it would be a little hard to find someone who is more genuinely devoted to advancing human rights and democracy, and doing so in an informed, transparent, and collaborative manner than Sarah.

If confirmed, she will be an open honest broker for improving human rights and democracy around the world. I recommend Sarah Margon as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and I thank you so much for the pleasure of testifying before you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Feingold. It is good to see you, and we appreciate your glowing recommendation of Ms. Margon.

We have now been joined by two of our colleagues, Senator Heinrich and Senator Lujan, who will join in introducing Senator Udall. Senator Heinrich?

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARTIN HEINRICH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO**

Senator HEINRICH. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and all the distinguished members of this committee, it is really my honor today, my distinct honor, to introduce President Biden's nominee to serve as the next U.S. ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa, and, obviously, our former colleague, Senator Tom Udall.

As a long-serving member of this committee, I know Tom is no stranger to any of you. But I wanted to make sure to echo what I am sure anyone who has worked with Tom Udall over the years would say about his incredible character and the deep commitment that he has to public service.

Tom has devoted his entire life to my state, to serving the people of New Mexico and to serving this great nation, first, as our state's attorney general, then for 10 years in the U.S. House of Representatives, followed by two terms in this body, in the United States Senate.

And during the time that the both of us served here together in the Senate, Tom Udall proved to be a constant friend and close mentor to me. He also set a true example of what it means to be a public servant.

Over his two terms in the Senate, Tom showed all of us how to act with decency and integrity, how to stay true to your principles but also how to find common ground, and these are all qualities that I am very confident will serve him well in this new diplomatic role representing our nation's interests abroad.

With all of his experience on climate issues and his work with indigenous communities, he is uniquely qualified to build upon our nation's cooperation and shared interests with our allies in New Zealand and Samoa, and I can truly think of no one better suited to represent our country and face international challenges than Tom Udall.

On behalf of Julie and myself, I want to congratulate both Tom and his wife, Jill, on this new opportunity to continue their lifelong service to our country, and I sincerely hope that each and every one of you on this committee will join me in supporting this incredibly qualified nominee.

Thank you, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Lujan?

**STATEMENT OF HON. BEN RAY LUJAN,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO**

Senator LUJAN. Thank you, Chairman. It is an honor to be here this morning before the committee alongside Senators Udall and Heinrich.

Senator Udall has spent his career, his life, serving fellow New Mexicans and our brothers and sisters across America. Both he and Jill Udall have made a tremendous difference in the lives of so many.

As our state attorney general, U.S. Representative, and United States Senator, Tom was deeply and continues to be committed to fighting for everyone to get a fair shake.

You know Tom and Tom knows you. Yesterday at the United Nations, President Biden pledged a new era of relentless American diplomacy, and today's consideration of Senator Udall to serve as U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa is proof of the President's commitment to restore American leadership around the globe.

New Mexicans know Tom as a true statesman and as a leader, as a friend, and as a mentor who takes the climate crisis seriously. He cares about others, he leads by example, and treats people with respect and dignity.

This ambassadorship matters. New Zealand and Samoa are leading on many important issues and are important partners in the fight against the climate crisis.

As ambassador, I am confident that Senator Udall will make New Mexico and our country proud. He will bring the same energy and commitment and, hopefully, a few bolo ties to the world stage.

[Laughter.]



Senator LUJAN. This is an exciting day for Tom and Jill, and for countless New Mexicans back home. Tom is a highly-qualified nominee and it is my honor to stand with him and Jill today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Lujan, for the glowing recommendation of our colleague. We appreciate it. We know you have other issues to attend to. Do not hesitate to leave when you think it is appropriate.

And I will just note as well that Congressman Malinowski from my home state of New Jersey is here with us. He had the former position that Ms. Margon is being nominated for as the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. We welcome him to the committee.

And since you are here, Congressman, we need to talk about the CASE Act and updating it so that we can actually get some information in real time these days. I look forward to working with you on that.

Let me briefly speak to these two nominees.

Senator Udall, welcome back to the committee. You now know what it feels to be on the other side of this questioning. But we know you are going to do great. Congratulations on your nomination, to Jill as well.

I am glad that President Biden selected you for this important post. I am confident that, upon confirmation, you will represent the United States well in New Zealand and in the Independent State of Samoa.

As you know, New Zealand is one of our closest partners, a partnership that is critical in this new era of strategic competition. Now more than ever, the United States has to pursue intense diplomatic outreach in order to support our common goals for addressing climate change, expanding economic and trade opportunities, and building security partnerships.

Climate change is one of the most pressing national security challenges of our time and it poses a significant threat to Pacific Island nations. Overall, I believe we need to reinvigorate our diplomatic presence and outreach to New Zealand and Samoa, and I am confident that you will be very well up to that task.

We look forward to hearing your goals for how we can deepen one of the closest diplomatic relationships we have even further.

Ms. Margon, congratulations on your nomination to DRL. You have extensive experience working to advance human rights and democratic values as well as support a bipartisan group of national security leaders, human rights, and civil society organizations, including prominent Jewish organizations who believe in the importance of the U.S.-Israel partnership and the importance of a two-state solution for ensuring Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state.

But I also know there have been questions about some of the nuances here and I will trust you will be able to answer those questions.

The need for strong effective leadership at the helm of DRL has never been more necessary. In every region of the world today authoritarian governments are seizing more and more power, disman-

ting core democratic institutions, and closing in on journalists and civil society.

Today, Beijing, Moscow, and their kleptocratic partners are driving global authoritarian expansion. They do this through increasingly sophisticated digital authoritarian surveillance and control tools that we put out a very significant report from this committee, and through old-fashioned arrests of peaceful protests and shutting down independent media.

To that end, we witnessed this summer the Cuban regime unleash a brutal wave of repression in response to unprecedented protests by the Cuban people. While the Trump administration took a wrecking ball to our reputation, the Biden administration is doing vital work to reassert the U.S. role in championing democracy and human rights around the globe.

That effort, however, was badly damaged this summer by the flawed withdrawal from Afghanistan and the unfolding human rights catastrophe.

From Burma to Ethiopia, the amount of human rights concerns around the world is vast. We understand that, at times, the United States faces hard choices where foreign policy and national security interests do not align neatly with the values we strive to reflect as a nation.

Upon occasion that is unavoidable. But we also know that the organizational structure at the State Department has allowed a culture to flourish in which human rights concerns gets less traction because the powerful regional bureaus frequently sideline DRL.

I look forward to hearing from you about how, if confirmed, you will work to recenter our foreign policy around the core American values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law that advance our U.S. national interests and the cause of freedom and human dignity that rightly belong to people everywhere.

And I will just close by saying today we had a breakfast meeting with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Boris Johnson, and in that conversation one of the things that he said that I thought was so poignant for our other colleagues to hear was how important it was for the United States to raise the principles of democracy and human rights, and what it means to the rest of the world to do so.

This is an incredibly important position.

I know that the ranking member has as well opening remarks as it relates to these nominees, and when he returns I will recognize him. As such, he is voting right now. But in the interests of expediting this process, let me turn to Senator Udall first for his opening statement.

I ask you both to try to summarize your statements in about five minutes. Your full statements will be included in the record, without objection.

And with that, Senator Udall, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF FORMER SENATOR HON. TOM UDALL OF NEW MEXICO, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO NEW ZEALAND AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION TO THE STATE OF SAMOA**

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, and I want to thank so much Senator Heinrich and Senator Lujan for coming and introducing me.

Ranking Member Risch and members of the committee, it is an honor and pleasure to meet with all of you again. As a former member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I have great respect for the important work you are doing to consider the diplomatic nominations before you.

Today, I have exchanged my seat on the dais to sit as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to New Zealand and to the Independent State of Samoa.

After a career of public service in the state of New Mexico, including two terms as New Mexico Attorney General, five terms as United States Representative, and two terms as United States Senator, I am grateful for the trust of the President and Secretary Blinken that they have placed in me to represent the United States overseas.

The advice and consent role of the United States Senate, Mr. Chairman, as you know well, is one of the most important roles granted to Congress by the Constitution, and I am honored by this committee's consideration of my nomination.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would like to take a moment to introduce my wife, Jill Cooper. She has been my partner and chief adviser during my 30 years of public service. She is an accomplished lawyer in her own right and a strong advocate for the arts, having served as a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.

And while they are not here with me today in these chambers, I would like to recognize my daughter, Amanda, and my son-in-law, Judge Jim Noel.

In January, I marked the conclusion of serving New Mexico in the United States Senate. New Mexico is a mountainous and rural state strong in its multiculturalism, including a vibrant indigenous culture.

New Mexico is also rich in natural resources and growing tech and space and cinematic sectors, complete with a vital national security sector. In all these respects, New Mexico is very much like New Zealand.

Both are aiming for the stars. Both continue to invest in new space sectors advancing science, human progress, and cinematic storytelling set in their unique geographies.

While there are numerous positive comparisons, it is no secret that New Zealand and Samoa, like New Mexico, face enormous threats from climate change.

As a senator, I made protection of the environment a priority, from championing the 30 By 30 proposal to conserve 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030, to passing the landmark bipartisan Frank Lautenberg Chemical Safety Act.

The president has made it clear that climate consideration shall be an essential element of United States foreign policy and national security.

As ambassador, I look forward to working with New Zealand, a country that shares my passion for the protection of our natural environment.

I also look forward to maintaining the strong political, military, and intelligence relationship we share with New Zealand from World War Two when tens of thousands of Americans were stationed in New Zealand, through the post-war Five Eyes intelligence alliance formed by the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and from support for our forces in Afghanistan in 2001 as well as other peacekeeping missions to formalize our strengthening defense cooperation in the 2012 Washington Declaration.

Just last week, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern affirmed that recent developments in the Indo-Pacific do not change the security intelligence ties of New Zealand to the Five Eyes alliance.

Members of this committee have been clear that the United States cannot challenge all the threats in the region alone. We need allies like New Zealand and we need to help them thrive despite these regional challenges. We should not allow outside influences to drive a wedge in that relationship.

As ambassador, I will work to protect and grow mutual goodwill between our nations. Countering and competing with the People's Republic of China requires strong partnerships with countries throughout the region. Beijing continues to pressure countries that stand up to its human rights violations, to threaten freedom of navigation, and to violate international rules and norms.

Like you say, I would just ask that the rest of my statement be put in the record and it will be a real honor, if confirmed, to go off as an ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the courtesies. And Ranking Member Risch, I mentioned you. It is wonderful to see you here in person. Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Senator Udall follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. TOM UDALL

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee. It is an honor and a pleasure to meet with all of you again. As a former member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I have great respect for the important work you are doing to consider the diplomatic nominations before you.

Today, I have exchanged my seat on the dais to sit as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to New Zealand and to the Independent State of Samoa. After a career of public service in the state of New Mexico, including two terms as New Mexico's Attorney General, five terms as United States Representative, and two terms as United States Senator, I am grateful for the trust the President and Secretary Blinken have in me to represent the United States overseas.

The advice and consent role of the United States Senate is one of the most important roles granted to Congress by the Constitution—and I am honored by this committee's consideration of my nomination.

Chairman Menendez, with your permission, I would like to take a moment to introduce my wife Jill Cooper. She has been my partner and chief advisor during my 30 years of public service. She is an accomplished lawyer in her own right, and a strong advocate for the arts, having served as a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. While they are not here with me today in these

chambers, I'd also like to recognize my daughter Amanda and son-in-law Judge Jim Noel.

In January I marked the conclusion of serving New Mexico in the U.S. Senate. New Mexico is a mountainous and rural state strong in its multiculturalism—including a vibrant indigenous culture. New Mexico is also rich in natural resources, and growing tech, space, and cinematic sectors, complete with a vital national security sector. In all these respects, New Mexico is very much like New Zealand.

Both are aiming for the stars. Both continue to invest in new space sectors advancing science, human progress and cinematic storytelling set in their unique geographies.

While there are numerous positive comparisons, it is no secret that New Zealand and Samoa, like New Mexico, face enormous threats from climate change.

As a Senator I made protection of the environment a priority, from championing the Thirty-by-Thirty proposal to conserve 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030, to passing the landmark bipartisan Frank Lautenberg Chemical Safety Act. The President has made it clear “that climate considerations shall be an essential element of United States foreign policy and national security.” As Ambassador, I look forward to working with New Zealand, a country that shares my passion for the protection of our natural environment.

I also look forward to maintaining the strong political, military, and intelligence relationship we share with New Zealand: from World War II when tens of thousands of Americans were stationed in New Zealand, through the post-war Five Eyes intelligence alliance formed by the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; and from support for our forces in Afghanistan in 2001 as well as other peace-keeping missions, to formalizing our strengthened defense cooperation in the 2012 Washington Declaration.

Just last week, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern affirmed that recent developments in the Indo-Pacific do not change the security and intelligence ties of New Zealand to the Five Eyes alliance.

Members of this committee have been clear that the United States cannot challenge all the threats in the region alone. We need allies like New Zealand and we need to help them thrive despite those regional challenges.

We should not allow outside influences to drive a wedge in that relationship. As Ambassador, I will work to protect and grow the mutual goodwill between our nations.

Countering and competing with the People's Republic of China (PRC) requires strong partnerships with countries throughout the region. Beijing continues to pressure countries that stand up to its human rights violations, to threaten freedom of navigation, and to violate international rules and norms.

To ensure stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region as a whole, it is important to note that our relations do not begin and end with security. As an island nation, New Zealand is not unique in its dependence on international trade.

It is also one of many countries that has felt the pressure of Beijing's attempts to coerce through punitive trade decisions.

The United States is one of New Zealand's top trading partners. And I know from experience that during Senate visits overseas many of us looked for ways to increase trade ties between many nations and our respective states. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that our trade relations continue to grow and that you or the companies you represent are welcome in New Zealand.

As Pacific nations with advanced economies, the United States and New Zealand have both an opportunity and responsibility to support the island nations in the Pacific. All of them are increasingly threatened by the immediate threat of COVID-19, but also the growing influence of the PRC, and the threats from climate change. The Independent State of Samoa, a small island country rich in Polynesian culture is not immune to these challenges. We need to continue to reinforce Samoa's independence with our Peace Corps and Fulbright initiatives.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it was one of my great honors to serve on this committee and to serve the nation and the people of New Mexico. After a career in public service, I am honored by the President's nomination to represent the United States in New Zealand and Samoa.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am happy to answer any of your questions during this hearing or for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Udall.

As I announced, I would recognize the ranking member at this time.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to speak briefly on both nominees and then, of course, questions.

First of all, it will come probably as no surprise to many that the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, the nominee is going to be a very difficult and a heavy lift for me to support.

The nominee has made some deeply troubling public statements related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict including on the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement—BDS movement—against Israel, and funding to the biased organizations in Gaza, which I am going to ask some questions on.

The nominee also told my staff, surprisingly, that she feels both the current and prior administrations—both the current Biden administration and the Trump administration’s—airstrikes against Iranian proxy targets were illegal.

This view is against those of the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and legal advice spanning both administrations. If this is the kind of advice that she is going to give to the Secretary, it is going to be very difficult to support her.

Further, the nominee publicly congratulated a private company for participating in the BDS movement against Israel and urged other companies to do likewise. She also tweeted in support of a July 20 New York Times op-ed entitled, “I no longer believe in a Jewish state.” We will talk about that when we get to questions.

On the nomination for the ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa, it is good to see you, Senator Udall, and your lovely wife. I talked to Senator Brown this morning and he feels that you have won the lottery and have been sentenced to paradise. He is high on this.

If confirmed, you would be charged with stewardship of our relationships with these two nations where we have seen malign influence from the People’s Republic of China and where there is room for our partnerships to grow. I look forward to hearing your priorities on these issues.

China recently submitted information to New Zealand to join the comprehensive progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.

Yet, we have seen the PRC use its economic might to coerce and bully its neighbors in the region. I am, therefore, skeptical of PRC’s ability to be a good trade partner.

This development also reminds us of the importance of a strong U.S. economic and trade agenda in the Indo-Pacific region, a key element of the Strategic Competition Act passed by the Senate earlier this year. I will be interested in hearing your thoughts on that.

Again, good to see you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

With that, I will turn to Ms. Margon now.

**STATEMENT OF SARAH MARGON OF NEW YORK, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR**

Ms. MARGON. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee.

I am honored to be here today as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for the trust they have placed in me.

It is an honor to have Senator Feingold introduce me. Working for him was a master class in principled integrity. As a result of his leadership, I saw how standing up for what is right can be central to effective policymaking and that reaching across the aisle usually makes for better and stronger policy.

Indeed, America in the world should represent all Americans. I come from a long line of New Yorkers, many of whom rarely left the state but all of whom believed in the promise of a better life through hard work and a little bit of luck.

It is that gritty mindset that enabled my grandfathers, Albert Simon, born Abraham Simonofsky, and Solomon Mogiliwsky, changed to Margon, to flourish. One owned a pharmacy In Queens. The other became a dentist in Brooklyn.

That same grit could be found in their wives as well. Gertrude Simon labored at her family's light and lampshade business in Brooklyn's Pitkin Avenue and raised two girls, while Florence Margon became a secretary, carrying her family through the Depression and, in later years, raising my father, all at the same time.

I am deeply grateful for the support of my parents, Arthur and Marilyn Margon, my brother, Andrew Margon, and sister-in-law, Zoe Stopak-Behr, my husband, Sam Chaltain, who is here, whose big dreams and generosity are all the cushion one could need, and my two sons, who are also here, 8-year-old Izzy and 12-year-old Leo, both of whom give me hope for the curiosity, decency, and empathy of future generations.

I am also indebted to the women of national security and their guidance, wisdom, and community.

Today's chaotic and complicated world requires us to be more firmly tethered to core democratic principles. Rising repression and autocracy require us to be bold in adhering to these values, which, as the President has said, are inseparable from our national interests and are the foundation of our diplomatic strength.

The global assault on basic freedoms also requires us to be intentional about who we support and why we fight for rights and dignity. This means considering not just policy choices but also how we engage in countries where those in power are using state institutions, the media, elections, corrupt individuals and entities, and even the pandemic to centralize power undemocratically and to repress their people.

If confirmed, I will apply these insights to focus on three priorities.

First, I will ensure DRL carries forward an agenda that affirms the United States as a leader and a partner in the struggle for democracy, pluralism, and rights.

Our priority must be protecting these foundational values and making sure governments like China, Russia, and Cuba do not succeed in their efforts to undermine international human rights norms and the rules-based order.

I will pay special attention to China, whose pernicious attacks on dissent and the rule of law are both on the rise domestically and fast becoming a common export.

Second, I believe we must focus on countering technological and digital threats as a human rights issue. For example, as we have seen too often, the promotion of disinformation from Russia, to China, to Ethiopia can have life and death implications.

Without U.S. leadership and push back, malign actors will continue abusing technology to enable mass atrocities, undermine democracy and human rights, and harm U.S. interests.

Congress has been on the front lines of this fight and, if confirmed, I look forward to navigating the path together.

Third, I will focus on ensuring human rights as considered as part of U.S. arms sales and security assistance. Advancing democracy and protecting human rights are national security interests, as the President has made clear.

If confirmed, I will make sure DRL provides strong analysis to help ensure our decisions on these issues align with our democratic values and our commitments on human rights.

If confirmed, I look forward to a strong working partnership with Congress so that together we can promote and protect our shared American values and interests around the world.

I will endeavor to make good use of the bipartisan tools you have already developed, from the Global Magnitsky sanctions to the Uighur Human Rights Policy Act to the Corporate Transparency Act, and I will engage allies, the private sector, and civil society to help realize the Biden-Harris administration's goal of centering human rights within U.S. foreign policy.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Margon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SARAH MARGON

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of this committee. I am honored to be here today as the nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor—and deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for the trust they've placed in me.

It's a special honor to have Senator Feingold introduce me. Working for him was a master class in principled integrity. As a result of his leadership, I saw how standing up for what's right can be central to effective policy making—and that reaching across the aisle usually makes for better and stronger policy. Indeed, America in the world should represent all Americans.

I come from a long line of New Yorkers, many of whom rarely left the state, but all of whom believed in the promise of a better life through hard work and a little bit of luck. It is that gritty mindset that enabled my grandfathers, Albert Simon—born Abraham Simonofsky—and Solomon Mogilwsky—changed to Margon—to flourish. One owned a pharmacy in Queens. The other became a dentist in Brooklyn.

That same grit could be found in their wives as well. Gertrude Simon labored at her family's light and lampshade business on Brooklyn's Pitkin Avenue and raised two girls, while Florence Margon became a secretary, carrying her family through the Depression, and, in later years, raising my father—all at the same time.

I am deeply grateful for the support of my parents, Arthur and Marilyn Margon; my brother Andrew Margon, and sister-in-law Zoe Stopak-Behr; my husband Sam Chaltain, whose big dreams and generosity are all the cushion one could need; and my sons—8.5-year-old Izzy and 12-year-old Leo, both of whom give me hope for the curiosity, decency, and empathy of future generations. I am indebted to the women of national security and their wisdom, guidance and community.

Today's chaotic and complicated world requires us to be more firmly tethered to core democratic principles. Rising repression and autocracy require us to be bold in



adhering to these values, which as the President has said are inseparable from our national interests and are the foundation of our diplomatic strength. The global assault on basic freedoms also requires us to be intentional about who we support—and why we fight for rights and dignity. This means considering not just policy choices, but also how we engage in countries where those in power are using state institutions, the media, elections, corrupt individuals and entities, and even the pandemic to centralize power undemocratically and to repress their own people.

If confirmed, I will apply these insights to focus on three priorities.

*First*, I will ensure DRL carries forward an agenda that affirms the United States as a leader and a partner in the struggle for democracy, pluralism, and human rights. Our priority must be protecting these foundational values—and making sure governments such as China, Russia, and Cuba—do not succeed in their efforts to undermine international human rights norms and the rules-based order. I will pay special attention to China, whose pernicious attacks on dissent and the rule of law are both on the rise domestically and fast becoming a common export.

*Second*, I believe we must focus on countering technological and digital threats as a human rights issue. For example, as we have seen too often, the promotion of disinformation—from Russia to China to Ethiopia—can have life-and-death implications. Without U.S. leadership and pushback, malign actors will continue abusing technology to enable mass atrocities, undermine democracies and human rights, and harm U.S. interests. Congress has been on the frontlines of this fight, and if confirmed, I look forward to navigating the path together.

*Third*, I will focus on ensuring human rights is considered as part of U.S. arms sales and security assistance. Advancing democracy and protecting human rights are national security interests, as the President has made clear. If confirmed, I will make sure DRL provides strong analysis to help ensure our decisions on these issues align with our democratic values and our commitments to human rights.

If confirmed, I look forward to a strong working partnership with Congress, so that together we can promote and protect our shared American values and interests around the world. I will endeavor to make good use of the tools you have already developed, from Global Magnitsky sanctions to The Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act to The Corporate Transparency Act. And I will engage allies, the private sector, and civil society to help realize the Biden-Harris administration's goal of centering human rights within U.S. foreign policy.

Thank you for the consideration of my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Before I turn to Senator Risch, I have some questions that are for the committee as a whole and they require a simple yes or no answer.

These questions speak to the importance that the committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you. I would ask each of you to provide verbally a yes or no answer.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just simply providing notification after the fact?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to questions for briefings and information requested by this committee and its designated staff?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator UDALL. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Both witnesses said yes to all questions. The chair will reserve his time and I will turn to the ranking member for his questions.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Margon, were you here when Mr. Nides testified?

Ms. MARGON. I was in the anteroom, Senator. Yes.

Senator RISCH. Did you hear his testimony and questions?

Ms. MARGON. I did.

Senator RISCH. I assume you do not share his enthusiasm for the despicable anti-Semitic movement called BDS—Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, I firmly oppose the BDS movement.

Senator RISCH. I am looking here at a tweet that you wrote on November 19th, 2018. It says, “Airbnb to remove listings in the Israeli settlements of occupied West Bank. Thanks, Airbnb, for showing some good leadership here. Other companies should follow suit.”

Did you write that?

Ms. MARGON. Yes, Senator.

Senator RISCH. And you do not consider that part of the BDS movement?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, I firmly oppose the BDS movement. I do believe that the private sector has an important role to play in not pursuing discriminatory practices.

Senator RISCH. I do not understand that.

Ms. MARGON. Senator, I am not and have never been a supporter of the BDS movement. I oppose it.

Senator RISCH. How do you square that statement with the text that you put out November 19th, 2018?

Ms. MARGON. That tweet was in response to a Human Rights Watch report. And again, just to be very clear, I believe the private sector across the board has an important role to play in not promoting or pursuing discriminatory policies.

Senator RISCH. You support any company that would participate in the BDS movement?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, I firmly oppose the BDS movement, and if I am confirmed to be Assistant Secretary of DRL, I will continue to do so just as the Biden administration does.

Senator RISCH. That does not square with what you said here on November. You can say it over and over and over again. It just does not make it true and it does not square with what you said in 2018. Have you changed your mind since 2018?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, that tweet was related to a very specific report.

Senator RISCH. It was in respect to a very specific action by Airbnb supporting the BDS movement.

Ms. MARGON. That was actually a report relating to their renting apartments, and as I have said and will continue—just like the Biden administration does, I am firmly opposed to the BDS movement.

Senator RISCH. With all due respect, ma'am, I do not believe it, not with what you put out here. Saying it over and over again just does not square with your actions.

Ms. MARGON. I am sorry, Senator, that you do not believe it. That is my firm belief, and if I am confirmed, going forward, I think you will see, as a member of the Biden administration, that that is the policy that I will implement.

Senator RISCH. When you met with my staff, you made the statement that you believed that the air strike against Soleimani was illegal. Do you still stand by that statement?

Ms. MARGON. That was from a tweet you are referring to?

Senator RISCH. No. That was in a meeting with my staff when you were preparing for this.

Ms. MARGON. That conversation, Senator, was in relation to a tweet that I had put out. I think that is probably a conversation best had with the Legal Adviser's Office at the State Department, for which I am not nominated.

Senator RISCH. Maybe, but you stated that you thought that that air strike was illegal. Is that true or not true?

Ms. MARGON. I did write that tweet at the time. But, again, I am looking at a position that is not for the Legal Adviser's Office.

Senator RISCH. I get that. What I am looking for is your view of these things. Obviously, the position you are in is not a legal position. But it, certainly, is very important in developing policy.

They also tell me that you said that the strikes that the past administration and even the current administration were illegal. Is that your position?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, I think, to be fair, there are wide discussions over the legality of some of these strikes. I am not a lawyer right now. I have never been a lawyer. I did work for an organization that engaged on these questions.

But if I am confirmed, I would consult with the legal advisers at the State Department to come to a determination.

Senator RISCH. I get that, and everybody here has to consult with the lawyers. Nonetheless, our policy decisions are based by our personal beliefs in that regard, and I am really, really troubled by these.

Have they straightened you out? My staff tells me that your Sherpa almost fainted when you said that the strikes by the current administration were illegal. Have they straightened you out on that? Are you willing to go along with the administration's view?

Ms. MARGON. Of course, I am willing to go along. President Biden and Secretary Blinken have nominated me to do a job and I will uphold administration policy.

Senator RISCH. In July of 2020, you retweeted an article from the New York Times op-ed entitled, "I no longer believe in a Jewish state." You retweeted that with approval. Do you still subscribe to that?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, sometimes when we tweet or say things in the heat of the moment we do not necessarily think of the broader impact of them. When I retweeted that article, what I was really focused on was the importance of ensuring Israelis and Palestinians could have equal protection under the law, access to demo-

cratic processes, security, and prosperity. That was the thrust of my tweet and what I intended with that.

I firmly believe in a two-state solution so that Israelis and Palestinians can live side by side in peace and security.

Senator RISCH. Thank you for your answers. I am not going to support your nomination, obviously. You have not persuaded me at all. In fact, I might have been persuaded if you would have owned up to these things and confessed there.

I am sorry I do not have any time for you, Senator Udall. But it is nice to see you. I know you will do a good job there and I will help you every way I can to get there.

Thank you very much, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member Risch, and thanks to our nominees. Congratulations to both of you, particularly to Senator Udall and Jill.

I am such huge fans of both of you as wonderful public servants, and it is exciting that you have had a lot of wonderful chapters in the past, both in New Mexico government and in the United States Senate, and in the House. And this next chapter is one I know you will do every bit as well. I am so proud to support you.

Ms. Margon, I want to ask you a question about the part of the world that I care most about outside the United States and that is the Americas.

I have been really troubled. I lived in Honduras when it was a military dictatorship. It is no longer a military dictatorship but, arguably, it is worse, and that is painful. A country that has gone from a military dictatorship in 1981 to a, quote, "democracy" is rife with corruption, the murder of journalists, the murder of environmental activists.

The current president was reelected in a widely disputed election. The OAS said it was so marked by fraud that the election should be rerun. For some reason, the United States discarded the OAS opinion and supported the current government, and then what has happened this president has been implicated in a variety of drug trafficking cases currently being brought in courts in the United States.

The good news is there is elections this weekend in Honduras. He is term limited and cannot run again. But I could give you the same story in El Salvador where there is currently massive backsliding of a government the people had a lot of hope in but it is behaving more and more authoritarian every day.

In Guatemala, serious issues with corruption. In Nicaragua, brutal repression of political dissidents. Costa Rica is a bit of a bright spot. We heard from Dr. Telles earlier.

I think the United States does not pay enough attention in the Americas. Just because we are not paying attention does not mean China is not paying attention. They are. Russia is paying attention. Cuba is paying attention. Iran is paying attention.

And so I would hope this administration could really embrace a more robust and continuous engagement with the Americas and show other nations because we are all Americans—North, Central, or South Americans—show other nations that our concern is con-

tinuous and not just episodic, quickly to be forgotten as we turn our attention elsewhere.

But if we are going to have an Americas policy we are going to have to really grapple with issues of human rights and democracy.

Should you be confirmed, what might your thoughts be about, as you say, centering human rights and pro-democracy within some of the nations that are the nearest to us?

Ms. MARGON. Thank you, Senator, for that question, and thanks for your long-standing work and interest in this region. It has been really notable, and you have been a real leader along with other members on this committee.

I think the Biden administration has taken the right approach in looking at a root driver strategy and allocating \$4 billion dollars to the region. I think those two tranches are really important to start getting at what is at the foundation.

It is not going to be something that can change overnight. But you mentioned many of the issues that we need to be looking at—not just assistance and development, but also anti-corruption, looking to build an independent judiciary, helping to work so that the Security Forces are actually viable entities that can protect the people, looking at criminal networks.

There is very much a punitive approach and a carrot and stick incentivizing approach and I think they go hand in hand. I think even before my confirmation, if that happens, there is good groundwork for which DRL will be able to work on.

I see DRL's role—and if I am confirmed, I will hope to amplify this—is to bring the analysis of the human rights organizations and civil society into the policymaking, to work with the regional bureau closely, but also to work with other agencies and, of course, with this body to make sure that there is a consistent steadfast approach, that the finances are sufficient and, frankly, that we bring in some of the other regional actors.

I spoke yesterday with the Chairman a little bit about Latin America and the importance of engaging broadly on democratic decline and governance deficits, and I think this is the perfect opportunity for DRL to really center its work not just on election by election, as you say, but actually building and supporting with other partners the context in which those elections occur.

I have never been to Central America myself and I would really like to travel there as one of my first trips. I think that would send a very important message, not just about our commitment as a bureau but our commitment as the United States.

Senator KAINE. I thank you for that answer. There are two opportunities coming up that are really important, the Summit for Democracy that President Biden has indicated he wants to hold likely next year, and also the U.S. chairmanship of the Summit for the Americas, which we have not chaired in 25 years, and these are opportunities where these issues of democracy and human rights should be front and center. I appreciate your answers.

Mr. Chair, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator BARRASSO?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations to both of you. Senator Udall, great to see you again. Jill, nice to see you. As you know, when you gave your final speech on the floor, I made a number of comments about our service together and working in a bipartisan way, and congratulations on this nomination. I think you will be magnificent ambassador. Thank you, Senator.

Ms. Margon, on April 27th of this year, the Human Rights Watch published a report accusing Israel of being an apartheid state. Do you believe Israel is an apartheid state?

Ms. MARGON. No, Senator, I do not.

Senator BARRASSO. Do you believe Israel commits war crimes when it acts to defend itself from rocket and other terror attacks from Gaza?

Ms. MARGON. No, Senator. I strongly support Israel's right to defend itself and to protect its people.

Senator BARRASSO. The Biden administration has announced its intention to rejoin the United Nations Human Rights Council. Do you believe the Human Rights Council has a bias against Israel?

Ms. MARGON. That pesky Item 7, Senator, on the agenda at the Human Rights Council needs to be addressed. If I am confirmed, one of the things I would like to do if the U.S. rejoins the Human Rights Council is work with the International Organizations Bureau, the ambassador to Geneva, and this committee to help reform the Human Rights Council so it is more effective, so it does not have a disproportionate bias against Israel, including that agenda item.

I have seen in the past that when the U.S. is a member of that Council that there are less anti-Israel resolutions and there is a decrease in anti-Israel attacks. That would be one of my priorities.

Senator BARRASSO. When I think about the Human Rights Council and the membership, do you know how many members of them are serious human rights abusers?

Ms. MARGON. There are a number of them that are very problematic, Senator. I do not know the exact number.

Senator BARRASSO. Russia?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator BARRASSO. China?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator BARRASSO. Pakistan?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator BARRASSO. Cuba? I could go on.

It is to point out to me as I look at this, it says—do you know of any of these that have actually had a resolution passed condemning their own actions while on the Council?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, your concern is well placed and I think this would be part of the reform agenda. I will also say that the Human Rights Council has put out some extraordinary reports in the past that this body, I think, has found very useful.

I would draw your attention specifically to the Commission of Inquiry on North Korea. I think it was published in 2014. That was an extraordinary documentation of the horrific abuses in DPRK.

And my goal would be not only to help reform the membership, which I understand is a priority also of the Biden administration, but also to work with the Council so that it has stronger, better

membership, and they can produce more reports like that DPRK report.

Senator BARRASSO. Because it does seem to me that a number of these keep themselves on the Council specifically so they can avoid accountability.

In terms of the blacklist the Human Rights Council has come up with, the Human Rights Council has published a blacklist of companies doing business in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Many of them are American companies. It is viewed by many as laying the groundwork for sanctions against these companies.

If confirmed, will you work to encourage the Council to retract this database and discourage our allies from associating with this in any way?

Ms. MARGON. Yes.

Senator BARRASSO. Okay. And what can the U.S. do to limit the continuation of this dangerous exercise by this group?

Ms. MARGON. This is part of why I think U.S. membership on the Human Rights Council is so important. It gives us a seat at the table. It allows us to help influence decisions, it allows us to engage, and it allows us to ensure there is not a strong anti-Israel bias, but that the Human Rights Council is looking broadly and globally at human rights abuses.

Senator BARRASSO. On January 4th of 2020, you tweeted this, "The Iranian Government is replete with nasty characters. Soleimani himself was horrifically brutal. But normalizing selective ally engagement to conduct an illegal action that not only normalizes assassinations but also escalates dramatically has taken us to a whole new scary level."

Do you believe that the U.S. attack on General Soleimani was illegal?

Ms. MARGON. Senator, this is a tweet. I think if I were going forward, looking at this from my position should I be confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I would need to review all of the evidence and the intelligence to make that assessment and consult with the Legal Adviser's Office.

Senator BARRASSO. What is your view of the Biden administration's botched drone attack that killed 10 civilians outside of Afghanistan in the last couple of weeks?

Ms. MARGON. Thank you for that question. I was really pleased to see the Pentagon and its press—excuse me, at its press conference admit to the attack, to talk about what had been happening, to talk about the investigation that was going to be underway.

I think this is a very important step that the Pentagon has taken, and I understand that there is going to be an investigation, and from there we will see where it goes.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Ms. Margon, let me just get some things clear for the record. Did you ever advocate on behalf of the BDS movement?

Ms. MARGON. No, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. And regarding the allegation that has been flown around there characterizing Israel's actions as apartheid and attributed to you, to clarify, that refers to a report released by

Human Rights Watch long after you departed the organization. Is that the case?

Ms. MARGON. That is correct. It was nearly two years later.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. When we look at the question of human rights, especially when one is not in an administration, one has the ability to look at it from the vantage—from the perspective uniquely about what is it that we seek to uphold in terms of the fundamental Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Is that not fair to say?

Ms. MARGON. That would be fair to say, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And the organization that you once worked with, Human Rights Watch, which has been quoted by many members of Congress when they find it appropriate and of value to do so, looked at the world in terms of human rights violations in that context. Would that be fair to say?

Ms. MARGON. That is right.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. The question is about participating at the United Nations Human Rights Council. The reality is when we are not there, then we cede to the world's worst actors the ability to take on allies like the State of Israel.

Is that a fair statement?

Ms. MARGON. I would say yes, that is.

The CHAIRMAN. While we do not like, and I, certainly, do not like—I find it appalling that Cuba can be on the Human Rights Council, but in the absence of the United States being there, I cannot push back on them and others, at the end of the day.

And so I think that one has to think about the perspective. Joining the Human Rights Council is not an acceptance of its actions. It is in defiance of its actions. Is that the way you would take the view if you were the assistant secretary?

Ms. MARGON. Yes, I think I would.

I would also say, Senator that it provides an exceptional opportunity for the United States to lead and to partner in pushing back against a number of those very abusive countries.

I would also say that the Biden administration has said it not only wants to rejoin but reform the Council, and there are plenty of opportunities to further that effort.

The CHAIRMAN. Israel remains our only democratic ally in the Middle East, and our bilateral relationship is rooted on shared democratic values. As in the United States or any country with a democratic process, we may not always agree with every policy that every government pursues.

International organizations, however, routinely unfairly target Israel for alleged human rights abuses while in the same breath actively ignoring the gravely serious human rights abuses of the leaders of some of its neighbors.

Would you commit to pushing back on unfair bias against Israel from international human rights organizations?

Ms. MARGON. Yes, absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. And then, finally, because the world is—as much as Israel is incredibly important, the world that you will be encountering—there are so many different parts of the world so I could spend a lot of time talking to you about arms sales, which I will



in the near future, about China and Belarus and Russia and many other places, about Turkey under Erdogan.

Even though they are a NATO ally, there are more journalists and lawyers in Turkish jails than in any other part of the world. That is saying something, considering some of the nasty parts of the world. Ethiopia and what is happening there in terms of human rights violations.

I look forward to having a more in-depth discussion with you. But I do want to just talk about one—something I broached with you when you came to visit me and I appreciated our visit, and it is about Cuba.

You noted that, quote, “Cuba offers more opportunities than dead ends when it comes to human rights, including by easing relations with other countries and encouraging them to pressure Cuba to, quote, “tolerate more dissent.”

I am of the view that dissent should not be tolerated but embraced as a fundamental human right. Would you agree with that?

Ms. MARGON. I think that is a much better word, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. And these statements were made before the July 11th protests in Cuba this year, which—where the regime unleashed a brutal wave of repression in response to average people, mostly led by Afro-Cubans in terms of protests.

If you are confirmed as the Assistant Secretary for DRL, what are some of the specific steps you would take to advance democracy and human rights in Cuba?

Ms. MARGON. The protests in July, I think, reminded us very clearly, not just us here in the U.S. but globally, that what the Cubans need and are looking for—the Cuban people—are basic services and basic rights, and they go hand in hand.

And so there really is an opportunity for the United States, working closely with partners in the region and more globally, to support civil society more extensively, to ensure they have access and are able to be amplified on larger platforms to share their experiences with such a brutal and horrific government.

Because it is those experiences, it is those stories, and it is their fight for those basic rights that we need to be supporting. There are questions about what we can support internet wise. There are questions about what we can support media wise.

And I think the review that is underway, Senator, if I am confirmed, is something that I will want to be actively participating in. But even if that review is done before I am confirmed, I look forward to working with you to figure out the best ways in which we can support civil society, amplify those voices, and make sure that there is an increase in support globally for the movement.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you.

Senator Udall, you and I had a very good and in-depth conversation yesterday about economic opportunities, about how AUKUS is going to affect us with New Zealand on security, bilateral relationship, about New Zealand vis-a-vis China.

And so we had such a good in-depth conversation I do not feel compelled to explore it again here with you today. But I do not want you to think you are not the object of my affection.

[Laughter.]

Senator UDALL. Thank you. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. With knowing everything that you and I spoke about, and I am very pleased with the answers you gave me, I will reserve at this time.

Seeing no other member before the committee, the record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, Thursday, September 23rd. Please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than then.

I urge the nominees to answer those questions fully and expeditiously so that you can be considered for a business meeting.

And with the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:18 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. THOMAS R. NIDES BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes. There is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. The administration is actively examining a range of hypotheses but has made no determination about the cause of the AHIs or whether they can be attributed to a foreign actor. I understand that AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the inter-agency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed there is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. THOMAS R. NIDES BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

#### *State Oversight*

*Question.* Currently, there are three public diplomacy outposts serving primarily a Palestinian audience, America Houses in East Jerusalem and Ramallah as well as an American Corner in Hebron.

- Do you support keeping these facilities outside of the U.S. embassy compound?

*Answer.* While I am not in a position to speak to the specific facilities of the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, if confirmed I am committed to ensuring that the U.S. Embassy in Israel's capital, Jerusalem, enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including public diplomacy engagement with local communities.

*Question.* What value do public diplomacy sites focused on the Palestinian audience provide to U.S. foreign policy?

Answer. I believe public diplomacy programs are valuable to U.S. national interests, as they allow the U.S. Government to communicate with local communities on our Government's strategic objectives. I understand that these are critical tools in our engagements with Palestinian communities as they encourage common values, such as the promotion of human rights, economic growth, freedom of speech, and upholding the rule of law.

*Question.* Do you support completing the renovation of the America House in Ramallah?

Answer. While I am not in a position to speak to the specific facilities of the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, if confirmed I am committed to ensuring that our diplomatic presence enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with local communities.

*Question.* Mission Israel has been under enormous stress over the past five years with the move of the embassy to Jerusalem, changes to the Palestinian Affairs Unit, and COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Israel?

Answer. Mission Israel is full of dedicated personnel committed to their jobs and carrying out U.S. foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I look forward to building a collaborative and inclusive work environment, and placing a priority on morale.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Israel?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to build a collaborative and inclusive work environment. I am committed to placing a priority on embassy morale.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Israel?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to underscore my commitment to an inclusive and representative working environment in support of U.S. national interests and strengthening the U.S.-Israel partnership.

#### *Management Is A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. My management style is one that focuses on promoting a collaborative, inclusive, and representative environment that is focused on promoting U.S. national interests.

*Question.* How do you believe this management style will translate to an embassy setting, where processes and resources aren't as readily available as they may be at Main State?

Answer. This style of management has served me well throughout my career and will translate well to an embassy setting. If confirmed, I look forward to working in partnership with the Embassy Jerusalem team to support an inclusive and collaborative environment that promotes U.S. national interests.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on the new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

Answer. I believe that it is important for us all, as representatives of the United States of America, to work towards serving our country to the best of our ability. If confirmed, I intend to fully integrate myself with the embassy team and look forward to supporting an inclusive and collaborative environment. We can't succeed any other way.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No, this type of behavior is never acceptable.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with the deputy chief of mission?

Answer. The deputy chief of mission is a key part of the embassy community and if confirmed, I look forward to building a collaborative, inclusive, and constructive partnership with him or her.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to the deputy chief of mission being involved in all facets of embassy leadership and working in partnership with him or her to strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- Given your previous tenure as the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, how do you assess the Department's current risk balance?

Answer. Advancement of U.S. foreign policy objectives inherently involves diverse types of risk, and it is the Department's policy that employees and leaders engage in risk management for the decisions and activities within the scope of their duties. All Department employees are expected to identify, evaluate, and mitigate any substantial risks to their objectives or to the enterprise in which they are engaged. Department leaders, including Chiefs of Mission, require the best possible assessment of risk, identification of mitigation measures, and evaluations of any remaining residual risk before making decisions. Department leaders ensure risk management is a continuous process that is adjusted as conditions change, and incorporated into planning and decision-making in a systematic, appropriate, timely and transparent manner by taking into account uncertainty and the impact on our capabilities to protect people, property, information and other assets.

*Question.* In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

Answer. The mission of a U.S. diplomat is to promote peace, support prosperity, and protect American citizens while advancing the interests of the United States abroad. U.S. diplomats are dedicated to public service and, even in dire situations, are committed to accomplishing their mission and advancing U.S. objectives.

*Question.* How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

Answer. I believe that it is important for U.S. diplomats to have access to, and engage with, a wide range of local populations if the security environment permits. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that Embassy Jerusalem's diplomatic presence enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leaders.

*Question.* Do you agree that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, should remain undivided, and should be the permanent place of the U.S. embassy to Israel?

Answer. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve. The administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work diligently to see a new U.S. embassy constructed in Jerusalem?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working diligently to see a new U.S. embassy constructed in Jerusalem.

*Question.* The administration has made clear its desire to open a consulate in Jerusalem for the Palestinians. It is my understanding that Israel would have to agree with the opening of a U.S. diplomatic facility in Jerusalem or anywhere else in Israel. Is that the case?

Answer. Secretary Blinken has publicly announced the administration's intent to reopen the Consulate General in Jerusalem. I understand that this is part of the administration's renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership. While I cannot attest to all requirements necessary for opening a diplomatic facility, if confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. diplomatic presence in Jerusalem enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with local communities and government leaders.

*Question.* The Israeli Government has come out against a Palestinian consulate in Jerusalem. FM Yair Lapid said that the proposed reopening by the U.S. Government of its Jerusalem consulate would be a "bad idea" and would send the "wrong message" not only to the region and to the Palestinians, but to other countries as well, who might view this as a green light to establish their own embassies in what they perceive to be a Palestinian part of Jerusalem. In addition, such a move might destabilize the "interesting, yet delicate" coalition government. Will you pressure

Israelis to reverse their opinion? Will you establish a consulate over Israeli objections?

Answer. Secretary Blinken has publicly announced the administration's intent to reopen the Consulate General in Jerusalem. I understand that this is part of the administration's renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership. The United States has not recognized a "State of Palestine." Reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem would not affect that policy or walk back or change our recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

While I am not privy to internal U.S. Government conversations with the Government of Israel, if confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Another legal obstacle to a Palestinian consulate is the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, passed overwhelmingly by the U.S. House and Senate, which recognized united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and states that "Jerusalem should remain an undivided city." Does the Jerusalem Embassy Act prevent the United States from reopening a consulate for the Palestinians? What location for a Palestinian consulate would the 1995 law allow?

Answer. I understand that Secretary Pompeo determined and reported to Congress in 2019 that the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem had officially opened, consistent with the requirements of the Jerusalem Embassy Act. I also understand the administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem. Reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem will not affect that policy or walk back or change our recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

If confirmed, I will always work to ensure that all our policies are consistent with U.S. interests and applicable U.S. law.

*Question.* If President Biden decided against (or Congress prohibited in law) the opening of a separate Consulate General to serve the Palestinian Authority, would you be prepared to carry out your duties as Ambassador to Israel with oversight of consular affairs in Palestinian-controlled territories?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy to Israel, which the U.S. Government has been clear will remain in Jerusalem, provides consular services to U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents, as well as communities residing in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. The President and Secretary Blinken have reaffirmed the administration's intent as well to reopen the Consulate General in Jerusalem, to support renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. diplomatic presence in Jerusalem enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including providing necessary consular services, and engaging with local communities.

*Question.* The Biden administration is reportedly conducting a review with the goal to open a Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) office in the United States, despite the legal prohibitions under the 1987 Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) and the 2019 Promoting Security and Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act (PSJVTA). Is the opening of a PLO office in the United States permissible under U.S. law? Can you commit to using your position as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, if confirmed, to advocating against any move to re-open the PLO office in the U.S., in contravention of U.S. law?

Answer. I understand that the issue of the Palestinian presence in Washington is a complicated one, with a number of legal implications. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that any possible reopening of a PLO office in Washington is consistent with U.S. interests in advancing peace and applicable U.S. law.

*Question.* In 2019, the Trump administration officially recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. In your view, what is the strategic benefit of Israel's sovereignty of the Golan Heights? Under what conditions would Israeli sovereignty not apply?

Answer. In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, I understand the administration gives great weight to Israel's security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria and Iran is present in Syria, it would be greatly irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door. My understanding is that this administration has not changed U.S. policy on this important issue.

#### *Foreign Assistance*

*Question.* There are promising reports about the effectiveness of the BriLife vaccine for COVID-19, which the American-Israeli company NRx Pharmaceuticals has

brought to trial. If approved, this new vaccine could prove to be a game-changer in expanding access to safe and reliable COVID-19 vaccines across the developing world, while also providing a suitable alternative to less reliable vaccines from China.

- If confirmed, will you commit to working with Israel to make its World Health Organization (WHO) and Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approved COVID-19 vaccines available to low- and lower-middle income countries, including as in-kind contributions to COVAX, as appropriate?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I commit to working with Israel to make doses of its COVID-19 vaccines, authorized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Federal Drug Administration (FDA), available to low- and lower-middle income countries, including as in-kind contributions distributed through COVAX.

*Question.* Institutions in Israel annually request, and routinely secure, funding through the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA program). Notably, ASHA is not a development program. Instead, it provides funds for infrastructure and equipment for overseas schools, libraries, and hospitals “to highlight American ideas and practices, to provide concrete illustrations of the generosity of the American people, to further U.S. Government public diplomacy, and to catalyze collaborations between U.S. citizens and citizens of other countries”.

- Do you agree that the purpose of U.S. foreign assistance is to end the need for its existence?

Answer. U.S. foreign assistance serves important U.S. national security interests, including supporting our enduring partnership with Israel and priorities such as helping our allies and partners maintain stability and prosperity.

*Question.* Noting that Israel is a High Income Country that already shares U.S. values, should institutions in Israel continue to be eligible for assistance through the ASHA program?

Answer. While Israel is indeed a high-income country, I continue to value the importance of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, and if confirmed, I commit to working to deepen the already existing partnerships in Israel.

*Question.* If so, why? If not, how do you intend to graduate Israeli institutions from dependence upon ASHA funding for basic infrastructure and equipment?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work closely with the U.S. Agency for International Development, which administers the ASHA program, on this matter. ASHA programs serve as an important link between American institutions and our partners overseas.

*Question.* Under what conditions, if any, would you support conditioning United States assistance to the West Bank and Gaza?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring U.S. assistance is well-calibrated to advance U.S. foreign policy interests. I understand that U.S. assistance provides critical relief to those in great need, fosters economic development, and supports Israeli-Palestinian understanding, security coordination, and stability. It also aligns with the values and interests of the United States and our allies and partners.

*Question.* Would you support conditioning assistance upon measurable progress in rolling-back the Palestinian Authority’s support for the heinous “pay for slay” program? If confirmed, would you make this a priority?

Answer. The Palestinian practice of prisoner and martyr payments is abhorrent. This administration and I are absolutely committed to working to end the practice of Palestinian prisoner and “martyr” payments in a manner that addresses longstanding U.S. and international concerns. If confirmed, I would build on the work done thus far through sustained diplomatic engagement and pressure, underscoring that part of resetting the U.S.-Palestinian relationship is seeing reform of this heinous practice.

*Question.* What forms of U.S. foreign assistance, if any, should be continued in the West Bank and Gaza, notwithstanding the PA’s continued support for the “pay for slay” program?

Answer. I understand the administration is committed to providing assistance in a manner that is consistent with U.S. law. U.S. foreign assistance for the West Bank and Gaza serves important U.S. interests, including providing critical relief to those in great need, fostering economic development, and supporting Israeli-Palestinian security coordination. Economic and humanitarian assistance programs improve the lives of millions of Palestinians by providing immediate relief and advanc-

ing development across sectors such as health, infrastructure, economic growth, and civil society, while security sector programs support Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation to enhance the stability of the West Bank.

*Question.* How would you define “humanitarian assistance” in the West Bank and Gaza? Please be specific.

*Answer.* U.S. humanitarian assistance for the West Bank and Gaza includes support to U.N. agencies, including UNRWA, other international organizations like the World Food Programme, and non-governmental organizations with the aim of providing immediate relief to the most vulnerable populations, including through support to needy households with food, clean water, and healthcare. Addressing immediate humanitarian needs, in combination with efforts to strengthen the Palestinian economy, civil society, and targeted infrastructure, helps eliminate a core source of social tension in the West Bank and Gaza and advances freedom, security, and prosperity for the Palestinian and Israeli people alike.

*Question.* How would you define “non-humanitarian assistance” in the West Bank and Gaza? Please be specific.

*Answer.* U.S. foreign assistance for the West Bank and Gaza serves important U.S. interests, including providing critical support to those in great need, fostering economic development, and supporting Israeli-Palestinian security coordination through economic, development, and security sector assistance. Economic and development programs for the West Bank and Gaza support critical issues that further progress toward peace such as our support for the development of the Palestinian economy, civil society, and other institutions to improve the lives of Palestinians and ensure the viability of a future Palestinian state. Assistance also supports youth engagement and employment activities, so that at-risk youth have access to positive forms of empowerment and are not lured by extremist groups. Further, U.S. assistance programs help small- and medium-sized enterprises to access financial and technical assistance to resume operations, build connections with traditional and new markets, and increase profitability. U.S.-funded security sector programs support Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation to enhance the stability of the West Bank, and advance efforts to uphold the rule of law and the protection of human rights and are a priority for both the United States and the Government of Israel.

*Question.* The Taylor Force Act prohibits assistance that “directly benefits” the Palestinian Authority. What is your interpretation of “directly benefit”?

*Answer.* I understand that, consistent with a report transmitted to Congress by the Department of State on May 3, 2018, the U.S. Government takes a number of criteria into account in assessing whether assistance “directly benefits” the PA in this context, such as the intended primary beneficiary or end user of the assistance; whether the Palestinian Authority is the direct recipient of the assistance; whether the assistance involves the payment of Palestinian Authority creditors; the extent of ownership or control the Palestinian Authority exerts over an entity or individual that is the primary beneficiary or end user of the assistance; and whether the assistance or services provided directly replace assistance or services provided by the Palestinian Authority.

*Question.* Despite compliance with the Taylor Force Act, opponents of continued assistance to the Palestinians argue that all money is fungible and that ESF to the Palestinian people relieves the Palestinian Authority of a burden and thus frees up additional funding for the pay to slay and martyr’s program. Do you believe this to be true? Please provide a detailed response to this argument.

*Answer.* The administration provides assistance in a manner consistent with U.S. law and through experienced, vetted, and trusted independent partners, who distribute directly to people in need. Further, I understand the administration goes to great lengths to provide assistance based on need and to advance important U.S. interests.

*Question.* The Nita Lowey Partnerships for Peace Act (PPA) authorized \$250 million annually for five years to support peacebuilding initiatives between Israelis and Palestinians, including through a “People-to-People Partnership for Peace Fund” at the U.S. Agency for International Development and a “Joint Investment for Peace Initiative” at the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC).

- If confirmed, how would you measure progress of these initiatives?

*Answer.* I fully support the Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA). This legislation and the programs it would support are critical to strengthening civil society peacebuilding projects that build economic cooperation and people-to-people engagement between the Israeli and Palestinian people. If con-

confirmed, I am committed to ensuring MEPPA is a vital tool of advancing U.S. foreign policy and supporting Israeli and Palestinian communities and cooperation. If confirmed, I plan to work with my colleagues at the DFC, USAID, and the Department of State to develop tools to measure the progress of this initiative.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that all partners and activities undertaken pursuant to the PPA—including at the sub-award level—are fully vetted and transparently reported to Congress?

*Answer.* I understand the administration will provide assistance in the West Bank and Gaza through experienced and trusted independent partners, who distribute directly to people in need. The Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development have a robust vetting process to mitigate the risk that U.S. Government resources could inadvertently support Hamas or other terrorist groups. In addition, development and humanitarian partners in the West Bank and Gaza have aggressive risk-mitigation systems in place aimed at ensuring U.S. taxpayer-funded assistance is reaching those for whom we intend it to benefit. U.S. assistance is also closely coordinated with Israeli authorities.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you leverage co-investment in PPA activities by Israelis and Palestinians, in addition to generating support by other donors?

*Answer.* I believe the PPA and the programs it would support are critical to strengthening civil society peacebuilding projects that build economic cooperation and people-to-people engagement between the Israeli and Palestinian people. I appreciate your and Congress' broad support for MEPPA and, if confirmed, I am committed to ensuring MEPPA is a vital tool of advancing U.S. foreign policy and supporting Israeli and Palestinian communities and generating support with other donors.

*Question.* Do you agree that all investments through a Joint Investment for Peace Initiative at the DFC must have a nexus to development, as envisioned by the BUILD Act which created the DFC?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree that all investments through a Joint Investment for Peace Initiative at the DFC must have a nexus to development.

*Question.* The Palestinian Authority recently passed a decree to “nationalize” NGOs working in the West Bank and Gaza, ostensibly giving the PA access to their funding. What concerns does this raise for continued assistance to the West Bank and Gaza? What safeguards are in place to prevent the PA from syphoning funding from “nationalized” NGOs?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is encouraging the Palestinian Authority to ensure that civil society organizations are free and empowered to engage fully in their activities, which support democratic, social, and economic development and are vital to a free and democratic Palestinian society and a viable future Palestinian state. I also understand the Department is closely following the conversation Palestinian civil society is having with the Palestinian Authority regarding this law and have engaged the Palestinian Authority on this issue. If confirmed, I plan to continue to monitor these efforts to ensure that U.S. assistance and civil society activities are not adversely affected and remain consistent with U.S. law.

*Question.* Despite the cancellation of elections for Palestinian leadership, there are concerns that Hamas, a foreign terrorist organization, will play a greater role in the Palestinian political environment. Should Hamas play a broader role in Palestinian politics and hand Fatah a defeat at the polls, how do you do reconcile Palestinian policy and counterterrorism policy? What are the implications for continued assistance to the Palestinian people and expenditures on Palestinian Security Forces?

*Answer.* U.S. assistance for the Palestinians is provided consistent with U.S. law. I understand the Department routinely assesses its foreign assistance programming and would do so as necessary following Palestinian elections or any other significant change related to the Palestinian Authority.

#### *Security Cooperation*

*Question.* The U.S. Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act, which was enacted into law in 2020, mandates not less than \$ 1.3 billion in security assistance to Israel. What is your position with respect to conditioning security assistance to Israel?

*Answer.* I do not believe that conditioning security assistance to Israel furthers U.S. interests. The President has been clear that the administration does not support placing conditions on military aid to Israel.



*Question.* Do you support fulfilling U.S. funding commitments outlined in the current 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

Answer. I fully support the 10-year, \$38 billion Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Israel.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to opposing any efforts to impose new restrictions on security assistance to Israel, which is an important show of the United States' commitment to the security of our allies?

Answer. The President has been clear that he does not support placing conditions on military aid to Israel. If confirmed, I commit to opposing any efforts to impose new restrictions on security assistance to Israel, consistent with the President's policy.

*Question.* In light of recent violence between Israel and militants in the Gaza Strip, do you support emergency funding for the Iron Dome?

Answer. Yes, I support emergency funding for the Iron Dome.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to working to expand U.S.-Israel cooperation on the Iron Dome and other similar defense programs?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working to expand U.S.-Israel cooperation on the Iron Dome and other similar defense programs, consistent with the President's policy.

*Question.* The 11 day war demonstrated that Israel's Iron Dome struggled to meet the demands of a one-front war with Hamas. A two-front war with both Hamas and Hezbollah would present a much more significant threat. Is Israel's current number of Iron Dome batteries, radars and munitions sufficient to meet the threat of a two-front war? What are the associated capability gaps you will address as the Ambassador to Israel?

Answer. The U.S. commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. The Biden-Harris administration remains committed to Israel's defense and security, including its qualitative military edge in the region, consistent with U.S. law and policy. On May 20, President Biden assured Prime Minister Netanyahu of his "full support to replenish Israel's Iron Dome system to ensure [Israel's] defense and security in the future."

I understand the administration is prepared to support President Biden's commitment to ensure Israel's right to defend itself from indiscriminate rocket attacks by assisting Israel in replenishing its Iron Dome Air Defense Missile System. If confirmed, I will work with Departments of State and Defense colleagues to see what can be done to assist Israel in replenishing its Iron Dome systems.

*Question.* Israeli vessels have been subject to an increasing number of Iranian attacks, which threaten freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and beyond. As a result, Israel has increased its deployments in the Red Sea region. How can the U.S. better support Israeli efforts to protect freedom of navigation?

Answer. The U.S. commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. The Biden-Harris administration remains committed to Israel's defense and security, including its qualitative military edge in the region, consistent with U.S. law and policy, which is the best way the United States can support Israeli efforts to protect freedom of navigation.

*Question.* One of Israel's top cyber security firms, NSO Group, is responsible for developing advanced cyber hacking technology, including Pegasus. NSO insists the software is used exclusively for the purposes of combatting terrorism and monitoring serious crime, underscoring the fact that the Israeli Government is responsible for vetting the company's sales. However, in recent years, numerous countries have been accused of using the software to spy civil society activists, journalists, and political dissidents among others.

- Do you feel the appropriate oversight checks are in place to prevent Pegasus, and other cyber surveillance software like it, from being used to commit human rights abuses?

Answer. The U.S. Government has undertaken a number of steps over the last year to avoid tools or products from U.S.-based cyber-surveillance companies being used abroad to undermine human rights. I understand that in October 2020, the Department of State released the first-of-its-kind "human rights due diligence" guidance to help businesses conduct a human rights impact assessment on relevant products or services and the Department of Commerce issued a Final Rule that revised the licensing policy for crime-control items in connection with human rights concerns, as well as expanded its consideration of human rights beyond crime con-

trolled items. If confirmed, I will work with our bilateral partners to promote respect for and protect human rights.

*Question.* To what extent do you feel NSO's licensing of the Pegasus spyware is done in a manner that complies with U.S. values and upholds U.S. national security interests?

*Answer.* The United States condemns the harassment or extrajudicial surveillance of journalists, human rights activists, or other perceived regime critics. Just as states have the duty to protect human rights, businesses have a responsibility, too. Thus, they should work to avoid their products or services being used to abuse human rights. President Biden has affirmed that "American leadership must meet this new moment of advancing authoritarianism." This commitment includes working to help U.S. companies avoid fueling authoritarian practices, stemming the use of new technological tools for repression, and giving citizens tools to improve their digital security. If confirmed, I will uphold this commitment and work with our bilateral partners to promote respect for and protect human rights.

*Question.* The U.S.-Israel Security Assistance Cooperation Act passed in the FY21 NDAA allows the United States to waive statutory caps on the annual transfer of precision-guided munitions to Israel under section 514(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321h(b)) under emergency circumstances. Would you consider a one front war with Hamas an emergency circumstance? A two front war with Hamas and Hezbollah? How do we balance U.S. PGM requirements and Israel's requirements?

*Answer.* The President has made clear that the United States supports Israel's legitimate right to defend itself and I understand the administration is prepared to support President Biden's commitment to ensure this. While any escalation that risks war is not in our interests, I cannot speak to hypothetical questions.

#### *United Nations*

*Question.* In 2012, you sent a letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee arguing against efforts to distinguish between Palestinian displaced by the conflict that led to the creation of Israel in 1948 and their descendants, who the U.N. currently classifies as refugees. This distinction would reduce the number of UNRWA registered refugees from 5 million to 30,000.

- Do you still maintain that efforts to limit those who can claim UNRWA refugee status would undermine U.S. interests in advancing discussions between Israel and the Palestinian Authority?

*Answer.* Yes. My understanding is that the status of Palestinian refugees remains a highly sensitive issue among Palestinians and their supporters, including U.S. regional allies such as Jordan.

*Question.* Who, in your view, should classify as an UNRWA refugee?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the United States recognizes UNRWA's definition of Palestinian refugees for the purposes of UNRWA's operations. UNRWA's definition of "Palestine refugees" is: "[P]ersons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period of June 1, 1946 to May 15, 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict." Descendants of eligible male "Palestine refugees" are eligible for registration with UNRWA for the purpose of accessing services. I understand this approach to including descendants is similar to that used by UNHCR in other protracted refugee situations, such as Afghanistan and Somalia.

*Question.* Why does UNRWA require 10,000 more staff to advocate its regional mission than UNHCR to advance its global mission?

*Answer.* UNRWA's mandate is set by the U.N. General Assembly and is to provide essential services directly to Palestinian refugees in the five regions it covers. Unlike UNHCR, which delivers most services to refugees through sub-partners, UNRWA employees include schoolteachers and health care workers who provide the services directly to beneficiaries.

*Question.* Do you believe UNRWA should be absorbed by UNHCR, given UNHCR's efficiency and infrastructure?

*Answer.* UNRWA's mandate is set by the U.N. General Assembly and is to provide essential services directly to Palestinian refugees in the five regions it covers. Unlike UNHCR, which works to deliver most services to refugees through sub-partners, UNRWA employees include schoolteachers and health care workers who provide services directly to beneficiaries. UNHCR's mandate focuses on seeking durable solutions (such as resettlement, repatriation, and local integration) for refugees,

which cannot be adequately applied in the Palestinian context as these matters are final status issues to be negotiated directly between Israel and the Palestinians.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working with the appropriate Congressional committees prior to any consultations related to new U.S. contributions to UNRWA?

*Answer.* The President and the Secretary have been clear that the administration is committed to working with Congress. I understand the Department has regularly engaged with Congressional committees since resuming humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people. If confirmed, I am committed to supporting the continuation of this approach.

*Question.* How do you plan to work with UNRWA to advance reform, particularly as relates to anti-Semitic educational content of text books?

*Answer.* I condemn incitement of violence and anti-Semitism in any form. U.N. agencies, including UNRWA, do not develop their own curriculum, but use the curriculum of host governments. When concepts contrary to U.N. principles are identified in host governments' education materials, UNRWA provides instructions and supplementary materials for its staff to address the issue. If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of following humanitarian principles, including neutrality, in discussions with UNRWA.

*Question.* In 1997, the Palestinian Authority signed an agreement to allow the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to establish a Liaison officer in Ramallah, and subsequently upgraded relations admitting the PA as a full member state in 2011. In response, both the U.S. and Israel withdrew their member status.

- The Biden administration is requesting a waiver to allow the U.S. to re-join the body. In your view, should the United States be a member of UNESCO?

*Answer.* The President has stated he believes firmly that more can be accomplished by working within U.N. organizations than outside. However, I cannot speak to the administration's review of U.S. policy on UNESCO.

*Question.* Section 410, Title IV of the FY 94–95 Foreign Relations Authorization Act (P.L. 103-236) prohibits the U.S. from making any voluntary or assessed contribution to the U.N. or any affiliated organization which grants full membership to an entity which lacks “the internationally attributes of statehood” like the Palestinian Authority. If confirmed, can you commit to ensuring no U.S. funds are used to make a contribution to UNESCO or any other U.N. body that grants the PA full membership status?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that all our policies, including with respect to U.N. contributions, are consistent with U.S. interests and applicable U.S. law.

*Question.* How, in your view, should the United States address concerns around the body's politicization and alleged anti-democratic leanings? What specific reforms should UNESCO pursue before the United States rejoins the body?

*Answer.* I understand the administration has been reviewing various aspects of its multilateral engagement. UNESCO leadership has made progress in helping member states avoid politicized debate on Middle East questions and should continue its efforts to counter any anti-Israel bias in UNESCO decisions and resolutions. UNESCO should continue to build on its efforts to promote transparency and accountability in its personnel and financial management practices.

*Question.* Recently, the Palestinian Authority threatened action to circumvent ascension protocols and seek a change in their status at the U.N.

- Do you believe this action promotes the Middle East peace process and serves the needs of the Palestinian people?

*Answer.* As a matter of principle, there are no shortcuts to Palestinian statehood outside of direct negotiations between the parties. This includes counterproductive unilateral steps to gain membership as a state in U.N. specialized agencies and other international organizations.

*Question.* In your view, what consequences should the Palestinians face if they continue to attempt to gain membership in U.N. agencies?

*Answer.* While I cannot speak to hypotheticals, if confirmed, I will underscore to the Palestinians that unproductive, unilateral steps are not a shortcut to Palestinian statehood.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to working to prevent the Palestinian Authorities' pursuit of full membership in U.N. entities?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will underscore to the Palestinian leadership that unproductive, unilateral steps are not a shortcut to Palestinian statehood.

*Question.* In 2018, the Trump administration withdrew from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) citing "chronic anti-Israel bias." Since, the Biden administration has re-engaged with the body, claiming U.S. absence did nothing to address its disproportionate focus on Israel. Do you share the Trump administration's assessment regarding the UNHRC's reported anti-Israel bias? What steps should the U.S. take to improve the UNHRC's impartiality?

Answer. If confirmed, consistent with administration policy, I will oppose efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies. When we have had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and we have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel.

*Question.* What are your views on the U.N. Human Rights Council's decision to open a commission of inquiry the wake of the 11 day Israel-Gaza conflict in May?

Answer. I understand that the United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the escalation in Gaza in May. It exemplifies the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. I believe the establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians, and ensure that terrorist organizations, including Hamas, do not exploit the situation, including by indiscriminate firing of rockets, to further their own destructive aims. If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with other U.N. member states.

*Question.* Do you support U.N. Security Council Resolution 2334?

Answer. If confirmed, I will oppose, as I understand the administration does already, efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies. Equally, I will firmly oppose any unilateral provocative actions that risk sparking more violence and that undermine prospects for a just, durable resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, which ultimately requires two states. I will work to preserve the path to a two-state solution as the best way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state and to give the Palestinians the state they seek. I will also continue and sustain diplomatic engagement on the issue of settlements.

*Question.* In March, the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor opened an investigation into possible war crimes allegedly committed in the West Bank and Gaza. Do you believe that the ICC should be investigating a case involving alleged Israeli actions in the Palestinian territories? If yes, please explain.

Answer. The United States shares the goals of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in promoting accountability for the worst crimes known to humanity. Further, the United States has always taken the position that the ICC's jurisdiction should be reserved for countries that consent to it, or that are referred by the U.N. Security Council. I understand the administration continues to disagree strongly with the ICC's actions relating to the Palestinian situation.

*Question.* Do you believe that the ICC has jurisdiction to investigate or bring to trial Israeli service members, officials, or other Israeli citizens? If yes, please explain.

Answer. The United States has always taken the position that the ICC's jurisdiction should be reserved for countries that consent to it, or that are referred by the U.N. Security Council.

*Question.* Do you believe the ICC's reputation has been diminished by recent attempts to prosecute United States and Israeli nationals? If no, please explain.

Answer. The United States has always taken the position that the ICC's jurisdiction should be reserved for countries that consent to it, or that are referred by the U.N. Security Council.

*Abraham Accords*

*Question.* What is your opinion on the Abraham Accords? What, if anything, has hampered additional normalization agreements?

*Answer.* I welcome and strongly support the Abraham Accords and normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world. While identifying new opportunities and negotiating agreements takes time, if confirmed I am committed to working with countries across the region to build on existing relationships and develop new ones, including by highlighting the tangible benefits of relations with Israel and leveraging the wide range of diplomatic tools at our disposal. I also look forward to learning from Israel's new partners in the region to better understand how we can work together to advance new normalization agreements and strengthen existing ones.

*Question.* How do you plan to operationalizing and expanding the existing Abraham Accords to ensure all parties reap tangible economic and security benefits?

*Answer.* The Abraham Accords and normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world have already made an important contribution to regional security and economic development, yet even more is possible. If confirmed, I will work with Israel and neighboring Arab countries that have normalized relations with Israel to identify and capitalize on the many new opportunities that these agreements have unlocked.

*Question.* Please provide you assessment of the progress that's been made with respect to the normalization agreement between Israel and Sudan.

*Answer.* While the Israel-Sudan normalization agreement is yet to be finalized, I understand the two governments have made significant progress towards improving their relations since announcing their intention to normalize their relations on October 23, 2020. On January 6, 2020, Sudan signed the Abraham Accords declaration of principles in a ceremony in Khartoum. On April 19, 2021, Sudan officially repealed its 1958 law boycotting Israel. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government of Israel to support the full implementation of the normalization agreement.

*Question.* Please provide you assessment of the progress that's been made with respect to the normalization agreement between Israel and Morocco.

*Answer.* Since announcing their intention to normalize their relations on December 10, 2020, I understand Israel and Morocco have made significant progress in deepening their relations. On January 16, Israel reopened its Liaison Office in Morocco and Israel's Chargé d'Affaires to Morocco, Dr. David Govrin, arrived in Rabat four days later. On February 9, Moroccan envoy Abderrahim Beyyoudh arrived in Tel Aviv to reopen Morocco's liaison office. In August 2021, the countries agreed to open embassies in the future. This diplomatic progress has been matched by similar progress in improving economic and social ties. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government of Israel to ensure the strength of the Israeli-Moroccan partnership continues to grow.

*Question.* Please provide you assessment of the progress that's been made with respect to the normalization agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Which sectors do you feel should be targeted moving forward as we continue to build upon the historic normalization agreement between Israel and UAE?

*Answer.* Since normalizing relations, I understand Israel and the UAE have enjoyed robust cooperation across a range of areas. Israel opened its embassy in the UAE on January 25, 2021 and officially inaugurated it on June 29 during Israeli Foreign Minister Lapid's visit to Abu Dhabi, the first official visit by an Israeli foreign minister since the announcement of the Abraham Accords. On February 26, the UAE's first ambassador to the State of Israel, Mohammad Mahmoud Al Khajah, was sworn in and he arrived in Israel on March 1. On March 12, the UAE announced it was setting up a \$10 billion investment fund aimed at "strategic sectors" in Israel. On May 31, Israel and the UAE announced an agreement on a tax treaty. If confirmed I look forward to identifying new ways to deepen Israel-Emirati cooperation, including increasing trade and investment, building new vehicles to support academic and people-to-people exchanges, and expanding security cooperation.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of the progress that's been made with respect to the normalization agreement between Israel and Bahrain?

*Answer.* Since normalizing relations, I understand Israel and Bahrain have signed over a dozen Memoranda of Understanding covering cooperative initiatives in sectors ranging from healthcare to education. On March 30, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain issued a Royal Decree appointing Ambassador Khalid Yusuf Al-

Jalahma as head of Bahrain's diplomatic mission to Israel, the first Bahraini envoy to the country. On September 3, Eitan Na'eh was nominated as Israel's first ambassador to Bahrain, the same day that Bahrain's Khalid Yusuf Al-Jalahma presented his credentials to Foreign Minister Yair Lapid. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government of Israel to nurture and grow this important new partnership.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to leverage the existing normalization agreements between Israel and its Gulf Arab neighbors, as well as Morocco and Sudan, to advocate for other countries to reach similar agreements with Israel?

Answer. I welcome and strongly support the Abraham Accords and normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world. If confirmed, I am committed to working with countries across the region to build on existing relationships and develop new ones, including by highlighting the tangible benefits of relations with Israel and leveraging the wide range of diplomatic tools at our disposal. I also look forward to learning from Israel's new partners in the region to better understand how we can work together to advance new normalization agreements and strengthen existing ones.

*Question.* In your view, what tangible benefits does normalizing relations with Israel offer to Muslim Majority countries in the Middle East and beyond?

Answer. The Abraham Accords and normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world have made an important contribution to regional security and economic development and support U.S. national security interests. The Abraham Accords have empowered our partners in the region to work together on their shared security interests, created new channels for peaceful dialogue and exchange, and fostered a broader culture of tolerance across the region. They are also an engine of economic growth, having spurred new trade and investment deals that previously would have been impossible. Over time, these new economic initiatives will create opportunities for the young and marginalized communities across the region. As more countries in the Middle East and beyond normalize their relations with Israel, more opportunities for cooperation and economic development will emerge.

*Question.* If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, you will have the opportunity to interact with both the UAE and Bahraini Ambassadors to Israel—in addition to potentially hosting delegations or meeting with diplomats from other countries normalizing or considering normalization with Israel. Will you commit to meeting regularly with your Abraham Accords counterparts?

Answer. I believe it is important to foster and promote the Abraham Accords and normalization agreements by identifying ways to strengthen and expand them. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, I look forward to meeting regularly with my counterparts from Abraham Accords countries to capitalize on these opportunities.

*Question.* Some argue that the Trump administration's exit from the nuclear deal and maximum pressure against Iran coupled with its clear pro-Israel policies set the conditions for normalization under the Abraham Accords. Please provide your perspectives on this argument.

Answer. The Abraham Accords have empowered our partners in the region to work together on their shared security interests, created new channels for peaceful dialogue and exchange, and fostered a broader culture of tolerance across the region. They are also an engine of economic growth, having spurred new trade and investment deals that previously would have been impossible. I believe these shared interests, including an interest in working together preserve stability in the region in the face of malign actors, were the core drivers behind the Abraham Accords and will continue to drive new normalization agreements in the future.

*Question.* Some have argued that the Abraham Accords may set the conditions for a new multilateral security construct in the Middle East focused on the shared threat from Iran, countering violent extremist organizations, and transnational organized crime. What are your thoughts on the potential for new security constructs stemming from the Accords and what shape might these take? What do you see as your role as the Ambassador to Israel in driving these new constructs?

Answer. I am committed to helping Israel build partnerships that further integrate Israel into the region. Any sustainable regional economic and security dialogue will need to include Israel, and normalization efforts have opened that door. If confirmed, I will work with Israel to identify ways to advance a structured re-

gional dialogue that explores ways to reduce tensions, create pathways to de-escalation, and manage mistrust.

*Egypt/Jordan*

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of the Egyptian-Israeli relations? What are some of the key frictions points in your view? What steps should the United States take to resolve these issues?

*Answer.* Peace between Egypt and Israel has lasted for more than 40 years and both countries have extensive areas of cooperation, including security, intelligence sharing, economic and energy. I understand the Biden-Harris administration is eager to explore ways to support development of a warmer peace between Egypt and Israel, including through greater people-to-people and civil society ties. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my Egyptian counterpart and Israeli officials to strengthen all parts of this partnership.

*Question.* In your view, what role does the Multilateral Forces Observer Mission (MFO) play in maintaining regional stability? Should the U.S. maintain existing levels of support?

*Answer.* The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) remains essential to both the treaty relationship between Israel and Egypt and the enduring peace and security within the region. The MFO continues to work as an intermediary between the treaty parties, enabling open and frequent communication between them to maintain strong mutual trust and cooperation. The MFO promotes confidence in the treaty, maintains dialogue between the parties, and assists them during a period when both face security challenges. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. support for the MFO and its critical mission.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of the Jordanian-Israeli relations? What are some of the key friction points in your view? What steps should the United States take to resolve these issues?

*Answer.* Israel's relationship with Jordan is both vital and complex. Over the 30 years since they signed a peace agreement, they have forged strategic ties and developed cross-border business ties that employ thousands of Jordanians, signed valuable contracts exporting Israeli natural gas to Jordan, and have collaborated on the allocation of scarce water resources. While domestic considerations tied to Jordan's large Palestinian population have made it difficult for Jordan to fully embrace and grow its relationship with Israel, both appreciate the need for deeper ties. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my Jordanian and Israeli counterparts as I work towards strengthening all parts of this partnership. I will also work to improve coordination between the two countries at the Haram Al-Sharif/Temple Mount.

*Question.* Since 1967, Jordan's custodial role over Temple Mount has helped maintain peace at one of the region's most contentious and divisive religious sites. For decades, religious worship at Temple Mount has been restricted to Muslims but in recent weeks the Israeli Government has authorized a growing number of Jewish worshippers to practice there.

- To what extent do you feel this shift in policy threatens to trigger further instability in East Jerusalem?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to continuing the U.S. recognition of the historic status quo on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount and to handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* What specific steps would you propose the U.S. takes to address concerns over worship at Temple Mount? What role should Jordan play in these discussions?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration made clear that it recognizes the historic status quo on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount, and it continues to respect the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty, which recognizes the special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem.

While I am not privy to diplomatic discussions between the U.S. Government and its foreign counterparts, I understand that the U.S. Government hopes to partner with its counterparts to express the importance of maintaining calm and keeping flashpoints like the situation in Jerusalem-be it in the Old City, on the Temple Mount, or elsewhere-from igniting the situation.

If confirmed, I am committed to continuing the U.S. recognition of the historic status quo on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount and to handling all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Lebanon*

*Question.* To what extent do you feel UNIFIL's current mandate is sufficient to oversee safety and security along the so-called Blue Line? Are there specific reforms to the mandate you feel the U.S. should pursue to help address Israel's ongoing security concerns?

*Answer.* The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) plays a critical role in ensuring security and stability along the Blue Line, limiting Hizballah's operations in southern Lebanon, and preventing escalation between Lebanon and Israel. I was glad to see that the United States worked with France and other partners to amend the mandate to allow UNIFIL to provide food, fuel, and medicine to the Lebanese Armed Forces, a key partner that provides an important counterweight to Hizballah's argument that it is the legitimate defender of Lebanon. Despite the success that UNIFIL has had in implementing its mandate to date, Hizballah continues to impede UNIFIL's access to key points along the Blue Line and openly flouts the arms embargo established under UNSCR 1701. If confirmed, I will work with UNIFIL and international partners to strengthen the mandate and enable UNIFIL to fully implement all aspects of that mandate.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to advance efforts to resume U.S.-mediated maritime talks between Israel and Lebanon? How do you feel the change in administration in both Israel and Lebanon impacts the likelihood of negotiations making tangible progress towards a viable resolution?

*Answer.* The maritime boundary is a decision for both Israel and Lebanon to make. The administration remains committed to working with the parties toward an agreement benefiting both countries.

*Question.* Hezbollah threatens Israel with precision-guided munitions often stored in densely packed urban areas. Should the United States sanction Hezbollah under the Sanctioning the Use of Defenseless Shields Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-348)? Why or why not? How do you address the PGM threat to Israel?

*Answer.* The U.S. commitment to Israel is ironclad and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States uses all the tools at our disposal to confront security threats to Israel, including from Hizballah. The U.S. Government remains committed to imposing sanctions on Hizballah and its financial supporters and enablers, and the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control's designations on September 17, 2021 of members of a major financing network of Hizballah demonstrate this administration's commitment to continuing to target Hizballah's financial networks around the world. If confirmed, I also commit to consult with Congress about the range of U.S. efforts to counter Hizballah and support Israel's right to self-defense.

*The West Bank and the Palestinian Authority*

*Question.* In 2016, John Kerry argued there would be no "separate peace" between Israel and Arabs without first solving the issue of Palestinian statehood.

- What are your views on Palestinian statehood and its ties to additional normalization agreements?

*Answer.* I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. By making Israel more secure and opening new channels for constructive dialogue and diplomacy between Israel and the Arab world, normalization agreements also bring with them the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Similarly, making progress towards a two-state solution may hasten new normalization agreements. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* Doesn't re-inserting Palestinian statehood back into the peace process hinder prospects of further normalizations with Israel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to working with countries across the region to build on existing relationships and develop new ones, including by highlighting the tangible benefits of relations with Israel and leveraging the wide range of diplomatic tools at our disposal. I also look forward to engaging with Israel's new partners in the region to find ways to improve the lives of Israelis and Palestinians alike to help create the conditions for a durable two-state solution.



*Question.* What is your assessment of Palestinian leadership and its ability to reach consensus between Gaza and the West Bank on issues of statehood and support for terrorism?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Israel and the Palestinian Authority to restore calm in the West Bank and Gaza and keep flash point issues from flaring into violence. There are issues of good governance and accountability that affect the standing of the Palestinian Authority in the eyes of the Palestinian public, and that lie within the PA's hands to advance; there are at the same time steps that the Israeli Government can consider for enhancing the role of the PA in delivering services and economic opportunities. It is incumbent upon both sides to adopt an affirmative and practical approach to the conflict that encourages constructive, positive steps for providing the Palestinian people—whether in Gaza or the West Bank—greater economic opportunities while restoring the conditions that will make possible eventual direct negotiations toward a two-state solution.

*Question.* In your view, how do Israeli-Arab normalization agreements affect the prospects for Israel-Palestinian peace negotiations?

*Answer.* I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. By making Israel more secure and opening new channels for constructive dialogue and diplomacy between Israel and the Arab world, normalization agreements also bring with them the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Similarly, making progress towards a two-state solution may hasten new normalization agreements. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* In 2012, you claimed “final status issues can and must only be resolved between Israelis and Palestinians in direct negotiations.” Do you still feel this is the case? If so, how would you support efforts to facilitate direct talks between the Israeli and Palestinians?

*Answer.* I believe that final status issues can and must only be resolved between Israelis and Palestinians in direct negotiations. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* What do you view as the proper role for the U.S. to play in assisting the parties' efforts to reach an agreement?

*Answer.* I believe the United States is in a position to help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians, which is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security, and prosperity for both people.

*Question.* Do you agree that the only way to reach a lasting two-state resolution to this conflict is through direct, bilateral negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians rather than one imposed by outside actors?

*Answer.* I believe that a two-state solution achieved through direct, bilateral negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity for both people.

*Question.* What is your assessment of Palestinian leadership and its ability to reach consensus between Gaza and the West Bank on issues of statehood and terrorism?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Israel and the Palestinian Authority to restore calm in the West Bank and Gaza, and keep flash point issues from flaring into violence. There are issues of good governance and accountability that affect the standing of the Palestinian Authority in the eyes of the Palestinian public, and that lie within the PA's hands to advance; there are at the same time steps that the Israeli Government can consider for enhancing the role of the PA in delivering services and economic opportunities. It is incumbent upon both sides to adopt an affirmative and practical approach to the conflict that encourages constructive, positive steps for providing the Palestinian people—whether in Gaza or the West Bank—greater economic opportunities while restoring the conditions that will make possible eventual direct negotiations toward a two-state solution.

*Question.* In August 2021, Israel rolled out several measures designed to strengthen the Palestinian Authority, including the extension of a \$150 million dollar loan

to the occupied West Bank. How can the U.S. work with the Israeli Government to ensure none of these funds are used to support the abhorrent pay for slay program?

Answer. Both the United States and Israel are likeminded in their opposition towards this abhorrent practice. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Israeli Government to ensure funds are not misused to support this heinous practice.

*Question.* The Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) continue to incentivize and celebrate the use of violence against Israel through the egregious “pay to slay” program. In 2019 alone, the Palestinians spent \$151 million dollars to support imprisoned terrorists and their families. In addition, to these prisoner payments, the PA and PLO maintain a “martyrs’ fund” to help support the families of terrorist killed while carrying out violent acts against the Israeli state. There is concern the Biden administration’s decision to re-establish relations with the Palestinians in a manner that failed to extract concessions with respect to their pay to slay program was a missed opportunity. How has the Biden administration’s outreach set conditions for any reforms on pay to slay?

Answer. While I am not in a position to comment on private diplomatic discussions, this administration and I, are absolutely committed to working to end the practice of Palestinian prisoner and “martyr” payments in a manner that addresses longstanding U.S. and international concerns. If confirmed, I would build on the work thus far, through sustained diplomatic engagement and pressure, underscoring that part of resetting the U.S.-Palestinian relationship is seeing reform of this heinous practice.

*Question.* Despite opening the aperture of ESF and INCLE to the Palestinians, the State Department has achieved no progress on the pay-to-slay policy. Please provide your roadmap for addressing this egregious practice.

Answer. I believe the Palestinian practice of prisoner and martyr payments is abhorrent. This administration and I are absolutely committed to working to end the practice of Palestinian prisoner and “martyr” payments in a manner that addresses longstanding U.S. and international concerns. If confirmed, I would build on the work thus far, through sustained diplomatic engagement and pressure, underscoring that part of resetting the U.S.-Palestinian relationship is seeing reform of this heinous practice.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to making efforts to address the Palestinian Authority’s pay for slay program a priority?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, pursuing reform of this heinous practice is a priority for me.

*Question.* What is your position on the viability of a two-State solution? Is it your sense that the tenure between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian authority has changed under the new administration led by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett?

Answer. I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians alike. The administration has been clear that Israelis and Palestinians alike equally deserve to live in freedom, security, and prosperity. As such, the United States is strongly encouraging both the Palestinians and the Israelis to avoid unilateral actions including settlement activity, annexation, and demolitions, as well as incitement to violence and providing compensation for individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism. If confirmed, I am committed to taking an affirmative and practical approach that encourages constructive, positive steps to keep the possibility of a negotiated two-state solution alive.

*Question.* Please provide your views on the relative benefits and risks of ESF and INCLE expenditures targeted towards the Palestinian people and security forces.

Answer. Promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances our national security. Our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and hold those who violate human rights accountable. I believe that we must continue to create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, and frequent cooperation. Institutional reforms supported by U.S. security sector assistance are critical in building the capabilities necessary to maintain stability in the West Bank and improve the Palestinian Authority security forces. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that our security sector assistance further supports efforts to uphold the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

*Gaza Strip and Hamas*

*Question.* In your view, does Hamas' targeting of civilian infrastructure in Israel constitute war crimes?

*Answer.* Hamas's heinous rocket attacks on Israel in May only reinforced the Biden administration's ironclad resolve on Israel's security. I unequivocally condemn all rocket fire into Israel by terrorist groups Hamas and PIJ, and human rights abuses being committed in Gaza where Hamas, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, exercises de facto authority. The U.S. Government supports Israel's inherent right of self-defense, including against rocket attacks from Hamas and other Gaza-based terrorist groups. If confirmed, I will be committed to stabilizing Gaza to prevent further conflict and loss of civilian life.

*Question.* Hamas fighters reportedly position military tunnels and deploy rocket launches in close proximity to civilian infrastructure, like hospitals, schools, and mosques to limit the likelihood of an Israeli counterstrike. Is Hamas responsible for using Palestinian civilians as human shields to protect its military assets from Israeli counter strikes?

*Answer.* I unequivocally condemn all rocket fire into Israel by terrorist groups Hamas and PIJ, and human rights abuses being committed in Gaza where Hamas, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, exercises de facto authority. The President has made clear that the U.S. Government supports Israel's inherent right of self-defense, including against rocket attacks from Hamas and other Gaza-based terrorist groups. If confirmed, I will be committed to stabilizing Gaza to prevent further conflict and loss of civilian life.

*Question.* The Sanctioning the Use of Defenseless Shields Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-348) mandates sanctions on any member of Hezbollah or Hamas who "knowingly orders, controls, or otherwise directs the use of civilians protected as such by the law of war to shield military objectives from attack." Under the law, the President is required to submit to Congress a list of, and impose financial sanctions on, each foreign person involved in the use of human shields by Hamas or Hezbollah "on or after the date of enactment." Despite widespread reporting on Hamas's use of human shields, as of September 21, 2021, no action has been pursued under this act. If confirmed, can you commit to advocating for the imposition of sanctions under The Sanctioning the Use of Defenseless Shields Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-348)? Please provide your assessment of Qatar's role with respect to Gaza. To what extent do you see it as a stabilizing influence?

*Answer.* The President has made clear that the United States supports Israel's inherent right of self-defense, including against rocket attacks from Hamas and other Gaza-based terrorist groups, and unequivocally condemns Hamas's human rights abuses in Gaza. If confirmed, I will support efforts by across the Government to use the tools at our disposal, including sanctions authorities, in countering terrorist actors like Hamas. We must work to stabilize Gaza to prevent future conflict. We can do this by working with partners, such as Qatar, through meeting humanitarian needs, including increasing access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services, and increasing levels of electricity and freedom of movement, while facilitating political and physical reintegration in the West Bank. Qatar has played a stabilizing role in Gaza, and I believe their strong partnership with the Government of Israel will continue to help stabilize the situation.

*Question.* What is your position on Qatari assistance to the Gaza Strip? Can you commit to working with the U.N. and the Government of Israel to ensure it IS delivered in a manner that's consistent with Israeli and U.S. national security interests?

*Answer.* I understand the United States is committed to working with the international donor community to support the Palestinian people. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the United Nations and Government of Israel to ensure assistance to Gaza is delivered a manner that is consistent with U.S. and Israeli national security interests.

*Question.* To what extent is assistance to Gaza subject to diversion by Hamas?

*Answer.* I understand the U.S. Government provides assistance in a manner consistent with U.S. law and does not direct assistance to Hamas. The Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development have a robust vetting process to mitigate the risk that U.S. Government resources could inadvertently support Hamas or other terrorist groups. In addition, our development and humanitarian partners in the West Bank and Gaza have aggressive risk-mitigation systems in place aimed at ensuring U.S. taxpayer-funded assistance reaches its intended recipients.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of Egypt's role in Gaza and its relationship with Hamas.

*Answer.* I believe that Egypt plays an important stabilizing role in Gaza, exhibited by Egypt's critical efforts to achieve a cessation of hostilities during the conflict in May.

*Question.* In August 2021, Egypt reportedly closed its main border point with the Gaza Strip, Rafah crossing, over "differences" between Cairo and Hamas with respect to the latest Egypt brokered ceasefire. Specifically, officials have cited concerns over the lack of progress in indirect talks with Israel following the 11 day war in May and efforts to reconcile the militant Palestinian factions that dominate Gaza Strip. Do you share these concerns?

*Answer.* We must work to stabilize Gaza to prevent future conflict. We can do this through meeting humanitarian needs, including increasing access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services and increasing levels of electricity and freedom of movement, while facilitating political and physical reintegration in the West Bank. An effective humanitarian response requires adequate access to Gaza to allow reputable, vetted organizations to meet emergency needs; continued and regular opening of border crossings; fast-track processing of humanitarian convoys; and the unimpeded movement of relief and recovery supplies, including critical goods required to meet the needs of Palestinian families.

*Question.* What is your position on the blockade over Gaza that Egypt and Israel imposed following Hamas's ascension to power in 2007? In your view, should this blockade be lifted? If so, on what basis?

*Answer.* I believe we must work to stabilize Gaza to prevent future conflict. We can do this through meeting humanitarian needs, including increasing access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services and increasing levels of electricity and freedom of movement, while facilitating political and physical reintegration with the West Bank. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the international community and Government of Israel to support these humanitarian efforts.

*Question.* Given Hamas' continued control over Gaza, what are some of the obstacles to post-conflict recovery?

*Answer.* Hamas is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224. I understand U.S. engagement in the West Bank and Gaza and with the Palestinians is consistent with U.S. law. Given Hamas's role, many partners have similar restrictions on operating in Gaza.

*Question.* Do you agree that there are significant challenges to assisting with long-term reconstruction in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip? In your view, what impact would reconstruction efforts have on Hamas' credibility and legitimacy?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree there are significant challenges to assisting with long-term reconstruction in Gaza and I understand U.S. engagement in the West Bank and Gaza and with the Palestinians is consistent with U.S. law. I also understand relief and recovery efforts are done in coordination with the Palestinian Authority, Government of Israel, and international donors in a manner that does not permit Hamas to restock its arsenal or achieve any legitimacy.

*Question.* Please address concerns that long-term reconstruction projects in Gaza would merely serve to bolster Hamas' rule much to the detriment of the Palestinian people?

*Answer.* We must work to stabilize Gaza to prevent future conflict. I believe relief and recovery efforts should be done in coordination with the Palestinian Authority, Government of Israel, and international donors in a manner that does not permit Hamas to restock its arsenal.

#### *Iran and Its Proxies*

*Question.* Please provide an assessment of the threat Iran poses to the security of Israel, including a detailed assessment of the extent of support it provides to its proxies, like Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) which pose similar dangers to Israeli sovereignty and the safety of its citizens.

*Answer.* Israel believes Iran is the greatest threat to its security. As Secretary Blinken and other senior U.S. officials have said, the United States is committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and believes diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal. An Iran with a nuclear weapon is likely to act even more provocatively when it

comes to these issues. The administration has fundamental problems with Iran's actions across a series of issues, including its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, its support to armed militant groups, and its destabilizing actions in the region. Our partners in the region share a similar concern.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of the threat Hezbollah poses to Israeli security.

*Answer.* Israel's top national security priorities are forestalling Iran's nuclear ambitions, preventing the proliferation of advanced weaponry across the region, and ending support to terrorist organizations, particularly Hizballah, Hamas, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. The United States remains unwavering in its commitment to Israel's security. The President and the Secretary have been clear that this administration has fundamental problems with Iran's behavior throughout the region, including acts committed by Iranian-backed militia groups. If confirmed, I commit to working with my Israeli counterparts to strengthen all facets of the U.S.-Israel partnership.

*Iran*

*Question.* In your view, should the United States make addressing Iran's support to its proxies like Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) a priority? If so, how should efforts to limit Iran's regional aggression fit into the Biden administration's efforts to pursue a mutual U.S.-Iranian return to the 2015 Iran Nuclear Agreement, otherwise known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA.)

*Answer.* Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and other Iranian-backed terrorist and militant groups pose a serious threat to the security of Israel and to that of the Middle East. The United States is fully committed to working with Israel and our other partners in the region to deter and defend against these threats, using the full spectrum of tools available. Regarding Iran's nuclear program, the administration's goal is first to return to mutual compliance with the JCPOA, and then to build on that to address other areas of concern, including Iran's ballistic missile development and proliferation, and support for terrorism. I support using a variety of policy tools to strengthen the constraints on Iran's nuclear program and address other issues of concern.

*Question.* Israel faces constant threats from terrorist organizations including Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and various Iran backed militia groups in Syria. If confirmed, how do you plan to work with the Government of Israel to address the threat Iran and its proxies pose to Israel's security?

*Answer.* The President has made clear that the United States remains unwavering in its commitment to Israel's security. The President and the Secretary have also been clear that this administration has fundamental problems with Iran's behavior throughout the region, including acts committed by Iran backed militia groups. If confirmed, I commit to working with my Israeli counterparts to strengthen all parts of the U.S.-Israel partnership.

*Question.* Do you support Israel's right to defend itself from terrorist attacks?

*Answer.* Yes. The United States has a long-standing, unshakable commitment to Israel's security.

*Question.* What role should the U.S. play in safeguarding Israeli sovereignty and security?

*Answer.* The United States should maintain its unwavering commitment to Israel's security and work to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israel partnership.

*Question.* Since taking office, President Biden has made facilitating a U.S. return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) a priority for his administration, and, in February, appointed Rob Malley as Special Envoy for Iran to oversee such efforts. Since, Special Envoy Malley has engaged in several rounds of indirect talks in Vienna, Austria aimed at facilitating a mutual U.S.-Iran return to JCPOA.

- After the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal was signed, the Israeli Government, as with our Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) partners, made clear, both publicly and privately, their discontent over the lack of consultations prior to the U.S. entry into the agreement. If confirmed, can you commit to ensuring the U.S. consults Israel prior to any U.S. re-entry into the JCPOA?

*Answer.* Yes. I understand that the Department, and in particular Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley, has been in close contact with our Israeli partners and will continue consulting closely with them throughout this process. I also understand

that former U.S. ambassador to Israel Dan Shapiro has also recently joined the State Department and remains in close consultation with Israel over Iran.

*Question.* In your view, how extensive should these consultations be? To what extent should the U.S. be responsive to Israeli concerns over Iranian proxy activity in the context of talks with Iran?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department, and in particular Special Envoy Malley and senior advisor Ambassador Dan Shapiro, have been in close contact with, and updated, our Israeli counterparts extensively throughout the negotiations. If confirmed, I will continue to consult deeply and continuously with our Israeli partners on all dimensions of Iran policy.

*Question.* Further, many have characterized Special Envoy Malley's consultations as "one-way" and not responsive to their concerns. Do you commit to extensive consultations with Israel prior to making concessions to Iran?

*Answer.* I understand that the Department, and in particular Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley, and senior advisor Ambassador Dan Shapiro have been in close contact with partners in Israel and among the Gulf Arab states, and will continue consulting closely with these key partners as this process proceeds. Every one of us shares a common interest: seeing to it that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Can you commit to seeking Israel's concurrence before the U.S. and Iran finalize any arrangement or agreement related to Iran's nuclear program?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to consult deeply and continuously with our Israeli partners on the nuclear negotiations and on preventing Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you manage disagreements with Israel over Iran policy?

*Answer.* I believe the Biden-Harris administration has conducted itself with a great deal of transparency, knowing that the United States and Israel share a common interest: seeing to it that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. I believe diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal.

*Question.* How do you address criticisms that the Biden administration's decision to re-engage with Iran merely served to isolate Israel and our Gulf partners?

*Answer.* The Biden—Harris administration has made clear that the United States has an ironclad commitment to Israel's security. Alongside that commitment, the administration is focused on de-escalating tensions, putting out the fires of conflict in Yemen, Libya, and Syria, and enhancing stability throughout the Middle East. The Department has updated Israeli and Gulf counterparts regularly before and after negotiation rounds, and is regularly engaged in discussions on its work to constrain and contain Iran's destabilizing regional activities. In fact, the administration's sustained diplomatic engagement with allies and partners has ensured a more united, better coordinated, and more consistent approach in countering the Iranian threat and advancing our shared goals in the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to working with the Special Envoy for Iran, Rob Malley, to ensure Israeli concerns are addressed in the context of talks aimed at facilitating a U.S.-Iran re-entry into JCPOA? How would you do so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Special Envoy Malley and other colleagues in the administration to continue to consult deeply and continuously with our Israeli allies on the nuclear negotiations and on preventing Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* The Biden administration has indicated that it will address Iran's ballistic missile program and regional terrorism in follow-on agreements. Should the United States and Iran rejoin the JCPOA, what leverage does the United States possess to encourage follow on agreements? Iran's leadership has refused to address regional terrorism. How likely is Iran to engage in discussions on its ballistic missile program and support for regional terrorism?

*Answer.* As the President has said, the goal is first to return to mutual compliance with the JCPOA, and then to build on that to address other areas of concern, including Iran's ballistic missile development, proliferation, and support for terrorism using a variety of policy tools to strengthen the constraints on Iran's nuclear program and address other issues of concern. The administration will consult closely with our allies and partners in the region on ways to address this moving forward.

*Question.* Should the Iranian regime refuse to rejoin the JCPOA, what is “Plan B” to address Iran’s nuclear program, ballistic missile program, and support to terror proxies?

*Answer.* The administration has made clear that it believes that diplomacy is the best path forward on the nuclear challenge at this time. In the event Iran refuses to return to mutual compliance with the JCPOA, the administration is prepared to leverage all applicable authorities, including sanctions against Iran, as well as the support of allies and partners around the world, to prevent Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon and to defend U.S. vital interests.

*Question.* Do you support Israel’s freedom to take unilateral military action against Iran’s nuclear program, its terror proxies, and ballistic missile program? Under what conditions would you constrain Israel’s freedom of action?

*Answer.* The President has made clear that the U.S. commitment to Israel’s security is ironclad. I support Israel’s freedom of action to counter Iran’s destabilizing activities and the United States will not take any action that jeopardizes Israel’s security.

#### *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement*

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of the boycott, divest, sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel.

*Answer.* This administration and I firmly reject the BDS movement, which unfairly singles out Israel. While the administration will fully and always respect the right to freedom of expression, the United States will be a strong partner in fighting efforts to delegitimize Israel. We will continue to support Israel’s further integration into the international community.???

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to prioritizing efforts to fight boycott, divest, and sanctions (BDS) Israel globally? If so, how would you use your position to do so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, while respecting the rights of all Americans to free speech, I will continue the tireless work of this administration to firmly reject the BDS movement and boycott laws that unfairly single out Israel and I will continue to support Israel’s further integration into the international community.???

*Question.* Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has publicly stated that he will not annex West Bank territory, nor permit it to be incorporated into a Palestinian state, though he does intend to pursue additional construction in the settlements. Do you believe Israeli settlements in the West Bank are illegal? If so, on what grounds?

*Answer.* The two-state solution is the best way to ensure Israel’s future as a Jewish and democratic state, and to give the Palestinians the state they seek. I firmly oppose any unilateral provocative actions that risk sparking more violence and that undermine prospects for a just, durable resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, which ultimately requires two states. I will continue to oppose any unilateral action that undermines the prospects for genuine progress and peace, whether that is settlement activity, home demolitions, annexation of territory, incitement to violence, or compensation for individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism. I am not in a position to speak to the administration’s legal views. If confirmed, I will work to preserve the path to a two-state solution, as the best way to ensure Israel’s future as a Jewish and democratic state and to give the Palestinians the state they seek.

#### *China*

*Question.* In recent years, commercial ties between Israel and China have grown significantly, as reflected in the Israeli decision to award numerous infrastructure projects to Chinese building conglomerates.

- Please provide your assessment of bilateral relations between Israel and China.

*Answer.* Strategic competition with the People’s Republic of China is a defining feature of the 21st century. As Israel is a world leader in developing innovative technology with military, civilian, and dual-use applications, I understand the administration remains deeply concerned by PRC attempts to extend influence and acquire dual-use technology through acquisition and investment in Israel.

*Question.* Specifically, what, if any, concerns do you have about Israeli cooperation with China and the impact on core U.S. national security interests?

*Answer.* The administration remains deeply concerned by attempts by the People’s Republic of China to extend influence and acquire critical and dual-use tech-

nology through acquisitions and investment in Israel. The administration welcomes efforts by all countries to enhance investment in quality infrastructure development. I believe that such an investment must be within the confines of strong regulatory structures that ensure all companies investing in Israel do so in a responsible manner, consistent with international practices, that benefits the people of Israel, and does not undermine Israeli national security.

*Question.* In your view, to what extent should Israeli-Chinese relations shape and inform Israel's relationship with the U.S.?

*Answer.* Strategic competition with the People's Republic of China is a defining feature of the 21st century. While the administration remains deeply concerned with attempts by the People's Republic of China to extend influence and acquire critical and dual-use technology through acquisitions and investment in Israel, the United States views close cooperation with Israel as important to our security and intelligence partnership.

*Question.* In 2019, in response to U.S. concerns over growing Chinese investment, Israel announced the establishment of an advisory committee, led by the Finance Ministry, to oversee and evaluate foreign investments in Israel. Right now, that committee is an inadequate mechanism and lacks a broad enough scope to protect high technology firms. Only foreign investments in the Israeli financial, communications, infrastructure, transportation, and energy sectors are subject to regulatory approval. Israel is a world-leader in high technology industries. Without a mechanism empowered to review in high technology firms, Israel will lack the ability to ensure controlling and non-controlling investments in these companies do not disadvantage Israel's national security. If confirmed, can you pledge to work with the Government of Israel to improve oversight of foreign commercial investment in Israel, particularly as relates to dual use technology and infrastructure?

*Answer.* While Israel's establishment of a new investment advisory committee is a step in the right direction, I understand there are concerns as to its effectiveness, especially its lack of coverage for the high-tech sector. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel to strengthen its foreign investment advisory committee to identify and mitigate risks associated with foreign direct investment, including investments involving critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure.

*Question.* From your perspective, what specific reforms should the U.S. seek from Israel to help improve its existing foreign investments oversight regime?

*Answer.* While Israel's establishment of a new investment advisory committee is a step in the right direction, I understand there are concerns as to its effectiveness, especially its lack of coverage for the high-tech sector. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel to strengthen its foreign investment advisory committee to identify and mitigate risks associated with foreign direct investment, including investments involving critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure.

*Question.* Can you commit to working with the Government of Israel to ensure its investment oversight regime covers high tech industries?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel to strengthen its foreign investment advisory committee to identify and mitigate risks associated with foreign direct investment, including investments involving critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure.

*Question.* The United States has growing concerns with China's economic relationship with Israel. Given the relative weakness on Israel's committee on foreign investment and issues highlighted by the China's involvement in Haifa port, how do you effectively decouple China from Israel?

*Answer.* The United States views close cooperation with Israel on a variety of national security topics including foreign investment risk management as important to our security and intelligence partnership. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel to strengthen its foreign investment advisory committee to identify and mitigate risks associated with foreign direct investment, including investments involving critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure.

#### *Russia*

*Question.* Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is scheduled to travel to Moscow for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the coming weeks. This will form the basis for joint Israeli-Russian cooperation on a number of issues, including



Iran's role in Syria which remains a top priority concern. Please provide your perspective on the Israeli Russian relationship.

Answer. Russia views its military intervention in Syria as helping to solidify a dominant influence in the Middle East and is responsible for enabling numerous atrocities on the ground. While we routinely condemn Russia's brutal military intervention in Syria on behalf of the Assad regime, we recognize Russia has influence on the ground and that Israel wishes to test that influence with regards to curbing Iran's presence in Syria. The U.S. Government has found narrow areas in which to engage with Russia in Syria, for example to extend cross-border humanitarian access into Syria through Security Council Resolution 2585, and we will continue to explore additional avenues for discussion if they are to the benefit the Syrian people and stability in the region.

*Question.* How does the U.S.'s failure to mitigate the threat Iran and its proxies pose to Israeli security impact Israel's relationship with Russia? In your view, does it make Israel more reliant on Russia given the former's active ties with destabilizing actors like Iran and its proxy, Hezbollah?

Answer. Israel's security posture is independent of Russia's presence due to Iran's destabilizing tactics through Hezbollah and other proxies allowing it to focus on subversive activities by those responsible.

#### *VISA Waiver Program*

*Question.* President Biden in his recent meeting with Prime Minister Bennett committed to advance a process to see Israel join the visa waiver program. If confirmed, can you commit to making it a priority to advance the President's commitment?

Answer. The administration is fully supportive of Israel joining the Visa Waiver Program once it meets all the requirements for participation in the program. If confirmed, it is a priority for me to advance the President's commitment.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work to ensure an efficient visa process that allows eligible Israelis to travel to the United States?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure an efficient visa process that allows eligible Israelis to travel to the United States.

*Question.* Will you work with the Israelis to help bring down the refusal rate for Israelis applying for visas?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel toward meeting all requirements for participation in the Visa Waiver Program.

#### *Non-Defense Cooperation*

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to expand trade and deepen the economic cooperation with Israel?

Answer. Advancing the depth and breadth of the bonds between our people, including our ever-expanding economic relationship, remains a top priority for me. Israel is a world leader in innovation, research and development, and its start-up economy is safe and welcoming for U.S. businesses, with American companies establishing two-thirds of the more than 300 foreign-invested research and development centers in Israel. If confirmed, I will build on these robust relationships to expand trade and deepen economic cooperation with Israel.

*Question.* If confirmed, what areas of the U.S.-Israel relationship will be priorities for you?

Answer. The U.S.-Israeli relationship has long been based on both common values and strategic interests. We remain united in our shared commitment to democracy, economic prosperity, and regional security. Should I have the honor of being confirmed, maintaining the U.S. Government's ironclad commitment to Israel's security, advancing the depth and breadth of the bonds between our people, including our ever-expanding economic relationship, working with a fellow democracy to oppose international institutional bias and promote human rights at home and abroad, and supporting the Abraham Accords and exploring new opportunities to advance normalization efforts are some of my top priorities.

*Question.* What areas of the relationship do you think can be strengthened?

Answer. Upholding Israel's security serves America's national security interests and ensures that we will always have a strong, reliable, and secure partner. If confirmed, I will work closely with Israeli partners to address critical threats from Iran and Iranian-backed militias and will work to strengthen Israel's foreign investment

advisory committee to identify and mitigate risks associated with foreign direct investment, including investments involving critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure. By making Israel more secure and opening new channels for constructive dialogue and diplomacy between Israel and the Arab world, normalization agreements also bring with them the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. THOMAS R. NIDES BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In July, the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) announced a permanent, three person commission to investigate alleged Israeli war crimes during the conflict in Gaza earlier this year. Recent reporting indicates that all three members—Navi Pillay, Miloon Kothai, and Chris Sidoti—hold anti-Israel views. I'm concerned that the composition of this commission makes it all too likely that this is just another anti-Israel attack by a commission that should be focusing on the ongoing genocide of Uyghurs and Muslims in China, or on Cuba's human rights violations of peaceful protesters, or at least a dozen other countries.

- If confirmed, what steps would you take to cooperate with the Israeli Government to counter this blatant anti-Israel sentiment at the U.N.?

*Answer.* The United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the escalation in Gaza in May. It exemplifies the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians, and ensure that terrorist organizations, including Hamas, do not exploit the situation, including by indiscriminate firing of rockets, to advance their own destructive aims. If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with other U.N. member states.

*Question.* In May of this year, Hamas and other Palestinian terrorists launched more than 4,000 rockets that targeted Israeli civilians. As you know, shortly after this, the Biden administration announced that it would re-open the consulate general in Jerusalem. U.S. law is clear that Jerusalem is the undivided capital of Israel. Re-opening this consulate sends the wrong message.

- Do you support re-opening the consulate in Eastern Jerusalem?

*Answer.* In May, Secretary Blinken publicly announced the administration's intent to reopen the Consulate General in Jerusalem. I understand that this is a component of the administration's renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. diplomatic presence in Jerusalem enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leaders.

*Question.* In your opinion, how does re-opening the Consulate comply with the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995?

*Answer.* I understand that the Jerusalem Embassy Act restricted certain funding for the Department of State until the Secretary determined and reported to Congress that the U.S. Embassy to Israel had officially opened in Jerusalem. During the Trump administration, Secretary Pompeo determined and reported to Congress in 2019 that the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem had officially opened, consistent with the requirements of the Jerusalem Embassy Act. I understand the administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem as called for by the Act. Reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem would not affect that policy or walk back or change our recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

If confirmed, I will always work to ensure that all our policies are consistent with U.S. interests and applicable U.S. law.

*Answer.* Are you aware of other cases where the U.S. operates both a consulate and an embassy in the same city?

*Answer.* I cannot speak to the global U.S. diplomatic presence, however I understand that the Department uses a variety of diplomatic and consular platforms to best serve U.S. interests around the world and maintained a Consulate General and

Embassy in Jerusalem simultaneously from May 2018 to March 2019. The Biden-Harris administration has made clear that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and the U.S. Embassy will remain in Jerusalem. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. THOMAS R. NIDES BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Do you believe, as is the policy of the United States, that we must assist the Government of Israel with its ongoing efforts to forge a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that results in two states living side-by-side in peace and security and to encourage Israel's neighbors to recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state?

*Answer.* I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. By making Israel more secure and opening new channels for constructive dialogue and diplomacy between Israel and the Arab world, normalization agreements also bring with them the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Similarly, making progress towards a two-state solution may hasten new normalization agreements. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as help create the conditions for direct negotiations of a two-state solution between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* As the President's nominee, do you agree that our diplomatic presence in Jerusalem through our Embassy is sufficient to meet the consular needs of Palestinians?

*Answer.* The U.S. Embassy to Israel, which the United States Government has been clear will remain in Jerusalem, provides consular services to U.S. citizens and permanent residents, as well as local communities residing in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. The President and Secretary Blinken have reaffirmed the administration's intent as well to reopen the Consulate General in Jerusalem, to support renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. diplomatic presence in Jerusalem enables our government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leaderships.

*Question.* While the opportunities for partnership are significant, there are also those who worry about China's growing relationship with Israel and needed proper guardrails in place when seeking to work on technology together. If confirmed, how would you seek to deepen the U.S.-Israel partnerships in emerging tech while seeking to deter the Israelis from taking steps closer to China?

*Answer.* The administration remains deeply concerned by attempts by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to extend influence and acquire critical and dual-use technology through acquisitions and investment in Israel. The administration welcomes efforts by all countries to enhance investment in quality infrastructure development. I believe that such an investment must be within the confines of strong regulatory structures that ensure all companies investing in Israel do so in a responsible manner, consistent with international practices, that benefits the people of Israel, and does not undermine Israeli national security. While Israel's establishment of a new investment advisory committee is a step in the right direction, I understand there are concerns as to its effectiveness, given the voluntary nature of its coverage and its lack of coverage for the high-tech sector. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Israel to strengthen its foreign investment advisory committee to minimize exposure to national security risks, including the acquisitions of critical technologies, sensitive data, and critical infrastructure.

*Question.* What untapped opportunities exist for mutual exchanges to deepen our bilateral research and innovation relationship?

*Answer.* Advancing the depth and breadth of the bonds between our people, including our ever-expanding economic relationship remains a top priority for me. Israel is a world leader in innovation, research and development and Israel's start up economy is safe and welcoming for U.S. businesses, with U.S. companies establishing two-thirds of the more than 300 foreign-invested research and development centers in Israel. Three U.S.-Israel bi-national foundations have provided over \$1.2 billion for joint science and technology projects and both sides signed a new Science

and Technology Cooperation Agreement that entered into force in December 2020. If confirmed, I plan to build on these already robust relationships to promote further cooperation in bilateral research and innovation, including working with Israel to strengthen foreign investment risk management which is a key investment in the innovation relationship between the United States and Israel.

In addition, collaboration made possible because of the Abraham Accords and in the Eastern Mediterranean, including with the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) and 3+1 mechanism, presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners. These efforts can help promote Israel's regional integration and greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity throughout the region. If confirmed, I look forward to expanding these efforts.

*Question.* A developing story from September 21 is that progressive Democrats in the House of Representatives have stripped funding for Iron Dome—Israel's primary tool for defending civilians from Hamas' terrorist rocket attacks—out from the upcoming funding bill. If confirmed, would you commit to advocating for the Congress to provide Israel with all the tools necessary to defend itself?

*Answer.* The U.S. commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. The Biden-Harris administration remains committed to Israel's defense and security, including Israel's ability to maintain its qualitative military edge in the region, consistent with U.S. law and policy. The President was clear when President Bennett visited Washington at the end of August that the administration fully supports replenishing Israel's Iron Dome System.

This administration is committed to ensuring Israel's right to defend itself from indiscriminate rocket attacks by assisting Israel in replenishing its Iron Dome Air Defense Missile System. If confirmed, I will work with relevant State and DoD colleagues to see what can be done in this regard.

*Question.* In carrying out the Memorandum of Understanding on U.S. Foreign Defense Aid to Israel, the funding for which Congress authorized last year, what are the most pressing threats that Congress must consider when we set aside annual funding for security assistance to Israel?

*Answer.* The commitment to Israel's security is a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, supported by the 10-year, \$38 billion Memorandum of Understanding with Israel. This commitment includes \$3.3 billion in annual Foreign Military Financing. As I shared in my opening statement, Israel is one of our closest security partners in countering a broad spectrum of threats ranging from climate change to cyber-attacks to nuclear proliferation. Chief among these is the critical threat that Iran and Iranian-backed militias pose. While President Biden has made clear his commitment to ensure that Iran never develops a nuclear weapon, upholding Israel's security serves America's national security interests and ensures that we will always have a strong, reliable, and secure partner.

The best way we can do this is by continuing robust levels of bilateral U.S. security assistance including through the Foreign Military Financing program, which will help to maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge; and acknowledge strong bilateral ties; and enable cutting-edge cooperation on missile defense. U.S. funding also supports Israel's continued defense modernization and provides for the acquisition of U.S.-origin defense equipment ranging from ammunition to advanced weapon systems and training.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. THOMAS R. NIDES BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Congressional Determinations and Policies*

*Question.* In 1987, Congress passed The Anti-Terrorism Act, in which Congress determined that "the PLO and its affiliates are a terrorist organization and a threat to the interests of the United States, its allies, and to international law" (22 USC §5201). In 2012, Congress passed The United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act, which established that it is "the policy of the United States. To assist the Government of Israel with its ongoing efforts to forge a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that results in two states living side-by-side in peace and security, and to encourage Israel's neighbors to recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state" (22 USC §8602). In 2014, Congress passed The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, which reaffirmed that it is "the policy of the United States. to support the Government of Israel in its ongoing efforts to reach a negotiated political settlement with the Palestinian people that results

in two states living side-by-side in peace and security” (22 USC § 8602 Statutory Notes).

- Do you agree with Congress’s determination that “the PLO and its affiliates are a terrorist organization and a threat to the interests of the United States, its allies, and to international law?”

Answer. My understanding is that subsequent to the 1987 passage of the Anti-Terrorism Act, in 1993, in connection with the Oslo Accords, the PLO renounced terrorism and recognized Israel’s right to exist, and Israel recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people for purposes of negotiations for permanent status and peace. Subsequently, across administrations, Congress and the executive branch have worked together to press the PLO to continue to comply with those commitments, and to support its engagement with Israel, and with the United States in support of negotiations and its commitments including those disavowing terrorism.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that our engagement with the Palestinians advances Israeli-Palestinian cooperation, understanding, peace, security coordination, and stability. To that end, I will work with the Palestinian Authority, Government of Israel, and international community to consider ways in which we can strengthen the position of the Palestinian Authority and to recommend that all sides adopt an affirmative and practical approach to the conflict that encourages constructive, positive steps-like condemning incitement to violence and terrorism- to keep the possibility of a negotiated two-state solution alive.

*Question.* Do you commit to “assist” and “support” the Government of Israel in its negotiations with the Palestinians?

Answer. I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians alike. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance peaceful co-existence between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as well as to help create the conditions for direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States should be neutral between the Governments of Israel and the Palestinians?

Answer. I believe that a two-state solution is the best way to ensure equal measures of freedom, security, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. By making Israel more secure and opening new channels for constructive dialogue and diplomacy between Israel and the Arab world, normalization agreements also bring with them the potential to create new opportunities to advance a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will work to capitalize on all opportunities to advance existing coordination between Israelis and Palestinians to help create the conditions for direct negotiations between the two parties.

#### *Sovereignty*

*Question.* The Obama-Biden administration’s approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict was justified on the basis of a theory of regional relations in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prevented broader Israeli-Arab rapprochement. Among other decisions, that administration implemented discriminatory policies that distinguished between Jewish communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967. That approach culminated in December 2016, when the Obama administration maneuvered the United Nations Security Council into passing UNSCR 2334, which among other things denied Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights and part of its capital Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter. The Trump administration systematically worked to hollow out and render UNSCR 2334 null and void. They did so, including by recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over the Golan Heights, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, by moving our embassy to Jerusalem, by seeking to end discriminatory approaches that distinguished legally and for the purposes of aid and trade between different Israeli communities, and by taking several other steps.

- Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?

Answer. In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, I understand the administration gives great weight to Israel’s security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria and Iran is present in Syria, it would be greatly irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door. I understand the administration has not changed U.S. policy on this important issue.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

Answer. I understand the administration has not altered U.S. policy on this important issue. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of the Golan Heights?

Answer. In considering the U.S. position on the Golan Heights, I understand the administration gives great weight to Israel's security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria and Iran is present in Syria, it would be greatly irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door. The administration has not changed U.S. policy on this important issue.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

Answer. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

#### *Abraham Accords*

*Question.* In your testimony you indicated that you are supportive of the Abraham Accords. In early 2021 the State Department distributed internal guidance through emails about how to refer to the normalization between Israel and other countries. In the emails, staffers were instructed that the State Dept. would no longer refer to the normalization as the "Abraham Accords," and the use of "normalization agreements" instead was indicated, according to a June 4 report by the *Washington Free Beacon*.

- Please transmit copies of those emails. *The Washington Free Beacon* reviewed at least two of them.

Answer. While I understand your interest, as a nominee I am not in a position to act on behalf of the State Department with regard to its records. I take my responsibilities with respect to Congressional oversight seriously and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to respond to your concerns.

*Question.* Please transmit any other internal guidance issued by State Department staffers—including emails, memos, cables, notes, decision memos, briefing papers, instructions, etc.—regarding the use of the phrase "Abraham Accords," from December 2020 through September 2021.

Answer. While I understand your interest, as a nominee I am not in a position to act on behalf of the State Department with regard to its records. I take my responsibilities with respect to Congressional oversight seriously and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to respond to your concerns.

*Question.* Can you commit to ensuring that any guidelines or policies prohibiting using the phrase "Abraham Accords" are revised and reversed?

Answer. My understanding is that the Biden-Harris administration refers to the agreements known as the Abraham Accords as such. I certainly do. If confirmed, I will continue to use that moniker.

#### *Palestinian Consulate*

*Question.* The Biden administration has indicated and recently reiterated its intention to open a Palestinian-facing consulate in Israel's capital Jerusalem.

- Please describe your assessment of whether the Israeli Government supports such a plan?

Answer. Secretary Blinken publicly announced the administration's intent to reopen the Consulate General. I understand that this is part of the administration's renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership. I am not in a position to comment further on diplomatic discussions related to this process. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the U.S. presence in Jerusalem enables our Government to carry out the full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leaders. My understanding is that reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem will not change our recognition of Je-

rusalem as Israel's capital, and the U.S. Embassy to Israel will remain in Jerusalem.

*Question.* Do you believe that opening a Palestinian-facing consulate in Jerusalem in the absence of affirmative permission from the Israeli Government would constitute an erosion of their sovereignty over Jerusalem? If not, why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the U.S. presence in Jerusalem enables our Government to carry out the full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leadership. The U.S. Government has been clear that our Embassy will remain in Jerusalem. The administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem. My understanding is that reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem will not change our recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

*Question.* Do you believe that the opening of a Palestinian-facing consulate in Jerusalem would prejudice final status negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians? If not, why not?

*Answer.* This administration recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem. Reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem will not change our recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

#### *Energy*

*Question.* In January 2019, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Greece, Italy, Cyprus, and the Palestinian Authority established the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) headquartered in Cairo. The EMGF, an intergovernmental energy forum, knits together Eastern Mediterranean and Gulf countries, including through an Israeli-Cypriot-Greek pipeline. The forum members agree to work to formulate a common policy for the regional energy market.

- Do you support the efforts and objectives of the EMGF?

*Answer.* The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners. The Forum can help promote greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity throughout the region. If confirmed, I would build on the work between colleagues in the Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs, Energy Resources, and European Affairs to coordinate our engagement and am eager to learn more about the EMGF's announcement earlier this year that it plans to work with specialists to discuss and promote gas decarbonization. I would also take steps to align our other regional embassies to support this effort in the field so that we can advance cooperation, energy security and U.S. national interests.

*Question.* Do you support the United States continued involvement within the EMFG?

*Answer.* The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners. If confirmed, I hope to continue U.S. involvement with the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum.

*Question.* Do you support efforts by Israel and other regional partners to develop a sustainable natural gas infrastructure including through bilateral negotiations?

*Answer.* I support the development of sustainable, secure, energy sources by Israel and other regional partners, including through bilateral negotiations. Natural gas discoveries have helped redefine relationships and increase energy security in the Eastern Mediterranean, and our partners building up capacity in renewable energy sources will further transform the energy landscape in this region.

*Question.* Can you evaluate the impacts of the EMFG on advancing peace and cooperation between Israel and regional partners?

*Answer.* The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners. The Forum promotes greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity and supports Israel's greater integration in the region.

*Question.* Can you evaluate the impact that completing the EastMed pipeline would have on providing Europe with an alternative to Russian supplied gas?

Answer. If completed, the EastMed Pipeline project could increase regional energy security in the Eastern Mediterranean, diversify Europe's energy supply, and aid in ensuring a more stable energy transition.

*Question.* Do you support the continued development of the EastMed Pipeline?

Answer. As I understand it, there are a number of regional energy projects in the Eastern Mediterranean under consideration, including the EastMed Pipeline. If confirmed, I would advocate for regional energy and electrical interconnections that have the potential to increase our partners' and allies' energy security, diversify energy supplies, and aid in ensuring more stable and sustainable energy transitions.

*Question.* What impact do you think this energy forum has on regional dynamics, including those related to diplomatic, economic, and security?

Answer. The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners and promotes greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity in the region, which would help advance stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. THOMAS R. NIDES BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* After the United States implemented the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-45)—including by formally recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel on December 6, 2017, and by relocating and opening the U.S. Embassy to Israel in Israel's capital city of Jerusalem on May 14, 2018—it also closed the U.S. Consulate General for the Palestinians and merged this Consulate General's functions into Embassy Jerusalem under the U.S. Ambassador to Israel's Chief of Mission authority. Do you agree that opening/reopening a U.S. consulate for the Palestinians in Jerusalem—in particular, after the fact of U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on December 6, 2017—would constitute a diminution of U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital?

Answer. During the Trump administration, Secretary Pompeo determined and reported to Congress in 2019 that the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem had officially opened, consistent with the requirements of the Jerusalem Embassy Act. I understand the administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem as called for by the Act. Reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem will not affect that policy or walk back or change U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

*Question.* Do you also agree that opening/reopening a U.S. consulate for the Palestinians in Jerusalem—in particular, after the fact of U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on December 6, 2017—would constitute a diminution of Israeli sovereignty? Please begin your answer with a yes or no.

Answer. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. I understand the administration is committed, as am I, to keeping the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem. Reopening the Consulate General in Jerusalem will not change U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* The Government of Israel—under then-Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and now under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett—has consistently opposed the opening/reopening of a U.S. consulate for the Palestinians in Jerusalem after the United States recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital on December 6, 2017, and relocated the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem on May 14, 2018. Do you agree that the United States should not open/reopen a U.S. consulate for the Palestinians in Jerusalem if the Government of Israel continues to oppose it? Please begin your response with a yes or no.

Answer. The administration has also been clear, as am I, that our Embassy to Israel will remain in Jerusalem. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the U.S. presence in Jerusalem enables our Government to carry out a full range of diplomatic activities, including engagement with the local communities and government leadership. In May, Secretary Blinken stated "the United States will be moving forward with the process to reopen our consulate in Jerusalem. That's an important way for our country to engage with and provide support for the Palestinian people." I understand that this is part of the administration's renewed engagement with the Palestinian people and leadership.



*Question.* Since the change in presidential administrations, some U.S. Government officials at times have publicly resisted using the term “Abraham Accords” and instead insisted on only using the term “normalization agreements.” If confirmed, do you commit that you will refer to the historic agreements that normalized Israel’s relations with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco by their name—the “Abraham Accords?”

*Answer.* My understanding is that the Biden-Harris administration refers to the agreements known as the Abraham Accords as such. I certainly do. If confirmed, I will continue to use that moniker.

*Question.* If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, you will have the opportunity to interact with both the UAE and Bahraini Ambassadors to Israel—in addition to potentially hosting delegations or meeting with diplomats from other countries normalizing or considering normalization with Israel. Will you commit to meet regularly with your Abraham Accords counterparts? What other steps will you take to continue Arab-Israeli normalization from your position?

*Answer.* As President Biden and Secretary Blinken have said, the administration welcomes and strongly supports the Abraham Accords and normalization agreements between Israel and countries in the Arab and Muslim world. I understand the Department is leading the U.S. Government’s efforts, working with interagency partners, to deepen existing agreements and urge other countries to normalize relations with Israel.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with diplomatic colleagues in Israel, including those from countries that have recently established ties with Israel. I am committed to working with countries across the region to build on existing relationships and develop new ones, including by highlighting the tangible benefits of relations with Israel and leveraging the wide range of diplomatic tools at our disposal. I also look forward to engaging with Israel’s new partners in the region to find ways to improve the lives of Israelis and Palestinians alike to help create the conditions for a durable two-state solution.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID L. COHEN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Canada & China:*

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to deepen coordination with our Canadian allies and ensure that our two countries formulate a joint response to the challenges posed by China’s coercive diplomacy? What would success look like to you two years from now?

*Answer.* Consistent with the longstanding, strong bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States, I have observed that the United States and Canada have undertaken significant efforts in recent years to coordinate our engagement with the People’s Republic of China (“PRC”). If confirmed, I would maintain regular contact with Canadian leadership to build on this progress and explore new avenues in our response to this significant challenge. Success in two years would see us having engaged in continued dialogue with Canada to identify and act on opportunities to develop a joint approach to the PRC that reflects our shared values and effectively pushes back on the PRC’s problematic activities.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree that these incidents are serious and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit that any such reported incident would be treated seriously and reported quickly through appropriate channels, and that affected individuals would receive prompt access to medical care.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit that I would meet with medical staff and RSO at post to discuss any past incidents to ensure protocols are being followed.

#### *Canada and Refugees*

*Question.* Canadians are among our most reliable partners on refugee resettlement, implementing innovative government and privately sponsored resettlement programs that enable the world's most vulnerable to find safety quickly. The Canadian Government has committed to accept 20,000 refugees from Afghanistan, adding to the tens of thousands they accepted from Syria, and the upwards of one million they've accepted since 1980. As conflicts become increasingly protracted and global challenges abound, the numbers of people in need of international protection will grow exponentially. Our partnership with Canada in anticipating and responding to new displacement-related needs will be critical.

- If confirmed, how would you seek to leverage Canada's experiences and deepen our collaboration with our Canadian partners on migration and protection issues?

Answer. As one of our closest allies, we have worked with Canada hand-in-hand on many issues, including migration and refugees. If confirmed, I would maintain the robust work our countries have done in conjunction with President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau's Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership on addressing the global migration crisis. Our countries share a commitment to providing safe haven to refugees, including through refugee resettlement. These commitments have been spotlighted recently with Afghan refugees. I applaud Canada's commitment to receive 20,000 Afghan refugees, 5,000 of whom are to be referred by the United States.

Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with our Canadian partners as they chair the MIRPS (Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework) Support Platform under the theme of "protection and empowerment of women and girls on the move" to draw attention and support solutions to forced displacement in Mexico and Central America.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID L. COHEN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

#### *Canada-China Relations*

*Question.* What is your assessment of the current state of Canada-China relations?

Answer. Canada-China relations reached their lowest point in 50 years following both the PRC's arbitrary detention of Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor in December 2018 and PRC bans on some Canadian agricultural exports in response to Canada's arrest of Meng Wanzhou on a U.S. extradition request in December 2018. Canada's relations with the PRC remain strained.

*Question.* Please explain how you would recommend the United States work to address the worst aspects of China's economic, political, and security influence in the Western Hemisphere and the world at large.

Answer. If confirmed, taking advantage of the historically strong bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States, I would continue to explore ways to work with Canada to more closely align our approaches to Beijing, including to address the challenges the PRC presents to our collective interest and to the international rules-based order in our hemisphere and around the world. I would work to coordinate our policies pursuant to the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership, including when dealing with the PRC's coercive and unfair economic practices, national security challenges, and human rights abuses, while cooperating on areas where it is in our interest, such as on the climate crisis.

*Question.* Please explain how you plan to communicate with the Canadian people about the challenges posed by the People's Republic of China to international norms.

*Answer.* The Canadian people appear to have a clear understanding of the challenges posed by the PRC, from its arbitrary detention of Canadian citizens to its use of economic coercion in trade to its intimidation of ethnic Chinese, Uyghur, and Tibetan communities in Canada. If confirmed, I plan to have significant interactions with Canadians and I would have frank conversations with Canadians about how the United States and Canada could work even more closely, bilaterally and multilaterally, to face the challenges the PRC poses to international norms.

*Question.* Please explain how the United States and Canada could enhance cooperation to counter Chinese disinformation, influence operations, academic espionage, and propaganda efforts.

*Answer.* These PRC efforts impact the United States, Canada, and many of our like-minded allies and partners. If confirmed, building on the historically strong bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States, I would work to increase cooperation with Canada and other likeminded countries to counter these PRC campaigns through joint actions, exchange of best practices, and multilateral initiatives.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to prioritize collaborative initiatives to implement the January 9, 2020 U.S.-Canada Joint Action Plan on Critical Minerals Development Collaboration?

*Answer.* As part of the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership, President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau agreed to strengthen the U.S.-Canada Critical Minerals Action Plan to target a net-zero industrial transformation, batteries for zero-emissions vehicles, and renewable energy storage. If confirmed, I would look to the Roadmap to guide my priorities as Ambassador, including efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Canada Critical Minerals Action Plan, as well as related efforts to build the necessary supply chains to make the United States and Canada global leaders in all aspects of battery development and production.

*Question.* Canada is the only member of the Five Eyes that has not formally barred or restricted use of equipment from Huawei in its telecommunication networks. Please explain what impact the presence of untrustworthy technologies, such as those from Huawei would have to our bilateral cooperation with Canada.

*Answer.* The United States understands the promise of 5G wireless networks, and governments and telecom operators need to prioritize security when building their 5G infrastructure. United States technical experts assess that the risk of allowing untrustworthy suppliers' equipment anywhere in 5G networks cannot be sufficiently mitigated; the United States is, therefore, removing untrustworthy equipment from its own government and private sector communications networks. Other governments, including the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand have come to the same conclusion. If confirmed, I would help carry out the U.S. Government commitment to ensure that U.S. telecommunications networks do not use equipment from untrusted vendors.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you communicate concerns about the use of untrustworthy technologies, such as Huawei's in Canada?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would convey the need for governments and telecom operators to prioritize security when building 5G infrastructure. Through conversations with the Canadian Government, public, and business community, I would stress that allowing untrusted telecommunications suppliers to participate in or control any part of a 5G network creates unacceptable risks to national security, the integrity of critical infrastructure, privacy, and human rights.

*Question.* Please describe the impact on privacy, censorship, and human rights from the inclusion of communication networks and supply chains with equipment and services from companies with close ties to or susceptible to pressure from governments or security services without reliable legal checks on governmental powers.

*Answer.* Countries and citizens need to be able to trust that 5G equipment and software will not introduce risks that threaten national security, privacy, or human rights. Trust cannot exist where information and communications technology and services vendors are subject to control by authoritarian governments, like the PRC, which lacks an independent judiciary or democratic checks and balances to protect companies and consumers and has a long track record of using access to data to surveil, harass, and otherwise crack down on its dissidents and to enabling other authoritarian governments to do the same. Like-minded countries, companies, and civil society groups can and must work together to address these threats.

*U.S.-Canada Border Closures*

*Question.* In August, Canada lifted its travel restrictions on Americans that are vaccinated or have a negative COVID-19 test result. On September 20, the Biden administration extended restrictions on land travel from Canada for at least another month, while lifting air travel restrictions for travelers from around the world who have been vaccinated or tested negative for COVID-19.

*Answer.* Acknowledged, and noted as context for the question that follows.

*Question.* Please explain your understanding of the reasons behind the different approaches to U.S. restrictions on land travel versus air travel from Canada.

*Answer.* I understand the difficult impacts on United States border communities and their residents of COVID-based travel restrictions. I also understand the health-based justifications for those restrictions. I also understand that decisions regarding travel restrictions are made with advice from public health and medical experts, who consult regularly with their Canadian counterparts. These decisions are made to decrease the spread of COVID-19, especially emergent variants. If confirmed, I would coordinate closely with the White House, relevant U.S. agencies, and Congress on our policies to protect our borders and citizens, and to facilitate cross-border traffic and commercial activities to the extent possible.

*Question.* In your opinion, does the divergent approach to air and land travel with Canada constitutes sound policy?

*Answer.* I believe that decisions regarding the health, safety, and welfare of the United States and its citizens are best left to our public health and medical experts.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the economic and emotional hardship northern border closures are placing on American border communities?

*Answer.* I empathize with those who face challenges as a result of the ongoing border restrictions. I understand that some U.S. citizens, their families, and businesses do not fall under the essential travel exemptions and may have experienced social and economic challenges. I want to emphasize that I share the desire of many fellow Americans to resume normal cross-border travel as soon as possible, once public health and medical professionals deem it safe to do so.

*Question.* Do you agree that the Biden administration should pursue a more consistent approach to air and land travel from Canada?

*Answer.* I believe we should resume normal cross-border travel as soon as U.S. public health professionals conclude it is safe to do so. I trust their recommendations and know that decisions regarding travel are made with our safety in mind. If confirmed, I would prioritize the safety and security of U.S. citizens in all aspects of my duties.

*Arctic*

*Question.* Please explain how the United States and Canada can revitalize cooperation on continental defense and in the Arctic, including the modernization of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) to effectively defend the Northern Hemisphere against the range of threats by peer competitors.

*Answer.* As a close and strategically located ally, Canada plays an indispensable role in promoting our common defense, especially in the Arctic. If confirmed, I would underscore in interactions with Canadian officials the strategic importance of NORAD to our mutual continental defense and emphasize the urgent need to bolster our aerospace defense through modernization efforts - efforts which Canada has embraced. Regarding Canada's Future Fighter Capabilities Project, I would continue U.S. efforts to advocate for a U.S. solution that would provide Canada with world-class defense technology at the best value while also supporting continued interoperability in our collective defense of Northern America.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the growing Chinese and Russian presence in the Arctic region.

*Answer.* Both Russia and the PRC have increased their activities in the Arctic in recent years, the latter going so far as to declare itself a "near Arctic state" and publicizing its objective of extending its Belt and Road Initiative into the Arctic. While investment in the Arctic is expected as climate change makes the region more accessible, such investment must be transparent, adhere to existing international law and practice, and support the needs of the peoples of the region. Neither Russia nor the PRC has been transparent about its operations in the Arctic, and both are eager to advance their interests. At the same time, Russia has indicated willingness to engage in discussions on our concerns, agreeing at the June Presidential Summit

in Geneva to further discuss the Northern Sea Route and improved coordination between our respective Coast Guards. If confirmed, I would work to strengthen our ability to deter attempts by Russia and the PRC to constrain the United States and our allies, including in the Arctic.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you communicate the need to heighten deterrence capabilities in the Arctic?

Answer. The Arctic is a strategic space in which U.S. and Canadian capabilities may be put to the test and in which our need to communicate credible deterrence is critical. This is another space where joint communication and action by the United States and Canada will send a more powerful signal. If confirmed, I would consult closely with the Department of Defense and others among the interagency to ensure we are conveying the full spectrum of our concerns, with supporting information, to our Canadian allies.

#### *U.S.-Canada Border Security*

*Question.* Last year, the CBP seizures of illicit narcotics along the Canadian border were up 1,000 percent. CBP seized nearly 40,000 pounds of marijuana across 16 ports of entry worth between \$100 million and \$120 million. There are concerns about increases in illicit trafficking of drugs through the border between the U.S. and Canada. How should the U.S. and Canada work together to better address these threats to prevent transnational criminal activity?

Answer. The U.S.-Canada Joint Action Plan on Opioids was launched in Washington on January 31, 2020. On February 23, 2021, President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau recommitted to the U.S.-Canada Joint Action Plan on Opioids as part of the larger Roadmap for a U.S.-Canada Renewed Partnership jointly issued by both leaders.

If confirmed, I would build on close bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States and the good progress our countries have made on the joint action plan to combat opioids, and I would work closely with our Canadian counterparts to address the issue of the flow of illicit drugs over the border.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous challenges, project subgroups focused on law enforcement, border security, and health meet regularly. The Working Group meets quarterly, and the Steering Committee meets bi-annually. I applaud the great work our respective countries have made to address this important issue, and I would support this action plan at every appropriate opportunity.

#### *NATO*

*Question.* Canada plans to increase its defense spending by 73 percent over ten years to reach C\$32.7 billion (\$25.2b) in 2026-2027. If implemented, Canada's total defense spending as a percentage of GDP would reach 1.4 percent in 2024-2025, which would fall well short of NATO's recommended 2 percent of GDP level. How do you see your role as Ambassador, if confirmed, to encourage Canada to adhere to its 2 percent commitment at NATO?

Answer. If confirmed, I would engage Canada's leadership to clarify the intent behind our security priorities, the underlying concerns that drive those priorities, and our position regarding equitable and sufficient contributions to NATO.

*Question.* Do you agree with Canada's counterargument that the countries' contributions to the alliance should be measured more by capabilities and the troops they provide over their defense expenditure as a percentage of GDP? How would you react to this if confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. If confirmed, I would express appreciation for Canada's notable contributions to security in the hemisphere and globally (including through NATO), I would note how both our countries' interests have been undermined by the actions of third parties, and I would underscore that a robust and concerted response to these threats and challenges is required. Such a response must necessarily include funding as well as capabilities and troops.

*Question.* In what ways can the U.S. and Canada work better together in NATO engagements?

Answer. Our defense cooperation with Canada is one of the most comprehensive security relationships globally and comprises both bilateral and multilateral arrangements. If confirmed, I would ensure U.S. security interests concerning NATO are conveyed and advanced as part of the U.S. Mission's bilateral engagement plan. Additionally, I would engage Canada's leadership to clarify the intent behind U.S. security decisions, and I would regularly solicit Canada's input for how best to further strengthen the NATO alliance.

*USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement)*

*Question.* What's your assessment of Canada's implementation of USMCA? What challenges do you foresee in USMCA implementation and how would you use your role as Ambassador to encourage Canada to rectify these issues?

*Answer.* Canada continues to work toward meeting its obligations under the USMCA, though challenges remain. If confirmed, I will work to further Canada's compliance with USMCA issues impacting dairy quotas, automotive trade, and digital services, among other topics. We will put the interests of American workers and businesses at the forefront of our foreign policy.

*Trade Disputes*

*Question.* The United States has longstanding disputes with Canada over softwood lumber imports. U.S. industry contends that Canada unfairly subsidizes its lumber by providing cheap access to public land. Softwood lumber is now in its fifth iteration of litigation. If confirmed as Ambassador, how would you work to ensure U.S. industry interests are represented?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with the United States interagency and industry to ensure fair treatment for U.S. softwood lumber producers. Because this remains an active litigation matter, I am unable to comment further.

*Energy*

*Question.* The Biden administration cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline's border crossing presidential permit in January 2021, which would have moved up to 830,000 barrels of crude daily. Canadian Government officials have expressed disappointment with President Biden's decision. Do you agree with President Biden's decision to revoke the permit?

*Answer.* Canada remains the top energy partner of the United States. I understand we have a robust trading relationship and shared energy infrastructure. Tackling the existential threat of the climate crisis requires, as the President's Executive Order of January 20 stated, action on a scale and at a speed commensurate with the need to avoid setting the world on a dangerous and potentially catastrophic climate trajectory. The world must be put on a sustainable climate pathway to protect Americans and the domestic economy from harmful climate impacts, and to create well-paying jobs as part of the climate solution. If confirmed, I would support President Biden's efforts to restore American leadership in the fight against climate change and to help position our nation to be the global leader in clean energy and jobs, while continuing to respect the strong energy partnership between Canada and the United States.

*Question.* What negative implications does the cancelation of the Keystone XL pipeline have on the bilateral U.S.-Canada energy relationship? What about the broader bilateral relationship?

*Answer.* President Biden spoke with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in his first call to a foreign leader as President of the United States only two days after the cancelation of the permit for the Keystone XL pipeline. While President Biden acknowledged Prime Minister Trudeau's disappointment regarding the decision to rescind the permit, he reaffirmed his commitment to maintain an active bilateral dialogue and to further deepen cooperation with Canada. During the call, both leaders highlighted the strategic importance of the U.S.-Canada relationship and the desire to reinvigorate bilateral cooperation on an ambitious and wide-ranging agenda, including combating the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthening economic ties, defense, and global leadership to address the pressing challenge of climate change. The continuing strength of our relationship was further demonstrated with the issuance of the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership in February.

*Question.* Do you think this decision has casted doubt among Canadians of the U.S. as a long-term reliable energy partner?

*Answer.* No. Following President Biden's decision to rescind the permit for the Keystone XL pipeline, Prime Minister Trudeau welcomed the President's decisions to rejoin the Paris Agreement and to place a temporary moratorium on all oil and natural gas leasing activities in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, noting, "I look forward to working with President Biden to reduce pollution, combat climate change, fight COVID-19, create middle class jobs, and build back better by supporting a sustainable economic recovery for everyone." The United States and Canada are working together to increase the scale and speed of action to address the climate crisis and support the transition to a net-zero clean energy future. If confirmed, I would support these goals in the course of my duties.

*Question.* If confirmed, where does North American energy security would fall on your list of priorities as U.S. Ambassador to Canada?

*Answer.* Energy security is an important priority. President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau recognized the important energy security benefits of our bilateral energy relationship and its highly integrated infrastructure as part of the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership. President Biden's Build Back Better agenda also highlights the importance of creating clean energy jobs as part of our economic recovery. If confirmed, I would focus on President Biden's priorities for the bilateral relationship as highlighted in the Roadmap, including the importance of energy security in the bilateral energy relationship.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you work to promote American and North American energy security?

*Answer.* President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau have pledged to work together to build on the countries' strong energy security partnership, including in the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S. Canada Partnership and to strengthen action towards a net-zero clean energy future. If confirmed, I would work to support this vision by communicating often and openly with Canadian counterparts on their energy plans, by identifying areas for deeper collaboration between our respective governments, and by looking for investment opportunities for U.S. companies.

#### *Foreign Assistance*

*Question.* In what areas do you see the greatest opportunity for U.S.-Canadian cooperation in foreign assistance?

*Answer.* A top priority of the United States and Canada is to end the COVID-19 pandemic and support global health security by working together to support global affordable access to and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines, including through the COVAX Facility. The United States and Canada cooperate closely in multilateral groups to raise global climate ambition, including through increased pledges of climate-related assistance to developing countries. Consistent with our shared values, the United States and Canada promote diversity and inclusion in our foreign assistance, particularly in support of gender equality through equal rights for women and girls.

*Question.* Canada is considered to be a "strong supporter" of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and even hosted the Fund's fifth replenishment conference in 2016. Still, Canada has provided roughly \$2.5 in contributions to the Fund since 2002, while the United States has provided over \$17.6 billion. Similarly, Canada is considered to be an "anchor" donor to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, as well as to the Gavi-led COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access initiative (COVAX). Canada has provided \$842 million in contributions for Gavi since 2002 and \$545 million for COVAX, while the United States has provided over \$4.4 billion and \$3.5 billion, respectively. If confirmed, how will you encourage Canada to take on a larger proportion of contributions for the Global Fund, Gavi, and COVAX? Do you consider this a priority?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to prioritize the issues highlighted in the bilateral Roadmap, of which fighting COVID-19 is first and foremost. Efforts to support global health security remain a top priority for both the United States and Canada, as demonstrated by Prime Minister Trudeau's participation at the Global COVID-19 Summit, hosted by President Biden on September 22, 2021. Both the United States and Canada have agreed to strengthen existing pandemic preparedness platforms and arrangements and to work to improve international institutions, including the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization.

*Question.* How will you encourage the Canadian Government to help finance international pandemic preparedness and response more broadly? What levers does the United States have? Are you willing to use them?

*Answer.* Through the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership, Canada has committed to strengthening international pandemic preparedness as a top priority. If confirmed, I would work closely with Canadian counterparts to drive progress on our shared priorities, including efforts to support increased global health security.

#### *Venezuela*

*Question.* Canada has taken a series of multilateral and bilateral actions in support of the Venezuelan people and to weaken the illegitimate Maduro regime.

- If confirmed, in what ways would you encourage Canada to take heightened action against the corrupt and illegitimate Maduro regime?

Answer. If confirmed, I would encourage Canada to continue to coordinate with the United States and other international partners to maintain and increase pressure on the Maduro regime, as appropriate. I would do this by seeking avenues to further isolate Maduro internationally, call attention to the regime's human rights abuses, and through the application of additional targeted sanctions, if warranted.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to encourage the Canadian Government to maintain support for the Guaido-led democratic forces as legitimate representative of Venezuela at the Organization of American States?

Answer. If confirmed, I would encourage the Canadian Government to maintain support for the Guaido-led democratic forces as the legitimate representatives of Venezuela at the Organization of American States.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to encourage the Canadian Government to maintain sanctions on the Maduro regime until there is a credible transition to democratic order in Venezuela?

Answer. Canada has implemented significant sanctions against the regime to date. If confirmed, I would seek continued support from Canada to maintain coordinated pressure against Maduro -including through sanctions- until there is a credible process underway to restore democracy, rule of law, and human rights in Venezuela.

#### *Nicaragua*

*Question.* Canada has issued sanctions related to Nicaragua in response to the gross and systematic human rights violations that have been committed by the Ortega regime against Nicaraguan people. In what ways would you encourage Canada to put further pressure on the Ortega regime?

Answer. If confirmed, I would encourage Canada to remain linked up with international efforts to further pressure the Ortega regime. I would also encourage Canada to continue to take a leadership role in the Organization of American States, where it has been instrumental in crafting previous joint statements denouncing the Ortega-Murillo regime.

#### STATE DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

#### *Mission Canada*

*Question.* Mission Canada has been under enormous stress over the past few years with management issues and COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Canada?

Answer. Based on the experience of this nomination process, I understand our mission in Canada to be staffed by hard-working civil servants, foreign service officers and specialists, uniformed military personnel, and locally employed staff. Respecting the limitations of my role as a nominee, I have not had any personal contact with Mission Canada. If confirmed, one of my first priorities would be to assess the morale of these dedicated staff members at the embassy and at our constituent posts.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Canada?

Answer. If confirmed, I would consult at the start of my tenure with key managers at U.S. Embassy Ottawa and at all our constituent posts to determine where the strengths and weaknesses of the mission are in terms of morale. I would make the maintenance of strong morale a priority in my role as Ambassador.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Canada?

Answer. If confirmed, I would consult closely with the Canada country desk, with others at State and across the interagency, and with Congress on priorities for our relationship with Canada. In Canada, I would consult with embassy and constituent post staff to solicit a full range of inputs and opinions, and I would encourage all to speak frankly. I would refer to the Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership to inform my vision for Mission Canada, and I would build on priorities and lines of effort in Mission Canada's current Integrated Country Strategy.

#### *Management*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I would describe my management style as collaborative and respectful. I consider myself to be an accessible and communicative leader. I believe in communicating expectations clearly and in providing constructive feedback as required.



*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* As noted above, I understand our mission in Canada to be staffed by dedicated civil servants, foreign service officers and specialists, uniformed military personnel, and locally employed staff. I have the utmost respect for their work and for what they do every day on behalf of the American people. If confirmed, this respect would be the foundation for my management of the complex operations of Mission Canada. I have had the experience of working with similarly well motivated career (civil service) employees when I served as Chief of Staff in the Philadelphia City government. In order to accomplish the Mission's goals, I would prioritize securing appropriate resources for the Mission, commensurate with the importance of the U.S.-Canada relationship.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* I agree with this approach. No leader can be successful if he or she lacks understanding of the organization's operations or workplace culture. If confirmed, I would commit to understand the Mission's operations and culture across the full spectrum of employees in Ottawa and at the constituent posts. As a manager and leader, I believe strongly in meeting and interacting with a wide swath of the employees in the Embassy and in being accessible and communicative.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No. Respect for subordinates is an essential leadership trait.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* The deputy chief of mission (DCM) plays a key role in ensuring that the Mission's priorities are pursued properly and that the Mission's functions are carried out smoothly. The DCM is also a wealth of institutional knowledge about the bilateral relationship and the workings of the State Department and the inter-agency. If confirmed, I would seek to complement the DCM's experience with my leadership of the Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would seek the advice of the DCM on how best to engage with Canada to pursue U.S. interests, how to solicit required resources so that the Mission may fully pursue these interests, and how best to support Mission staff in the completion of their duties.

#### *Local Interaction*

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* Diplomats are most successful when they are able to allot ample time and are sufficiently resourced to engage directly and regularly with host country and host government contacts. If confirmed, I would support and prioritize my own engagement and staff engagement with their contacts to the maximum extent possible, consistent with Canada's current public health advice.

*Question.* How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would assess if the Mission had adequate resources to pursue U.S. interests and accomplish its goals, including the ability of our diplomats to access a sufficiently representative cross section of the local population. If these resources were lacking, I would work with my DCM and others to determine how best to fulfill our needs.

#### *Public Diplomacy*

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Canada? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

Answer. The bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States is strong and productive, with deep, historic ties. Although Canadians see the bilateral relationship as vitally important, public opinion polling in 2021 showed Canadians perceived the state of relations between Canada and the United States with mixed feelings. To address this challenge, Mission Canada works to reinforce our shared values and goals, including our commitment to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, building back our economies in environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive ways, accelerating climate ambitions, advancing diversity and inclusion, bolstering security and defense, and building global alliances. Continuing to pursue these objectives, and to communicate our commitment and work on these issues would be a top priority if I am confirmed.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. The U.S. Mission in Canada conducts public diplomacy activities through its eight posts across Canada. Main State, through bureaus like Global Public Affairs, Western Hemisphere Affairs, and the Global Engagement Center, provides overall policy guidance and general messaging. Each post tailors messaging to its audience based on daily interactions with the Canadian public.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID L. COHEN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Canada's Participation in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly*

*Question.* As Ambassador to Canada, how would you lead the U.S. Embassy to work with the newly-elected Canadian members of the Parliamentary Assembly to become active in the OSCE PA?

Answer. Our shared democratic heritage, including the regular election of legislative bodies to represent our populations, is a foundational aspect of the bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States. If confirmed, one of my top priorities would be to build strong connections with members of Canada's Parliament, in particular those newly elected on September 20. Canada participated in its 29th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) on June 30 to July 6. If confirmed, I would encourage further inter-parliamentary dialogue through vigorous engagement with parliamentarians. I would also encourage active Canadian participation in OSCE PA meetings, committees, and election observation activities to advance our shared goals of promoting security, prosperity, and democracy in the OSCE region.

*Question.* I also authored a law directing the State Department to seek to build out a parliamentary assembly in the OAS. How would you propose that Canada help to support this initiative?

Answer. The United States and Canada both have a long history of supporting parliamentary exchanges. The Canadian Section of ParlAmericas is one of the 35 members of ParlAmericas, an institution that promotes Parliamentary Diplomacy in the Inter-American System. The international Secretariat of ParlAmericas is incorporated in Canada and remains the only interparliamentary forum to have its headquarters located in Ottawa.

If confirmed, I would cite past successes and promote the value of parliamentary exchanges, and I would encourage counterparts and legislators in Canada to continue to support a parliamentary assembly in the OAS comprising elected legislators.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID L. COHEN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The Trudeau Government has stated it supports upgrading its equipment to strengthen NORAD, including purchasing more than 80 fighter aircraft. Yet the procurement process has been delayed for more than a decade, raising questions about Canada's political commitment to NORAD. What message would you communicate to the Government of Canada regarding NORAD and our shared aerospace defense?

Answer. If confirmed, I would build on our robust relationship and our frank engagement with Canada to underscore the strategic importance of the role NORAD

plays in our continental defense, and the urgency with which Canada should bolster its contribution to our shared aerospace defense. In my engagement with Canada, I would further highlight the indispensable role we need Canada to play in promoting our common defense due to its position as a close ally and a strategically located neighbor. Regarding Canada's Future Fighter Capabilities Project, I would continue U.S. efforts to advocate for a U.S. solution to offer world-class defense technology at the best value in support of continued interoperability in defense of Northern America.

*Question.* How do you view our defense cooperation with Canada? Given our recent diplomatic tension with France and other allies over questions of defense cooperation, what steps will you take if confirmed to reassure Canada about our enduring commitment?

*Answer.* Our defense cooperation with Canada is one of the most comprehensive security relationships in the world and comprises both bilateral and multilateral arrangements. If confirmed, I would ensure U.S. security interests are fully represented in the U.S. Mission's engagement. Additionally, I would engage Canada's leadership to clarify the intent behind our security decisions, and I would regularly solicit Canada's input for how best to strengthen our alliance even further.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. CYNTHIA ANN TELLES BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEZDEZ

*Economic Stability*

*Question.* Costa Rica's remarkable economic growth over the past quarter of a century has been made possible through the strength of its democratic institutions, its openness to foreign investment, and steadfast adherence to environmental and humanitarian principles. Although Costa Rica still has one of the lowest poverty rates in the region, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on the country's tourism-dependent economy.

- Given these setbacks, if confirmed as our ambassador in Costa Rica what would be your top priorities over the next year to help the country recover from the pandemic and build resiliency against future potential economic shocks?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our economic partnership, which supports prosperity in both Costa Rica and the United States. In the short term, I will support Costa Rica's efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, which has created a significant retraction of the economy, as it has in the region. Additionally, with respect to economic resiliency, I will strongly support efforts to expand bilateral trade and foreign direct investment (FDI). I will encourage Costa Rica to follow through on commitments for governmental and economic reforms, which will lead to a more sustainable path toward prosperity. I will also urge Costa Rica to leverage its recent accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to align itself even more closely with standards that will help it attract investment from U.S. firms and create quality employment. Lastly, I will support Costa Rica's efforts to ensure that post-pandemic growth is inclusive, creating opportunities in tourism and other key sectors for all its citizens.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Absolutely. There is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. The interagency community is actively examining a range of hypotheses but has not yet made a determination about the cause of the AHIs or whether they can be attributed to a foreign actor. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with its workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. I will do everything possible to ensure that employees, who report a possible AHI, receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and that the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. Again, if confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working at U.S. Embassy San Jose.

#### *Migration*

*Question.* Costa Rica has a long tradition of welcoming asylum seekers. As of the end of 2020, Costa Rica hosted nearly 122,000 people of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Already in 2021, nearly 23,000 people have applied for asylum in the country, mainly citizens fleeing oppression in Nicaragua.

- Dr. Telles, in your view, how important is it for the United States to support Costa Rica's humanitarian efforts and what will you do as our ambassador to further these efforts?

*Answer.* Costa Rica is a regional leader in providing access to international protection for refugees and asylum seekers and welcoming vulnerable migrants and guest workers from Nicaragua, Venezuela, Colombia, and elsewhere. We anticipate Costa Rica will continue to support Nicaraguan refugees and asylum seekers, which are likely to increase as a function of upcoming elections. If confirmed, I will work closely with Costa Rica to further our cooperation on migration and to assess the need to increase capacity to welcome refugees and asylum seekers.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO DR. CYNTHIA ANN TELLES BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Please describe the evolving Chinese presence in Costa Rica since President Solis switched diplomatic relations from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China in 2007.

*Answer.* Costa Rica was the first Central American country to recognize the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 2007. The countries signed a free trade agreement in 2011 and a bilateral investment treaty in 2016, but the economic relationship remains very limited. Foreign direct investment (FDI) from the PRC in Costa Rica is small, topping \$10 million only once in the last decade and never exceeding one percent of total FDI inflows. Large PRC-backed infrastructure projects have been marred by delays or outright cancellations. Nonetheless, there are efforts to increase public diplomacy and to expand the PRC's economic presence in specific areas, including telecommunications.

*Question.* Please describe any efforts by the PRC to build relations with legislators and local government officials in Costa Rica.

*Answer.* My understanding is that the PRC has actively built relations with legislators and local government officials in Costa Rica to build support for PRC-backed infrastructure projects, which have been marred by delays or outright cancellations. The PRC has also attempted to make inroads with local officials through offers of monitoring and communications technology for municipalities.

*Question.* Please describe what would be your approach to countering Chinese influence in Costa Rica, if confirmed.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will vigorously promote the United States as Costa Rica's steadfast partner, emphasizing our common democratic values and strong track record of success. I will communicate to the Costa Rican Government the security risks to Costa Rica's telecommunications infrastructure of allowing PRC-backed vendors to participate in or control its networks. I will also call attention to the poor-quality and costly infrastructure projects financed by the PRC and promote high-standard and transparent investment by the United States and our partners. I would also continue to support ongoing Embassy efforts to build strong relations and security programs with local governments, which have already served as effec-

tive counterpoints to the PRC's efforts to increase its influence in Costa Rican municipalities.

*Question.* Do you agree that the presence of Huawei in Costa Rica is concerning, especially as Costa Rica transitions to 5G?

*Answer.* The presence of equipment from untrustworthy vendors, such as Huawei, in any country's telecommunications networks is concerning. Allowing high-risk suppliers like Huawei to participate in or control any part of a 5G network, or nationwide broadband networks, creates risks to national security, critical infrastructure, and privacy. If confirmed, I will lead Embassy San Jose's ongoing efforts to engage with Costa Rica on the risks posed by PRC-backed 5G network providers and to encourage the use of only trustworthy vendors in the information and communications technology ecosystem.

*Question.* Costa Rica participates in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with the China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) undertaking upgrades and widening works for its primary national route (Route 32), costing US\$465 million. Please describe U.S. concerns with the Belt and Road Initiative, including in Costa Rica.

*Answer.* The United States remains concerned about infrastructure projects built under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), including its efforts in Costa Rica. In many countries, the PRC uses investment under the BRI and diplomatic engagement to create dependency on PRC resources. In Costa Rica, efforts include the PRC's donation of a \$100 million national soccer stadium (2011) and subsequent donation of \$11 million to modernize the stadium (2018), as well as a multimillion-dollar contribution towards the construction of a police academy. Other large public investments in Costa Rica have not been successful. The financing and construction of the Route 32 highway expansion has been marred by delays, poor planning, and poor budgeting. If confirmed, I will work to maintain the United States' position as Costa Rica's economic partner of choice and trusted ally by emphasizing our geographic proximity, common democratic values, and strong track record of success.

According to the U.N. Refugee Agency, more than 108,000 Nicaraguans have fled the repression of the Ortega-Murillo regime in Nicaragua since 2018, mainly to the United States and Costa Rica. Nearly 23,000 Nicaraguans have sought asylum in Costa Rica in 2021 alone.

*Question.* Do you agree that the Ortega/Murillo regime in Nicaragua has become a source of significant instability in Central America, and for Costa Rica specifically?

*Answer.* Yes. The Ortega-Murillo Government's repression has contributed to instability in Central America and a dramatic increase in Nicaraguan refugees and asylum seekers. The Ortega-Murillo regime has taken actions that undermine respect for human rights and exacerbate fear and insecurity, thus, fueling surges in migration. Costa Rica is a regional leader in providing protection to asylum seekers, refugees, and vulnerable migrants, including a great number of Nicaraguans. If confirmed, I will work with Costa Rica and our international organization partners to increase their capacity to process asylum seekers and refugees and to provide protection to vulnerable Nicaraguans.

*Question.* The Ortega-Murillo regime of Nicaragua continues to receive international financing by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), despite the instability it generates in Central America.

*Answer.* I understand that the amount of CABEI financing that benefits the Ortega-Murillo Government is disproportionate, particularly given the many challenges we are addressing in Central America. If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts to encourage Costa Rica to oppose any funding from CABEI that would go toward sustaining the Nicaraguan Government while it represses its people and undermines democracy and human rights.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with Costa Rica to ensure that any loan or assistance provided by CABEI to Nicaragua is administered through entities with full technical, administrative, and financial independence from the Ortega-Murillo regime?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts to encourage CABEI members to halt financing that directly benefits the Ortega-Murillo Government. If confirmed, I will encourage CABEI members, particularly Costa Rica, to explore ways to structure projects and work through non-governmental organizations and implementers, in order to ensure that financing more directly benefits the Nicaraguan people rather than the repressive Ortega-Murillo Government.

In March 2020, the U.S. indicted Nicolas Maduro and 14 current and former Venezuelan officials for allegedly partnering with the FARC to use cocaine as a weapon to “flood” the United States.

*Question.* Do the actions by the Maduro regime related to transnational criminal activities undermine U.S. counternarcotic and law enforcement cooperation with Costa Rica?

*Answer.* We are concerned about the Maduro regime’s transnational criminal activities and their impacts across the region. Costa Rica has become a major transshipment hub for South American cocaine headed to the United States, and it is used by transnational criminal organizations for trafficking both narcotics and people through Central America and Mexico. Therefore, sustaining support of Costa Rica’s security forces with training, equipment, and infrastructure will be key to ensuring their continued success in combating transnational crime. If confirmed, I will continue the strong U.S. support to bolster Costa Rica’s capacity to be our partner in these efforts.

*Question.* Please explain your understanding of the nexus between transnational criminal organizations and human smuggling/trafficking across Central America and Mexico.

*Answer.* Transnational criminal organizations fund their activities by engaging in drug trafficking, human smuggling, and human trafficking through Central America and Mexico. Irregular migrants pay smugglers to guide them through Central America to the United States and then later fall prey to human traffickers, who force them into committing crimes, such as transporting drugs to the United States. Irregular migrants are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and human rights abuses by transnational criminal organizations that engage in human trafficking crimes, such as commercial sex, forced labor, forced criminality, and forced recruitment. Irregular migrants who embark on a journey to the United States unwittingly put themselves at greater risk of financial hardship and human trafficking abuses.

*Question.* What financial benefits would you estimate drug trafficking groups are reaping from the increased flows of illegal migrants transiting through Costa Rica towards our Southwest border?

*Answer.* Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) are reaping significant profit from smuggling migrants northward through Central America. Costa Rican and Panamanian authorities, assisted by a U.S. Department of Homeland Security investigative unit, are pursuing a cross-border human smuggling ring. Costa Rican media outlets widely reported smugglers are charging migrants from \$11,000 to \$22,000 per person.

In 2020, Guatemala and Honduras declared Hizballah a foreign terrorist organization.

*Question.* In your opinion, would it be in the interest of the United States for Costa Rica to make a similar determination?

*Answer.* Yes, it would be in the U.S. interest for Costa Rica to make a similar determination.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to seek Costa Rica’s designation of Hizballah as a foreign terrorist organization?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to seeking Costa Rica’s designation of Hizballah as a foreign terrorist organization.

*Question.* Costa Rica is a reliable partner in the fight against illicit narcotics. Please explain how an increase in coca cultivation in South America impacts the ability of the Costa Rican Government to effectively reduce the flow of illicit narcotics through its territory and into the United States.

*Answer.* Certainly, increased coca cultivation in South America impacts Costa Rica’s efforts to reduce the flow of narcotics bound for the United States. Costa Rica is the number one transshipment point for Colombian cocaine moving towards the United States. Nonetheless, it is a strong partner in the fight against drug trafficking as exemplified by its interdiction of a record 71 tons of narcotics in 2020. Increased coca cultivation leads to a higher volume of cocaine flowing through Costa Rica. The Embassy works closely with multiple partners in Costa Rica, including their Coast Guard, Border Police, Air Surveillance Service, and national police to increase interdictions and to build law enforcement capacity. In order to ensure that Costa Rica continues to be successful in combating transnational crime, it is critical for the United States to maintain its support of Costa Rica’s security forces with

training, equipment, and infrastructure. If confirmed, I will continue the strong U.S. support to bolster Costa Rica's capacity to be our partner in these efforts.

There is currently a case of a minor American Citizen who was abducted by her mother to Costa Rica. Costa Rica, a signatory to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, is in direct violation of their agreements under the Convention and has not returned the child to her parent here in the U.S.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to engage on this matter with Costa Rican authorities?

*Answer.* I understand the Embassy maintains regular contact with PANI (Costa Rican child protective services, the central authority for Hague Abduction Convention cases) and often communicates with the parents, in addition to conducting welfare checks on the child when possible. If confirmed, I will ensure that compliance with the Hague Convention agreements continues to be a top priority for the U.S. Embassy.

*Question.* How will you work to ensure Costa Rica becomes compliant with the obligations under the Convention?

*Answer.* Costa Rica was cited for demonstrating a pattern of noncompliance in the Department's 2020 and 2021 Annual Reports on International Child Abduction due to judicial delays and decisions that were noncompliant with the Hague Abduction Convention. To address these concerns, the Department of State's Consular Affairs Bureau engages with Costa Rican authorities and international partners. As part of these efforts, the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs helped organize a series of judicial seminars focused on the Convention hosted by the Costa Ricans in November 2020 and February 2021. If confirmed, I will be committed to supporting these and other efforts of the U.S. Embassy to help ensure that Costa Rica complies with its obligations under the Convention.

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons report, Costa Rica was again placed on Tier 2, indicating they do not meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking but are making significant efforts to do so.

If confirmed, how will you engage with the host government on this issue to provide additional support to victims, increase prosecutions, and continue prevention efforts?

*Answer.* The Costa Rican Government demonstrated increasing efforts overall to combat human trafficking compared to the previous reporting period, considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity. The Costa Rican Government's anti-trafficking efforts included employing new investigative techniques in trafficking cases, identifying more victims, and converting planned training and interagency coordination to virtual delivery amidst the pandemic. However, authorities decreased funding for anti-trafficking efforts and closed a trafficking-specific emergency shelter. If confirmed, I will encourage the Costa Rican Government to strengthen anti-trafficking efforts and to continue providing support for ongoing projects that improve prosecution efforts, protective services, and prevention campaigns.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. CYNTHIA ANN TELLES BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you engage with Nicaraguan activists and refugees in Costa Rica fleeing the persecution of Daniel Ortega's regime?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned about the Nicaraguan refugees fleeing the Ortega-Murillo Government's repression. If confirmed, I will support Costa Rica as it continues to serve as a safe haven for those Nicaraguans. I also commit to engage with those courageous individuals who are advocating for democracy and human rights in their home country.

*Question.* What steps is the administration taking to support Costa Rica in its efforts to welcome and care for the Nicaraguan refugees streaming into the country?

*Answer.* Costa Rica is a regional leader in providing protection to asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants and has a tradition of welcoming vulnerable migrants from Nicaragua. This summer, Costa Rica has seen a rise of Nicaraguan asylum seekers and migrants in the wake of political violence in Nicaragua. If confirmed, I will work with Costa Rica to continue to increase their capacity to process asylum seekers and provide protection. Costa Rica is concerned that it does not have the resources to continue to care for Nicaraguan asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants.

If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with our international organization partners on the ground and the Costa Rican Government to build capacity and provide protection.

*Question.* The Trump administration's donation of three former Coast Guard cutters to Costa Rica in 2018 gave the country its first blue water interdiction capability. Since then, seizures of illegal drugs has dramatically increased in the country. I applaud this creative use of former Coast Guard cutters to support our allies in defense of U.S. national security interests. Looking forward, what are the current gaps in Costa Rica's capability to disrupt the flow of illegal drugs from South America through the country? What is the Biden administration doing to address these gaps in cooperation with the Government of Costa Rica?

*Answer.* Costa Rica remains a strong partner in the fight against drug trafficking, interdicting a record 71 tons of narcotics in 2020. The Embassy works closely with multiple partners in Costa Rica, including their Coast Guard, Border Police, Air Surveillance Service, and national police, on increasing interdictions and building law enforcement capacity. Costa Rica has become a major transit point for South American cocaine heading to the United States. Continuing to support Costa Rica's security forces with training, equipment, and infrastructure will help ensure it can effectively combat transnational crime. If confirmed, I will assess the U.S. support needed to bolster Costa Rica's capacity to be our strong partner in these efforts.

*Question.* How has U.S. security assistance and cooperation been utilized by Costa Rica? If confirmed, what steps would you take to oversee and strengthen our cooperation?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government works with Costa Rica closely on a number of shared security concerns, including narcotics trafficking. U.S. security assistance to Costa Rica focuses on four areas: counternarcotics; curbing transnational threats and crime; improving citizen security and law enforcement capacity; and strengthening rule of law. If confirmed, I will continue the strong U.S. support for bilateral security cooperation with Costa Rica and assess the need for enhancing this partnership.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TOM UDALL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*Question.* What steps should the United States take to work more closely with New Zealand on economic and trade matters?

*Answer.* Robust economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific is a key part of the Biden-Harris administration's effort to Build Back Better. The United States will continue working with New Zealand and other partners in the Indo-Pacific region to address specific economic issues such as infrastructure, the digital economy, and energy.

*Question.* How do you anticipate this agreement will affect the U.S.-New Zealand bilateral relationship?

*Answer.* AUKUS will increase peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, which will have a positive impact on the bilateral relationship with New Zealand. PM Ardern has said that she welcomes "the increased engagement of the UK and US in the region and reiterate our collective objective needs to be the delivery of peace and stability and the preservation of the international rules based system."

*Question.* In what ways can we bolster our security partnership with New Zealand and work towards stability in the South Pacific?

*Answer.* Our military-to-military relationship has reached new heights since the signing of the Wellington and Washington declarations in 2010 and 2012, respectively. Combined naval patrols and exercises have become routine, the New Zealand Army holds one of the Deputy Commander positions with the 25th Infantry Division, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force has been instrumental in providing critical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) support in the Pacific.

The United States and New Zealand defense forces continue to explore additional ways to cooperate beyond our current work in the areas of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and peacekeeping support operations.

*Question.* What is your assessment of how New Zealand's thinking on China has evolved in recent years? And what should the United States be doing to influence New Zealand's approach towards confronting and competing with China?



*Answer.* New Zealand is increasingly concerned about growing PRC influence in the Pacific, an indelible part of its own identity and backyard. Mission New Zealand in turn has deepened government, parliamentary, and academic engagement with the United States. Mission New Zealand's Public Affairs section has collaborated with speakers and exchanges to promote our shared understanding on issues related to the PRC.

*Question.* Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed. There is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. There is an extensive, ongoing interagency investigation into the cause of these incidents and how we can best protect our people.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed. Again, there is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

*Question.* If confirmed, what opportunities and priorities will you pursue to grow U.S.-New Zealand climate cooperation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to continue strong U.S.-New Zealand climate cooperation, for instance on the Global Methane Pledge and USDA's AIM4C. The United States is committed to working with New Zealand to raise global ambition on climate change.

*Question.* What are the U.S.-New Zealand shared security interests in building resilience and climate change adaptation capacities in Oceania—especially the countries facing existential crises due to climate change?

*Answer.* Climate change is considered an existential crisis by many Pacific Island countries. The United States and New Zealand share similar concerns about the security of Pacific Islands that may be forced to take on financial debt from other countries, such as the PRC, to fund adaptation programs like climate-resilient infrastructure.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. TOM UDALL BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What are the key interests underpinning U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region, and what should our objectives and goals be in the region?

*Answer.* Strong diplomatic, military, and economic relationships with like-minded allies and partners can help ensure a safe, prosperous United States. To that end, I support a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific region where democracies can thrive, with strong institutions, responsible actors, and close security, economic, and people-to-people ties.

*Question.* The 2018 National Defense Strategy states that “great power competition, not terrorism, is now the primary focus of U.S. national security.” Do you agree with the Defense Department's assessment?

*Answer.* Counterterrorism remains a deep concern to the United States and our partners, as recent acts of terrorism in New Zealand have demonstrated. As Secretary Blinken has said, China is the only country with the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to seriously challenge the stable and open international system. I support that statement and, if confirmed, will work closely with our New Zealand partners to advance U.S. interests and support a free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* Do you agree that the objectives and policies of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is the greatest foreign policy challenge facing the United States today? If not, why not? What do you think instead is our greatest foreign policy challenge?

**Answer.** The People's Republic of China (PRC) is the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system. However, the United States can still cooperate with China on issues of mutual interest. If confirmed, I will work with New Zealand under the premise that the U.S. relationship with China will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will your top 3-5 policy priorities be as U.S. Ambassador?

**Answer.** I look forward to working with our partners to advance U.S. and common interests in a variety of issues. My top three priorities would be strengthening our Pacific and Antarctic cooperation, advancing security ties, and expanding economic cooperation and commercial opportunities. The United States would like to be the Pacific's "partner of choice."

*Question.* How would you characterize the current U.S.-New Zealand relationship? What are our main challenges? Where do we have opportunities for growth?

**Answer.** The United States and New Zealand have a very close relationship, with strong political, economic, intelligence sharing, security, and people-to-people ties. We cooperate on a range of international issues from upholding the rules-based international order and defending against threats to shared democratic values. We also work together to counter foreign influence and debt diplomacy in the region. Our space and cyber cooperation are vibrant and growing. Challenge areas include COVID-19 recovery, climate change, and ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our Pacific and Antarctic cooperation, advance U.S.-New Zealand security ties, and expand economic and commercial opportunities.

*Question.* What role do you see New Zealand playing in the Indo-Pacific region in light of the growing challenges from China?

**Answer.** China is New Zealand's most important goods trading partner and second most important overall trading partner after Australia. Recent New Zealand Governments have made tough public statements about the PRC's influence in the Pacific and its human rights record and sharpened the country's stance on the South China Sea. If confirmed, I would continue to work with New Zealand as a likeminded democratic partner. In addition to diplomatic responses in the South China Sea, New Zealand has funded repairs to identified substandard projects completed by Chinese construction companies in the Cook Islands.

*Question.* What specifically can we do to strengthen our security relationship with New Zealand in the short-term?

**Answer.** New Zealand officials have previously stressed the importance of their Government's commitment to increased intelligence and defense interoperability, prevention of the movement of foreign terrorist fighters, and stoppage of terrorist financing. If confirmed, I would continue to expand these efforts and work with the New Zealand defense forces to explore additional ways to cooperate beyond our current work in the areas of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and peace-keeping support operations.

*Question.* What specifically can we do to strengthen our security relationship with New Zealand in the medium- to long-term?

**Answer.** U.S. defense engagement with New Zealand is strong but limited by the small size of the New Zealand Defense Force. However, New Zealand has recently taken steps to increase interoperability with the United States by purchasing P-8s and C-130Js and conducting combined patrols in the South China Sea with the United States and other Five Eye partner nations. If confirmed, I would continue to encourage New Zealand to work with the United States as the security partner of choice, including by enhancing our cooperation in the fields of space and cybersecurity.

*Question.* What specifically can we do to strengthen our economic relationship with New Zealand in the short-term? What about the longer-term?

**Answer.** Partnerships in innovation, like the technology sector, film industry, and the space sector, are helping to drive trade and investment in both New Zealand and the United States. New Zealand has a small but developed economy that is highly trade dependent, so New Zealand's trade dependency on the PRC has a distorting effect on its foreign policy. If confirmed, I will explore whether regulatory reforms or a digital services/trade agreement could provide interim steps that signal U.S. support to New Zealand on trade.

*Question.* How would you characterize the current U.S.-Samoa relationship?

*Answer.* The United States and Samoa enjoy strong bilateral relations based on shared values and mutual trust. Cultural and historical linkages, including shared connections to the U.S. territory of American Samoa, translate into strong people to people ties. The United States and Samoa also share close economic ties on multiple levels and cooperate on security and policing matters.

*Question.* What are our main challenges?

*Answer.* China is seeking to grow its influence among the Pacific Islands, including Samoa. Samoa is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Additionally, unreported, unregulated and illegal fishing threatens the livelihoods of Samoan fisherman. If confirmed, I look forward to discussing how to best address these challenges with the Government of Samoa.

*Question.* Where do we have opportunities for growth?

*Answer.* Our engagement with Samoa is vital for a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific region where democracies can thrive, with strong institutions, responsible actors, and close security, economic, and people-to-people ties that benefit the U.S. economy and our people. The PRC is engaged in Samoa, as it is throughout the Pacific, and the United States needs to be present to maintain and expand its influence. If confirmed, I look forward to establishing strong ties with the new Government of Samoa and identifying what more we can do together as Pacific nations.

*Question.* What role does Samoa and the Pacific Islands play in broader U.S. strategy goals in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* Samoa is an active member of regional and international organizations, including the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Pacific Islands Forum, and the Polynesian Leaders Group. Samoa regularly sides with the United States on key votes in international fora. Samoa is particularly vulnerable to climate change, and I understand the Government will be a willing partner on U.S. or global initiatives to mitigate the ongoing effects of climate change or expand the use of new climate-friendly technologies. If confirmed, I will reassure Samoa that the Pacific region remains an enduring foreign policy priority for the United States.

*Question.* In your assessment, what are the implications for U.S. interests of more pronounced presence and influence by China in the Pacific Islands?

*Answer.* The PRC's goals for the Indo-Pacific include reducing U.S. influence and that of like-minded partners, growing its own influence, and reducing Taiwan's international space.

*Question.* What forms of influence are we seeing from China that could have a negative impact on U.S. interests in the Pacific Islands region?

*Answer.* The Pacific Island Countries are susceptible to questionable loans and infrastructure projects that can threaten their sovereignty and the stability and security of the region. China has made significant inroads in Samoa over the last decade by providing extensive development assistance, primarily in the form of large infrastructure projects, including the airport, the national hospital, and government buildings. In September 2019, the Solomon Islands and Kiribati established diplomatic ties with Beijing, leaving Taiwan with just four diplomatic partners in the region (Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, and Tuvalu). Some Pacific Islands Countries no longer accept PRC loans, but grants remain on the table, and there is high demand from the region for development and infrastructure assistance.

*Question.* How can the U.S. better collaborate with Indo-Pacific countries, including New Zealand and Samoa, to deal with the negative effects of China's economic coercion and malign political influence?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to engage with New Zealand and Samoa where our mutual interests are being undermined by PRC actions. Like the United States, New Zealand has areas of cooperation and areas of disagreement with China. I welcome New Zealand's public comments on regional security and the South China Sea, including that all countries, big and small, need to follow the rules of international conduct. I also welcome New Zealand's public comments regarding human rights in Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

*Question.* Do you support pursuing a robust trade agenda in the Indo-Pacific region?

*Answer.* Robust economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific is a key part of the Biden-Harris administration's effort to Build Back Better. If confirmed, I would support an Indo-Pacific trade agenda focused on supporting American working families,

defending our values, and protecting the long-term prosperity and security of the United States. As President Biden has said, the United States is focused on making investments in U.S. workers and U.S. competitiveness before he signs new trade agreements, including in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* What are your views on the United States joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership agreed to by 11 other nations in 2019?

Answer. As White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said, “The President has been clear that he would not rejoin the TPP as it was initially put forward.” Much has changed in the world since the original TPP was signed in 2016. The administration is reviewing the CPTPP to evaluate its consistency with the Build Back Better agenda. If confirmed, I would work with the White House, other agencies, and Congress to negotiate and develop trade policies that advance the interests of all Americans, support American innovation, and enhance our competitiveness.

*Question.* What areas can the U.S. expand its trade and investment footprint in the region?

Answer. If confirmed, I would look for ways to work with New Zealand to build the capacity of countries in the Pacific to participate in comprehensive, high standard bilateral or multilateral trade agreements that remove barriers and unfair practices. I would also explore securing, diversifying, and strengthening resilient U.S. supply chains to ensure we are prepared not only to defeat COVID-19, but to reduce the likelihood that future crises or global challenges can impede our supply chains and economic growth.

*Question.* Do you support exploring opportunities for expanding digital trade in the region specifically? Why or why not?

Answer. Barriers to digital trade threaten the ability of all firms—including small businesses—to benefit from the advantages of the digital economy. Our test for trade policies—including in the area of digital trade—is whether they deliver for the American worker and the middle class. If confirmed, I would apply that metric to any new trade deal. For further questions, I refer you to USTR.

*Question.* On September 17th, Chinese Commerce Minister submitted China’s application to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) to New Zealand’s trade minister. What should the future of the trade structure in the Indo-Pacific look like?

Answer. I understand that China has submitted a formal request to join CPTPP. The United States is not a party to the CPTPP; therefore, it defers to CPTPP parties regarding views on China’s potential accession. That said, if confirmed, I would engage with New Zealand and other partners who are members of the CPTPP to remind them that China’s non-market trade practices and use of economic coercion against other countries should factor into CPTPP parties’ evaluation of China as a potential candidate for accession. For further questions, I refer you to USTR.

*Question.* The U.S. has been engaged with the Pacific Islands on multiple energy projects. What would your priorities be with respect to cooperation on energy, should you be confirmed?

Answer. New Zealand is an important partner for assisting the Indo-Pacific region with its clean energy transition. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen our energy cooperation with New Zealand to increase energy security, expand access to energy, and accelerate the region’s decarbonization. One project I would like to continue pursuing with New Zealand and other like-minded partners is the Papua New Guinea Electrification Partnership (PEP), which will help 70 percent of Papua New Guinea’s population have reliable access to energy by 2030.

*Question.* Should the Development Finance Corporation be restricted from financing energy projects in Samoa and other qualifying Pacific Island nations if those projects are related to oil, natural gas, or other fossil fuels?

Answer. The Development Finance Corporation and other U.S. development financing tools will be important to accelerating the Pacific’s transition to clean energy economies. Assisting the Pacific in its deployment of renewable energy can best advance the region’s energy security, energy access, and decarbonization goals in most instances.

*Question.* Does New Zealand’s nuclear free policy present challenges to the U.S.-New Zealand security relationship?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to work with New Zealand to advance our security relationship. Despite its history, New Zealand invited the U.S. Navy to send a ship to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Royal New Zealand Navy in

2016. New Zealand has again invited the Navy to make a port visit in New Zealand as soon as is practical with COVID-19.

*Question.* How can we mitigate the negative effects of these challenges?

Answer. U.S.-New Zealand relations have warmed significantly over the past decade, which has resulted in several Royal New Zealand Navy ship visits to U.S. military ports. The bilateral relationship has grown significantly over the past few years and is stronger than it has been in decades. If confirmed, I will work to further strengthen our partnership.

*Question.* Do you commit to messaging these negative effects to New Zealand?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the frequent, candid, and constructive conversations on issues across the board and at the highest levels of government.

*Question.* Do you agree that extended deterrence is fundamental to our alliance network in the Indo-Pacific?

Answer. I believe the United States should remain committed to maintaining a strong, credible deterrent to defend the United States and our allies, while also taking steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons. If confirmed, I will uphold the policy that extended deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region plays a critical role in advancing U.S. national security interests, including providing assurance to allies and promoting nonproliferation.

*Question.* China has a history of breaking its promises, and its words on climate change often do not match its actions. Will you commit to the following: not to advise or support entrance into an agreement with the People's Republic of China (PRC) that trades key U.S. interests away for cooperation or future promises by Beijing on climate change;

Answer. I believe the United States must judge Beijing by its actions, not its words. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to impose costs on China when it violates international norms and agreements. If confirmed, I will also work with New Zealand and other partners to press Beijing to raise its climate ambition significantly during this critical decade.

*Question.* not to recommend any the following policies to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC:

- Decreasing freedom of navigation exercises in the South China Sea;
- Making changes in our defense relationships with any U.S. ally, or our overall defense posture in the Indo-Pacific region;
- Delaying arms sales to Taiwan, or pulling back from any form of U.S.-Taiwan cooperation;
- Deciding not to pursue policies that safeguard the U.S. economy from Beijing's anti-competitive trading practices;
- Terminating sanctions against individuals or entities of the PRC, or removing a PRC company from the Entity List;
- Dropping U.S. policies that hold CCP officials and companies accountable for egregious human rights abuses, including those conducted in Xinjiang?

Answer. Prime Minister Ardern's Government has spoken out about human rights abuses by China, condemned malicious cyber activity by Chinese state-sponsored actors, and reaffirmed its support for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in the face of expansive Chinese claims in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Government, businesses, and people of New Zealand to promote our shared interests on issues related to China. If confirmed, I will engage with New Zealand and other partners on climate change, while continuing to protect our national security interests and working to maintain a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* What is your view on the challenges presented by greater presence of Huawei Marine in constructing undersea cables?

Answer. If confirmed, I would urge our partners to consider the potential risks to national and economic security, critical infrastructure, and privacy of selecting untrusted vendors to build and maintain undersea cable systems. Undersea cables are vital lines of communication, but there are national security risks associated with network equipment that can be manipulated, disrupted, or controlled by authoritarian regimes, like the People's Republic of China, which have no regard for human rights or privacy, or where the equipment is susceptible to potential uneth-

ical, unlawful, and otherwise inappropriate behavior, including intellectual property theft.

*Question.* Do you commit to prioritizing this issue should it come up for either of the two countries where you are credentialed, should you be confirmed? How would you use diplomacy and other tools to address this issue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would urge our partners to consider the potential risks to national and economic security, critical infrastructure, and privacy of selecting untrusted vendors to build and maintain undersea cables or choosing to land and interconnect with such cable systems.

*Question.* What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission New Zealand?

*Answer.* I understand Mission New Zealand is, unsurprisingly, a very sought after posting with high morale. As an outsider, I do not yet know specifics, but I know that Mission New Zealand and Mission Samoa, like much of the world, have faced quarantine requirements, occasional lock-downs, and travel disruptions due to COVID-19 restrictions.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across Mission New Zealand?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the teams at Mission New Zealand and Mission Samoa to understand and address any issues affecting morale.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission New Zealand?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will start by listening to those already in Mission New Zealand and Mission Samoa. I will also clearly communicate my priorities and those of the Biden-Harris administration.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I believe in being an inclusive manager and encouraging everyone to perform to the best of their abilities.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* As a collaborative and inclusive manager, if confirmed, I hope to listen closely and to seek ideas and opinions widely throughout Mission New Zealand and Mission Samoa. Many of the best ideas come from those closest to the issues.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* New Chiefs of Mission must integrate themselves into the mission community and culture. A lot can be learned from career State Department Personnel.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I don't believe in berating mission employees in public or private. If confirmed, I would work to supply constructive criticism without belittling, if and when required. When State Department performance reviews are required, I would conduct these with the goal of recognizing strong performance and improving weaker performance.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* As an inclusive manager, if confirmed, I will work to empower my deputy chief of mission (DCM) to do his or her best work by being trusted and having my full confidence.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will rely on my DCM's career-knowledge of Department policies and procedures to ensure the smooth functioning of Mission New Zealand and Mission Samoa.

*Question.* In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* My experience overseas has taught me that State Department employees are out in the community and trying hard to learn about the country they are serving in.

*Question.* How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the public affairs teams in Mission New Zealand and Mission Samoa to ensure we are reaching all of the local populations to the best of our ability.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in New Zealand? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* I understand there is a vibrant and active public diplomacy environment in New Zealand. If confirmed, I would work to expand and strengthen the relationship between the people and Government of the United States and the citizens of New Zealand and Samoa. Some of the successful programs Mission New Zealand has done include cultural and sports programming, academic grants, educational exchanges, and international visitor programs. I hope to continue science and technology-related public diplomacy programs which focus on encouraging youth, particularly women, to explore STEM fields, including space industries. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge for public diplomacy programming, although many initiatives have continued by shifting online or by changing logistics.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the team at Mission New Zealand to understand and protect the Mission's crucial role in formulating public diplomacy programs and responses. The staff of Americans, New Zealanders, and Samoans based at the Embassy in Wellington, the Consulate General in Auckland, and the Embassy in Apia, Samoa, all provide expertise and local insight. If confirmed, I will draw on that local expertise to ensure our public diplomacy messages are appropriate for the local audience.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. TOM UDALL BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* How do you assess New Zealand's relationship with China?

*Answer.* New Zealand is increasingly concerned about growing PRC influence in the Pacific and has made clear that it will follow an independent foreign policy that supports the rules-based international order in the face of challenges to democracy, human rights, governance, free markets, and the global common good. New Zealand's trade relationship with China has not stopped its Government from speaking out on matters of security and human rights.

*Question.* What are the implications for U.S. security and defense cooperation from a growing relationship between New Zealand and China?

*Answer.* The United States and New Zealand are both committed to the security, stability and prosperity of our shared neighborhood, as well as strengthening democracy and democratic resilience across the Pacific region. We continue to draw on New Zealand's depth of knowledge and unique perspective on the South Pacific and look forward to greater partnership in the North Pacific.

Both the United States and New Zealand have a clear national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, respect for international law, unimpeded lawful commerce, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. New Zealand's relationship with China, like ours, can be expected to have aspects of competition and cooperation.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your message to the Government of New Zealand regarding strategic competition with China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to engage with New Zealand where our mutual interests are being undermined by PRC actions, while recognizing areas where cooperation with China is still possible. I welcome New Zealand's public comments on regional security and the South China Sea, including that all countries, big and small, need to follow the rules of international conduct. I also welcome New Zea-

land's public comments regarding human rights in the PRC including in Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MS. SARAH MARGON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Cuba*

*Question.* If confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, what are some of the specific steps you would take to advance democracy and human rights in Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Government continues its steadfast support and engagement with Cuban human rights defenders, activists, and other civil society members to bolster their important work; promote human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democracy; and facilitate the free flow of information to the Cuban people, including access to the internet. I will also support continued use of targeted sanctions and other punitive measures that respond to human rights violations. In addition, I will work closely with partners and allies—in the region and beyond—to develop a coordinated, comprehensive, and expanded approach to this support.

*Question.* What are the redlines, in your view, for the steps that the Díaz Canel regime must take before there should be any sort of normalization with Cuba?

*Answer.* Before any sort of normalization with Cuba takes place, there must be signs that the Díaz-Canel regime is adhering to long-established benchmarks for democratic governance, respect for human rights, and fundamental freedoms. This includes the release of political prisoners, the freedom of movement, speech, and expression, and an end to arbitrary detention.

*Question.* Will you commit to pushing back on unfair bias against Israel from international human rights organizations?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to pushing back against unfair and disproportionate bias against Israel across the international system.

*Question.* There have been extensive efforts by many countries including China, Saudi Arabia, Belarus and Russia, to engage in assassinations, abductions, and other forms of violence against nationals abroad, including human rights activists, dissidents, and members of diaspora communities. Freedom House recently documented 608 cases of direct, physical transnational repression since 2014, including assassinations, abductions, assaults, detentions, and unlawful deportations. How should the United States respond to and deter these activities?

*Answer.* Human rights abuses through transnational repression activities are disturbing and must be taken seriously, and I understand that the Biden administration is focusing additional attention and resources to combatting the growing scourge of transnational repression. If confirmed, this will be a top priority for me, especially given the potential implications transnational repression has here at home. I will endeavor to ensure that human rights activists, journalists, political dissidents, former insiders, and members of minority groups are able to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms without fear of retribution, retaliation, punishment, or harm from the governments of their home state and that if they flee their home state they are adequately protected. To promote accountability for government officials who engage in transnational repression, I will ensure that combatting transnational repression remains a high priority for DRL, and will work closely with interagency partners, as well as congressional allies, to consider all available tools to deter perpetrators, including financial sanctions and visa restriction authorities such as the Khashoggi Ban, which the Department announced in February to promote accountability for governments that threaten and attack journalists and perceived dissidents overseas.

*Question.* In what ways should we work together with our partners and allies to combat this sort of authoritarian reach and protect threatened communities?

*Answer.* I take very seriously the growing threat of transnational repression, as I understand the Biden administration does. If confirmed, I will support and lead diplomatic engagement with like-minded partners to deter, counter, and hold accountable perpetrators of transnational repression. I support information-sharing between like-minded partners to identify and build evidence against those responsible for these attacks, to prevent transnational repression from occurring, and to



protect the individuals who are targeted. I will coordinate diplomacy, messaging, and action such as sanctions, with our partners and allies, to strengthen their impact and deterrent effect. Publicly denouncing individuals involved in transnational repression, as with other human rights abuses, can help deter them and others from committing subsequent attacks.

*Question.* Please describe the Department's efforts to address abuses and violations of the rights of people with disabilities.

*Answer.* I understand that the Department's disability rights programs promote the rule of law and good governance by strengthening the capacity of Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) to effectively promote implementation and enforcement of national and local disability rights laws. Currently, the Department's disability rights programming is in 46 countries including: 7 countries in Africa, 11 countries in East Asia and the Pacific, 4 countries in Europe and Eurasia, 8 countries in Near East Asia, 4 countries in South Central Asia, and 12 countries in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I will be happy to consult on these programs.

*Question.* How much funding does the Department provide to foreign governments, foreign NGOs, and U.S. NGOs to promote and advance the rights of people with disabilities?

*Answer.* I understand that DRL has approximately \$15,500,000 in active programming dollars focused on disability rights programming in 46 countries.

*Question.* How does the DRL bureau engage with other parts of the Department and the broader interagency to prioritize support for people with disabilities in U.S. foreign policy, including in bilateral engagements?

*Answer.* I understand that DRL promotes the full inclusion of persons with disabilities by providing capacity building training, resources, and technical assistance to Department personnel and collaborating with regional and functional bureaus and the interagency to achieve policy objectives that promote inclusion and expand disability rights. Further, I understand that DRL works with federal agencies to support bilateral policy engagements on employment, inclusive education, accessibility, and independent living.

*Question.* Describe the Department's efforts to support human rights defenders, both in terms of support to their work and support to provide them with safety and protection when threatened. Please be specific. How does the Department currently define a human rights defender?

*Answer.* I understand the Department defines a human rights defender (HRD) as an individual, working alone or in groups, who non-violently advocates for the promotion and protection of universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. I understand the Department supports HRDs through a variety of diplomatic tools, including by engaging with the U.N. and its special rapporteurs to address specific threats against human rights defenders; developing policies to reduce violence against human rights defenders; working across the interagency to strengthen policies and practices related to protecting human rights defenders; and conducting foreign assistance programs. More specifically, I understand DRL has developed programming to provide HRDs with flexible, short-term, emergency financial support that gives them the real-time assistance they need to increase their safety and continue their critical work. I understand short-term emergency grants include support for: medical expenses, legal representation, prison visits, trial monitoring, temporary relocation, security, equipment replacement, daily living necessities, and dependent support. Since the inception of impact reporting, I understand 97 percent of respondents stated that the assistance received has had a positive impact on their safety or reduced the threat they faced and 80 percent of respondents have been able to continue their human rights work in some way.

*Question.* Please describe the role played by the DRL bureau in the planning for the December Summit for Democracy.

*Answer.* The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor serves as the subject matter experts within the Department. Given the scope of the Summit shared to date, I am confident that DRL has been involved in providing technical expertise in anti-corruption, human rights, countering authoritarianism, supporting marginalized populations, and engaging international organizations and civil society. DRL is also skilled in planning and hosting large events including the Community of Democracies Governing Council Ministerial in 2017. If confirmed, I will also engage in Summit planning and implementation.

*Question.* What influence does the DRL bureau have on the invitees to and the agenda of the Summit?

*Answer.* I understand that both established and emerging democracies will be invited to participate in the Summit. I have not seen the invitation list nor the agenda and am not involved in internal administration deliberations. Therefore, I cannot provide specifics about them, but believe DRL has played an important role in providing input and more generally that this is an important opportunity for the Biden administration to shore up not only its support for global democracy but its own commitments to democracy as well. If confirmed, I will engage on both the agenda and the proposed invitees.

*Question.* What criteria or process is being used to determine which countries which will receive invites, and which countries will not?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that since this is a Presidential Summit, the White House will make the final determination on which countries will receive an invitation. I understand the Summit will include both established and emerging democracies and presume geographic diversity and country context may have also been factors in the invitation list. In my view, the Summit would benefit from the diversity of perspectives and voices discussing both democratic achievements and challenges and hearing directly from organizations and individuals who work on democracy and understand how best to secure some of the core institutional components of a democracy in today's world.

*Question.* How do you think the U.S. arms transfer process should change to better incorporate human rights and civilian harm concerns, and what changes would you advocate for as Assistant Secretary?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is already working to develop a new Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy to ensure arms transfer decisions reflect the administration's foreign policy priorities, including its emphasis on putting human rights at the center of foreign policy. While I understand human rights and civilian harm concerns are one of several factors taken into account in the arms transfer process, together with the implications of such sales for U.S. and regional security, bilateral relations, and U.S. commercial interests, if confirmed I will make sure DRL is at the right decision-making tables to ensure human rights concerns are incorporated into the process early on and given adequate weight. In addition, I will coordinate closely with the Political-Military (P/M) and regional bureaus to ensure they are seeing the same information and analysis that we see. If confirmed, I will ensure that the arms sales process gives appropriate weight to any human rights and civilian harm concerns.

*Question.* Do you agree that the U.S. Government should refrain from exporting arms to fragile states or countries at risk of atrocities?

*Answer.* Promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances our national security interests. Our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, respect and protect human rights, and hold human rights violators accountable. The United States must continue to create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, frequent and ongoing cooperation, and carefully considered arms exports. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our arms export policies uphold and support U.S. laws on global fragility and atrocity prevention.

*Question.* Under Erdogan, Turkey is neither a reliable NATO ally nor a democracy. Turkey is among the top jailers of journalists and lawyers in the world, which is unacceptable for a NATO member. The Government of Turkey has slapped arbitrary restrictions on the Orthodox Church and Orthodox community, Turkey's Kurds, and other minority groups. We must be clear-eyed about Erdogan and the autocratic path he is taking, and we must stand with the Turkish people as they work to change that. What is the best way to support civil society and counter Erdogan's aggressive push for power?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about measures employed by the Government that negatively impact civil society and other voices critical of the Government in Turkey. I am deeply troubled by the pattern of punitive actions by Turkish officials targeting those whose views differ from those of the Government. Turkey has been an important NATO Ally for nearly 70 years and addressing democratic backsliding is critical to our alliance. If confirmed, I would call for the immediate release of Osman Kavala, who remains incarcerated on specious charges despite a European Court of Human Rights ruling calling for his immediate release, and will work to coordinate with U.S. allies, particularly in the EU, on this issue. I would also urge Department action to underscore for the Turkish Government the fundamental importance of the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association in democracies. I would

urge the Turkish Government to revise laws that restrict freedom of expression and other essential freedoms guaranteed by Turkey's constitution. I would also urge the Department and the embassy to regularly engage with Turkish civil society, hear their concerns, and amplify their voices.

*Question.* The situation in Tigray and across Ethiopia is bleak. U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, released a statement, in which she deplored "multiple and severe reports of alleged gross violations of human rights, humanitarian and refugee law" committed by all parties to the conflict in Tigray. Violations included extrajudicial killings, torture, sexual violence, rape, and racially-targeted killings. President Biden recently signed an executive order threatening sweeping new sanctions against all parties if serious negotiations do not start, attacks on civilians continue, and if humanitarian access remains blocked.

While this is a welcome step, what more can the United States do to ensure that gross human rights violations cease in Ethiopia and that all parties are held accountable for mass atrocities committed over these past eleven months?

*Answer.* It is imperative that the United States continue to use every available tool to urge all parties to end the conflict in northern Ethiopia and cease all gross violations of human rights. These tools include the newly-signed Executive Order; a visa restriction policy targeting those responsible for, or complicit in, undermining resolution of the crisis; foreign assistance restrictions; defense trade controls; multilateral development bank lending; and certain trade benefits.

The United States must continue to marshal its diplomatic resources to press for a negotiated ceasefire; full and unhindered humanitarian access; protection of civilians; the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Ethiopia; a withdrawal of the Tigray People's Liberation Front and Amhara regional forces to their home regions prior to the military conflict; and a political settlement of the crisis. The United States also must continue to press our concerns with like-minded partners, regional governments, the African Union, eminent African voices, and the U.N. Security Council and engage independent actors—including Ethiopian civil society—in the process. If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I would work steadfastly to resolve the human rights crisis in Ethiopia through these and other means.

I also believe that U.S. efforts must remain focused on ensuring that all those who are responsible for atrocities, violations of international humanitarian law, and human rights abuses in Ethiopia are held accountable in transparent processes. To that end, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I would make sure that DRL continues to support independent, international investigations of human rights violations and abuses and atrocities as part of a broader strategy to advance transitional justice efforts in Ethiopia.

*Question.* During the 2020 Armenia-Azerbaijan war, according to human rights organizations, the Azeri military deliberately targeted civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh with cluster munitions and committed extrajudicial executions, including decapitations, as well as beatings of prisoners of war. The State Department's 2020 Country Report on Human Rights for Azerbaijan documented these and other gross human rights violations by the Azeri military. How will you lead State Department efforts to hold Azerbaijan accountable? Why does the administration continue to provide an exemption waiver for Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, further incentivizing this conduct?

*Answer.* The 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights for Azerbaijan and Armenia both detail credible reports of unlawful killings involving summary executions of detained combatants and civilians, and civilian casualties during the 44 days of intensive fighting last fall. The Biden-Harris administration is deeply committed to fostering respect for human rights. I understand that the administration has been urging both sides to investigate any and all allegations of human rights abuses or violations of international humanitarian law and bring to justice those responsible, and, if confirmed, I would press for accountability for such abuses. I also understand that administration officials have been urging both sides to return all remaining detainees—an area of work I would also take up, if confirmed, should it remain unresolved.

U.S. assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan is provided consistent with Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act and related provisions of U.S. law. Assistance provided to the Government of Azerbaijan that does not fall under a statutory exemption is contingent upon a presidential waiver certifying that such assistance is a) necessary to support U.S. efforts to counter international terrorism, or b) is necessary to support the operational readiness of U.S. Armed Forces or coalition partners to counter international terrorism, or c) is important to Azerbaijan's border security, and d) will not undermine or hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peace-

ful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan or be used for offensive purposes against Armenia. The aforementioned waiver authority comes with reporting and consultation requirements to help ensure that Congress is fully informed with respect to assistance for the Government of Azerbaijan. Additionally, all units receiving U.S. security assistance continue to go through the Leahy vetting process. If confirmed, I would strongly support the Leahy vetting process, which DRL is responsible for managing.

*Question.* In the past year, the Lukashenka regime has detained thousands of protesters, torturing hundreds, jailed political opponents, banned and shut down media organizations, and persecuted its people both at home and abroad. The regime is weaponizing migrants by forcing them at gunpoint to cross illegally into Poland, Latvia, and Lithuania. How can the United States partner with countries like Lithuania and others on the front lines of democracy to support the democratic opposition in Belarus?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to strengthen U.S. support for the pro-democracy movement in Belarus and promote accountability for the regime's abuses. As such, I will press for additional sanctions to promote accountability for those responsible for human rights abuses, undermining democracy in Belarus, and for supporting the Lukashenka regime. Similarly, I hope to continue U.S. support for international mechanisms designed to document the regime's abuses, including the International Accountability Platform for Belarus (IAPB) and U.N. fact-finding mission. If confirmed, I seek to increase U.S. support for Belarusian civil society, independent media, and exiles fleeing repression. Lastly, I hope to increase cooperation with likeminded countries in the context of the Summit for Democracy, including Lithuania, which has done remarkable work to provide a safe haven for the Belarusian opposition, civil society, journalists, and ordinary citizens fleeing the Lukashenka regime's repression. Lithuania continues to demonstrate its strong commitment to democratic values, and we look forward to collaborating with them and others to safeguard and advance democracy globally.

*Question.* Earlier this month, Russian occupation authorities in Crimea detained more than 50 Crimean Tatars, reportedly beating them and questioning them without lawyers present. Arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances, and torture of Crimean Tatars and ethnic Ukrainians have been a recurring feature of Russian occupation, with many residents being persecuted on religious grounds. An estimated 30,000 Tatars have fled from the region. How can the State Department work with the international community to hold Russian authorities accountable for their crimes in occupied Crimea?

*Answer.* I am appalled by the egregious abuses Russia carries out in occupied Crimea and its targeting of Crimean Tatars, ethnic Ukrainians, and other religious and ethnic minorities for intimidation, harassment, and repression. Such abuses must cease immediately and perpetrators must be held to account. If confirmed, I will lead the U.S. Government in playing an active role in the newly launched Crimea Platform to increase the spotlight on Russia's occupation of Crimea, hold Russian occupation authorities to account for their human rights abuses on the peninsula, and implement policy that increases the costs to Russia for their continued occupation. Crimea is Ukraine. I would also focus on securing releases for political prisoners and documenting human rights abuses so that perpetrators can be held to account.

*Question.* Hungary, Poland, and other nominal democracies in Europe continue to backslide on democracy and human rights. These countries have undermined the independence of their judiciaries. In addition, Hungary has outlawed gender transition and gay adoption, and banned LGBTQ content from television and in schools. Poland has created 'LGBT-free' zones in almost 100 Polish regions, town and cities. How can the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor work with NATO partners like Hungary and Poland to meet not only their defense commitments to the alliance, but their commitments on values like individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law?

*Answer.* I share the concerns expressed by the Biden-Harris administration and members of Congress regarding the undermining of democratic institutions in Poland and Hungary. Being a member of NATO includes commitments to Transatlantic values, not only security. If confirmed, I would engage with governments, civil society, the private sector, and core European allies to support strengthening Poland and Hungary's democratic institutions and urge transparency and respect for the rule of law. I would work with partners in the European Union to encourage the EU and member states to amplify U.S. messages through complementary statements and action. Additionally, I would look for opportunities to use available tools,

including the Global Magnitsky sanctions passed by the Congress, when there is sufficient credible information that a particular politician has engaged in corruption or serious human rights abuses. I am troubled by the rise in anti-LGBTQI+ rhetoric and legislation in recent years in both countries. If confirmed, I would work with the Special Envoy to Advance the Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons to raise awareness of this challenge and determine the best way to respond to discriminatory laws and policies and intolerant rhetoric while engaging local communities and/or organizations and maintaining the safety and security of LGBTQI+ persons.

*Question.* The UK's Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis introduced a proposal in July that would create a statute of limitations on all crimes committed during the Troubles prior to April 1998. The proposal is not supported by a single political party in Northern Ireland, signaling cross-community opposition, and its incompatibility with the intent undergirding the Good Friday Agreement. 1,000 civil cases seeking justice and resolution for crimes during the Troubles are currently pending in the High Court in Belfast, indicating a continued desire to address legacy issues in the courts. What leverage can the United States exert on the United Kingdom to ensure that it protects the Good Friday Agreement, and respects the intertwined questions of legacy and reconciliation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to protecting the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement as the bedrock of peace, stability, and prosperity in Northern Ireland. Constructive engagement with all affected parties is critical, and I will continue to urge the parties to negotiate within existing mechanisms when differences arise. I will encourage a focus on solutions that promote peace and stability in Northern Ireland and help victims move forward.

*Question.* As of August, The Memorial Human Rights Center in Moscow recognized 329 Russian political prisoners that were imprisoned in connection with their right to freedom of religion. This list includes 87 Jehovah's Witnesses. Memorial identifies another 81 political prisoners for non-religious reasons, including those on the front lines of democracy in Russia like opposition leader Alexey Navalny and his supporters. How will you use your role as Assistant Secretary to pressure the Russian Government to release those unjustly imprisoned by the Putin regime?

*Answer.* I share your concern about the growing number of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Russia, one of the many manifestations of the Kremlin's deepening repression. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to call for the release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in public statements and in multilateral fora. I will work with likeminded governments and civil society organizations to raise awareness of their cases and demonstrate solidarity with their families, friends, and colleagues. I will also use all available tools to promote accountability for those officials responsible for their wrongful imprisonment and work with other allies to ensure they're doing the same.

*Question.* In September, on the eve of the Russian elections, the Russian Government accused Google and Apple of supporting extremism under the Russian extremism law for hosting apps critical to informing Russians of candidates associated with Alexei Navalny's democracy movement. How will you work to address the increasing media repression in Russia, where the internet seems to be the last outpost for freedom of expression? How will you engage U.S. tech companies on their policies and practices with regard to authoritarian regimes like Putin's?

*Answer.* I share your concern about the stark erosion of media freedom in Russia, including increasing restrictions on Internet Freedom. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to promote the courageous work of Russia's independent media, civil society organizations, and democratic elements of society, and call out and hold accountable the Russian Government for its repressive actions.

More broadly, concerns around the use of technology to undergird authoritarian tendencies are only accelerating. While the United States needs to continue promote connectivity to an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet where the rights that all persons have offline are also protected online, including freedom of expression, there is also much work to be done engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including other governments and tech companies, to advocate for implementation of human rights principles in the tech space. But additionally, if confirmed, I will work across the Department to help build a collective and strategic approach to combating digital authoritarianism that ensures public-private partnerships and any potential regulation are rooted in the promotion and protection of basic rights and the core principles of democratic governance.

*Question.* Locally-employed U.S. Embassy and Consulate staff remain in prison following the Government's purges in 2016. In June 2020, one translator employed

by the U.S. Consulate was sentenced to more than 8 years in prison. Will you prioritize getting these staff out once confirmed?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the ongoing prosecutions of U.S. locally employed staff in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties. If confirmed, I would strongly support continued Department efforts to secure the immediate release of Metin Topuz from prison and press Turkey to terminate any judicial controls or prosecutions targeting Mete Canturk and Hamza Ulucay, including movement restrictions.

*Question.* In June 2021, the Turkish Constitutional Court agreed to hear a case seeking to ban the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), the country's third largest political party and a strong proponent for ethnic Kurdish rights. The campaign follows years of replacing democratically-elected HDP mayors with so-called "trustees" appointed by the Government. The State Department reported in its 2020 Country Report on Human Rights for Turkey that "the Government suspended 81 percent of HDP mayors elected in the March 2019 municipal elections, suspending 16 mayors in 2020 alone." What do you intend to do about this democratic backslide in Turkey, especially ahead of potential snap elections? How will your bureau ensure ethnic minority rights and political representation are protected in Turkey?

Answer. I share your concerns about democratic backsliding, erosion of rule of law, and the repressive tactics employed by the Turkish Government. If confirmed, I would urge Department action to make clear to the Turkish Government the importance of political pluralism. Banning the country's second largest opposition party would unduly subvert the will of Turkish voters, further undermine democracy in Turkey, and deny potentially millions of Turkish citizens their elected representation. If confirmed, I would urge the Government to abandon efforts to dissolve the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and impose political bans on hundreds of HDP members. I would also call upon the Turkish authorities to investigate and hold accountable perpetrators of violence against HDP members. I would also support efforts to ensure all parties in Turkey are able to campaign freely and on a level playing field. I would also seek to work closely with like-minded governments and consider engaging private sector companies that might also have an interest in advancing rule of law issues to the benefit of all Turkish citizens.

*Question.* How is State measuring Bangladesh's progress on labor rights in the aftermath of the 2013 Rana Plaza disaster? Is the administration considering restoration of Dhaka's access to the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)? Under what circumstances or conditions would it do so?

Answer. I understand that since the horrific building collapse at Rana Plaza in 2013, the United States Government has worked with partners across the international community, major industries, and Bangladeshi authorities to advocate for and enable improvements in factory safety, which included the establishment of new agreements by major international brands to enforce safety standards across factories. While these changes are encouraging, much more needs to be done to institutionalize safety standards across Bangladesh's major industries, as evidenced by the tragic fire at a juice factory in July 2021. The Department of State works closely with the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and the Department of Labor to monitor Bangladesh's progress to meet internationally recognized labor rights, especially workplace safety, freedom of association, and collective bargaining. I commit, if confirmed, to upholding the USTR's position that if Congress reauthorizes GSP, restoring Bangladesh's GSP benefits must be contingent upon strengthening labor rights and workplace safety, as well as improving the overall business and civil society operational environment.

*Question.* Extrajudicial killings by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) have reportedly spiked since the Government of Bangladesh began its 'war on drugs' in the months ahead of the December 2018 elections. Do you support imposing sanctions on senior commanders of Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), which has reportedly conducted more than 400 extrajudicial killings since 2015?

Answer. I share the Biden-Harris administration's deep concern regarding reports of extrajudicial killings in Bangladesh and urge the Government to thoroughly and transparently investigate and hold perpetrators accountable. I believe the United States Government must continue to press the Bangladeshi Government to uphold its commitments to human rights and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will seek to utilize available tools to promote accountability, including, as applicable, Section 7031(c) visa restrictions and/or with the Department of the Treasury to consider the Global Magnitsky sanctions program, in a targeted manner, to advance our human rights goals.

*Question.* There have been nearly 600 forced disappearances of activists, opposition members, and government critics since Prime Minister Hasina took office in 2009, as documented in Human Rights Watch's August 2021 report. How will you address this issue?

*Answer.* I understand the Department of State has repeatedly emphasized its concern over reports of enforced disappearances and have urged the Government to hold perpetrators accountable. If confirmed, I will maintain this approach in bilateral meetings, multilateral exchanges, and coordinate with like-minded partners to stop these abusive practices and protect human rights in Bangladesh. If confirmed, I will explore the use of available tools to promote accountability and deter further violations and abuses.

*Question.* Rights groups have detailed increased abuse of Tamil political prisoners—including beatings, burnings, suffocations, sexual assaults—since Gotabaya Rajapaksa became president in 2019. What consequences should there be to hold those responsible accountable?

*Answer.* Such allegations of abuse and gross violations of human rights are disturbing and must be taken seriously. If confirmed, I will work to promote the protection of human rights for all in Sri Lanka, including, but not limited to, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, women and girls, LGBTQI+ persons, and persons with disabilities. For reconciliation to take place, members of the Tamil and other ethnic communities can no longer suffer from systematic discrimination and targeted treatment such as monitoring, harassment, and abuse by security forces. If confirmed, I will utilize all available tools to promote accountability, including, as applicable, Section 7031(c) visa restrictions and/or with the Department of the Treasury to consider the Global Magnitsky sanctions program, in a targeted manner, to advance our human rights goals. I will also advocate that Sri Lanka amend its Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)—legislation that denies due process and is used disproportionately to crack down on members of Tamil and Muslim minority communities. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's commitment to promote justice, accountability, and reconciliation measures in support of all people in Sri Lanka.

*Question.* In January 2021, Michelle Bachelet pushed for targeted sanctions on Sri Lankan military commanders implicated in war crimes committed during the civil war, including the current army chief and in March, the Human Rights Council passed resolution 46/1 promoting accountability in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, recently policies and actions indicate that the Government's commitment rule of law, judicial processes, and democracy are weak. How will you work to hold accountable those who perpetrated atrocities during the war and since, including current Sri Lankan officials and, if possible, forestall further deterioration in Sri Lankan democracy?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the backsliding of democratic governance and human rights in Sri Lanka, especially pertaining to justice for victims, civil society, rule of law, human rights defenders, and religious freedom. The United States' co-sponsorship of Human Rights Council resolution 46/1 is a testament to our Government's commitment to promoting democratic values, human rights for all, and accountability measures. If confirmed, I will utilize all available tools to promote accountability, including, as applicable, Section 7031(c) visa restrictions and/or with the Department of the Treasury to consider the Global Magnitsky sanctions program, in a targeted manner, to advance our human rights goals. I will also urge my Sri Lankan counterparts, at the highest levels, to follow through on recommendations of the United Nations and Sri Lanka's robust civil society to make progress on justice, accountability, and reconciliation objectives. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's commitment to promote democratic values, respect for human rights, justice, and accountability measures in support of the people of Sri Lanka.

*Question.* The five countries of Central Asia—despite progress in some—regularly confine human rights defenders, political opposition figures, outspoken minority members, and others to lengthy detention without trial or following conviction for trumped-up charges. What will you do to ensure that our diplomacy with these countries continues to advocate for these unlawfully detained prisoners?

*Answer.* Countries are stronger when they enshrine and respect the rights to peaceful protest and freedom of expression. Despite advancement in some Central Asian countries, many challenges remain on these issues, including meaningful democratic reform. If confirmed, I will urge these issues be a priority for our diplomacy in Central Asia. I will stress the long-term benefit in strengthening protection of human rights. I am particularly concerned about the criminalization of non-vio-

lent political speech and the detention of political prisoners, but also concerned by an uptick in restrictions on freedom of expression and politically motivated detentions in the run up to upcoming elections in the region. If confirmed, I will directly engage on specific cases, broader systematic concerns regarding political prisoners, and the need to protect dissenting voices.

*Question.* Democratic progress in Central Asia is always uncertain. Some countries may be trending in the right direction now, but we know that this could change. What can the U.S. do to shore up human rights in the region amidst our competing priorities with regard to China, Russia, and Afghanistan?

*Answer.* Thirty years after their independence, some Central Asian countries have made considerable progress in human rights reforms; however, significant challenges in the region remain. Addressing these shortcomings by promoting democracy and human rights in Central Asia is central to our regional efforts to reassert core values and advance respect for human rights, especially for women, girls, and minority groups, as a cornerstone of our foreign policy. If confirmed, I will support and reinforce ongoing reforms while pressing governments to take necessary steps to create genuinely pluralistic political systems that uphold human rights for all, including women, members of religious and ethnic minority groups, LGBTQI+ persons, persons with disabilities, and opposition members. I will press governments to secure fundamental freedoms and expand space for civil society—including organizations that work on resource transparency and accountability—by amending problematic laws, easing excessive and burdensome administrative requirements, and enhancing trust between the Government and independent civil society. U.S. support is vital for democratic progress to continue in Central Asia.

*Question.* Minority groups in Pakistan are under duress. Members of the Ahmadi Muslim community are frequently accused of, prosecuted for, and murdered on the basis of their identity or the belief that they have committed blasphemy or apostasy. Furthermore, the Pakistani Government has successfully pressured U.S. based technology companies to remove web-based content and apps provided by the Ahmadi community to its members. How will you lead State Department efforts to the State Department to address the dire human rights situation there for millions of minorities? What tactics will you employ to ensure that the internet in Pakistan remains free of malicious government control for these same persons?

*Answer.* I am very concerned about Pakistan's continued enforcement of blasphemy laws, which are inconsistent with international human rights law. Several dozen people are currently serving life imprisonment or are on death row for blasphemy.

I am also deeply concerned by the targeted killings of individuals accused of blasphemy and members of Pakistan's Ahmadiyya Muslim community, spurred in part by discriminatory anti-Ahmadi laws. A recent example of such violence was the assassination of Tahir Naseem, an Ahmadi and U.S. citizen who was murdered by a violent extremist in open court while on trial in Peshawar for blasphemy in July 2020.

If confirmed, I will advocate for the human rights of all individuals irrespective of their religion or beliefs. I will advocate for everyone to have the opportunity to live freely from harassment or threat of violence and to practice the religion of their choice. I will work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and the Office of International Religious Freedom to engage technology companies, to highlight the human rights costs of enabling these abuses by governments, and to help empower civil society groups, including religious actors, advocating against the use and abuse of blasphemy laws. If confirmed, I will join my colleagues across the U.S. Government actively supporting freedom of expression online and offline and working to remove obstacles facing members of minority groups around the world.

*Question.* I have concerns about the persecution of minorities in India, the re-categorization of Muslim citizens as stateless persons under the Citizenship Amendment Act. What will you do to ensure that Indian democracy and its diverse population remain a centerpiece of our diplomacy with India?

*Answer.* I share your concerns and believe strongly in the importance of Indian democracy serving as a model for the region. If confirmed, I would advocate the United States Government continue to place human rights and democratic principles at the heart of our diplomacy with India, including an open, inclusive civil society, and respect for human rights, including the freedoms of religion or belief, expression, peaceful assembly, and association. If confirmed, I will urge Indian officials to protect and respect the right to practice one's religion or belief, the right



to peaceful assembly, and freedom of expression for all, on and offline, in keeping with India's constitution and democratic values.

*Question.* After a decade of work to establish a civilian-led democratic government, the Tatmadaw tragically overthrew Burma's Government. The same leaders now running the country are guilty of genocide against the Rohingya and of a sustained campaign of violence against Burma's ethnic minorities. While I welcome Secretary Blinken's decision to review the atrocities and make a determination on genocide, such determination is long overdue.

How can the United States work to promote accountability for the military's gross abuses and atrocities? When will the administration announce whether the Tatmadaw and/or the Burmese regime committed genocide against the Rohingya people?

*Answer.* I am appalled by the atrocities that the Burmese military continues to commit against the people of Burma, which underscores the urgency of promoting accountability for perpetrators of atrocities and other human rights violations and abuses. I understand that the administration is taking action, alongside our allies and partners, to promote justice for victims and accountability for those responsible, including by supporting the U.N. Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, providing assistance to Burmese civil society actors seeking justice, and implementing sanctions on those responsible for these horrific abuses. The Secretary has committed to reviewing whether the atrocities committed against Rohingya constitute specific atrocity crimes. If confirmed, I will support the Secretary in reaching a decision and to making sure our commitments on accountability are implemented with both the spirit and the letter of the law.

*Question.* After a decade of work to establish a civilian-led democratic government, the Tatmadaw tragically overthrew Burma's Government. The same leaders now running the country are guilty of genocide against the Rohingya and of a sustained campaign of violence against Burma's ethnic minorities. While I welcome Secretary Blinken's decision to review the atrocities and make a determination on genocide, such determination is long overdue.

How can the United States continue to support democracy and human rights in Burma and halt the horrific reversal of progress there?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to continuing our longstanding support for democracy and promotion of respect for human rights in Burma, which is vital in the face of the military coup d'état and continued deterioration of civilian security and human rights across the country. I would continue to support Burma's pro-democracy movement and provide humanitarian assistance on the basis of need, including to ethnic and religious minority communities as appropriate, and to regularly meet with members of Burma's civil society. Ensuring their voices are heard as part of the roadmap for Burma's democracy is an essential part of its legitimacy and so if confirmed I would urge that the U.S. remain steadfast in our support for the people of Burma. Additionally, I would encourage strong diplomatic engagement and cooperation with our likeminded and regional partners, including in international organizations, to deny the military regime international credibility and press the regime to reverse course. If confirmed, I will support continued efforts to pursue targeted sanctions and other actions to deny the military financial resources and promote accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MS. SARAH MARGON BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What would you do to bolster and reiterate the U.S. Government's commitment to protect and advocate for those on the frontlines, including civil society organizations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek to bolster protections for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people—including women, youth, and members of historically marginalized groups—so that they may shape the laws, policies, and political processes that affect their lives. To do so, I will support the utilization of a wide array of tools to achieve this goal, including bilateral and multilateral diplomacy; public messaging; accountability tools; and foreign assistance to civil society, including rapid response programs to support journalists, activists, and human rights defenders under threat for their work. I will also make sure to seek out the views of civil society groups and activists, meet them when I travel, help ensure they are

able to participate in multilateral fora, and take all steps to ensure their concerns are central to our consideration on larger U.S. policy decisions.

*Question.* How would you direct the State Department to enhance the protections globally governing freedom of expression and press?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to work with other parts of the Department, executive branch agencies, and Congress to bolster efforts to promote the ability of people everywhere to exercise their right to freedom of expression—online and offline—free from harassment, intimidation, and violence. This includes through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy; public messaging; accountability tools; multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Media Freedom Coalition, the Freedom Online Coalition, and the President’s upcoming Summit for Democracy; and foreign assistance to civil society, including rapid response programs to support activists, human rights defenders, and journalists under threat.

*Question.* How will you prioritize a “whole-of-government” approach to human rights policy and its application in regional and functional diplomatic relationships?

*Answer.* The diplomatic work of the United States encompasses all the work of all applicable federal agencies and tools. If confirmed I will consult broadly with federal agencies and within the Department to ensure that U.S. policy on human rights and fundamental freedoms is a significant component of decision-making. If confirmed, my job will be to use resources and information to ensure policy making adequately reflects core human rights and democracy standards. It means ensuring DRL is at the table, participating actively in interagency debates and decision making. It also means making sure DRL is viewed across the foreign service as career enhancing and a net positive in career development so there is interest, engagement, and an understanding of why our work matters. This cross-Bureau and inter-agency work is a high priority and essential to effective diplomacy.

*Question.* There is serious concern about the state of press freedom around the world. If confirmed, what actions will you take to curb suppression of press freedom and support independent journalists around the world?

*Answer.* I share the concern that press freedom is threatened globally. If confirmed, I will direct the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to work with other parts of the Department, executive branch agencies, and Congress to promote the ability of journalists everywhere to do their work—online and offline—free from harassment, intimidation, and violence. This includes through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy; public messaging; accountability tools; multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Media Freedom Coalition, the Freedom Online Coalition, and the President’s upcoming Summit for Democracy; and foreign assistance to civil society, including rapid response programs to support journalists under threat and training and capacity building programs to bolster the safety of independent journalists globally. If confirmed I’ll also look at new ways to partner in support of press freedom and to do so with allies around the globe—whether other governments, philanthropic groups, or the private sector.

*Question.* Everyone should be able to practice their faith however they choose, including in places like China, India, and Uzbekistan. How does international religious freedom factor into your priorities?

*Answer.* President Biden and Secretary Blinken have made clear that the United States prioritizes respect for human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, as a key foreign policy objective. Human rights are universal—no matter where someone is born, what they believe, how they identify, or whom they love, they are entitled to the enjoyment of these rights. Human rights are also co-equal, inter-related, and interdependent. All people should be able to organize their lives in accordance with their conscience, free from violence, abuse, and discrimination. If confirmed, I intend to work alongside the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and with our embassies and consulates around the world, to deploy the full range of diplomatic tools—both positive and punitive—to encourage governments to respect their international obligations and commitments to protect freedom of religion or belief.

*Question.* What do you believe is the U.S. Government role in advocating on behalf of religious minorities?

*Answer.* I believe the U.S. Government must be committed to advancing religious freedom internationally, including the protection of members of religious minority groups, across the globe. As a part of those efforts, we must demonstrate solidarity with those struggling to secure their rights and provide foreign assistance to build

the capacity of local organizations to effectively advocate for themselves. We must assist victims of abuses through direct advocacy with foreign governments and other forms of emergency assistance, including working to free individuals imprisoned for their beliefs. It is also imperative that we engage in bilateral diplomacy to encourage governments to bring their laws and policies into alignment with their obligations and commitments to promote respect religious freedom, including ensuring protection for members of religious minority groups. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Office of International Religious Freedom and its appointed Ambassador at Large on these issues.

*Question.* Would you describe the U.N. Human Rights Council as a deeply flawed body? Why or why not?

*Answer.* The U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC) does have flaws, including in particular the Council's problematic membership and its disproportionate focus on Israel. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring with colleagues the HRC can be as effective and balanced as possible. When the United States has a seat at the table, it has been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, resulting in changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel, a clear benchmark for U.S. leadership, and has stood up to more problematic members with notable records of abuse. When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, it has been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep some of the countries with the worst human rights records off the Council and encourage countries with better records to run for seats.

*Question.* Can you please explain in detail how the Biden administration plans to reform the U.N. Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and the Council's problematic membership. When the U.S. has had a seat at the table, it has been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and has seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel, one benchmark I will use for our leadership. I have not been part of these conversations, but I understand it is a priority for the administration—and certainly one for me, if confirmed. As part of that effort, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends, allies, and long-time HRC experts in civil society to address the Council's problematic membership record and its anti-Israel bias. I will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on a wide range of issues and also make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, it has been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep off some of the countries with the worst human rights records and to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats.

*Question.* Do you believe that human rights should be a permanent agenda item for the U.N. Security Council?

*Answer.* Human rights are woven into the agenda items for the U.N. Security Council in its work to maintain international peace and security. Peace and security are intrinsically linked to respect for and support of human rights. The U.N. Human Rights Council, to which the United States is running for an elected seat, is the premier U.N. body focused on human rights issues. I look forward to utilizing that platform to advance human rights, if confirmed.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Do you believe that human rights should be a permanent agenda item for the U.N. Security Council?

*Answer.* Yes. That said, human rights are woven into the agenda items for the U.N. Security Council in its work to maintain international peace and security. Peace and security are completely linked to respect for human rights. The U.N. Human Rights Council, to which the United States secured an elected seat, is the premier U.N. body focused on human rights issues. If confirmed, I look forward to utilizing that as well as other multi-lateral platforms to advance human rights.

*Question.* Do you support U.N. Security Council Resolution 2334?

*Answer.* I am committed to achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace between the Israelis and Palestinians and to supporting dignity, equal protection under the law, and fundamental freedoms for all. For as long as Israel has been a member of the United Nations, Israel has been treated differently from other nations at the

United Nations. Such unequal treatment not only unfairly singles out Israel, it undermines the legitimacy of the United Nations itself.

If confirmed, I will uphold President Biden's strong commitment to Israel and its security. This includes opposing efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies. I will also continue to oppose any unilateral provocative actions that risk sparking more violence and that undermine prospects for a just, durable resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, which ultimately requires two states.

I understand the United States will block any resolution that we believe may undermine Israel's security or seek to impose a resolution to the conflict.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Do you support U.N. Security Council Resolution 2334?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will oppose, as I understand the administration does already, efforts to unfairly single out or delegitimize Israel through one-sided resolutions, reports, and other actions across the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and other bodies. Equally, I will firmly oppose any unilateral provocative actions that risk sparking more violence and that undermine prospects for a just, durable resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, which ultimately requires two states. I will work to preserve the path to a two-state solution as the best way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state and to give the Palestinians the state they seek. I will also continue and sustain diplomatic engagement on the issue of settlements.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a bipartisan manner, including by providing timely, accurate, and complete information on all relevant strategies, initiatives, programs, and assistance under the purview of DRL?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed I would welcome the opportunity to work closely with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in a bipartisan manner, and in coordination with the Bureau of Legislative Affairs.

*Foreign Assistance*

*Question.* If confirmed, under what conditions, if any, would you support conditioning U.S. foreign assistance?

*Answer.* Conditions that prohibit certain assistance to foreign security forces that are credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights, such as the Leahy Laws, support the U.S. foreign policy objective of promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms. U.S. national security is strengthened when partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, promote, and protect human rights, hold human rights violators accountable when necessary, and do not unduly restrict fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department of State's continued rigorous implementation of the Leahy Laws and similar conditions. Foreign assistance is an important part of how the U.S. engages globally—a way for us to engage local communities and support their goals for a more pluralistic society. I believe the principle of “do no harm” is an important one for all donors to embrace. If confirmed, I would work closely with colleagues at USAID to consider whether restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance related to DRL equities are prudent.

FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* If confirmed, under what conditions, if any, would you support conditioning U.S. foreign assistance?

*Answer.* I believe effective implementation of existing U.S. law provides helpful starting points to identify the conditions under which I would support appropriate conditioning or limitations on applicable U.S. assistance. For example, Section 502(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act precludes assistance to governments that engage in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. Similarly, the Leahy laws prohibit the provision of applicable U.S. assistance to foreign security force units that are credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights. U.S. national security is strengthened when partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, promote, and protect

human rights, and hold those responsible for human rights violations accountable. In addition, if confirmed, I would carefully examine, on a case-by-case basis, other human rights factors that may impact decisions about foreign assistance, such as whether another government is engaged in acts that could constitute atrocities or gender-based violence.

*Question.* Would you support conditioning assistance to the West Bank and Gaza upon the achievement of measurable progress in ending the Palestinian Authority's support for human rights atrocities through the heinous "pay for slay" program?

*Answer.* I believe the Palestinian practice of prisoner and martyr payments is abhorrent. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working to end the practice of Palestinian prisoner and "martyr" payments to address longstanding U.S. and international concerns. If confirmed, I will commit to closely tracking requirements under the Taylor Force Act and other similar legislation and ensuring that U.S. assistance is consistent with it. By providing critical humanitarian relief, fostering economic development, and supporting Israeli-Palestinian security coordination, we will help millions of vulnerable Palestinians and promote a stable environment that benefits both Israelis and Palestinians in a manner that is consistent with our values, with U.S. foreign policy priorities, and with U.S. law.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Would you support conditioning assistance to the West Bank and Gaza upon the achievement of measurable progress in ending the Palestinian Authority's support for human rights atrocities through the heinous "pay for slay" program?

*Answer.* I believe the Palestinian practice of prisoner and martyr payments is abhorrent. The Biden-Harris administration is committed to working to end the practice of Palestinian prisoner and "martyr" payments to address longstanding U.S. and international concerns. If confirmed, I would build on the work thus far, through sustained diplomatic engagement and pressure, underscoring that part of resetting the U.S.-Palestinian relationship is seeing an end to this heinous practice.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with regional and functional bureaus, including the Bureau for Political-Military Affairs (PM) to ensure statutory restrictions on the provision of certain forms of U.S. foreign assistance to foreign security forces that commit human rights abuses are upheld on the one hand, while balancing U.S. national security interests and regional security imperatives on the other?

*Answer.* Promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances U.S. national security interests. Our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, respect and protect human rights, and hold human rights violators accountable. Human rights is one of a number of national security interests that need to be considered as part of U.S. foreign assistance, but ensuring human rights is part of that conversation requires doubling down on both information-sharing and relationship-building. I understand DRL colleagues are engaged in building relationships with the various regional and functional bureaus; if I am confirmed, I will not only support such efforts but undertake them myself. If confirmed, I will work to support to the fullest extent partner governments' accountability mechanisms essential to the resumption of assistance to elements of foreign security forces critical to U.S. national security and regional security.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with regional and functional bureaus to ensure that statutory restrictions on assistance to foreign governments that engage in corruption and/or fail to uphold budget transparency requirements are upheld on the one hand, while balancing U.S. national interests and on the other?

*Answer.* U.S. national interests are served through a wide array of tools and approaches, including bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement, public diplomacy, and foreign assistance. In countries that do not meet statutory restrictions on assistance to foreign governments, including those relating to corruption, I understand the Department elevates other forms of engagement, and can at times provide assistance to civil society organizations capable of advancing U.S. interests. Congress has passed important bipartisan legislation that enables U.S. Government efforts to better fight corruption and President Biden's Memorandum on the Fight Against Corruption as a Core United States National Security Interest will further enable the executive to assess corruption concerns by modernizing and resourcing our ability to elevate and effectively address this problem. If confirmed, I pledge to

work closely and collaboratively with regional and functional bureaus and across the interagency to strategically leverage all foreign policy tools possible in each country context.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you measure the impact of DRL grants for building the capacity of civil society organizations, particularly in non-permissive environments? What is—or should be—the criteria for “graduating” civil society organizations from reliance upon U.S. foreign assistance?

*Answer.* I understand that DRL is a leader in the Department of State for their monitoring and evaluation of programs and grants. I understand DRL measures outcomes and impact, including on capacity building, through a set of custom indicators and routine evaluation. If confirmed, I will continue to support this practice and closely examine what criteria and metrics are in place for measuring success over all programmatic goals, including capacity building for civil society organizations (CSOs), including in non-permissive environments. My understanding is that DRL does not provide core funding for CSOs, but instead provides technical assistance (which can be geared towards CSO sustainability) or assistance to conduct particular activities within a time-limited grant (usually 2-3 years in length). Furthermore, my understanding is that it is not a question of “graduating” from U.S. foreign assistance as the grants, by nature, are time-limited and end.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you de-conflict DRL’s grant-making with the work of the U.S. Agency for International Development—which has a far more significant budget and deep roots with civil society across all development sectors—to guard against duplication and waste?

*Answer.* DRL adds unique value to U.S. democracy, governance, and human rights programming. DRL’s close connection with activists and human rights defenders on the ground, especially in repressive environments, and programmatic flexibility allow it to address emerging opportunities and challenges. If confirmed, I pledge to ensure these programs are closely coordinated with the U.S. Agency for International Development. My understanding is that USAID and other relevant interagency representatives regularly participate in DRL’s grant-making process, to include serving on panels and reviewing program proposals. I hope to continue and deepen this collaboration if confirmed.

*Question.* In your view, should the U.S. Agency for International Development be directly engaging in democracy promotion, or would democracy promotion be best left to the Department of State and its diplomatic corps?

*Answer.* I believe that the U.S. Agency for International Development should engage in democracy support, especially in the context of development and strengthening government institutions in permissive environments. Supporting and advancing democracy in all environments is vitally important and has important links to development and aid efforts. support , If confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues both at the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development to use all tools at our collective disposal to promote democracy.

*Question.* In your view, what is the difference between human rights defenders and climate activists?

*Answer.* I understand the United States defines human rights defenders as individuals, working alone or in groups, who non-violently, and consistent with the law, advocate for the promotion and protection of universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights defenders can be of any ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious denomination, disability status, or age. They can come from any part of the world, from any social class or background, and work on a wide range of issues. A climate activist is someone who actively campaigns to have issues of climate change recognized and addressed. In some countries, individuals who exercise their human rights to peacefully express views on land, climate, or environmental issues face abuses from corrupt actors and/or politically motivated repression or reprisal. In such cases, I believe the Department should continue to protect the universal human right of these individuals to express and advocate for their views non-violently.

*Question.* Do you agree with the Biden administration’s recent efforts to prioritize U.S. foreign assistance specifically set aside for human rights defenders for climate activists, effectively placing them above other categories of activists that may be subject to security action?

*Answer.* The Department works to ensure foreign assistance funds are programmed consistent with applicable directives, including those related to human

rights defenders. Members of civil society should be heard and not silenced when exercising their rights to freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly as they seek to participate in the governance of their country. U.S. diplomatic efforts and foreign assistance programs seek to protect and support civil society members and human rights defenders threatened and attacked for exercising their human rights, including those advocating on environmental issues. I also understand the Department has long included environmental activists as beneficiaries of support through a variety of foreign assistance programs. Activists exercising their human rights when seeking to protect the environment, including addressing climate change, are experiencing increasing repression and violence, including killings. I understand U.S. foreign assistance is provided to help address these threats. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the committee on these and other U.S. foreign assistance matters.

#### *Security Partnerships*

*Question.* How do you define a values-based security partnership?

*Answer.* Promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances U.S. national security. Our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, protect the human rights of their citizens and civilians they protect, hold human rights violators accountable, and do not unduly restrict the fundamental freedoms of their people. Partnerships should also allow partners to speak openly and honestly about all issues—ones where there is agreement and ones where there is disagreement. Waiting until a U.S. law is violated doesn't help the U.S. and doesn't help the partner be at its best and more effective. If confirmed, I will make every effort to ensure core DRL equities are part of all security cooperation discussions, with an eye towards enhancing behavior and strengthening the partnership. I believe that we must continue to create and maintain strong values-based security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, and frequent and ongoing cooperation.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* How do you define a values-based security partnership?

*Answer.* I define a values-based security partnership as one that promotes democracy, human rights, and accountability in partner security forces. This means supporting leaders and institutional safeguards in foreign security forces that seek to advance those values but also placing importance on transparency, both between governments and with the American public. It means having regular, respectful, and frank conversations with our foreign security partners through embassy personnel as well as in bilateral security meetings with more senior officials. Rights-respecting, accountable security forces enjoy more support from their public, are better allies, and are more effective in promoting security in their own countries. It also means looking for opportunities to help with remediation so security forces can get back on track—or at least understand that doing so is a viable option. This ultimately improves U.S. security as well. If confirmed, I will work to build and maintain such values-based security partnerships.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.S. should only pursue security partnerships with liberal democracies? Why or why not?

*Answer.* No. I believe that supporting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances U.S. national security and that most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, protect the human rights of their citizens and civilians, hold human rights violators accountable, and do not unduly restrict the fundamental freedoms of their people. While these are not the only security partnerships that exist, it is important to centralize core democratic tenets within these efforts. In some cases, if the partner in question isn't a democracy, security assistance can be a valuable incentive to generate reform. If confirmed, I will work to realize President Biden's vision of a foreign policy, including with regards to security partnerships, that are centered around human rights and democratic values, which can certainly but not exclusively find expression in partnerships with other democracies.

*Question.* How do you think a country's human rights environment will be affected if China replaces the U.S. as security partner of choice?

*Answer.* The PRC's active campaign to reshape the rules-based order, and corrupt practices are often conducted under the guise of diplomatic, economic, and security

cooperation and can threaten both the human rights situation in countries with which China partners, as well as the partner country's very sovereignty. America's commitment to democracy and human rights in our foreign policy is a competitive advantage, including with our security partners, and one we have seen demanded by local populations from Hong Kong to Belarus. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that American values continue to remain a centerpiece of U.S. security cooperation.

FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* How do you think a country's human rights environment will be affected if China replaces the U.S. as security partner of choice?

*Answer.* I believe the PRC's active campaign to reshape the rules-based order and other problematic practices are often conducted under the guise of diplomatic, economic, and security cooperation and threaten to degrade the human rights situation in countries with which China partners if China replaces the U.S. as a country's security partner of choice. America's commitment to promoting democracy and respect for human rights in our foreign policy is a competitive advantage, including with our security partners and has created important opportunities for strengthening bilateral relations. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that American values continue to remain a centerpiece of U.S. security cooperation.

*Question.* Do you support imposing a new requirement for Leahy-like vetting for all U.S. arms sales? Why or why not?

*Answer.* I understand the Biden-Harris administration is already working to develop a new Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy to ensure arms transfer decisions reflect the administration's foreign policy priorities, including its emphasis on putting human rights at the center of foreign policy; if confirmed, I will support and uphold that policy. In the meantime, I understand the Department—consistent with the Arms Export Control Act and other applicable laws—determines on a case-by-case basis whether arms transfers support U.S. interests, including human rights. If there is interest from Congress to move a new Leahy-like vetting for all U.S. arms sales, I would engage meaningfully in the discussion and consult closely with others in the Department—as well as outside experts. When appropriate, that review should include consultations with the U.S. Congress and input from DoD and other interagency partners—a process I intend to take very seriously, if confirmed.

*Question.* Should the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor have a veto over arms sales?

*Answer.* No single bureau has or should have a veto over foreign arms sales; I understand human rights concerns are one of several factors taken into account in the arms sales process, together with the implications of such sales for U.S. and regional security, bilateral relations, and U.S. commercial interests. If confirmed, I will ensure that the arms sales process gives appropriate weight to human rights concerns raised by any bureau, and I will fully support the role of human rights considerations in arms transfer decisions, in line with the requirement for such considerations in statute and with President Biden's commitment to putting human rights at the center of foreign policy. I understand the Biden administration is already working to develop a new Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy to ensure arms transfer decisions reflect the administration's foreign policy priorities, including its emphasis on putting human rights at the center of foreign policy.

*Question.* There are efforts in Congress to condition security assistance given to Israel. Yes or no, do you believe in conditioning Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, and other forms of assistance that the U.S. gives Israel? Why or why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed I will fully support the administration's commitment not to condition U.S. assistance to Israel. President Biden's commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. I understand that the Leahy laws prohibit Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, and other forms of U.S. assistance to foreign security forces that are credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights, where no accountability is taking place. If confirmed, I will fully support the letter and spirit of the Leahy Laws and their rigorous implementation by DRL, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* There are efforts in Congress to condition security assistance given to Israel. Yes or no, do you believe in conditioning Foreign Military



Financing, International Military Education and Training, and other forms of assistance that the U.S. gives Israel? Why or why not?

Answer. If confirmed, I will fully support the administration's commitment not to condition U.S. assistance to Israel. President Biden's commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. I understand that the Leahy laws prohibit Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, and other forms of U.S. assistance to foreign security forces that are credibly implicated in gross violations of human rights, where no accountability is taking place. If confirmed, I will fully support the letter and spirit of the Leahy Laws and their rigorous implementation by DRL, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense.

*Question.* Can the nominee clarify whether she thinks Israel is such a place where no accountability is taking place, as referenced in her answer?

Answer. I do not believe that Israel is a place where no accountability is taking place.

*Question.* The United States provides significant funding to the International Committee of the Red Cross. However, ICRC is now advocating for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a treaty that threatens the ability of the U.S. to defend itself and its allies, among other issues. Do you believe this advocacy is outside the ICRC's mandate? Should U.S. taxpayers fund it?

Answer. I am aware the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been addressing nuclear weapons since 1945 as part of its mission. I also understand that the PRM bureau at the State Department is authorized to provide funds to the ICRC to respond to emergencies, protect and assist civilians in situations of armed conflict, wounded members of armed forces, prisoners of war, and other vulnerable populations, and promote international humanitarian law. I understand that the United States does not support the TPNW and, if confirmed, I will commit to work with my State Department and interagency colleagues on tangible, verifiable measures to reduce strategic risk and enable progress on nuclear disarmament.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* The United States provides significant funding to the International Committee of the Red Cross. However, ICRC is now advocating for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a treaty that threatens the ability of the U.S. to defend itself and its allies, among other issues. Do you believe this advocacy is outside the ICRC's mandate? Should U.S. taxpayers fund it?

Answer. I am aware that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been addressing nuclear weapons since 1945 as part of its mission. The ICRC has an important role that includes promoting respect for international humanitarian law (IHL), helping to disseminate and teach it, and working with States in fulfilling their obligations under IHL, especially those of states parties to the Geneva Conventions. The United States does not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, nor does the U.S. Government provide funds to support the ICRC's advocacy activities related to it. If confirmed, I commit to defending the ability of the United States to defend itself and our allies and will work with my State Department and interagency colleagues on tangible, verifiable measures to reduce strategic risk and enable progress on nuclear disarmament.

*Question.* Since 2015, parties to the conflict in Yemen have carried out gross human rights violations with impunity. This includes the Iran-backed Houthis, who, both the U.N. and the Department of State, have implicated in abuses ranging from arbitrary arrest, forced disappearance, to gender-based violence and even torture.

- Please provide your assessment of the Houthi Movement's adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law.

Answer. The Houthis have committed egregious human rights abuses in Yemen; the United Nations Panel of Experts noted they may have also committed war crimes. The 2020 State Department Human Rights Report on Yemen notes many of these allegations, including arbitrary deprivation of life, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, gender-based violence, including sexual violence, torture, and the recruitment and use in hostilities of children. All parties to Yemen's armed conflict, including the Houthis, are responsible for compliance with international human law. Efforts to hold the Houthis responsible for grave crimes are just as im-

portant as those to hold government officials accountable. If confirmed, I would work with U.S. Special Envoy Tim Lenderking and our international partners to push all parties to the conflict to engage with the new U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg in good faith and without preconditions.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to using your position to bringing greater awareness to the human rights violations being actively perpetrated by the Houthis in Yemen, which poses a grave and long-term threat to regional stability?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I would work with U.S. Special Envoy Tim Lenderking and our international partners to push all parties to the conflict to engage with the new U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg in good faith and without preconditions. The United States continues to work with our international partners to apply pressure on the Houthis, including via domestic and U.N. sanctions, and, if confirmed, I would support that work. I would also work closely with the U.N. Human Rights Council to continue highlighting the importance of accountability for human rights abuses committed in Yemen.

*Question.* To what extent do you feel the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure by the Houthis both in Yemen and in Saudi Arabia constitutes war crimes?

*Answer.* The Houthis continue to impact Saudi civilians and infrastructure with missiles and unmanned aircraft systems launched from Yemen. I understand that the Department of State shares concerns over these actions and has continued to urge all parties to this conflict to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, and to mitigate the risk of harm to civilians.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* To what extent do you feel the deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure by the Houthis both in Yemen and in Saudi Arabia constitutes war crimes?

*Answer.* The Houthis continue to mount egregious attacks against Saudi civilians and infrastructure with missiles and unmanned aircraft systems launched from Yemen. While I am not in a position to make a legal assessment of whether individual attacks constitute war crimes, credible NGOs such as Human Rights Watch have alleged that some of these attacks constituted war crimes. Houthi attacks on Marib have killed civilians, including small children, and have put over one million internally displaced Yemenis at grave risk, and Houthi attacks on Saudi civilian infrastructure have killed and wounded civilians. I understand that the Department of State shares concerns over these actions and has continued to urge all parties to this conflict to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, and to mitigate the risk of harm to civilians.

*Question.* How would the role of the Houthis in a future Government of Yemen impact this administration's ability to carry out its priorities with respect to human rights, religious freedom, and democracy promotion in Yemen?

*Answer.* President Biden has committed to elevating the importance of human rights in our foreign policy. The Houthis have a record of egregious human rights abuses. Respect for human rights, accountability for human rights abuses and violations, and progress on the political track are all mutually reinforcing. If confirmed, I would work with U.S. Special Envoy Tim Lenderking and our international partners to push all parties to the conflict to engage with the new U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg in good faith and without preconditions.

*Question.* In a 2020 report, the U.N. panel of experts noted that their investigations "confirmed rampant levels of serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, many of which may amount to war crimes." What role should DRL play in international efforts to pursue accountability and justice for crimes committed in Yemen?

*Answer.* The United States continues to work with our international partners to promote accountability in Yemen, including via domestic and U.N. sanctions, public and private diplomatic engagement, and support for documentation of human rights violations and abuses by all parties to the conflict. If confirmed, I would support that work and also engage local civil society organizations on what types of justice would be most meaningful.

*Question.* How does institutional capacity building at the local level fit into the overall peace process in Yemen?

*Answer.* Years of war have degraded governmental and non-governmental institutions throughout Yemen, and rebuilding key social, political, and economic institutions will be critical to reaching and maintaining a durable peace agreement. If confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. Special Envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking, the United Nations, the Government of Yemen, civil society leaders, including women and youth, and key regional and international partners to build on the unprecedented international consensus on the need to end the war.

*Question.* How can local government structures be better used to advance efforts to find a political settlement to the conflict?

*Answer.* Only a comprehensive peace agreement between Yemenis can begin to reverse the humanitarian crisis and bring sustainable relief. If confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. Special Envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking, the United Nations, the Government of Yemen, and key regional and international partners to build on the international consensus on the need to end the war and to engage civil society leaders, including women and youth at the local and national level. An inclusive political dialogue involving civil society is essential to ensuring all Yemenis are heard and represented in efforts to end the war.

*Question.* Since anti-government protests broke out in October 2019, dozens of protestors have been killed by Iran backed militia groups in Iraq. These groups operate largely with impunity having successfully evaded the Government of Iraq's efforts to hold them to account for their crimes. What role should DRL play in ensuring the protests movement's voices are heard and their concerns addressed?

*Answer.* The Government of Iraq has an obligation to respect and protect freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Peaceful demonstrators seeking democratic reforms should never be met with threats and violence. If confirmed, I will prioritize promoting accountability for the ongoing violence against protesters, journalists, and activists in Iraq. I also will ensure DRL continues to work with other U.S. Government stakeholders and likeminded countries to pursue justice, accountability, and democratic reforms through increased diplomatic pressure on the Government of Iraq to investigate and hold accountable individuals responsible for violence against the media, protesters, voters, civil society activists and minority populations, as well as to continue to communicate the U.S. Government's strong support for the rights and dignity of all persons.

*Question.* After months of stalled government formation efforts following the August 4, 2020 Beirut Port Blast, Lebanon's political elite finally reached an agreement to form a cabinet on September 20, 2021. If confirmed, please outline your list of priorities with respect to Lebanon.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support efforts to urge the newly formed Lebanese Government to take action to address the dire economic situation facing those living in Lebanon and to address the legitimate demands of the Lebanese people, including concrete political and economic reforms which would combat corruption and protect the rights of Lebanese civil society, as well as accountability for the port blast. I would also support efforts to work to ensure Lebanon's parliamentary elections are held on-time and conducted in a free and fair manner.

*Question.* How do you plan to work with Lebanon's newly formed cabinet and civil society to support efforts to pursue accountability for the Beirut Port Blast?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support efforts to push for the newly formed Lebanese Government to work closely with Lebanese civil society to ensure accountability for the Beirut Port Blast. I believe the Lebanese justice system must work without any political interference, and civil society plays an important role in promoting transparency.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of Russia's role in the Middle East and North Africa region with respect to human rights and democratic ideals.

*Answer.* Russia's actions in the Middle East and North Africa largely serve to undermine the international order, including human rights and democracy, through its enabling of regimes committing human rights violations. Among the greatest concerns is Russia's military campaign in Syria in support of the Assad regime, which has led to massive destruction, the detainment and abuse of countless individuals, the displacement of millions, and the deaths of hundreds of thousands. If confirmed, I will push back on Russia's efforts to shield the Assad regime from accountability, including in multilateral fora.

*Question.* Is it your view that closer partnership with Russia positively, or negatively, impacts U.S. interests in the region?

*Answer.* In general, Russia's interests in the region are mostly geopolitical but there is an element of commercial interest as well—which means there are multiple angles for the U.S. to consider engaging. If confirmed, I would support cooperation with Russia in the Middle East and North Africa region on issues where our interests align, such as on constraining Iran's nuclear ambitions. In Syria, the United States has always been open to dialogue with Russia as long as it contributes to the protection of civilians, enables steps toward a political resolution to the conflict, and promotes Syria's adherence to its international obligations. Where Russia acts to thwart U.S. objectives in the region, however, I believe the United States should respond with firm resolve. Calling out and holding Russia accountable for its malign actions is an important response tool.

*Question.* According to the U.N., widespread human rights violations have been committed over the course of the conflict in Libya. What role should DRL play in efforts to pursue accountability for the victims?

*Answer.* The United States shares the aspirations of the Libyan people: a sovereign, stable, unified, and secure Libya, free from foreign interference. Libyans should be able to feel that their rights will be respected. Ensuring accountability for human rights abuses is critical to the national reconciliation process.

If confirmed, I will explore all tools available to promote accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and abuses in Libya, including sanctions and support for multilateral mechanisms like the U.N. International Fact-Finding Mission on Libya. I will continue ongoing diplomatic engagement with the Libyan Government and civil society, and will support civil society in their efforts to document human rights violations and abuses as part of broader accountability mechanisms.

*Question.* What is the best recourse to pursue action against the alleged perpetrators of such crimes?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with Libyan civil society and build on international best practices and the expertise of my colleagues in the Department to determine the most effective way to promote accountability in support of a sovereign, stable, secure, and unified Libya that protects the human rights of all individuals in the country.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of the exceptional measures taken by President Kais Saied in July through which he suspended parliament, lifted MP's immunity, and dismissed the prime minister.

*Answer.* I share the Tunisian people's goal of a democratic government that is responsive to the country's needs, as it battles economic and health crises. I am concerned that President Saied's transitional measures are continuing without a clear end in sight. If confirmed, I would echo calls from the Tunisian public for the president to articulate a plan with a clear timeline for an inclusive reform process that includes civil society and diverse political voices and ensure that Tunisians' human rights are respected and protected.

*Question.* To what extent do you feel President Saied's recent actions threaten the state of Tunisian democracy?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration continues to urge President Saied to swiftly end exceptional measures, appoint a prime minister to form a capable government that can respond to Tunisians' legitimate economic and political demands, and launch an inclusive reform process that incorporates civil society and diverse political perspectives. If confirmed, I would support and advance administration policy on these fronts, echo calls from the Tunisian public for the president to articulate a plan with a clear timeline for an inclusive reform process that includes civil society and diverse political voices and ensure that Tunisians' human rights are respected and protected.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to work with Tunisia to preserve hard won democratic gains?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has called on the Tunisian Government to continue its public commitment to respect Tunisians' fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. If confirmed, I would continue to make clear the United States' unwavering support for Tunisian democracy and work closely with a range of Tunisian interlocutors, including Tunisian civil society, to strengthen Tunisia's democracy, and ensure that Tunisians' human rights are respected and protected. I would also work closely with multilateral organizations and the international financial institutions to ensure Tunisia's democracy has wide support and adequate resources to succeed.

*Question.* In 2016, the Obama administration signed a 10-year security assistance Memorandum of Understanding with Israel in which the U.S. pledged military assistance in the form of Foreign Military Financing and missile defense funding. Do you support providing Israel with defensive capabilities that include Iron Dome munitions?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration remains committed to Israel's defense and security, including its qualitative military edge in the region, consistent with U.S. law and policy. On May 20, President Biden assured Prime Minister Netanyahu of his "full support to replenish Israel's Iron Dome system to ensure [Israel's] defense and security in the future." If confirmed, I will support transfers of defensive capabilities to Israel consistent with U.S. law and the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding.

*Question.* In May, President Biden confirmed his administration's support for Israel and said, "Until the region says unequivocally they acknowledge the right of Israel to exist as an independent Jewish state, there will be no peace."<sup>5</sup> If confirmed, will you support transfers of offensive capabilities to Israel so they can properly defend themselves?

*Answer.* The United States remains unwavering in its commitment to Israel's security. If confirmed, I will support transfers of offensive capabilities to Israel consistent with U.S. law.

*Question.* Should the International Criminal Court investigate U.S. or Israeli personnel? Why or why not?

*Answer.* No. I support the administration's efforts to firmly oppose investigations by the International Criminal Court of U.S. or Israeli personnel. The United States and Israel are not parties to the ICC and have not consented to the Court's jurisdiction. I understand the U.S. Government has expressed serious concerns about the ICC's attempts to exercise its jurisdiction over Israeli personnel. The Palestinians do not qualify as a sovereign state and therefore, are not qualified to obtain membership as a state in, participate as a state in, or delegate jurisdiction to the ICC.

I understand the United States Government remains deeply committed to ensuring justice and accountability for international atrocity crimes. I recognize the role that international tribunals such as the ICC can play—within their respective mandates—in the pursuit of those important objectives and believe a peaceful, secure, and more prosperous future for the people of the Middle East depends on building bridges and creating new avenues for dialogue and exchange, not unilateral judicial actions that can exacerbate tensions and undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution.

*Question.* What are your views on the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, which includes companies with whom the Department of State does business?

*Answer.* I firmly oppose the BDS movement. While the United States will protect the constitutional rights of our citizens to free speech, the Biden-Harris administration has been clear that it resolutely opposes the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement because it unfairly and inappropriately singles out Israel.

*Question.* Under what conditions would you advocate for the United States—and the Department of State, in particular—to join the boycott movement?

*Answer.* Like the Biden-Harris administration, I firmly oppose the BDS movement.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israeli settlements in West Bank and Gaza are illegal?

*Answer.* I believe it is critical for both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to refrain from unilateral steps that exacerbate tensions and undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution, including annexation of territory, settlement activity, demolitions, incitement to violence, and providing compensation for individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Do you believe that Israeli settlements in West Bank and Gaza are illegal?

*Answer.* The two-state solution is the best way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state, and to give the Palestinians the state they seek. I firmly oppose any unilateral provocative actions that risk sparking more violence and that undermine prospects for a just, durable

resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, which ultimately requires two states. I believe it is critical for both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to refrain from unilateral steps that exacerbate tensions and undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution, including annexation of territory, settlement activity, demolitions, incitement to violence, and providing compensation for individuals imprisoned for acts of terrorism. I am not in a position to speak to the administration's legal views. If confirmed, I will work to preserve the path to a two-state solution, as the best way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state and to give the Palestinians the state they seek.

*Question.* The Egyptian Government has a less-than-stellar record on human rights, including recent arbitrary detentions of human rights activists, impunity for security services, deplorable detention conditions, suppression of fundamental freedoms, and more. It is important that the United States seek to bolster human rights and civil society in Egypt. What tools will you use to address these human rights abuses and end impunity for those committing them?

*Answer.* It's clear that the United States has multiple priorities when it comes to policy toward Egypt, but I think it's important to recognize that the Secretary of State's recent decision neither to certify improvements in Egypt's human rights record nor to waive the Foreign Military Financing human rights conditions presents an opportunity for the administration to double down on its efforts to address Egypt's grave human rights crisis. If confirmed, I will consider all tools available to address human rights violations in Egypt and to end impunity for those violations, including through public and private diplomatic engagement, engagement with partners and at multilateral forums, and more punitive measures to address specific abuses, including restrictions on security assistance as appropriate. I also will support engagement with Egyptian civil society groups, including human rights defenders and work closely with the NEA bureau and Embassy Cairo to ensure those civil society voices are heard. Ultimately, the Egyptian people will be the most effective advocates for human rights and government accountability in Egypt, so if confirmed I will prioritize identifying how to best push back on Egyptian restrictions on civic space and how to secure adequate space for independent civil society groups working to address these issues in Egypt.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you change about current programming in Syria?

*Answer.* I understand that since before the 2011 uprisings, DRL programs have been actively supporting Syrian civil society, independent journalists, civic groups, and women and youth activists, to advance the cause of democracy and human rights. I believe DRL's programs protect civic space for Syrian civil society groups to advocate for the needs of their communities; play an active role in the political process; promote reconciliation and stabilization of areas recently liberated; hold local governance institutions accountable; contribute to accountability and transitional justice efforts; and provide support to survivors of torture and sexual and gender-based violence. While other donors have ceased or limited their support for these Syrian civil society actors, DRL has provided continuous assistance to help protect civil society's role as positive change agents within Syria, in neighboring countries, and in the diaspora. If confirmed, I will look closely at DRL's programmatic efforts in Syria to determine if any changes are needed to ensure the continued success and impact of these efforts, to ensure our programs remain aligned with our policy, and to ensure our partners can continue to operate as safely as possible.

*Question.* Do you agree that the United States should not be funding reconstruction efforts in Syria? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would not support reconstruction assistance to Syria until there is irreversible progress toward a political resolution to the conflict in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254. I would support the United States continuing to provide humanitarian aid in Syria, including certain early recovery assistance, to build resilience and restore Syrian civilians' access to basic services, so long as these are delivered on the basis of need and conducted by independent and impartial humanitarian agencies.

*Question.* What steps, if confirmed, will you take to bolster civil society in country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would ensure the United States continues its strong support for courageous Syrian civil society actors whose efforts are critical to advancing peace and stability in Syria. I understand DRL has provided continuous assistance to maintain civil society's role as positive change agents within Syria, including

through efforts to protect and expand civic space and encourage meaningful citizen participation in public policy and governance; promote local reconciliation; support human rights and accountability efforts; and facilitate reintegration of returning IDPs, among other activities, as well as Syrians in neighboring countries and the diaspora. If confirmed, I will ensure DRL continues to work closely with interagency colleagues to ensure the continued success and impact of these efforts, and that our partners can continue to operate as safely as possible.

*Question.* What steps, if confirmed, will you take to bolster human rights defenders in country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would ensure DRL continues its strong support for courageous Syrian human rights defenders whose efforts are critical to advancing peace and stability in Syria. I understand DRL has provided continuous assistance to ensure human rights defenders' efforts to contribute to accountability and transitional justice efforts; provide support to survivors of torture and gender-based violence; play an active role in the political process; and promote stabilization in areas liberated from ISIS. If confirmed, I will ensure DRL continues to work closely with interagency colleagues to support and encourage the continued success and impact of these efforts, and that our partners can continue to operate as safely as possible.

*Question.* Syrian-Russian forces continue to deliberately and openly attack civilian entities, community centers, and populations. How would you engage with the intra-Department and interagency to promote a political solution through United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would encourage the United States to remain engaged with the U.N., our allies, and our international partners to encourage all possible efforts to advance a political resolution to the conflict through a U.N.-facilitated, Syrian-led process as laid out in U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254, including a nationwide ceasefire and the release of arbitrarily detained Syrians. Peace and stability in Syria, and the greater region, can only be achieved through a political process that addresses the root causes of the conflict, including the Assad regime's ongoing campaign of arbitrary detention and violence against his own people, and promotes accountability for the innumerable atrocities the Assad regime and its allies have perpetrated against the Syrian people.

*Question.* The use of arbitrary detention and torture by the Assad regime continues to shock the conscious. Please explain what tools are available to you, if confirmed, to hold the regime accountable for its crimes against civilians?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would use every tool at my disposal to promote an end to the Assad regime's vicious campaign of arbitrary detention and torture in Syria. I will consult with our DRL team and Department colleagues to assess which tools are most appropriate to achieving this objective, including continued support for human rights and documentation groups laying the groundwork for accountability efforts; support for former detainees, families of the missing, and other survivors of the regime's abuses; the continued use of targeted sanctions that promote accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses and limit their access to resources; and ensuring our efforts to advance a political resolution also address the root causes of the conflict and promote accountability for the innumerable atrocities the Assad regime and its allies have perpetrated against the Syrian people.

*Question.* The recent botched evacuation in Afghanistan highlights some serious gaps in the policy decisions made by this administration. What conditions would a Biden administration place on future assistance to Afghanistan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will monitor closely how any future Government of Afghanistan respects and protects human rights, especially for women, girls, and minority groups, and fundamental freedoms that have become an integral part of the life of all Afghan citizens, and actively engage our bilateral and multilateral partners to maintain unity in holding the Taliban accountable to their actions. If confirmed, I also commit to ensuring unhindered U.S. humanitarian assistance continues to safely flow to support the needs of Afghan people and that female aid workers are granted the ability to fully participate in the delivery of aid. I will work to increase support to human rights defenders, independent journalists, and civil society activists who remain in Afghanistan. The provision of humanitarian assistance is a demonstration of the U.S. commitment to the Afghan people, and an important part of ensuring they remain protected and supported. If confirmed, I will encourage the United States, to work with other governments, with financial institutions, and with NGOs to support humanitarian and emergency assistance to Afghans whose lives depend on it.

*Question.* U.S. efforts in Afghanistan dramatically improved conditions for women, minority and youth but now are at great risk of violence and regression from the Taliban. How should the State Department safeguard the gains made for Afghan women, minority, and youth in the current security environment?

*Answer.* The meaningful participation of women and members of minority groups in governance has a positive effect on the economic, political, and health aspects of a country and its people. If confirmed, I will support U.S. efforts to hold the Taliban to its stated commitment to allow U.S. citizens, Legal Permanent Residents, and Afghans with the proper documentation who wish to leave the country to do so. I will also continue to support efforts to hold the Taliban to international expectations on respecting the fundamental human rights of all Afghans, including those of women, children, and members of minority and vulnerable groups. I will also work with the international community, including the United Nations, to hold the perpetrators of human rights abuses and violations accountable for those actions. Part of my job, if confirmed, will be to make sure the Department—as well as the interagency—is aware of the fragile situation for women, minorities, and youth and has all the updated information available so we can make decisions as U.S. Government that lessens the burdens—and threats—they face and increase protection and opportunities.

*Question.* Do you feel that this administration failed women, girls, and youth in Afghanistan given the botched evacuation?

*Answer.* Over 124,000 American citizens, lawful permanent residents (LPRs), locally employed staff, Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs), and Afghans at-risk, including women, children, journalists, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQI+ community, and members of minority groups were evacuated from Afghanistan prior to September 1. That said, many vulnerable Afghans remain in Afghanistan and will need support and protection. The administration will continue to hold the Taliban to their commitment to allowing the safe passage of American citizens, LPRs, and Afghans with the proper documentation, including women and children, who desire to leave. The meaningful participation of women and members of minority groups in governance has a positive effect on the economic, political, and security health of a country. If confirmed, I will work with the rest of the interagency to press the Taliban on the international community's expectations of their ability to uphold the rights of all Afghans, including women and children. I will engage our multilateral and bilateral partners on the same, to ensure they are pushing the same message of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need to form an inclusive government that includes women and members of minority groups. I will work with the international community, including the United Nations, to hold the perpetrators of human rights abuses and violations accountable for their actions.

*Question.* How will you continue to support vulnerable populations in Afghanistan and the region?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially for Afghan human rights defenders, women, children, journalists, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQI+ community, members of minority groups, and other vulnerable persons. I will support U.S. efforts to hold the Taliban to its stated commitment to allow American citizens, Legal Permanent Residents, and Afghans with the proper documentation who wish to leave the country to do so, as well as press them to respect human rights, including those of women and children, in Afghanistan. I will also look for ways for the State Department to support multilateral initiatives that protect and support vulnerable populations, work with regional governments, multilateral organizations, international civil society organizations and USAID colleagues. I will seek to maintain our robust relationships with Afghan human rights defenders both inside and outside Afghanistan. If confirmed, my commitment to these relationships will remain unwavering as we work with academics, human rights defenders, women activists, and disability activists on these issues.

*Question.* The U.S. recently killed 10 civilians, including seven children, via an over-the-horizon drone strike in Afghanistan. The U.S. has killed civilians in numerous other errant strikes. Would other countries be justified in boycotting, divesting, and sanctioning the United States? Why or why not?

*Answer.* I share my deepest condolences with the families and friends of those who were killed by the strike. While the United States, like all other countries, has a right to defend itself and, if confirmed, I will defend that right, there has been tremendous work in the area of how best to respond to civilian casualties and a



number of lessons learned that if implemented robustly can help generate both effectiveness towards national security goals and good will amongst local communities. General McKenzie stated on September 17, “This strike was taken in the earnest belief that it would prevent an imminent threat to our forces and the evacuees at the airport. But it was a mistake and I offer my sincere apology.” Secretary Austin said that “We will endeavor to learn from this horrible mistake. To that end, I have directed a thorough review of the investigation just completed by U.S. Central Command. I have asked for this review to consider the degree to which the investigation considered all available context and information, the degree to which accountability measures need be taken and at what level, and the degree to which strike authorities, procedures and processes need to be altered in the future.” I believe such a response is important not just to the immediate friends and family of those killed but also for us as a country and is morally responsible. If confirmed, I will support the approach described in these statements.

*Question.* Is it your opinion that the policy and objectives being advanced by the Chinese Communist Party pose the greatest foreign policy challenge to the United States today and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future?

*Answer.* There is no doubt that the PRC poses the most significant challenge of any nation to the United States in terms of our values and the interests of the American people. If confirmed, I will pay special attention to the PRC, whose pernicious attacks on human rights, dissent, and the rule of law are on the rise domestically and fast becoming a common export. Our priority must be making sure the PRC does not succeed in its efforts to undermine international human rights and the rules-based order.

*Question.* If not, why not?

*Answer.* There is no doubt that the PRC poses the most significant challenge of any nation to the United States in terms of our values and the interests of the American people.

*Question.* What do you believe is our greatest foreign policy challenge?

*Answer.* I believe there is not one issue that is our greatest foreign policy challenge but instead a number of interlocking ones that include digital and technological advancements, the climate crisis, rising authoritarianism, and an increasingly aggressive China. These transnational issues are already testing democracies worldwide and, left unchecked or ill-coordinated, have the potential to lead to frayed alliances, institutional vulnerabilities, massive, large scale and persistent migration, and a serious deterioration of basic, fundamental freedoms. If we don’t rise to the occasion to respond to each of these developments in a coordinated way, the consequences to democracy, security, and human rights could be catastrophic.

*Question.* Will the Biden administration continue public presidential meetings with, and support for, the Dalai Lama as conducted by the Trump administration?

*Answer.* Yes. I understand administrations from both political parties have long welcomed engagement with, and support for, His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a globally renowned religious leader. If confirmed, I would support a continuation of that practice.

*Question.* Will you commit that the Department of State will meet with the Dalai Lama’s representatives, as the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor did in 2020?

*Answer.* Yes. I understand administrations from both political parties have long welcomed engagement with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. If confirmed, I would support a continuation of that practice.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to confront the Chinese Government on the human rights violations taking place in Xinjiang?

*Answer.* The United States should continue to speak out consistently and jointly with allies and partners to condemn these atrocities, and to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and deter future abuses. If confirmed, I will continue concrete U.S. Government action—in coordination with our allies and partners whenever possible—to promote accountability for ongoing atrocities and genocide in Xinjiang, including through the imposition of visa restrictions, tightening of export controls, enforcement of import restrictions, imposition of financial sanctions, and multilateral initiatives. We will continue to caution businesses about the economic, legal, and reputational risks of supply chain links to entities that engage in human rights abuses, including forced labor in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China.

*Question.* Due to the massive amounts of human rights abuses being committed by the Chinese Communist Party, do you believe they should be allowed to host the Olympics in 2022?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the human rights violations and abuses being committed by the PRC. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department of State continues to play a strong leadership role in global efforts to combat serious human rights abuses committed by the PRC, domestically and abroad, and consults closely with our allies and partners to establish a shared approach regarding the Olympics.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Due to the massive amounts of human rights abuses being committed by the Chinese Communist Party, do you believe they should be allowed to host the Olympics in 2022?

*Answer.* The International Olympic Committee (IOC) members select the Olympic host. If confirmed, I will engage with the IOC and the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee to advocate for human rights to be considered in the selection of host cities consistent with the Olympic Charter, which highlights respect and human dignity as key values.

I am deeply concerned by the human rights violations and abuses being committed by the PRC Government and the PRC Government's abhorrent genocide and crimes against humanity against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department of State continues to play a strong leadership role in global efforts to end the genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, combat human rights abuses committed by the PRC, domestically and abroad, and will consult closely with our allies and partners to define our common concerns and establish a shared approach.

*Question.* Legislation currently under consideration proposes a human rights briefing for the Olympic athletes on Team USA. The briefing would help inform athletes about major human rights abuses committed by the government hosting the Olympics, and alert them to narratives that the government pushes to deflect or deny such abuses. Do you support such a proposal?

*Answer.* I support raising awareness among athletes of the human rights abuses committed by the government hosting the Olympics. If confirmed, I will consult with key stakeholders, including the Centre for Sport and Human Rights, in developing an approach that does so.

*Question.* Would you devote Department of State resources and personnel toward working with the International Olympic Committee and other relevant stakeholders to ensure such briefings are provided to as many American athletes as possible prior to the 2022 Olympics?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult with key stakeholders, primarily the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, in developing our approach to continue to conduct outreach on human rights issues to American athletes chosen or competing for a place on Team USA prior to the 2022 Olympics.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Would you devote Department of State resources and personnel toward working with the International Olympic Committee and other relevant stakeholders to ensure such briefings are provided to as many American athletes as possible prior to the 2022 Olympics?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and relevant others in the Department to ensure that briefings, including about PRC human rights and atrocities, are provided to as many American athletes chosen or competing for a place on Team USA prior to the 2022 Olympics.

*Question.* Do you support a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Olympics? Why or why not?

*Answer.* I understand this is a strongly bipartisan issue that many in Congress are focused on and I understand why. If confirmed, I will consult with key stakeholders in developing our approach, ideally a shared approach with allies and partners, in advance of and during the 2022 Olympic Games. I will review this issue in light of the PRC's abhorrent human rights record, including genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang.

## FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Do you support a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Olympics? Why or why not?

*Answer.* The PRC has an abhorrent human rights record, including the commission of genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang. I believe the United States should continue to speak out consistently and jointly with allies and partners to condemn these atrocities, and to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and deter future abuses, including a potential diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Olympics. I personally support such a diplomatic boycott as a way of signaling U.S. disapproval of the PRC's behavior.

*Question.* The CCP has cracked down on the most basic rights of the people of Hong Kong. How will you address the human rights abuses occurring in Hong Kong?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the PRC and Hong Kong Governments' increased efforts to wield the National Security Law as a tool to curtail the exercise of human rights, dismantle civil society, and silence dissenting views. If confirmed, I will support the United States' continued efforts to press the PRC to abide by its international obligations and commitments; to cease its dismantlement of Hong Kong's democratic institutions, autonomy, and rule of law; to immediately release and drop all charges against individuals unjustly detained in Hong Kong; and to respect the human rights of the people of Hong Kong.

*Question.* Do you believe that reaching a climate agreement should be the top priority in our dealings with China? If so, why?

*Answer.* Addressing the climate crisis with urgency is a top priority for the administration, but without question, so is protecting human rights. I believe human rights should not be given a back seat even as other issues come to the fore. The administration has said rights are not a negotiating chip in engagements with the PRC or any other country for greater action on climate. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that that approach continues.

*Question.* If not, what should be our top priority instead?

*Answer.* The administration's Interim National Security Strategy states that "we will only succeed in advancing American interests and upholding our universal values by working in common cause with our closest allies and partners, and by renewing our own enduring sources of national strength." If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the promotion of our democratic values are at the center of U.S. foreign policy, including in our dealings with China.

*Question.* The PRC Government and Chinese companies have been implicated in corruption at home and in its dealings with other countries around the world. If confirmed, will you commit to highlighting corrupt Chinese practices and prioritize assistance to help counter corruption, including corruption caused or exacerbated by the Chinese Government or Chinese companies?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Several countries have forcibly returned Uyghurs fleeing persecution and abhorrent human rights abuses by the Chinese Communist Party. How will you and interagency partners work with other nations to discourage, and eventually end, this practice?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners to urge third countries to act to avoid complicity in the PRC's human rights violations and abuses committed against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities from Xinjiang, including by providing protection to and preventing the forcible return of individuals seeking to flee the PRC's repressive policies.

*Question.* Do you consider the human rights abuses committed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) against the Uyghurs and other religious and ethnic minorities, including forced sterilization, to constitute a genocide? If not, please explain.

*Answer.* Yes. As Secretary Blinken has said, the PRC has committed genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups. These atrocities remain ongoing.

*Question.* The Chinese Government continues to "Sinicize" religions, which the Congressional Executive Commission on China describes as "a campaign that aims to bring religion in China under closer official control and into conformity with offi-

cially sanctioned interpretations of Chinese culture.” These policies affect Christians, Muslims, Han Buddhists, Taoists, and many others. What can the Biden administration do to support freedom of religious practice for the people of China, free from interference and enforced conformity?

Answer. I share your concerns regarding the ongoing deterioration of freedom of religion or belief in the PRC. The PRC demonstrates blatant disregard for freedom of religion or belief and exercises extreme hostility toward members of all religious and spiritual communities, including predominantly Muslim Uyghurs, Tibetan Buddhists, Protestants, Catholics, and Falun Gong. These communities have suffered unspeakable oppression at the hands of China’s authoritarian government.

The PRC is engaged in human rights abuses—and in the case of Xinjiang, genocide and crimes against humanity—that shock the conscience and must be met with serious consequences.

If confirmed, I will speak out consistently with allies and partners to condemn these atrocities and abuses, and I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and to deter future abuses. I will also continue to urge the PRC to uphold its international commitments with respect to freedom of religion or belief for all individuals and call on the international community to condemn with a united voice the PRC’s atrocities in Xinjiang.

*Question.* The Vatican extended its agreement with the Chinese Government that establishes a process for appointing bishops in China. Under the Agreement, bishops in China are in communion with Rome but also approved by the Chinese Government. The details of this agreement have never been made public. Despite the agreement, Catholic bishops not affiliated with the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association continue to face persecution. Do you believe this Vatican-China agreement advanced human rights and religious freedom in China? If so, why? If not, why not?

Answer. As I understand, despite the provisional agreement between the Holy See and Beijing, the PRC continues to repress Catholics, particularly clergy and laypersons who refuse state control of religion. In his book published late last year, Pope Francis characterized Uyghurs in the PRC alongside members of other religious and ethnic communities as persecuted due to their beliefs.

If confirmed, I would encourage the Holy See to speak out publicly against the PRC’s human rights violations and abuses of members of minority religious and ethnic communities. I would also encourage the Holy See to hold the PRC Government accountable to the terms of the provisional agreement and make the terms of the agreement public to promote accountability for the PRC’s commitments.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you prioritize religious freedom issues in China in your diplomatic engagements with Vatican officials? What will you emphasize to them in these engagements?

Answer. The Holy See has a long history of promoting freedom of religion or belief, including through advocacy and interfaith dialogue, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the Vatican on this issue. If confirmed, I would encourage the Holy See to speak out publicly against the PRC’s human rights violations and abuses of members of minority religious and ethnic communities. I would also encourage the Holy See to hold the PRC Government accountable to the terms of the provisional agreement and make the terms of the agreement public to promote accountability for the PRC’s commitments.

*Question.* Xi Jinping has emphasized the desire to ensure that Hollywood filmmakers use their position to “tell China’s story well”. This translates into Beijing’s overreach into and censorship of Hollywood films through explicit censorship requirements for the Chinese market, boycotts and economic pressure, and acquisitions of industry corporations by Chinese companies. As Hollywood director Judd Apatow recently said, “Instead of us doing business with China and that leading to China being more free, what has happened is that China has bought our silence with their money”.

- Will the Biden administration, including yourself and other senior State Department officials, engage the film industry regarding the pernicious impact of censorship by the Chinese Government and other authoritarian governments on freedom of expression and other principles that are fundamental to the political system of United States?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* What are your views on the implications and consequences of Beijing’s tactics in Hollywood for the PRC’s overall strategy to exercise malign influence across various types of U.S. media? What other types of media in the United States

are at risk of being subjected to tactics we are seeing used by Beijing to influence Hollywood?

Answer. I am concerned by the PRC's campaign of disinformation and censorship, which extends well beyond its borders and directly impacts the information environment in the United States. The PRC's attempts to control freedom of expression are not limited to Hollywood or U.S. media but extend into cultural, academic, and social media spaces as well.

If confirmed, I will engage with governments and nongovernmental actors, including media organizations and private institutions, to promote freedom of expression and support U.S. entities in resisting PRC malign influence and coercion. I will also work closely with partners and allies to build resilience to, and jointly confront, the PRC's efforts to control the global information environment.

*Question.* China is starting to build extraterritoriality into its laws and regulations, not just the Hong Kong National Security Law but also numerous other laws and regulations. Please describe what you think the implications are for human rights abroad and for the United States in particular.

Answer. The PRC continues its efforts to reshape the international rules-based order to advance its own interests, including by utilizing its laws and regulations to commit transnational repression. These actions threaten global peace and stability and threaten human rights and democratic institutions and actors in the United States and globally.

If confirmed, I will work closely with our partners to address these challenges from a position of strength, reengage in international institutions, and resist attempts to rewrite the rules that govern these institutions. I will use all available diplomatic tools to promote accountability for these egregious abuses and support human rights defenders and civil society organizations seeking protection.

*Question.* Will you commit not to advise or support entrance into an agreement with the People's Republic of China (PRC) that trades key U.S. interests away for cooperation or future promises by Beijing on climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests. I believe this can be done in a manner consistent with the President's commitment to policies that address the climate crisis. I believe these two goals are complementary.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Will you commit not to advise or support entrance into an agreement with the People's Republic of China (PRC) that trades key U.S. interests away for cooperation or future promises by Beijing on climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests and focus on what Beijing does—not what it says it will or won't do. I will not advise that the United States sacrifice vital U.S. interests or our values for PRC promises on climate change. We can speak the truth about the PRC's human rights abuses and atrocities and promote accountability for them while working to reverse the effects of climate change.

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend decreasing freedom of navigation exercises in the South China Sea to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests, including a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and South China Sea that ensures freedom of navigation. I believe this goal is consistent with and supportive of the President's goals on climate change.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend decreasing freedom of navigation exercises in the South China Sea to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests, including the continuation of activities that protect and promote the rules-based order in the South China Sea such as freedom of navigation exercises. I will not recommend decreasing freedom of navigation exercises in the South China Sea to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC.

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend making changes in our defense relationship with any U.S. ally, or our overall defense posture in the Indo-Pacific region to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support President Biden's commitment to policies that address climate change while deepening and strengthening strategic alliances including in the Indo-Pacific region in line with U.S. interests, including the protection and promotion of human rights; I believe these goals are complementary.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend making changes in our defense relationship with any U.S. ally, or our overall defense posture in the Indo-Pacific region to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support President Biden's commitment to policies that address the climate crisis while deepening and strengthening strategic alliances including in the Indo-Pacific region in line with U.S. interests, which include the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights; I believe these goals are complementary. If confirmed, I will support cooperation with the PRC where it is in line with these objectives.?

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend delaying arms sales to Taiwan, or pulling back from any form of U.S.-Taiwan cooperation to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support President Biden's commitment to policies that address climate change while deepening and strengthening strategic partnerships including with Taiwan in line with U.S. interests, including the protection and promotion of human rights; I believe these goals are complementary.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend delaying arms sales to Taiwan, or pulling back from any form of U.S.-Taiwan cooperation to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support President Biden's commitment to policies that address climate change while deepening and strengthening strategic partnerships including with Taiwan in line with U.S. interests, including the protection and promotion of democracy and human rights; I believe these goals are complementary. If confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, I will seek to enhance the U.S. relationship with Taiwan, including the defense relationship, as a way of implementing the President's vision of a foreign policy with democracy and human rights at the center.

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend deciding not to pursue policies that safeguard the U.S. economy from Beijing's anti-competitive trading practices to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests. I believe this can be done in a manner consistent with the President's commitment to policies that address the climate crisis.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend deciding not to pursue policies that safeguard the U.S. economy from Beijing's anti-competitive trading practices to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests and to work alongside U.S. allies and partners to confront the PRC's anti-competitive, market distorting, and coercive behaviors. I will not recommend against pursuing policies that safeguard the U.S. economy from Beijing's anti-competitive trading practices to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC.

*Question.* Will you commit not to recommend terminating sanctions against individuals or entities of the PRC, or removing a PRC company from the Entity List to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will strongly support policies that advance U.S. values and interests. I will make recommendations regarding sanctions and Entity List designations that promote and protect human rights and labor rights, including forced labor and I will recommend those not be lifted until there is progress on human and labor rights. I believe this can be done in a manner consistent with the President's commitment to policies that address the climate crisis.

**Question.** Will you commit not to recommend dropping U.S. policies that hold CCP officials and companies accountable for egregious human rights abuses, including those conducted in Xinjiang to either secure or preserve a climate change agreement with the PRC?

**Answer.** Yes. If confirmed, I commit to advocating for U.S. policies that protect and promote human rights and hold PRC and CCP officials accountable for egregious human rights abuses, including the ongoing atrocities in Xinjiang and campaign of repression targeting Tibetans, Hong Kongers, lawyers, and human rights defenders. I believe this can be done in a manner consistent with the President's commitment to policies that address the climate crisis.

**Question.** Recently the Government of Bangladesh has forcibly moved Rohingya refugees from Cox's Bazaar to Bhasan Char, an island in the Bay of Bengal. This move was done without consultation with donor countries and international organizations. If confirmed, do you commit to discussing this move with Bangladeshi Government officials?

**Answer.** Yes. If confirmed, I will uphold the U.S. Government's long-standing commitment to ensure movements of displaced persons are informed and voluntary. I recognize and appreciate the generosity Bangladesh has shown in hosting nearly 900,000 Rohingya refugees since they fled horrific atrocities and abuses in Burma in 2017. I believe that the United States, as the leading contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya crisis, also has a responsibility to ensure Bangladesh respects these refugees' human rights, including freedom of movement. If confirmed, I will work with other donor countries and international organizations to message consistently to Bangladeshi authorities that any transfers must be in full coordination with humanitarian organizations and align with humanitarian principles.

**Question.** Do you commit to pressing the Bangladeshi officials to ensure that no further moves before the United Nations conducts a thorough and independent technical and protection assessments to determine the safety, feasibility, and desirability of relocating refugees Bhasan Char?

**Answer.** Yes. I understand the United States has consistently recognized and appreciated the challenges and responsibilities that the Rohingya humanitarian response has placed on the Government and people of Bangladesh. If confirmed, I will commit to supporting consistent, strong U.S. messaging to urge Bangladesh to permit the U.N. to conduct a comprehensive technical and protection assessment on Bhasan Char. I would also commit to working with Bangladesh and humanitarian groups to ensure that such relocations are voluntary and based on informed consent without pressure or coercion.

**Question.** Do you support United States security alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific?

**Answer.** Yes. U.S. national security benefits when partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, promote and protect human rights, hold human rights violators accountable when necessary, and do not unduly restrict fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we develop and maintain such important security alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, guided by President Biden's insistence that U.S. interests and values are inseparable.

**Question.** Do you believe that U.S. security alliances and partnerships can contribute to improving human rights records in relevant countries?

**Answer.** Yes, I believe U.S. security alliances and partnerships as important aspects of foreign policy can and should be used for positive effect on countries' human rights records. Promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances U.S. national security. Our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, respect and protect human rights, and hold human rights violators accountable. The United States must continue to create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, and frequent and ongoing cooperation.

*Question.* Do you consider the Philippines to be a strategically important ally of the United States? Please explain your position.

*Answer.* Yes. The U.S. alliance with the Philippines is one of the oldest and most strategically important in East Asia. Continued engagement with the Philippine Government is vital to regional security. At the same time, in that engagement, I believe it is crucial for the U.S. to emphasize the importance of shared values including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms to sustain a stable, bilateral partnership. If confirmed, I will raise human rights concerns—from arbitrary and unlawful killings to targeting the independent press—at every possible opportunity with the Government of the Philippines.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the U.S.-Philippine relationship and its importance to U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region more broadly?

*Answer.* The United States' effort to build a network of allies and partners that can credibly and collectively respond to shared security threats has the benefit of strengthening the free, open, and inclusive regional order, which is in our national interest. If confirmed, I will continue to pursue that goal while helping to ensure that our engagement with those partners and allies includes promotion of human rights and accountability for abuse. I believe that respect for human rights is integral to maintaining strong and sustainable countries and partnerships.

*Question.* Do you support continuing a robust security partnership with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including through appropriate arms transfers consistent with existing U.S. law?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support continuing a robust security partnership with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including through appropriate arms transfers consistent with existing U.S. law and provisions that promote and protect human rights.

*Question.* Do you support United States security alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* Yes. U.S. national security benefits when partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, promote and protect human rights, hold human rights violators accountable when necessary, and do not unduly restrict fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we develop and maintain security alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, guided by President Biden's insistence that U.S. interests and values are inseparable.

*Question.* Do you believe that U.S. security alliances and partnerships can contribute to improving human rights records in relevant countries?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe U.S. security alliances and partnerships as important aspects of foreign policy and can be used to positive effect on countries' human rights records. While security alliances have manifold reasons to exist, the important role they can also play as a joint investment in promoting democracy and human rights is central to also advancing U.S. national security. Our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, respect and protect human rights, and hold human rights violators accountable. The United States must continue to create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, and frequent and ongoing cooperation.

*Question.* Will you ensure that the U.S. Department of State consults with Congress before taking action on issues that could jeopardize U.S. access to or create significant tensions in our relationships with key defense partners in the Indo-Pacific, especially those in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to engaging with Congress, as appropriate, on our actions and engagements with partners and allies in the Indo-Pacific region, including those partners and allies in Southeast Asia.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Will you ensure that the U.S. Department of State consults with Congress before taking action on issues that could jeopardize U.S. access to or create significant tensions in our relationships with key defense partners in the Indo-Pacific, especially those in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* Our alliances and partnerships are a strategic advantage over our competitors and the strength of this network of defense relations cannot be taken for granted. If confirmed, I am committed to consulting with Congress, as appropriate, on our actions and engagements with all partners



and allies in the Indo-Pacific region, including those partners and allies in Southeast Asia.

*Question.* How will you prioritize Internet Freedom within the Democracy, Human Rights and Labor bureau and across the Department?

Answer. I strongly believe that the same human rights people have offline must be protected online, including the rights to freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. If confirmed, I will support DRL's efforts to promote internet freedom by raising our concerns bilaterally and building and participating in multi-lateral and multi-stakeholder coalitions such as the Freedom Online Coalition, where we play a leadership role. I will support investment in global internet freedom programming to support digital safety, policy advocacy, technology, and research to help global internet users overcome barriers to accessing the open internet.

*Question.* Do you believe that internet shutdowns are a threat to human rights?

Answer. Yes. In May, Secretary Blinken condemned the use of partial or complete government-imposed internet shutdowns, among other tactics, to prevent the exercise of freedom of expression online. I believe that in addition to restricting the exercise of human rights, including the right to expression and assembly, internet shutdowns disrupt access to essential services such as healthcare and emergency services, and negatively impact the economy. If confirmed, I will support DRL's efforts to address internet shutdowns by raising our concerns bilaterally, continuing our participation in multilateral fora that are working to raise awareness such as the G7, and supporting our efforts in multi-stakeholder coalitions such as the Freedom Online Coalition, where we play a leadership role.

*Question.* The Department has been focused on the idea of "internet freedom" as a key programmatic effort to combat and counter malign influence and authoritarian governments. How will you bring more cohesion to the various internet freedom programs throughout the department?

Answer. I will support DRL's continued leadership of the State Department's efforts to promote internet freedom globally through a variety of bilateral and multi-lateral engagements as well as through foreign assistance programming. I understand that DRL works to advance the U.S.-led vision of the open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet, governed in a manner consistent with international human rights standards and democratic norms. I also believe growing concerns around digital authoritarianism or tech governance are tremendously important policies on which DRL needs to engage given how these tools are used to undermine democracy and restrict fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will ensure that DRL continues to coordinate throughout the Department on internet-related issues, such as cybersecurity, disinformation, and emerging technologies.

*Question.* Do you believe that these programs are effective in providing training and tools to civil society?

Answer. Yes, I believe that DRL's global internet freedom programs are effective in providing training and tools to civil society. My understanding is that since 2008, the State Department has invested over \$320 million in global internet freedom programs, which support digital safety, policy advocacy, technology, and research to help global internet users overcome barriers to accessing the open internet. These programs support leading anti-censorship tools that allow millions of internet users worldwide to safely connect to the uncensored internet, which helps to advance U.S. business opportunities abroad, foster the free sharing of information across borders, and counter political repression around the world. They also help to protect journalists and activists operating in repressive environments from online censorship and cyber-attacks. I believe these efforts ensure that users have access to diverse information and perspectives, which play a critical role in combatting corruption, countering disinformation, undermining extremist narratives, strengthening democratic norms, and promoting accountability for violations of human rights.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you expand internet freedom programming to additional countries with shrinking civil societies and/or space for free online expression?

*Question.* If confirmed, I will prioritize this critical programming and apply DRL's deep expertise on regional and country-level threats to human rights online to direct resources to where they are most needed. I believe that the Department should apply available resources to innovative technical programs, including surging and sustaining support for critical anti-censorship platforms, in order to counter technical developments in censorship and surveillance by repressive governments, and

further develop programs to provide protection against accelerating cyber threats to civil society and independent media. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues—and Congress—to expand these vital programmatic efforts.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that information collected by the bureau of Conflict Stabilization Operations (CSO) and then used by the bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor are harmonized and used for the improvement of programmatic efforts?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will continue to foster what I understand is a productive relationship between DRL and CSO. DRL will utilize all data sources available to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of its programs.

*Question.* The White House-led Atrocity Early Warning Task Force (the Task Force) was designed to serve as a focal point for the relevant Federal departments and agencies, policy makers, and civil society working to identify and address the early warning signs of atrocities. How does the task force define success?

*Answer.* I will work with the various interagency players in the task force, if confirmed, to refine and clearly articulate our successes, but ultimately the goal is to identify the various risk factors for atrocities and then address, mitigate, and ameliorate them, thereby reducing the likelihood of an atrocity occurring. This measurable reduction in risk is success.

*Question.* How would you, if confirmed, use this data as the Assistant Secretary of DRL?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available sources of data and information to make the soundest and most effective decisions possible including where to focus diplomatic efforts, programmatic efforts, allocation of resources, and where and when to partner with likeminded colleagues.

*Question.* What efforts can the task force undertake to amplify public messaging on signs of atrocities and/or other conflict indicators?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek out opportunities to encourage the Task Force to present atrocity prevention messaging in whatever fora are available, including multilateral and within the civil society and non-governmental space. If confirmed, I will also consult with interested Members of Congress.

*Question.* What efforts can DRL undertake to amplify public messaging on signs of atrocities and/or other conflict indicators?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will seek out opportunities to amplify atrocity prevention messaging in whatever fora are available: multilateral, with DRL's extensive networks in the civil society and non-governmental space, and with partners across the interagency. I also believe in some cases calling out human rights abuses and looking for ways to course correct and address impunity can be an important way to respond to signs of atrocities before they worsen. If confirmed, I will also consult with interested Members of Congress. I understand the Secretary participated in the rollout of this year's Elie Wiesel annual report and I will further expand this high-level involvement and attention.

*Question.* How would you use the tools available within the task force and within the department to provide assistance to Afghanistan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will collaborate with the State Department and interagency to use all available sources of data and information to make the soundest decisions possible in what tools to utilize in the case of Afghanistan to support our goal goals and objectives. These tools include but are not limited to diplomatic efforts, sanctions regimes, support for civil society, messaging, accountability and justice efforts, and potential to partnerships with likeminded colleagues, depending on the policy goals under consideration. I will also regularly engage civil society members that fled Afghanistan to better understand the situation on the ground and what the most viable pathways are to offer support in a way that does not create additional security risks.

*Question.* The White House-led Atrocity Early Warning Task Force (the Task Force) was designed to serve as a focal point for the relevant Federal departments and agencies, policy makers, and civil society working to identify and address the early warning signs of atrocities. How would you use the tools available within the task force and within the department to provide assistance to Tigray?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the atrocities underway in Tigray, the dehumanizing rhetoric, clear indications from the U.N. that the region is "sliding into famine," and the government's recent decision to eject U.N. humanitarian officials from the country. I am grateful for this committee's activity on Ethiopia and its re-

peated efforts to draw attention to the Tigray crisis and Ethiopia's growing instability. If confirmed, addressing the crisis in northern Ethiopia would be one of my top priorities. I would use all appropriate tools available within the Task Force to ensure the USG's response to ongoing atrocities in northern Ethiopia continued to involve a whole-of-government, coordinated response. And I would work through the Task Force to ensure that the United States continues to use every available tool to urge all parties to end the conflict in northern Ethiopia, cease all gross violations of human rights, hold those perpetrators accountable, and allow full and unhindered humanitarian access so that those in need receive urgently needed assistance.

*Question.* How would you use the tools available within the task force and within the department to provide assistance to Burma?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available sources of data and information to make the most informed decisions possible on what tools to utilize in Burma. These tools include but are not limited to diplomatic efforts, programmatic assistance, sanctions regimes, other forms of support for civil society, public messaging, accountability and justice efforts, and where and when to partner with likeminded colleagues. I will also regularly engage civil society members that fled Burma to better understand the situation on the ground and what the most viable pathways are to offer support in a way that doesn't create additional security risks.

*Question.* How would you use the tools available within the task force and within the department to provide assistance to Venezuela?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available sources of data and information to make the most sound decisions possible in what tools to utilize in the case of Venezuela. These tools include but are not limited to diplomatic efforts, programmatic efforts, assistance, sanctions regimes, support for civil society, messaging, accountability and justice efforts, and where and when to partner with likeminded colleagues. I will also regularly engage civil society members that fled Venezuela to better understand the situation on the ground and what the most viable pathways are to offer support in a way that doesn't create additional security risks.

*Question.* How would you use the tools available within the task force and within the department to provide assistance to Yemen?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available sources of data and information to make the soundest decisions possible in what tools to utilize in the case of Yemen. These tools include but are not limited to diplomatic efforts, programmatic efforts, assistance, sanctions regimes, support for civil society, messaging, accountability and justice efforts, and where and when to partner with likeminded colleagues. I will also regularly engage Yemeni civil society members, including individuals who have fled Yemen, to better understand the situation on the ground and what the most viable pathways are to offer support in a way that doesn't create additional security risks.

*Question.* How would you use the tools available within the task force and within the department to provide assistance to Syria?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will use all available sources of data and information to make the soundest decisions possible in what tools to utilize in the case of Syria. These tools include but are not limited to diplomatic efforts, programmatic efforts, assistance, sanctions regimes, support for civil society, messaging, accountability and justice efforts, and where and when to partner with likeminded colleagues. I will also regularly engage Syrian civil society members, including individuals who have fled Syria, to better understand the situation on the ground and what the most viable pathways are to offer support in a way that doesn't create additional security risks. I will also assess what is already funded by DRL and what additional support would be useful.

*Question.* Do you commit to regular, quarterly briefings to Congress on the efforts of the Task Force as well as those within the Department?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to continuing what I understand is a productive, ongoing, regular conversation between the Department and interested congressional members and committees about atrocity prevention efforts.

*Question.* State Department employees have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID-19 working from home, and Department management issues. What is your understanding of morale throughout the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL)?

*Answer.* As a nominee I have not discussed morale issues with anyone at DRL, but I understand that the bureau is full of passionate and experienced civil service

and foreign service officers committed to advancing human rights and democracy around the world and pushing back against authoritarianism and democratic backsliding. The Biden administration's public commitment to putting human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy, and its demonstrated pledge to advancing the human rights of all persons, are important validations of DRL's centrality to the mission of the State Department.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across DRL?

*Answer.* If confirmed I would seek to hold regular meetings with each office within DRL to really get to know the bureau, the work, and the teams. I also would conduct "deep dive" reviews to understand each team's long-term vision, current priorities, and the challenges they face. If confirmed, I would be as accessible as possible to the entire bureau, keeping an "open door" policy and blocking off regular times on the schedule to meet with any DRL staff. If confirmed, I won't only be there to lead the bureau, but also to support the team, amplify and advance shared priorities, and reward hard work. Morale is in part about leadership, team strengthening, and seeing "wins" on the board, but it is also dependent on proactive recruitment and retention policies. To that end, if confirmed I would strive to continue to strengthen the bureau's reputation as one of career-enhancement and excellence. I would also support DRL staff's career development within the wider State and foreign affairs community. I would seek to rely on the expertise that already exists in the bureau to ensure staff feel empowered, are heard, and know that they are having impact. Responsibility and accountability for the A/S are essential, but I would be equally focused on encouraging problem-solving by staff while making sure they know I'm in their corner and ready to contribute as needed so that together we can tackle the challenges that come our way. That's what I've always done and it's what I'll do at DRL if confirmed.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across DRL?

*Answer.* I am excited by the potential, if I am confirmed, to help guide DRL into a team that is even better unified to promote and support human rights and democracy around the globe in a genuine and principled manner. Foremost, I would seek to create opportunities for DRL's offices to collaborate more closely on functional issues like counter-authoritarianism, technology and human rights, and arms sales/security assistance. Part of creating that unified mission and vision will mean defining goals with the staff, within the framework the President and the Secretary have set, and then empowering the experts to implement them with encouragement and top cover. Once our goals are set, if confirmed, I will encourage DRL colleagues to reinforce relationships with allies in and out of the building—including in Congress. Finally, I would want to make sure we're learning lessons whenever possible and course-correcting whenever necessary. Programs and policies need to be closely integrated and matched with the current moment, which means being flexible and open to changing direction as needed.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for Assistant Secretaries of State. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I believe effective leaders need to surround themselves with an empowered team. My support of my team means they will support me; we all bring complementary skills to the table. At DRL, if confirmed, I would seek to encourage staff to think boldly and take risks to advance our shared goals, knowing that I will have their back. I want to empower problem-solving before elevating. I want to build trust through our mutual belief in the power of the United States to do good in the world, and through our shared work to overcome the challenges in seeing that belief fully realized. Good management also sometimes requires engaging more senior principals and responding to their needs while simultaneously providing direction to staff. If confirmed I will seek to balance both while helping staff value how their work fits into a larger picture. Humility and humor are key to me, balanced with clarity of purpose and a calm, steady approach.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to a Department setting, where resources may not be readily available and your workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* My hope is that my style may be refreshing and invigorating for career employees, for whom I have great respect and admiration. They deserve someone who believes in them. I believe strongly in the talent and expertise of the bureau, so I want to elevate and support them in areas where I am able, even if resources are not readily available. Sometimes support is less about more money and bigger offices, and more about a leader who will listen and take action. I've spoken to a number of former DRL Assistant Secretaries who served in administrations of both

parties, to hear their guidance on policy, vision, and management strategies. I believe there is a lot to learn from their experiences.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on the Department leaders to integrate themselves into Bureau operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* No matter one's appointment authority, I think any Assistant Secretary's goal is to maximize the contributions that every member of the team can make and understanding how the bureau operates is essential to good management and good policy making. If confirmed, I intend to take the time to understand how DRL has operated, what the culture has been, and what's worked, what needs to be fixed, and what disagreements, if any, need to be resolved so we can function as a united team. I am not afraid to make tough decisions if there's a need but will want to do so after a full review and adequate consultation.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No, it is never appropriate or constructive, and as a leader I have never and will never tolerate such behavior.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate performance reviews for both Foreign and Civil Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking. Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes. Constructive feedback is an important part of holding staff accountable for their work, holding supervisors accountable for their management, and ensuring strong work products. If confirmed, I will make sure all formal evaluations are completed on time and with a high degree of specificity. For those whom I may not directly oversee, I will put time on my calendar to ensure we are discussing their goals, concerns, and accomplishments.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage the managers in your bureau to provide clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes, I would, because such feedback is essential to helping high achievers continue to excel, helping other employees become high achievers, and retaining talent in a competitive environment.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you organize and mobilize the resources of the DRL Bureau to counter malign Russian Government behavior and influence in the Western Hemisphere?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to countering malign Russian Government influence around the world, including in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I will take a comprehensive view of this complex problem and its effects on democracy and human rights in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I will advocate for the use of all of our tools to counter Russian malign influence in the hemisphere, including diplomatic engagement, technical exchanges, foreign assistance, and public diplomacy. DRL's existing policy and programmatic lines of effort focused on anti-corruption, civil society, and strengthening rule of law should continue, and undercut Russian malign influence and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you organize and mobilize the resources of the DRL Bureau to counter malign Chinese Government behavior and influence in the Western Hemisphere?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) represents a serious challenge to U.S. interests and values in the region, with its growing security ties and infrastructure investments. If confirmed, I will lead our team to meet this challenge by advancing our positive agenda for the hemisphere and working with likeminded partners—whether aligned governments or regional organizations. We will build on our shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We will welcome our allies and partners' expertise and resources to support the region's COVID-19 response, entrepreneurship, and sustainable infrastructure. We will support high-standard investment in infrastructure and transparent economic development that creates jobs essential for regional pandemic recovery.

*Question.* Are China's growing commercial ties and investments in Latin America a threat to human rights in the hemisphere? Please explain.

**Answer.** The People's Republic of China's (PRC) aggressive efforts to expand market share for state-affiliated firms, carrying out of infrastructure projects, implementation of disinformation campaigns, and export of surveillance and censorship tools play a direct and indirect role in human rights violations and abuses in Latin America. The lack of transparency in the PRC's transactions and its increase of the region's dependence on debt financing enables corruption. The PRC's infrastructure projects often ignore both labor and environmental laws, undermining individual workers' rights and labor standards more generally. The PRC's manipulation of media outlets silences investigative journalists who hold human rights abusers publicly accountable while suppressing negative stories of the PRC's activities in the region. The proliferation of untrusted vendors' surveillance and control equipment in the region also increases the risk to human rights defenders and those willing to expose human rights violators. The PRC's activities take place throughout the region and result in countries adopting policies inconsistent with democratic values.

**Question.** Are Russia's activities in Latin America a threat to human rights in the region? Please explain.

**Answer.** Russia's engagement in the region is marked by disinformation, military and equipment sales, and energy deals, all with implications for human rights in the region. The Biden administration is committed to countering disinformation and imposing costs on Russia for its aggression and malign activities across the globe. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor closely Russia's activities in the region, including its relationships with Cuba, the illegitimate Maduro regime in Venezuela, and the Ortega-Murillo Government in Nicaragua. I will work with colleagues and the interagency to promote and protect human rights, combat disinformation, and combat corruption and reduce impunity in Latin America.

**Question.** According to the 2019 National Drug Threat Assessment, fentanyl and other highly potent synthetic opioids continue to be the most lethal category of illicit substances in the U.S. The 2020 DEA report on fentanyl flows to the United States indicates that Mexican transnational criminal organizations are producing increased quantities of fentanyl and cartels such as the Sinaloa and the New Generation Jalisco cartel are the primary trafficking groups responsible for smuggling fentanyl into the U.S. from Mexico.

- Please explain how illicit drug trade impacts human rights in Mexico.

**Answer.** Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) in Mexico are a threat to public health, safety, and human rights. Crime and violence are at record-high levels in Mexico, with as many of three-fourths of all homicides tied to organized crime. Mexico reported 34,515 homicides in 2020 and 34,648 in 2019, a rate of around 29 per 100,000 inhabitants.

As to other human rights abuses, for example, indigenous persons in isolated regions reported incidents of forced labor, in which cartel members forced them to perform illicit activities or face death. Minors were recruited or forced by cartels to traffic persons, drugs, or other goods across the border. Migrants were also recruited by criminal organizations to conduct illicit activities. To enable their criminal activities, TCOs corrupt democratic institutions and put the safety and livelihoods of ordinary citizens at risk. If confirmed, I will continue the State Department's work with government partners in Mexico to build institutional capacity to dismantle TCOs and hold them accountable for their behavior.

**Question.** The Ortega regime in Nicaragua has repeatedly failed to take action to pass meaningful electoral reforms—which the U.S., OAS, EU and U.N. have called for. The U.S. has leveraged sanctions and diplomatic tools, but what other options are on the table?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will support the United States' ongoing efforts to rally international pressure on the Ortega-Murillo Government, through public statements by Secretary Blinken, regular media engagements by Department leadership, and bilateral and multilateral diplomacy with our partners, such as joint public condemnations that call out the Ortega-Murillo Government's attacks on democracy. If confirmed, I will support continued use of the diplomatic and economic tools available to the Department, such as sanctions and visa restrictions.

**Question.** If confirmed, do you commit to prioritizing and maintaining policies and programs to create acceptable conditions for free and fair elections in Nicaragua?

**Answer.** Yes. As Secretary Blinken stated on August 7, the Nicaraguan electoral process, including its eventual results, has lost all credibility. The Ortega-Murillo Government has made no effort to honor its agreement with the opposition to begin electoral reforms ahead of the November election. To the contrary, it has changed the legal code and implemented new, vague laws based on Russian legislation that

restrict human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will support continuing U.S. policies and programs in support of the Nicaraguan people's desire for a return to democracy.

*Question.* What strategies would you employ to improve the capacity of the democratic opposition to coalesce and become a credible challenge to Ortega?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the Department's efforts to build the capacity of and strengthen civil society organizations that work to promote human rights protections, democratic governance, and transparency.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* What strategies would you employ to improve the capacity of the democratic opposition to coalesce and become a credible challenge to Ortega?

*Answer.* President Ortega has ensured the rigged elections on November 7 will proclaim him victorious. If confirmed, I will support the Department's efforts to hold the Ortega-Murillo Government accountable. Through USAID and the Department of State, we will continue to support Nicaraguan civil society organizations, independent media, and human rights defenders as they fight to restore democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights. We will continue to work with democratic actors, inside and outside of Nicaragua, to promote consensus-building and unification around their efforts to challenge President Ortega and Vice President Murillo's authoritarian government. Our continued support will help to demonstrate to the Nicaraguan people that the international community has not forgotten them.

*Question.* Please describe the long-term implications for Nicaragua and the region if Ortega fraudulently extends his time in office.

*Answer.* The Ortega-Murillo Government will not have a democratic mandate following fraudulent elections in November. The June resolution of the Permanent Council of the OAS stated just this—that the measures adopted by the Government of Nicaragua do not meet the conditions for transparent, free and fair elections to which all member states have committed under the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Thus, it is foreseeable that a fraught election could further isolate the government internationally and rekindle domestic unrest. At the same time, a fraudulent election in Nicaragua could embolden other autocratic governments in the region. The consolidation of power under Ortega and Murillo will also have migration implications for the region, as an increasing number of Nicaraguans decide to leave their country due to continued repression. If confirmed, I will support consideration of all diplomatic tools to address the fraudulent elections in Nicaragua.

*Question.* Should the U.S. support an internationally-accompanied negotiation between the Ortega regime and the Nicaraguan democratic forces, as the Biden administration is supporting in Venezuela? Please explain.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the Nicaraguan people's expressed desire for democracy. I will collaborate with the embassy in Managua and Department staff in Washington to continue to work with civil society and the international community to support opposition voices in Nicaragua and within the Nicaraguan diaspora. It is past time for free and fair elections so the people of Nicaragua can turn the page on the corrupt and repressive Ortega-Murillo Government.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Should the U.S. support an internationally-accompanied negotiation between the Ortega regime and the Nicaraguan democratic forces, as the Biden administration is supporting in Venezuela? Please explain.

*Answer.* The United States continues to seek to increase bilateral and multilateral pressure on the Ortega-Murillo Government. With President Ortega and Vice President Murillo throwing the leading opposition figures in jail and crushing all political dissent, the repressive conditions in Nicaragua do not support the prospect of negotiations. If confirmed, I will continue to support the unilateral and multilateral efforts to hold the Ortega-Murillo Government accountable and explore with allies a coordinated path forward to address the electoral sham scheduled for November 7.

*Question.* Should Cuba be removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism (SST) while they continue to harbor U.S. fugitives?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals toward Cuba, and I look forward to consulting with Congress on this issue.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Should Cuba be removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism (SST) while they continue to harbor U.S. fugitives?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals toward Cuba. In May, the administration certified Cuba as a Not Fully Cooperating Country with U.S. counter-terrorism efforts, which I fully support. If confirmed, I will consult closely with my counter-terrorism and other colleagues in reviewing the facts and legal standards in determining my position on whether Cuba should be removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism (SST).

*Question.* Would you advise establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba while it continues to provide safe harbor to fugitives from the U.S. justice system?

Answer. I am aware that Cuba harbors several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on or convicted of charges of political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades. If confirmed, I will support the regular U.S. calls on Cuba to return fugitives from justice and would look forward to supporting the administration's review of Cuba policy.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Would you advise establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba while it continues to provide safe harbor to fugitives from the U.S. justice system?

Answer. I am aware that Cuba harbors several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on or convicted of charges of political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades. If confirmed, I will strongly support the regular U.S. calls on Cuba to return fugitives from justice and would not advocate for increased diplomatic engagement unless it would enhance respect for human rights and democracy in Cuba.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support Cuba's removal from the SST list without verifiable assurances that it would cease to foster a permissive environment for international terrorists in Venezuela?

Answer. I have long believed that state sponsor of terrorism designations should be used for states that are terrorists, based on fact, analysis, and intelligence. Similarly, I believe a designation should not be lifted until there's full clarity that the government in question has taken all steps necessary to relieve themselves of the criteria needed for such a designation. Regardless of the state sponsor of terrorism designation, I do believe other corresponding punitive measures are an important tool to be used on repressive governments and/or officials. I will consult closely with the intelligence community and Congress on the way forward, including on the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support Cuba's removal from the SST list without verifiable assurances that it would cease to foster a permissive environment for international terrorists in Venezuela?

Answer. I am very concerned about the support Cuba has provided to the Maduro regime to engage in human rights abuses against the Venezuelan people. I have long believed that state sponsor of terrorism (SST) designations should be based on fact, law, and analysis. I believe an SST designation should not be lifted until the government in question has taken all steps necessary to meet the criteria needed for rescission. The administration has committed to carefully reviewing decisions made in the prior administration, including the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. If confirmed, I am committed to carefully reviewing the facts and the law in determining my views on whether Cuba should continue to be designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism and to consulting closely with Congress on the issue.

*Question.* Please describe the trajectory of Cuban involvement in Venezuela.

Answer. Cuba has long had deep engagement in Venezuela's military and intelligence services. Fidel Castro was a close confidant and advisor to Hugo Chavez. With Cuba's support, the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recog-



nize as the Government of Venezuela, has ignored the Venezuelan people's calls for change and a return to democracy, and learned from Cuban advisors how to spy on its own citizens and suppress dissent. Venezuelan secret police have perfected the torture tactics, systems of social control, and mechanisms of repression that Cuban authorities have used against their own people for decades. If confirmed, I would seek to thwart such abuses.

*Question.* Do you agree that Cuban military and intelligence support is the linchpin to Maduro's survival in Venezuela?

*Answer.* Cuba shields the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recognize as the Government of Venezuela, from some of the effects of international economic and diplomatic pressure, while providing the intelligence and muscle that improves Maduro's ability to cling to power. I understand that Cuban military and intelligence advisors actively support Maduro through the provision of security forces, intelligence officers, and by providing direction to Venezuelan authorities. They equip the Maduro regime with the tools he needs to repress any domestic or internal dissent, including in his military. Cuba also provided thousands of medical professionals to Venezuela, before and during the COVID-19 crisis, allowing Maduro to avoid the domestic political consequences of his failed economic and health policies. Allegations of forced labor and using the mission to conduct political interference and intelligence collection on behalf of Maduro are widely reported by former participants. If confirmed, I would seek to stem these practices.

*Question.* Please describe your views on the most effective approach to persuade the Cuban regime to play a more positive role in Venezuela.

*Answer.* I understand the United States will continue to coordinate closely with like-minded nations, including within the EU and OAS, to promote a negotiated solution to the crisis in Venezuela. The aim is to counter interference and raise the costs to Cuba for supporting any anti-democratic actions or human rights abuses by the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recognize as the Government of Venezuela. I support this approach.

*Question.* Please explain your views on how the international community can exert pressure on Cuba for its involvement in Venezuela.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the United States' efforts to continue to exert pressure on Cuba through Secretary Blinken's public statements, regular media engagements by Department leadership, bilateral diplomacy with other countries in the region, and multilateral diplomacy. I would also continue U.S. efforts to protect and support the human rights of Cubans and to empower them to determine their own future.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the impact it would have on human rights conditions in Cuba and Venezuela if the United States were to elevate its diplomatic relations with Cuba by nominating and confirming an Ambassador.

*Answer.* I believe the protests that began on July 11 have demonstrated how important it is for U.S. diplomats to engage directly with the Cuban people. I understand the U.S. diplomatic corps will continue to engage directly with and support civil society, including human rights defenders and political dissidents, as part of an overall effort to empower the Cuban people and their desire for freedom. If confirmed, I would strongly support such continued engagement.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Please explain your views on the impact it would have on human rights conditions in Cuba and Venezuela if the United States were to elevate its diplomatic relations with Cuba by nominating and confirming an Ambassador.

*Answer.* Our primary goal in Cuba and Venezuela is to promote democracy and respect for human rights and any potential change in our diplomatic relations must serve to further this goal. The United States must ensure that any changes to our diplomatic engagement do not negatively affect our ability to support the societal demands in Cuba and Venezuela for democratic reforms. If confirmed, I will closely evaluate the impact of potential changes to diplomatic engagement on the administration's ability to promote democracy and human rights.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of the role of military-controlled firms in the Cuban economy.

*Answer.* The Cuban Government exercises significant control over most of Cuba's important economic sectors. For example, the Cuban Government benefits from remittance fees that are handled through its remittance processor, Financiera Cimex S.A. (FINCIMEX), which is a military-controlled entity. State-owned stores as well as the medical missions program are also an economic boon for the Cuban Government, which significantly marks up prices in the stores and keeps a large portion of medical workers' salaries. The Armed Forces Business Enterprise Group (GAESA), which is led by Raul Castro's son-in-law, is involved in all sectors of the economy. The Cuban military controls tourism, including through ownership of Gaviota Hotels.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the impact it would have on human rights conditions in Cuba if U.S. policy were to facilitate or allow financial transactions that benefit military-controlled firms in Cuba.

*Answer.* Democracy and human rights are at the core of the administration's efforts toward Cuba. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals to support the Cuban people and hold the regime accountable for its abuses through efforts that maximize benefits to the Cuban people and minimize or eliminate any benefits to the Cuban Government and its military. I look forward to consulting with Congress on these efforts.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Please explain your views on the impact it would have on human rights conditions in Cuba if U.S. policy were to facilitate or allow financial transactions that benefit military-controlled firms in Cuba.

*Answer.* I share your concerns about Cuba's military, intelligence, and security services' role in serious human rights abuses against the Cuban people, and I recognize the military's role in the Cuban economy. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals to support the Cuban people and hold the regime accountable for its abuses, including by minimizing or eliminating any financial benefits to the Cuban Government and its military.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the impact it would have on human rights conditions in Cuba if U.S. public and private engagement with Cuba were to disproportionately benefit the Cuban military, intelligence, or security services or personnel at the expense of the Cuban people?

*Answer.* Democracy and human rights are at the core of the administration's efforts toward Cuba. If confirmed, I will support the administration's goals to support the Cuban people and hold the regime accountable for its abuses, including efforts that maximize benefits for the Cuban people and minimize or eliminate any benefit to the Cuban Government and its military. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with Congress on these efforts.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Please explain your views on the impact it would have on human rights conditions in Cuba if U.S. public and private engagement with Cuba were to disproportionately benefit the Cuban military, intelligence, or security services or personnel at the expense of the Cuban people?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about Cuba's military, intelligence, and security services' role in serious human rights abuses against the Cuban people, and I recognize their role in the Cuban economy. I would oppose any move that would disproportionately benefit the Cuban military, intelligence, or security services at the expense of our efforts to lift the Cuban people out of oppression. If confirmed, I will further the administration's goals to support the Cuban people and hold the regime accountable for its abuses, including efforts that maximize benefits for the Cuban people and minimize or eliminate any benefit to the Cuban Government and its military intelligence, or security services.

*Question.* According to the State Department, in 2019, the Government of Cuba maintained an estimated 50,000 medical personnel in more than 60 countries under conditions that represent forced labor. The U.S., United Nations, independent media outlets and NGOs have documented and called out the Cuban regime's exploitative and coercive practices toward its doctors participating in its overseas medical programs.

Can you describe your understanding of how Cuban doctors are forced into participating the program and sent to a foreign country, as well as the conditions by which they live while in this program?

Answer. I understand that former participants in Cuba's overseas medical programs have stated that the Cuban Government coerced some participants to remain in the program, including by withholding their passports and medical credentials; restricting their movement; using "minders" to conduct surveillance of participants outside of work; threatening to revoke their licenses to practice medicine in Cuba; retaliating against their family members in Cuba if participants left the program; or imposing criminal penalties, forced exile, and family separation if participants did not return to Cuba as directed by government supervisors.

*Question.* Can you describe how these programs only go to serve the Cuban Government at the expense of the Cuban people?

Answer. The export of professional services, including medical missions, remains Cuba's largest source of foreign exchange earnings. I understand that it is difficult to ascertain the exact amount of proceeds due to a lack of transparency in bilateral agreements with host countries. Contracts often involve direct payments to the Cuban Government with former participants reporting receiving roughly 10 to 25 percent of the amount paid by the host governments to the Cuban Government for their services. In addition, there are reports of in-kind transfers of medical equipment for medical professionals in South Africa and of oil for doctors in Venezuela and Algeria.

*Question.* Do you consider the Cuban regime's overseas medical missions to be exploitative human trafficking efforts?

Answer. I understand there are documented reports of widespread abuse and exploitation of medical professionals within the medical program, including allegations that the Cuban regime coerced some participants to remain in the program, including by withholding a large portion of their salaries; restricting their movements; using "minders" to conduct surveillance of participants outside of work; threatening to revoke their medical licenses; retaliating against their families in Cuba if participants leave the program; or imposing criminal penalties, exile, and family separation if participants do not return to Cuba as directed by government supervisors. I agree with the Department of State's conclusion that these practices are "clear indicators of human trafficking." If confirmed, I will urge countries to take the necessary measures to protect Cuban medical workers and to seek transparency on contractual agreements between the Cuban Government and the medical professionals.

*Question.* Do you commit to instructing our Embassies in countries that accept Cuban medical missions to communicate to host governments to inform them of the Cuban regime's forced labor practices?

Answer. I am very concerned about the human and labor rights abuses within the Cuban medical missions program. If confirmed, I will highlight these issues with host governments and work with our officers in the field and foreign government officials, at the highest appropriate level, to urge them to take necessary measures to protect Cuban medical workers and to seek transparency on contractual agreements between the Cuban Government and medical professionals. I will encourage countries to put steps in place to prevent exploitation and forced labor, and to proactively monitor these programs, given persistent allegations that the Cuban Government are compelling medical professionals to work.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of the relationship between the Government of Cuba, the U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional (ELN), and the Maduro regime in Venezuela.

Answer. I understand members of the Colombian-origin National Liberation Army (ELN), including senior leadership, traveled to Cuba in 2018 for now-defunct peace negotiations with the Government of Colombia. When negotiations failed, Cuba continued to provide safe haven to ELN leadership. In January 2019, ELN claimed responsibility for a deadly bombing in Colombia. Citing peace protocols signed before the ELN negotiators traveled to Cuba, Cuba has refused to extradite ELN leaders to Colombia. With respect to Venezuela, Maduro and his associates use criminal activities to help maintain their hold on power, fostering a permissive environment for known terrorist groups, including the ELN and its sympathizers. The Cuban intelligence and security apparatus has infiltrated Venezuela's security and military forces, helping Nicholas Maduro to maintain his stranglehold over his people while allowing terrorist organizations to operate.

If confirmed, I will commit to closely reviewing the status of ELN leadership in Cuba and consulting with Congress as the Biden-Harris administration reviews U.S. policy toward Cuba.

*Question.* Considering the well-documented ties between the Maduro regime and the ELN, and Cuba's harboring of ELN terrorists, why should the Cuban regime not be included in the list of States Sponsors of Terrorism?

*Answer.* I have long believed that state sponsor of terrorism designations should be used for states that are terrorists, based on fact, analysis, and intelligence. Similarly, I believe a designation should not be lifted until there's full clarity that the government in question has taken all steps necessary to relieve themselves of the criteria needed for such a designation. If confirmed, I will consult closely with the intelligence community and Congress on the way forward, including on the previous administration's decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.

*Question.* Considering the well-documented ties between the Maduro regime and the ELN, and Cuba's harboring of ELN terrorists, why should the Cuban regime not be included in the list of States Sponsors of Terrorism?

*Answer.* I am very concerned about Cuba's harboring of members of the ELN. I have long believed that state sponsor of terrorism designations should be based on fact, law, and analysis. Similarly, I believe a designation should not be lifted until the government in question has taken all steps necessary to meet the criteria needed for rescission. If confirmed, I am committed to carefully reviewing the facts and the law in determining my views on whether Cuba should continue to be designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism and to consulting closely with Congress on the issue.

*Question.* Over the last three decades, Colombia has emerged as source of economic and stability in the region, in great part due to the success of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement and Plan Colombia. Yet, policy decisions made during the negotiations of the 2016 deal with the FARC created new challenges for Colombia and our relations. Coca production in Colombia steadily increased since 2013, reaching 212,000 hectares in 2019. In March 2020, the United States and Colombia announced a joint action plan to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by the end of 2023. The plan would make full use of all available tools, including rural development, interdiction, as well as manual and aerial eradication.

- Would you agree that achieving this goal by 2023 would deliver significant health and security benefits for Americans here at home?

*Answer.* Yes. Significant and sustainable reductions in coca cultivation and cocaine production will deliver significant health and security benefits for Americans by reducing the amount of cocaine flowing to the United States. The U.S. Government's new counternarcotics strategy for Colombia pursues sustainability through an integrated, bilateral focus on integrated supply reduction, rural security and development, and environmental protection. Integrated implementation of these pillars will reduce cocaine-related overdoses and violence in the United States, and slow migration caused by narcotrafficking-related violence in drug-transit countries. If confirmed, I would support this approach.

*Question.* Please explain your understanding of the nexus between growing coca cultivation and violence against human rights defenders in Colombia.

*Answer.* The enormous profit margins associated with the cocaine trade mean that narcotrafficking organizations will violently oppose any interference in their money-making activities, whether it be from the Colombian Government for prosecuting offenders; human rights defenders and social leaders for their efforts to support crop substitution and public advocacy on behalf of rural communities; or competition from rival criminal organizations. Narcotrafficking organizations will target anyone who interferes in their illicit business model.

In areas with significant narcotics trafficking, coca cultivation, and where organized criminal groups exercise significant control, human rights challenges abound, including killings of social leaders, including human rights defenders. I understand that a review by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) of social leader murders in 2020 found that 93 percent occurred in areas the Colombian National Police identify as being under the control of criminal organizations. The UNODC has found that in Cauca, the department with the highest level of social leader killings, the probability of a social leader being killed is 4.3 times higher in areas where coca is grown. I understand that Embassy Bogotá's integrated counternarcotics and rural security strategy aims to reduce coca cultivation while also

expanding state and CNP presence to rural areas to reduce the influence of armed groups and curtail the violence they perpetrate against social leaders and the general public. If confirmed, I would support these efforts.

*Question.* Please explain your understanding of the nexus between community participation in Colombia's National Program for Integral Substitution and the rate of social leaders' killings.

*Answer.* Narcotrafficking organizations' profits depend upon having farmers who either work directly for them or from whom they buy coca. The National Program for Integral Substitution (Programa Nacional Integral de Sustitución de Cultivos Ilícitos—PNIS) seeks to convince farmers to switch to the cultivation of legal commodities. As the Government's authority is weaker in rural areas, the farmers are vulnerable to threats from the narcotrafficking organizations.

I understand that INL invests an average \$10 million annually to implement human rights programming that seeks to improve protections of human rights defenders (HRDs) and help Colombian authorities pursue accountability for crimes against HRDs. Since its creation, INL has assisted the unit of specialized human rights prosecutors in the Attorney General's Office with training, mentoring, and equipment and is now working with specialized human rights judges to provide similar assistance. If confirmed, I would support these efforts and look for ways to build on them.

*Question.* Do you agree that the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela is the direct result of the political and security conditions imposed by the Maduro regime in that country?

*Answer.* Yes. Since 2015, nearly 5.7 million Venezuelans have been forced to flee the economic, political, and humanitarian crisis caused by the Maduro regime's abuses, corruption, and mismanagement, making it the largest external displacement of persons in the Hemisphere's history. I understand the United States supports a wide range of life-saving humanitarian programs for Venezuelans, such as food assistance; emergency shelter; access to health care, water, sanitation, and hygiene supplies; support for livelihoods; and protection for vulnerable groups including women, youth, LGBTQI+, and indigenous people. If confirmed, I would support the continuation of that assistance.

*Question.* Can the humanitarian crisis be resolved on Maduro's watch?

*Answer.* Maduro could resolve the underlying causes of the humanitarian crisis by restoring democracy and respect for human rights, as well as taking the necessary steps to rebuild the Venezuelan economy. Venezuelans are suffering from one of the worst economic and humanitarian crises outside of a war in modern history. Since 2017, more than 5.6 million Venezuelans have been forced to flee their country.

The Maduro regime mismanages the economy, plunders public coffers, and impedes access to critical humanitarian assistance, including lifesaving food and nutrition aid. If confirmed, I will work to open more possibilities for humanitarian workers, organizations, and assistance to reach the Venezuelan people in Venezuela and beyond, to meet their most urgent needs. I am deeply committed to the Venezuelan people and strongly support their desire for free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections and the return to the rule of law and democracy, which can only have a positive impact the humanitarian crisis.

Since 2017, the United States has provided more than \$1.2 billion in humanitarian, economic, development, and health assistance to help Venezuelans, including more than \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance, both inside Venezuela and throughout the region. On September 22, the United States announced more than \$336 million in additional humanitarian, economic, development, and health assistance at the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Of this total, nearly \$247 million is for humanitarian assistance and more than \$89 million is for economic, development, and health assistance. The United States is the largest donor of foreign assistance for the Venezuela regional crisis, having provided over \$1.9 billion in funding since Fiscal Year 2017. If confirmed, I would support these efforts.

*Question.* There has been more than a dozen failed attempts at negotiating with Maduro. They have occurred in an environment of engagement during the Obama administration, and under the pressure of punitive measures implemented by the Trump administration.

- Is the United States using all available tools to create the appropriate conditions for a successful negotiation with the Maduro regime to transition to democratic rule in Venezuela?

**Answer.** I understand the United States continues to support a negotiated, Venezuelan-led solution to the Venezuelan crisis that leads to free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections and a return of the rule of law and democracy in Venezuela.

I also understand the State Department continues to prioritize coordination with its closest regional partners, as well as its European partners, to improve the effectiveness of our sanctions, address growing humanitarian needs, and support a negotiated, political solution. I understand the United States remains steadfast in our support to the Venezuelan people in their struggle for the restoration of democracy and rule of law. If confirmed, I would support these efforts.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

**Question.** There has been more than a dozen failed attempts at negotiating with Maduro. They have occurred in an environment of engagement during the Obama administration, and under the pressure of punitive measures implemented by the Trump administration. Is the United States using all available tools to create the appropriate conditions for a successful negotiation with the Maduro regime to transition to democratic rule in Venezuela?

**Answer.** The United States supports a Venezuelan-led solution to the crisis, which the Venezuelans have decided must be a negotiated solution that leads to free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections and a return to rule of law and democracy in Venezuela. The United States will continue to advocate for pressure from regional and European partners to pursue this end. If confirmed, I would support these efforts.

**Question.** Please explain how the United States could work with the European Union—and specifically Spain—to create the right conditions for a credible transition to democratic rule in Venezuela.

**Answer.** I understand the Department regularly engages with the international community bilaterally and in multilateral fora to raise awareness of human rights violations and abuses in Venezuela and to get other countries and international bodies to join us in pressing the Maduro regime to uphold democracy and respect human rights. If confirmed, I would support these efforts and look for creative ways to double down on these efforts, including support for justice and accountability measures, programs that strengthen democratic institutions, transparency, rule of law, inclusion, empowerment, and access to information.

**Answer.** Will you, if confirmed, advocate for the release of the nine American Citizens currently held on political charges and against their will in Venezuela? How will you work with the regional bureau and Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs?

**Answer.** Yes. If confirmed, I will advocate for the release of all American citizens currently held on political charges and against their will in Venezuela. I will consult with all relevant Bureaus and Offices, including the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, to resolve these cases.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

**Question.** Will you, if confirmed, advocate for the release of the nine American Citizens currently held on political charges and against their will in Venezuela? How will you work with the regional bureau and Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs?

**Answer.** The safe return of wrongfully detained U.S. nationals is a top priority for the Biden administration. Using wrongful detention as a bargaining chip represents a threat to the safety of everyone traveling, working, and living abroad. The U.S. opposes this practice everywhere. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs and WHA to identify how DRL can help ensure the safe return of the nine American Citizens currently held on political charges in Venezuela and any other American who is wrongfully detained.

**Question.** In September 2020, the U.N. Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Venezuela cited evidence of unlawful executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions and torture in the country since 2014, amounting to crimes against humanity. If confirmed, what tools will you use to ensure every person responsible is punished for their actions and brought to justice?

**Answer.** I understand the United States will continue to hold the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recognize as the Government of Venezuela, and

regime-aligned individuals accountable for their human rights abuses by applying a wide array of diplomatic and economic tools, including employing sanctions and visa restrictions. If confirmed, I would support these efforts.

*Question.* In December 2020, the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) accused the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) of failing to take swift action after allegations that Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's Government committed crimes against humanity. Do you support the ICC opening a formal investigation into these allegations?

*Answer.* I understand the United States is committed to promoting accountability for human rights violations and abuses in Venezuela, which is a party to the Rome Statute of the ICC. If confirmed, I will promote the importance of accountability for the horrific violations and abuses that continue to be committed in Venezuela. Where domestic systems are unable or unwilling to genuinely pursue the justice that victims deserve and that societies require to sustain peace, international courts such as the ICC can play a meaningful role in advancing accountability. I understand the United States is united with like-minded democracies in denouncing human rights violations and abuses that have occurred in Venezuela and in calling for accountability for the perpetrators and justice for the victims.

I understand the United States is aware of the ICC Prosecutor's ongoing evaluation of whether to open an investigation into the situation in Venezuela.

*Question.* Please explain your understanding of how the Maduro regime operates as a narco-terrorist regime.

*Answer.* According to the Department of Justice indictments of Maduro and 14 other regime officials unsealed in March 2020, senior Venezuelan political, intelligence, and military officials have facilitated drug trafficking through the country since at least 1999. Colombian drug-trafficking organizations—including dissident FARC factions and the ELN—exploit the lack of rule of law created by the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recognize as the Government of Venezuela, to traffic narcotics. President Biden has been clear that he believes Maduro is a dictator and that his administration will stand with the Venezuelan people and their call for a restoration of democracy through free and fair elections. I agree with the "VERDAD Act" and the administration that there must be a negotiated solution to the problems in Venezuela.

If confirmed, I will continue to work with allies, such as Colombia, to combat drug trafficking in the Andean region in ways that are both meaningful and economically sustainable. I also will support U.S. Government efforts to increase multilateral pressure on Maduro, call for the release of political prisoners, and implement sanctions against Venezuelan officials credibly accused of corruption and human rights abuses.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the role of the Venezuelan military in narcotics trafficking.

*Answer.* According to the Department of Justice indictments of Maduro and 14 other regime officials unsealed in March 2020, senior Venezuelan political, intelligence, and military officials have facilitated drug trafficking through the country since at least 1999. Colombian drug-trafficking organizations—including dissident FARC factions and the ELN—exploit the lack of rule of law created by the Maduro regime, which the United States does not recognize as the Government of Venezuela, to traffic narcotics. President Biden has been clear that his administration will stand with the Venezuelan people and their call for a restoration of democracy through free and fair elections. I agree with the "VERDAD Act" and the administration that there must be a negotiated solution to the problems in Venezuela.

If confirmed, I will continue to work with allies, such as Colombia, to combat drug trafficking in the Andean region in ways that are both meaningful and economically sustainable. I also will support U.S. Government efforts to increase multilateral pressure on Maduro, call for the release of political prisoners, and implement sanctions against Venezuelan officials credibly accused of corruption and human rights abuses.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the relationship between the Maduro regime and U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organizations, FARC and ELN

*Answer.* According to the Department of Justice indictments of Maduro and 14 other regime officials unsealed in March 2020, senior Venezuelan political, intelligence, and military officials have facilitated drug trafficking through the country since at least 1999. Colombian drug-trafficking organizations—including dissident FARC factions and the ELN—exploit the lack of rule of law created by the illegitimate Maduro regime to traffic narcotics.

*Question.* In Africa, DRL focuses its programs on non-presence countries or where limited democracy, rights and governance (DRG) investments are made by USAID. Do you agree with this approach? Why?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure DRL continues to consider many factors in determining where to support democracy and governance program goals, including those mentioned above. I believe it is important for DRL programming to continue to support U.S. policy objectives on the continent—while also maximizing effectiveness and avoiding duplication—through close coordination with other funders, including USAID. I understand that DRL’s approach to programming, however, is different from other bureaus within the Department and other U.S. agencies due to its close connection with activists and human rights defenders on the ground and programmatic flexibility which allows it to address emerging opportunities and challenges. Recognizing this, I believe DRL should remain invested in certain countries with a USAID presence, such as Sudan and Nigeria, where DRL’s programming can complement and amplify other programs and given long-standing and sensitive human rights concerns that could complicate aspects of the bilateral relations.

*Question.* In your role as Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, if confirmed, how will you follow through on administration statements that “Africa is a priority for the Biden administration”? How will you demonstrate—through DRL’s work and in your engagements within the Department—that the U.S. respects and values our African partners while being clear about our values and expectations, particularly as it relates to respect for democratic norms, human rights and rule of law?

*Answer.* Promoting and advancing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is a top priority for the United States in Africa. If confirmed, I would seek ways to support democratic advancement on the part of governments and stand with citizens, civil society, and the private sector to hold their governments to be more responsive and accountable. I would also travel regularly to the continent and meet with a range of actors, including opposition leaders and members of the independent media. In diplomatic engagements, I would encourage close attention to free and fair elections and attempts to manipulate term limits, the context in which elections are held, respect for democratic norms, media freedom, and the health of civil society.

*Question.* Across Africa, the USG has invested in a number of early warning early response (EWER) systems focused for conflict prevention and mitigation. What is your assessment of EWER systems as an effective conflict prevention tool in Africa?

*Answer.* I understand EWER systems across Africa provide communities at risk for conflict and atrocities practical means to take a lead role in their own protection. I believe by creating low-cost, easy to use means of communicating with security providers and other communities at risk, these USG-supported programs have empowered previously unprotected or ignored communities and have evidently prevented escalations of conflict in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria especially at the grassroots, community-level.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Across Africa, the USG has invested in a number of early warning early response (EWER) systems focused for conflict prevention and mitigation.

What is your assessment of EWER systems as an effective conflict prevention tool in Africa?

*Answer.* EWER systems across Africa enable vulnerable and remotely located communities at risk for conflict and atrocities practical means to take a lead role in their own protection. I believe that by creating low-cost, easy to use means of communicating with security providers and other communities at risk, these U.S. Government-supported programs have empowered previously unprotected or ignored communities and have evidently prevented escalations of conflict in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria. I understand U.S. Government investments also seek to support EWER systems that can be easily adapted and managed by local actors, ensuring sustainability and ownership at both the government and community level.

*Question.* Do you feel they are a good investment of U.S. resources given limited resources for conflict prevention and resolution in Africa?

*Answer.* Yes. I understand these early warning systems use radio and SMS to communicate, and that the training required to use them is cost-effective. Trained



community members can in turn train others in their operation, and partnerships with telecom and security providers ensure that the communication channels remain available at a very low cost. I believe their sustainability and effectiveness make them a good investment of limited resources in this field.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Do you feel they are a good investment of U.S. resources given limited resources for conflict prevention and resolution in Africa?

*Answer.* Yes, especially when paired with training and capacity support for community members to identify violence trends and forecast risks to prevent attacks before they happen. Preventing violence and interrupting cycles of retaliatory intercommunal violence helps save lives and is a more impactful and cost-effective intervention than responding to conflict once it has broken out. Moreover, I understand that these early warning systems use radio and SMS to communicate, and the training required to use them is cost-effective. I understand trained community members can in turn train others in their operation, and partnerships with telecom and security providers ensure that the communication channels remain available at a very low cost. Their sustainability and effectiveness make them a good investment of limited resources in this field. While sophisticated defense systems have their place in protecting vulnerable populations in Africa, EWER systems that utilize technology already in regular use in at-risk locations can be much more effective in alerting populations in real time by being readily accessible, quick to stand up, and easy to use.

*Question.* Are you supportive of DRL investing in EWER systems in Africa? If yes, in what circumstances are they appropriate?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe EWER systems can be appropriately deployed in a number of situations where security providers are either slow or reluctant to provide quality protection for communities at risk for conflict due to ethnic, religious, resource, or other reasons. I understand due to the ease of use, DRL-supported EWER access is not limited to only a certain subset of users; indeed, we have seen tangible success when groups often overlooked for leadership roles—youth and women—have been empowered to use these systems. DRL's EWER systems are also appropriate and effective even where the government is the primary perpetrator. I believe in those circumstances, the alerts can be directed to alternative sources for response, such as local civil society or regional or international actors.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Are you supportive of DRL investing in EWER systems in Africa? If yes, in what circumstances are they appropriate?

*Answer.* Yes. EWER systems can be appropriately deployed in any number of situations and locations where security providers are either slow or reluctant to provide quality protection for communities at risk for conflict due to ethnic, religious, resource, or other reasons. I understand that due to their ease of use, DRL-supported EWER access is not limited to a certain subset of users and has demonstrated success when groups often overlooked for leadership roles—youth and women—have been empowered to use these systems. I believe DRL's EWER systems are also appropriate and effective where the Government is the primary perpetrator of abuses. In those circumstances, the alerts can be directed to alternative sources for response, such as local civil society or regional or international actors. I understand DRL also seeks to deepen its programs' coordination with security actors active in locations of mutual priority to ensure that information sharing is maximized.

*Question.* Across Sub-Saharan Africa, democratic gains are under threat as long-serving rulers manipulate constitutional and electoral processes to remain in power, while stifling dissent and limiting the activities of opposition parties and candidates. In 2020 alone, we saw ruling parties and incumbent leaders apply authoritarian tactics under the guise of democracy, including in Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe, and in the last year, four coups d'état have occurred in Chad, Guinea and two in Mali:

What is your perspective on balancing the sometimes competing U.S. priorities of security and democracy and human rights in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially when some of our top security partners—including Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Chad and Mali—periodically or consistently engage in undemocratic practices or experience undemocratic and unconstitutional transitions of power?

Answer. A 2019 Afrobarometer study encompassing survey data from 34 African nations found that 68 percent of Africans believe democracy is the best form of government, while 78 percent reject strong-man rule and 72 percent oppose military rule. While it is in the U.S. interest to support African states facing security crises, we must make clear to African leaders who flout democratic norms that respect for human rights and democratic institutions is in their best interest, as well as that of their people, and their country. Without meaningful democratic governance, African states will not be well-positioned to expand peace and security and foster economic growth.

*Question.* In your view, which should take priority in Africa?

Answer. I firmly agree with President Biden's stated commitment to place respect for human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy. I also believe considering the human rights and democracy components of U.S. security engagement is an important element of policy development and can help guide and strengthen how the administration engages in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in countries with weak or nascent democracies. If confirmed, I look forward to participating in an interagency policy process as the Biden-Harris administration develops a fresh U.S. approach for Africa that addresses our national interests in Africa including respect for human rights and democratic norms, as well as security.

*Question.* How can the U.S. better engage the African Union on issues related to democracy, human rights, corruption, and rule of law?

Answer. I understand that democracy and governance is a core pillar of the U.S. High Level Dialogue with the African Union (AU), and one through which the U.S. Government works to advance the shared values of promoting democratic institutions and human rights on the continent throughout the year. If confirmed, I would work with the U.S. Ambassador to the AU as well as the AF bureau to seek policies that continue to counter corruption; promote constitutional reform undertaken in a democratic and transparent manner; mitigate conflict; protect civilians; support transitional justice; protect the independence of accountability mechanisms, such as the African Commission of Human and People's Rights; and promote political space for civil society. I also welcome the strategic use of U.S. foreign assistance resources to advance shared democracy, human rights, and good governance priorities through the AU, such as the ongoing technical assistance in support of the AU Assembly presidency in an effort to advance democracy and human rights, and training for youth experts on the AU's transitional justice policy.

*Question.* In the last three years, Sudan and Ethiopia embarked on unexpected democratic transitions. While the U.S. was, and continues to be, eager to support these transitions, rapidly mobilizing adequate resources has been a challenge in both cases:

- As Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, how will you work inside DRL and with the Africa Bureau to be better prepared to contribute financial and diplomatic resources to support democratic transitions and opportunities that emerge unexpectedly in Africa?

Answer. If confirmed, I would seek to build on democratic openings across the Africa continent and in close coordination with the recently confirmed A/S for Africa to ensure we are coordinating closely and maximizing our resources and aligned in our policy approach. I would work to develop and coordinate strategic U.S. diplomatic engagement and assistance on democracy and human rights for countries in transition, working closely with the Africa Bureau, as well as colleagues from throughout the J Family, USAID and beyond.

*Question.* What lessons have the challenges to the transitions in Sudan and Ethiopia taught us about how to best support unexpected democratic transitions in the medium and long term?

Answer. The challenges in the transitions in Sudan and Ethiopia have taught us that the democratic transition process is extremely fragile and that success requires sustained medium and long term support but also that civil society—and women in particular—are important partners to understand alternative perspectives in transitioning countries.

If confirmed, I would work to support democratic institutions, so that they're strong, accountable, able to govern capably, and have the capacity to support credible and inclusive elections, enabling a peaceful transition to a democratic state; promote the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms including through legal reforms; and promote comprehensive transitional justice measures and credible, independent justice mechanisms.

*Question.* Russian malign activity in Africa is of increasing concern, particularly given credible reports of election interference, the engagement of Russian mercenaries, including Wagner Group, in Northern Mozambique, and Russia's security sector support to the Touadera administration (which includes an exemption to the U.N. arms embargo) in the Central African Republic (CAR).

- In your opinion, what should the U.S. be doing in Africa to counter malign Russian interference in elections, other democratic processes, and to reduce its influence over elected leaders?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States supports efforts by African nations to develop strong peace and security institutions to improve access to justice through capacity building and technical assistance. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen coordination within the Department of State, across the U.S. Government, and with likeminded partners such as the European Union and France to ensure our efforts are aligned and mutually supportive to strengthen African governments' abilities to mitigate conflict, stop human rights abuses and violations, hold those responsible for such actions accountable, and help countries achieve stable democracies that do not require the short-term security assistance of malign external actors. As has been demonstrated in multiple contexts, governments that partner with groups like Russian-supported Wagner become weaker, poorer, and less secure. As a practical matter, leaders in such countries lose control of their militaries and natural resources. Specifically, to counterbalance Russia's influence, if confirmed, I will pursue opportunities to stand up to Russian malign influence and reaffirm America's commitment to countries that uphold democracy and human rights. Additionally, I will work with partners to develop security alternatives for governments facing conflict and poverty.

*Question.* The recent coups d'etat in Mali are recent examples of the fragility of the Malian state. What is your assessment of the status of the Algiers Accord and prospects for its implementation?

*Answer.* The events in May of this year underscore just how important it is that Mali conducts free and fair elections on time in February 2022 and that the Head of the Transition and the Prime Minister of the Transition should not under any circumstances be candidates for the forthcoming presidential election. Without a legitimate government in place, it will be very difficult to make progress on the key provisions of the Algiers Accord.

*Question.* In your opinion, should the Algiers Accord remain the primary framework for peacebuilding and governance in Mali? If so, why? The recent coups d'etat in Mali are recent examples of the fragility of the Malian state.

*Answer.* In my opinion, the United States should continue to support the Algiers Accord, because, if implemented, it would play a substantial stabilizing role in Mali and the region. In particular, Accord provisions that concern decentralization and government services for marginalized populations will help respond to ongoing grievances that erode state legitimacy and fuel conflict.

*Question.* In light of the recent coups d'etat in Mali and Chad, would you agree that Niger is the U.S.' most important democratic ally in the Sahel? If yes, do you feel that U.S. democracy and governance support to Niger is sufficient to reflect the importance of this strategic relationship? If no, why not?

*Answer.* Niger is a democratic example for the region, especially for the transition governments in Mali and Chad. In February, the transition from former Nigerien President Issoufou, who voluntarily stepped down after two terms, to President Bazoum was Niger's first handover from one democratically elected president to another. Mauritania similarly achieved its first peaceful democratic transition of power in 2019. I understand Niger is a strong partner of the United States on matters of regional security through its participation in the G5-Sahel Joint Force, MINUSMA, the MNJTF, and D-ISIS Coalition. U.S. democracy and governance support to Niger totaled \$1.78 million in FY2021. I believe greater U.S. democracy and governance support to Niger would further strengthen Nigerien democratic institutions and serve as a bulwark against growing regional anti-democratic trends.

*Question.* Given the ongoing political and constitutional crisis in Somalia, do you feel U.S. policy toward Somalia requires a re-think? If no, why not? If yes, in what alternative ways should the U.S. support democracy and human rights in Somalia?

*Answer.* I believe that it is always important for the United States to reflect upon its policies and seek to ensure that its approach will bring about the best possible outcome, and this is especially true when there is a crisis. I understand the administration recently completed a comprehensive policy review for Somalia, which iden-

tified addressing the political dynamics at the root of the current political situation as necessary for advancing long-term stabilization goals for the country.

If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that implementation of U.S. policy toward Somalia helps resolve the political and constitutional crisis and supports long-term democracy and human rights objectives. If confirmed, I will welcome your engagement and make myself available to brief you on these efforts.

*Question.* Immediately following the indirect selection of Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (aka Farmajo) as President of Somalia in 2017, the U.S. engaged with the Somali Government in Mogadishu on the premise that Somalia would hold one-person-one-vote direct elections in 2020.

- Was this a realistic expectation to set in 2016 or has U.S. policy been based on a fundamentally-flawed assumption?

*Answer.* I am not aware of the deliberations that followed the indirect selection of Farmajo as President of Somalia in 2017, but I am aware that one-person-one-vote direct elections have not yet come about in Somalia.

*Question.* How do you view the prospects of one-person-one-vote direct elections in Somalia in the future?

*Answer.* Somalia is a deeply challenging context, but I am always hopeful about the prospects for democracy and the tenacity of people to pursue a governance system that truly affords them fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I am committed to supporting efforts towards more inclusive, representative governance in Somalia, to include one-person-one-vote elections when feasible.

*Question.* Is it an appropriate approach to orient U.S. democracy and governance programs toward a specific electoral event in Somalia? If no, what is a more prudent approach for building democratic institutions and norms?

*Answer.* I believe that democracy is an evolving process. While elections are seminal events that often serve as milestones for measuring democratic progress, they are insufficient markers for building or consolidating a democratic state. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that U.S. democracy support continues to be holistic in its response to challenges and focuses on building institutions and support norms globally. I understand that while DRL does not currently have any programs in Somalia, any future investment should be strategically targeted in coordination with interagency efforts to further democratic priorities in country.

*Question.* Is it your view that a coup d'état occurred in Guinea on September 5, 2021 to depose President Alpha Conde?

*Answer.* On September 5, military officers led by Colonel Mamdy Doumbouya deposed duly elected President Alpha Conde and seized power. Doumbouya's dissolution of the constitution and government plunged Guinea into a political crisis. COL Doumbouya now exerts de facto control over the Guinean Government.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the challenges to democracy and human rights in Liberia?

*Answer.* Corruption is endemic in Liberia and affects nearly every facet of life. In 2019 and 2020, Liberia ranked 137 of 180 countries and territories on the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, having fallen from 120 in 2018.

Recent editions of the Department of State's annual Human Rights Report note that restrictions on freedom of expression are among the most significant human rights issues in Liberia. Journalists sometimes perceive the Government's approach to them as antagonistic and sometimes self-censor as a result. Individuals protesting against the Government must apply for a permit from the Ministry of Justice before organizing demonstrations, though the laws and regulations regarding permits remain unclear. Other significant human rights issues in Liberia include violence against women, including widespread female genital mutilation and other harmful practices against women and girls; ongoing impunity for serious human rights abuses and violations, and harsh prison conditions and lengthy pretrial detention; and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTQI) persons.

*Question.* Do you feel that issues of justice and reconciliation from Liberia's civil wars has been adequately addressed? If no, what options for justice and reconciliation in Liberia should be explored?

*Answer.* Liberia's 2009 Truth and Reconciliation Commission report recommended a mix of criminal accountability and restorative measures to address the crimes committed during the country's civil wars to include prosecution of gross violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law and monetary

reparations and memorialization of victims. To date, I understand the Liberian Government has not implemented the majority of the recommendations from the TRC report. Efforts to promote justice and reconciliation in Liberia must be Liberian-led. This is not to say that all Liberians feel their issues from that long war have been resolved, and questions about how the administration can continue to support those needs remain important. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States stands ready to be a partner to Liberia in justice and reconciliation efforts and will continue to encourage the Liberian Government and people to pursue such efforts.

*Question.* In several Francophone African countries—Togo, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, and recently Chad—dying and long-serving presidents have manipulated fragile constitutions to pave the way for their sons to replace them should they pass away while in office. Is such a scenario likely in Cameroon, and if so, what should be the U.S. position if this occurred?

*Answer.* The trend of elected leaders seeking to change constitutions or laws in order to remain in office, or transfer power to members of their family, is deeply concerning and undermines critical governing institutions that bring stability. President Biya has been in power for nearly 40 years and is among the world's longest ruling leaders. If confirmed, I will seek to promote democracy, respect for human rights, and accountability in Cameroon and will use a range of tools to do so.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* In several Francophone African countries—Togo, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, and recently Chad—dying and long-serving presidents have manipulated fragile constitutions to pave the way for their sons to replace them should they pass away while in office. Is such a scenario likely in Cameroon, and if so, what should be the U.S. position if this occurred?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the trend of unconstitutional changes in power in Africa and efforts to manipulate constitutions and laws in a manner that undermines democratic transfers of power, including in favor of successions within families. While Cameroon's constitution is clear regarding the presidential transition process, it has not been tested in more than 40 years. It is important that the Government and people of Cameroon work to strengthen institutions to ensure a democratic transition should the President be unable to complete his term. An unconstitutional transfer of power to any would-be successor could exacerbate current challenges and lead to instability. If confirmed, I will work with our Embassy in Yaoundé and like-minded partners to engage the Cameroonian Government and civil society actors interested in strengthening Cameroon's democratic institutions, respect for human rights, and accountability. I will also reaffirm the United States' strong support for countries to respect their constitutions during transitions in power and to oppose extra-constitutional changes or maneuvers to facilitate successions within families.

*Question.* As Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, if confirmed, how can DRL better support a resolution to the Anglophone Crisis and the significant and longstanding challenges to democratic elections and democratic governance in Cameroon?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about the ongoing violence in Cameroon and the crisis in the Anglophone region. Secretary Blinken's decision to restrict the visas of individuals responsible for undermining peace in Cameroon is a concrete example of options the Department of State can exercise to push for peace and dialogue. If confirmed, I will seek to promote accountability for human rights violations and abuses and ensure any Cameroonian security force unit that may be nominated for assistance is fully vetted for allegations of gross violations of human rights, consistent with the Leahy law.

My focus would be to continue urging all parties to end violence and to engage in an inclusive dialogue without preconditions. I would make clear U.S. support for the Swiss Government's effort to advance mediation between the Government and separatist armed group leaders and encourage the Cameroonian Government take concrete steps to move this effort forward. I would also continue to pursue engagement with African nations, France, other likeminded partners, and U.N. Security Council member states to find ways to promote a peaceful resolution of the ongoing violence.

*Question.* DRL has led the USG's efforts to support electoral processes and a democratic transition in CAR since the lead up to CAR's 2016 elections. In your

opinion, what areas are most critical for U.S. democracy, governance and human rights support to focus on in CAR in the post-2020/21 election period?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with colleagues throughout the State Department and interagency and with likeminded governments to identify areas where interventions may advance democracy, governance, justice and accountability, and respect for human rights in the Central African Republic (CAR). I understand that the United States has historically supported CAR's efforts to develop strong institutions and strengthen rule of law through capacity building and technical assistance. I am deeply concerned by reports of human rights violations and abuses by the CAR Armed Forces and Russian-supported mercenaries, respectively, and reports of violence by armed groups against civilians and increased use of IEDs. I am equally concerned by credible reports of money laundering and a wide range of illicit trafficking and believe the U.S. has a role to play in further investigating these allegations and ensuring they do not undermine CAR's electoral process. The CAR Government's pending commission of inquiry will be critical to demonstrating its commitment to justice and accountability. If confirmed, I will seek to strengthen the CAR Government's ability to expand access to justice for more Central Africans, prevent human rights abuses and violations, promote accountability for those responsible, and help the country achieve stability and security without calling on malign actors for short-term security assistance.

*Question.* What is your perspective on the performance of the Tshisekedi administration to date?

Answer. Since President Tshisekedi took office in 2019, the DRC has released unjustly detained individuals; established an anti-trafficking agency; and realized the highest-level corruption conviction in DRC history. These were among the steps that merited the reinstatement of DRC's AGOA eligibility. I was pleased to see the first U.S.-DRC Human Rights Dialogue occur in June 2021 with the support of the Tshisekedi administration and if confirmed, I will aim to advance and deepen the commitments made during that dialogue.

*Question.* Do you feel that the Tshisekedi administration is in a position to continue to advance reforms, including in the areas of anti-corruption, the security sector and the natural resources sector?

*Question.* I understand that under the Tshisekedi administration, the DRC saw the highest-level corruption conviction in that country's history. If confirmed, I would work with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and partners in the DRC to help address corruption and encourage accountability for corrupt actors with all available tools. The DRC has a long history of corruption and abuse in the mining and security sectors so a core component of any strategy must be engaging on both issues in a meaningful way that can bring about a more professional and effective security sector and a mining sector that truly benefits all Congolese. Essential to doing this work will be close collaboration with local communities and civil society groups.

I believe that the United States should support the Congolese Government's efforts to stabilize eastern DRC by addressing the drivers of escalating violence, including holding those in the military responsible for corruption and human rights abuses and violations to account.

*Question.* In your view, how can the U.S. best continue to support democratic reforms in DRC, including prospects for free, fair and transparent elections in 2023?

Answer. If confirmed, I will emphasize to DRC leaders the early imperative of undertaking the legal, financial, and technical preparations necessary for free and fair elections in 2023, including reform of the Independent National Electoral Commission. To be credible, the 2023 elections must be inclusive, conducted transparently and impartially, and held in accordance with constitutional deadlines. If I am confirmed, I would work to ensure appropriate resources are in place to help our Congolese partners with this important task.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to supporting the legitimate victor of a free and fair electoral process in 2023?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work diligently to support a free and fair electoral process and a constructive election environment in the run up to and including the 2023 elections. The declared winner of the presidential election should reflect the will of the Congolese people at the ballot box through a transparent, impartial, and inclusive electoral process.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the current human rights situation in Burundi?

*Answer.* Since the election of President Ndayishimiye, the Burundian Government has lifted bans on media outlets associated with the political opposition, freed imprisoned journalists and human rights defenders, increased efforts to address trafficking in persons, and taken steps to end abusive practices by the ruling party's youth militia. However, I am also aware of the recent report by the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, which documents ongoing human rights violations, the absence of adequate democratic space, ongoing targeting of journalists, denial of freedom of association to civil society, and a lack of meaningful structural reform. If confirmed, I will engage with colleagues from across the State Department and the interagency to address the current human rights situation in Burundi.

*Question.* Do you feel the democracy and human rights situation in Burundi has improved or declined in Burundi since President Nkurunziza's death and the inauguration of President Ndayishimiye? How?

*Answer.* I understand that Burundi's 2020 elections took place in a markedly different atmosphere from that in 2015 and were characterized by a competitive process with relatively little violence. Since the election of President Ndayishimiye, the Burundian Government has lifted bans on media outlets associated with the political opposition, freed imprisoned journalists and human rights defenders, increased efforts to address trafficking in persons, and taken steps to end abusive practices by the ruling party's youth militia. However, I am also aware of the recent report by the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, which notes the absence of any structural reform to "durably improve the [human rights] situation" and multiple ongoing human rights violations and other concerns. If confirmed, I will engage with colleagues across the State Department and the interagency to assess the approach of President Ndayishimiye's administration and review Burundi's progress on democracy and respect for human rights.

*Question.* In your opinion, have the conditions in Burundi adequately changed for the Departments of State and Treasury to consider terminating the Burundi Sanctions Program?

*Answer.* I understand the Burundi sanctions program has been a valuable tool to deter abuses and promote accountability among those connected with the 2015 violence and instability in the country. If confirmed, I will engage with the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of African Affairs, and the Department of the Treasury to assess whether Executive Order 13712 remains an effective tool to advance our foreign policy goals in Burundi, including improved respect for human rights. I will also consider the use of all available tools to respond to human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

*Question.* Do you feel that the upgrading of Burundi from Tier 3 to Tier 2 Watch List in the 2021 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report was an objective reflection of the efforts of the Burundian Government, specifically its justice sector, to make good faith efforts to improve the TIP situation in Burundi?

*Answer.* I understand that Burundi's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report tier ranking as Tier 2 Watch List was based on the Burundian Government's increased efforts, including by the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, and Interior, at the direction of the Office of the President, to counter trafficking in persons. These efforts included increasing investigations and prosecutions of suspected trafficking offenses, convicting traffickers, and referring victims to assistance. The Government also developed and implemented the country's first-ever national data collection system on law enforcement's efforts to combat human trafficking and trained officials on its use. If confirmed, I commit to working with Burundi to ensure it continues to prioritize countering trafficking in persons.

*Question.* Kenya will have elections in 2022. In your opinion, are planned levels of USG support to Kenya's electoral process adequate?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States has invested significant resources over the last two decades in support of free and fair elections and democratic reform in Kenya, covering a broad set of programming areas. If confirmed, I would assess the electoral climate and work with colleagues to determine whether planned levels of U.S. Government support are adequate for the 2022 general elections in Kenya and whether additional funding, if available, would be merited. I believe continued U.S. engagement and programs for the August 2022 elections can help Kenya, one of four U.S. strategic partners in Africa, conduct credible elections and forestall the violence and instability that have too often plagued prior election cycles. I strongly support the ongoing efforts to enhance accountability and transparency of the election process, support anti-corruption efforts, promote initiatives to mitigate possible

election-related violence and protect human rights, strengthen civic engagement and voter education, and improve the information and media environment.

*Question.* While there was hope that the end of Mugabe's 37 year reign as president of Zimbabwe would usher in democratic and economic reforms that would enable the beleaguered country to cast off its pariah status, the three years of leadership under President Mnangagwa has demonstrated a continuation, if not worsening, of human rights abuses, economic mismanagement and kleptocratic behavior of the ZANU-PF regime. What tools does the U.S. have at its disposal that are underutilized to encourage democratic and economic reforms in Zimbabwe?

*Answer.* The Government of Zimbabwe's authoritarian and corrupt practices, including the targeting of opposition political figures, journalists, and members of civil society through harassment, arrests, and detentions are matters of great concern. I greatly appreciate that this committee has publicly called out repressive actions taken by the Zimbabwe Government. The State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Harare also issue condemnations when appropriate and publicly voice support for the courageous Zimbabwean women and men who speak out against government corruption and abuses. I understand the U.S. supports governance programs that improve electoral processes, refine citizen advocacy strategies, and enhance public accountability measures. It provides support to those the Zimbabwean Government singles out for abuse, and imposes targeted sanctions to promote accountability for corrupt actors and those who abuse human rights and undermine democratic processes. If confirmed, I will work with this committee, civil society, regional neighbors, and likeminded partners to direct more attention to the situation in Zimbabwe so that, together, we can increase the pressure on the Government to respect democratic principles and human rights. If confirmed, I will also work with interagency partners to mobilize sanctions programs to promote accountability for those individuals who are currently active in corruption and human rights abuses.

*Question.* An area of considerable debate has been the value of reincorporating political party programming into the U.S.' portfolio of democracy assistance to Zimbabwe. Do you commit to working with the Africa Bureau to review the Department of State's posture on political party support to Zimbabwe?

*Answer.* The Government of Zimbabwe has systematically weakened the opposition through manipulated court rulings, harassment and incarceration of key figures, and thinly veiled actions to install pliant political figures in parliament since it took power after the 2018 election.

If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the Department of State's posture on political party support in Zimbabwe, as well as how to better engage civil society organizations, build confidence in the electoral commission, and encourage more regional engagement.

*Question.* As Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, would you support the investment of DRL resources into programming that would support investigative journalism and research to better understand corruption and kleptocratic networks in Zimbabwe?

*Answer.* It is important to look into all options available that would help counter the corrupt and authoritarian actions of the Government of Zimbabwe. If confirmed, I will explore new funding options for DRL interventions in Zimbabwe while factoring how such programs would complement existing USAID programs in country to ensure effectiveness and avoid duplication of efforts, as well as the availability of funds, the timing of appropriations, and procurement lead times.

*Question.* Given the supermajority retained by the MPLA in the August 2017 legislative elections, has President Lourenco and his party used this legislative power to push through the necessary democracy and human rights reforms from the start of their current term in office as prioritized by the United States and the international community? If so, what are these specific democracy and human rights reforms? If not, what has the U.S. done to ensure that Angola's Government makes these necessary reforms?

*Answer.* I understand the Government of Angola has made significant progress in its efforts to combat corruption, including investigations and prosecutions of current and former government officials and adopting a new penal code which increased penalties for corrupt officials. The Government has also taken steps to hold officials accountable for human rights abuses. Though challenges remain, the Government has noted that human rights are a matter of national security and acknowledged the need for oversight provided by civil society organizations across the country. Since the release of the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, Angola has demonstrated further commitment to combat human trafficking by increasing the



criminal penalties for human trafficking; convicting and sentencing traffickers to prison; and conducting a national awareness campaign on human trafficking. Angola also modified its religious registration law to reduce restrictions on Islam and other religions. I understand the United States looks forward to discussing ways to build upon Angola's progress at their fourth Bilateral Dialogue on Human Rights in the coming months. If confirmed, I intend to use that and other opportunities to strengthen bilateral cooperation to support Angola's anti-corruption efforts, enhance accountability mechanisms for human rights violations and abuses, advance democratic governance, and support protections for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to peaceful assembly and freedoms of expression, association, and religion or beliefs.

*Question.* While Angola's constitutional court rejected the opposition parties' legal petitions in the last election for alleged irregularities, what specific electoral reforms are needed to address some of the concerns raised in those petitions as well as to improve the overall electoral process for the 2022 polls?

*Answer.* The 2022 legislative elections will be an opportunity for Angola to demonstrate its commitment to democratic governance. A transparent planning process for the elections will aid in their success.

If possible, I would also like to see local elections held in conjunction with the legislative elections, noting that they would be the first to be held in recent Angolan history.

*Question.* The ruling MPLA under the leadership of President Lourenco introduced changes to the electoral law that would centralize the counting of votes instead of doing it at the level of each municipality and province. Given that centralized counting of votes is not a best practice in results management, particularly in terms of engendering confidence in the transparency and credibility of transmission of election results, how would the centralizing of vote counting be seen in your view? Given the concerns raised by opposition candidates in the 2017 elections through their legal petitions citing the lack of transparency by the electoral commission and alleged vote counting irregularities at the provincial level, would such a law engender greater confidence in the electoral process? If so, how so? If not, why not?

*Answer.* President Lourenço has shown a willingness to take into account the concerns of minority parties as well as the public demand for free and fair elections. The draft law could present logistical challenges in registering voters in remote areas, and constraints in the prescribed electoral timeframe could lead to low voter registration and participation abroad. As the law is debated and refined, the U.S. Government should continue to advocate for transparency and adherence to international norms.

I also note that on September 11, Angola saw its largest political demonstration since before the pandemic began in response to the draft election law, and that the peaceful nature of the march and the authorities' willingness to permit such a sizeable gathering, despite standing COVID restrictions, is a hopeful signal as Angola gears up for its 2022 legislative elections.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MS. SARAH MARGON BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In 2016, the Washington Examiner quoted you as saying that the human rights situation in Cuba was improving. Specifically, you said that in "Cuba we've seen more engagement on HR issues." In 2021, you opposed the State Department's decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism:

- Do you believe that the human rights situation in Cuba is improving? And if so, what specific indicators are you looking at to make this determination?

*Answer.* I do not believe that the human rights situation is improving. In response to peaceful protests in July, Cuban security forces violently repressed the protests, arresting hundreds of demonstrators simply for exercising their rights of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, as well as numerous human rights activists. If confirmed, I pledge democracy and human rights in Cuba will remain at the core of our Cuba policy.

*Question.* Can you explain why you oppose Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism?

*Answer.* As a nominee I do not have access to information that would enable me to have an informed opinion as to whether Cuba should be designated as a state

sponsor of terrorism. I have long believed that state sponsor of terrorism designations should be used for states that are terrorists, based on fact, analysis, and intelligence. Similarly, I believe a designation should not be lifted until there's full clarity that the government in question has taken all steps necessary to relieve themselves of the criteria needed for such a designation. Regardless of the state sponsor of terrorism designation, I do believe other corresponding punitive measures are an important tool to be used on repressive governments and/or officials. If confirmed, I will consult closely with the intelligence community and Congress on the way forward, including on the decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism.

*Question.* Are you aware that Cuba continues to provide safe haven to convicted criminals on the FBI's most wanted list, like Joanne Chesimard, who executed a New Jersey State Troop in 1973 and William Morales who was convicted in a U.S. District Court for possession of explosives and other crimes?

*Answer.* Yes, I am aware that Cuba harbors several U.S. fugitives from justice wanted on or convicted of charges of political violence, many of whom have resided in Cuba for decades. If confirmed, I will support the regular U.S. calls on Cuba to return fugitives from justice.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you advocate for Cuba to be de-listed as a state sponsor of terrorism?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the administration's review of Cuba policy, including the previous administration's decision to designate Cuba as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. I will consult with the intelligence community and Congress on the way forward.

*Question.* In July of this year, we witnessed the largest protests against the regime in 62 years. It's clear from the videos and messages shared, that these protests were clearly sparked by decades of mismanagement and human rights abuses by the regime. The unprecedented size and spread of these protests are directly related to ordinary Cubans' access to internet circumvention tools like VPNs. If confirmed, you will oversee the Bureau at State, which is responsible for U.S. assistance to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

- If confirmed, do you commit to support robust funding for the democracy movement in Cuba?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will use all tools at my disposal to support independent civil society and democratic actors in Cuba, including through robust funding for democracy and human rights programs. I believe that these programs, including those that promote internet freedom, are central to empowering independent civil society organizations and ordinary citizens to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you support providing internet circumvention tools that allow Cubans unfettered and uncensored access to the internet?

*Answer.* I understand the United States provides funding—over \$70 million globally on an annual basis—to support the development, deployment, and operation of the latest secure and reliable technical solutions to counter Internet censorship, content blocking, and shutdowns, and other violations of Internet Freedom. I also understand U.S.-supported programming makes secure circumvention and communications tools available to internet users everywhere, including in Cuba. If confirmed, and with the continued appropriations support for these activities, I will ensure DRL continues these critical programs.

*Question.* In 2018, you tweeted in support for the anti-Semitic BDS movement, praising AirBnB for removing rental listings of homes located inside the West Bank.

- Do you still support this decision?

*Answer.* I firmly reject the BDS movement, which unfairly singles out Israel. If confirmed, I will work with Israel to counter efforts to delegitimize it around the world, while respecting the First Amendment rights of Americans and supporting U.S. businesses.

*Question.* Do you view the BDS movement as hateful and anti-Semitic?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration has been clear that it resolutely opposes the BDS movement. I also have made clear that I firmly reject the BDS movement. The administration has stated it will always fully respect Americans' First Amendment rights, while also remaining a strong partner in fighting efforts to delegitimize Israel. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to support Israel's further integration into the international community, and to oppose the BDS movement and any efforts to delegitimize Israel.

*Question.* In July 2020, you praised an op-ed by Peter Beinert that argued for Israel to discard its identity as a Jewish State. This conflicts with longstanding U.S. support for Israel as a Jewish state.

- Can you clarify whether or not you fully endorse the views expressed by Beinert in this op-ed? Specifically, like Beinert, do you no longer believe in a Jewish state?

*Answer.* I believe that Israel is a democratic and Jewish state. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israel partnership.

*Question.* Can you clarify, is it “cruel” to limit Tehran’s support for groups that violate the human rights of ordinary people across the region?

*Answer.* The Iranian Government has a deeply troubling record on human rights both at home and abroad. If confirmed, I am committed to working to disrupt Iran’s efforts to repress, harass, harm, or otherwise violate the human rights of individuals in any part of the world, including via its support for violent partners and proxies, and to continuing to use a variety of tools, including sanctions, to counter Iran’s support for violent partners and proxies in the region.

*Question.* Has your opinion of the Iranian Government changed since Raisi’s election as President?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration’s Iran policy is designed to advance U.S. interests, which include deterring and punishing human rights abuses, regardless of who is in power in Tehran. If confirmed, I will ensure that we deploy all available tools to promote accountability for human rights violators.

*Question.* If the Iranian Government is still replete with nasty characters, do you believe that providing that regime with sanctions relief advances democracy and human rights in Iran?

*Answer.* The Iranian Government regularly denies Iranians their human rights, including through severe restrictions on the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, religion or belief, and expression. If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to call out and stand up to Iran’s human rights abuses, and to maintain and impose sanctions on Iranian entities and individuals perpetrating human rights abuses.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MS. SARAH MARGON BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Recently, the United States and the U.N. Relief and Works Agency agreed upon a framework for cooperation which includes a mutual commitment to abide by the Foreign Assistance Act’s prohibition on assistance to UNRWA without adequate oversight of funding, specifically over funds which could end up in the hands of terrorist. But UNRWA has displayed an insufficient track record in exercising oversight of its funds, even after committing to our government to do so:

- At what point is it necessary to accept that the constant flow of U.N. support is enabling corrupt entities in the region and not actually helping bring about peace and security? What options exist for alternative, U.S.-led and U.S.-facilitated assistance?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration supports the work of UNRWA, which provides critical services to vulnerable Palestinian refugees. UNRWA is a lifeline for thousands of Palestinian refugees in the region. I understand the United States and UNRWA have reaffirmed a commitment to uphold the principles of accountability, neutrality, and transparency. I understand the Department is deeply engaged with UNRWA, including on key reforms related to efficiency, effectiveness, and importantly neutrality. I want to be clear—neutrality means antiracism, combatting anti-semitism and tolerance.

The Department is committed to ensuring U.S. Government funding does not end up in the hand of terrorists, including Hamas. The administration provides assistance to trusted international organizations and NGOs in a manner consistent with U.S. law and does not direct assistance to Hamas. The Department takes oversight of U.N. operations, including UNRWA, seriously to ensure U.S. taxpayer-funded assistance is reaching the intended recipients.

*Question.* Do you agree with President Biden that further conditioning security aid to Israel would be “outrageous”?

Answer. Yes. The Biden-Harris administration remains unwavering in its commitment to Israel's security and will work to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israel partnership. If confirmed, I will support these efforts to strengthen our bilateral ties.

*Question.* Do you acknowledge that Israel's security environment is unlike any other in the world, by means of its very existence?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Is the Human Rights Council serving the interests of the United States when it consistently displays bias against the state of Israel?

Answer. The U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC) has flaws, including in particular the Council's problematic membership and its disproportionate focus on Israel. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring with colleagues the HRC can be as effective and balanced as possible, and will continue to advocate that the HRC treats Israel in the same way as the HRC handles any other country. When the United States has a seat at the table, we are able to advocate on Israel's behalf. The U.S. is hopeful about moving resolutions out of Agenda Item 7, which will be a step in the right direction. Advancing democracy and protecting human rights are vital to U.S. national security interests. U.S. leadership in multilateral venues, including the Human Rights Council helps focus international attention on the world's most egregious human rights situations such as Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Ethiopia, Burma, and help direct U.N. assistance to countries in transition like Sudan.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MS. SARAH MARGON BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Cuba*

*Question.* The Cuban regime annually proposes a resolution at the United Nations General Assembly condemning the U.S. for policies toward Cuba, and among other things calling for the embargo to be lifted. The U.S. has consistently voted against this measure, with the exception of 2016, when the Obama-Biden administration instead abstained from the vote. Long-standing policy of the U.S. to use its voice and vote to oppose this measure was restored under the Trump administration. The Biden administration has extended this policy, and this year U.N. Ambassador Thomas Greenfield voted against the Cuban-sponsored resolution condemning the United States' congressionally mandated trade embargo at the United Nations General Assembly.

Meanwhile, the United States Congress has been and remains committed to maintaining America's embargo on Cuba. The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-114) codifies the U.S. embargo. The executive branch is prevented from lifting the embargo without congressional concurrence through legislation until certain democratic conditions set forth in the law are met.

- Do you agree with the Congressionally mandated policy mandating an embargo?

Answer. The LIBERTAD Act codifies the bulk of the embargo and the circumstances under which it can be ended. Unless it is repealed or amended by Congress, the embargo can only be ended if the President determines Cuba has entered a transition to democracy. The administration is committed to implementing U.S. law while ensuring its policies advance the right to self-determination for the Cuban people, greater freedom for the Cuban people, and expanded support for pro-democracy, human rights, and independent media in Cuba. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting these goals as part of the administration's policy toward Cuba and consulting with Congress on ways to advance them that is consistent with U.S. law.

*Question.* Do you agree with the decision to vote against U.N. resolutions condemning the U.S. embargo?

Answer. Yes. Under LIBERTAD, the embargo is U.S. law. If confirmed, I commit to supporting the administration's policy approach to Cuba consistent with U.S. law.

*Question.* Please describe what policies you would take to deepen Congress's policy mandating an embargo of Cuba?

Answer. Democracy and human rights in Cuba are at the core of the administration's efforts to empower the Cuban people to determine their own future. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the administration's goals to support the Cuban people to further strengthen Cuban civil society, and to increase pressure on the regime for its repression and human rights violations, as the Biden administration did

this past July following the Government's brutal response to protests. I look forward to consulting with Congress on the way forward and to ensuring our policy towards Cuba is rooted in broad support for fundamental values.

*Israel/State Dept*

*Question.* On July 8, 2014 our Israeli allies launched Operation Protective Edge in response to a string of Hamas terrorist attacks and atrocities. The State Dept. among other things called on Israel to avoid civilian casualties and committed to resupplying them with military technology they required to defend themselves. On July 31 you criticized that stance as "consistently inconsistent" in a post on Twitter. Your view is particularly worrisome because, if confirmed, you would contribute to decision-making related to providing resources to allies in crisis conditions.

- Please clarify what you meant by the criticism that the State Dept. being "consistently inconsistent" for urging Israel to avoid civilian casualties while seeking to resupply Israel.

*Answer.* I strongly support Israel's right to self-defense and the United States' continued commitment to Israel's security. I also believe that mitigation of civilian casualty risks, consistent with U.S. law, should be considered for all U.S. arms sales. My tweet was an unnuanced expression of that objective. If confirmed, I will support the United States' continued commitment to Israel's security and will work to strengthen all aspects of the U.S.-Israel partnership. Secretary Blinken also has underscored the U.S. expectation that Israel should do everything it possibly can to mitigate the risk of civilian casualties, which I believe is in line with our shared values and common strategic interests.

*Question.* Please describe human rights concerns that you believe are relevant to decisions related to supplying our Israeli allies with resources they need to defend themselves.

*Answer.* The U.S. commitment to Israel's security is ironclad. The Biden-Harris administration remains committed to Israel's defense and security, including its qualitative military edge in the region, consistent with U.S. law and policy. The President has also made it clear that the rule of law and respect for human rights are front and center in U.S. foreign policy. If confirmed, I will join this administration in insisting on adherence to our agreements on the use of U.S.-origin defense equipment by our allies and partners, compliance with the laws of armed conflict, and respect for human rights.

*Question.* In May 16, 2018 you criticized the United States Government on Twitter for being "virtually silent" on "Israeli security forces' disproportionate attacks on Palestinians in Gaza." This assessment is not a legal assessment: it is an institutional judgment about the role of U.S. Government officials. These assessments and others like them would be significant if you are confirmed for role as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

Please list which Israeli actions in the context of your May 16, 2018 post you believe the U.S. Government should have been more vocal about?

*Answer.* I believe that the United States should continue to underscore the expectation that Israel, as a key democratic ally in the region, should do everything it possibly can to mitigate the risk of civilian casualties. It is critical for all parties to refrain from unilateral or disproportionate steps that exacerbate tensions and undercut efforts to advance a negotiated two-state solution, such as annexation of territory, settlement activity, demolitions, and incitement to violence.

*Interbranch Cooperation*

*Question.* In January 2020 Sens. Cotton, Cruz, and Braun sent an oversight letter to then-Attorney General Barr requesting that he "review the activities of the National Iranian American Council (NIAC) and its sister organization NIAC Action for potential violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)." You criticized this request, and joined a letter saying that the Senators had used "tactics [that] have no place in our political process or our national discourse, and risk turning our Justice Department into a political tool."

- Do you believe that the Senators' letter asking for a review of activities has no place in our political process?

*Answer.* To the contrary, I believe Congress has a strong role to play in exercising vital oversight functions. In joining that letter, I was expressing concern about the potential for federal law enforcement power to be misused to intimidate or silence civil society organizations. If confirmed, I would seek to be in regular communication with Congress and meaningfully accommodate oversight requests.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of the role that elected officials play in overseeing agencies charged with investigating potential violations of statutory regulations such as FARA, in the context of your potential role as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor?

*Answer.* Elected officials have an important oversight function. I commit to working with Congress to accommodate its need for information to conduct oversight.

*Question.* Do you agree with the assessment that the Chinese Government is engaged in a genocide against the Uyghurs and other minorities in the XUAR that is ongoing?

*Answer.* Yes. I agree that the PRC has committed genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups, and that these crimes are ongoing.

*Question.* What role do you see for the State Department in countering that ongoing genocide, and more broadly the human rights atrocities being committed by the Chinese Communist Party?

*Answer.* The United States should continue to speak out consistently and jointly with allies and partners to condemn these atrocities, and to consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible for those abuses. If confirmed, I will advocate to continue concrete U.S. Government actions—in coordination with allies and partners whenever possible—to promote accountability for ongoing atrocities and genocide in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China, including through the imposition of visa restrictions, tightening of export controls, enforcement of import restrictions, imposition of financial sanctions, and multilateral initiatives. I will also look to engage the private sector on questions related to digital authoritarianism and the economic, legal, and reputational risks of supply chain links to entities that engage in human rights abuses, including forced labor in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China. Finally, if confirmed I will work with DRL colleagues and other non-governmental entities to ensure civil society is adequately supported to monitor, document, and respond to China's abuses—wherever they may occur.

#### *Israel/Sovereignty*

*Question.* The Obama-Biden administration's approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict was justified on the basis of a theory of regional relations in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict prevented broader Israeli-Arab rapprochement. Among other decisions, that administration implemented discriminatory policies that distinguished between Jewish communities in places Israel controlled before and after 1967. That approach culminated in December 2016, when the Obama administration maneuvered the United Nations Security Council into passing UNSCR 2334, which among other things denied Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights and part of its capital Jerusalem, including the Jewish Quarter. The Trump administration systematically worked to hollow out and render UNSCR 2334 null and void. They did so, including by recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, by moving our embassy to Jerusalem, by seeking to end discriminatory approaches that distinguished legally and for the purposes of aid and trade between different Israeli communities, and by taking several other steps.

- Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over the Golan Heights?

*Answer.* I understand that the Biden-Harris administration gives great weight to Israel's security. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria, it would be irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door. The Biden administration has not reversed U.S. policy on this important issue.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has sovereignty over Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* I understand the Biden-Harris administration has not altered U.S. policy on this important issue. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The administration also recognizes that Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of the Golan Heights?

*Answer.* I understand that U.S. policy regarding the Golan has not changed since the beginning of the Biden-Harris administration. As long as Bashar al-Assad is in control of Syria, it would be irresponsible to urge Israel to part with the Golan

Heights. Control of the strategic Golan Heights provides Israel an added measure of security from the turmoil next door.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel is in illegal occupation of any part of Jerusalem, including the Old City of Jerusalem?

*Answer.* Jerusalem is central to the national visions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem itself is a final status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. If confirmed, I will handle all issues related to Jerusalem with the care and sensitivity that they deserve.

*Question.* Do you believe that Israel has engaged in discriminatory policies, in response to which the private sector has an important role to play in not promoting or pursuing?

*Answer.* I believe all governments, including the United States and Israel, should work to end discrimination of any kind. If confirmed, I will work with all partners, including the private sector, to address discrimination and help ensure all people are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

*Question.* If so, please describe which discriminatory Israeli policies you believe the private sector has an important role to play in not promoting or pursuing.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review all available evidence and work with all partners to address discrimination—whether targeting Israelis or Palestinians—and ensure full compliance with existing U.S. policy and law, while also ensuring that all people are treated with the fundamental dignity and respect they deserve.

*Question.* The Biden administration has repeatedly expressed commitments to providing assistance to Lebanon, including in the absence of any government or in the context of a government controlled or unduly influenced by Hezbollah. If confirmed, you would have a central role in evaluating the humanitarian situation in Lebanon and you would have significant equities in what a response would look like.

- Do you believe that it would be in America's national security interest for resources to go to the Government of Lebanon even if that government was controlled or unduly influenced by Hezbollah?

*Answer.* Hizballah is a terrorist organization, and the United States undertakes rigorous measures to safeguard U.S. assistance from conferring benefits to Hezbollah or any other terrorist group, including thorough oversight, vetting, and robust risk mitigation practices. If confirmed, I would ensure the Department continues to support our vital interests in Lebanon through the ongoing but carefully allocated provision of U.S. assistance, including to Lebanese civil society, which helps to bolster Lebanon's resiliency, stability, and security.

*Question.* On January 10, 2021, the State Department designated Ansarallah, sometimes called the Houthis, and Abdul Malik al-Houthi, Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi, and Abdullah Yahya al Hakim, three leaders of Ansarallah, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) pursuant to Executive Order 13224. On February 5, the Biden administration informed Congress of its intention to revoke those sanctions. The issue of humanitarianism was central to the public explanation of the decision: officials at the State Department have justified the delisting of what they described as the "broad" designation of Ansarallah on humanitarian grounds, e.g. that large parts of Yemen's population live under areas controlled by the group. Since then, the Houthis have escalated their violence across the region, bombarding civilians in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Yemen was already one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the world, in large part because the Houthis and their Iranian backers block aid, steal aid, and attack civilians.

- Please describe the role played by Iran and the Houthis in deepening the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

*Answer.* The Houthis, with continued Iranian support, remain intransigent and focused on their military offensive against Marib. The offensive is the single biggest threat to peace efforts and is exacerbating an already-dire humanitarian crisis, placing at risk the approximately one million internally displaced persons who found refuge in Marib after escaping fighting in other parts of the country. The Houthis also exacerbate the humanitarian consequences of the fuel situation at Hudaydah port by stockpiling fuel and manipulating fuel prices, driving up the cost of fuel far beyond the reach of most Yemenis. In addition, the Houthis continue to interfere in the delivery of humanitarian aid.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in general.

*Answer.* The Biden administration revoked the terrorism designations of Ansarallah, sometimes referred to as the Houthis, in recognition of the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. I understand the administration listened to concerns voiced by the United Nations, humanitarian groups, and bipartisan members of Congress, among others, regarding potential impacts the designations could have had on Yemenis' access to essential basic commodities. The short time that passed between the designations and their revocations limited the impact the designations could have had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports. According to U.N. data, food and other humanitarian assistance items are moving through Yemeni ports at normal rates.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which the Biden administration's decision to lift terrorism sanctions against the Houthis and their leaders has enhanced the ability to provide humanitarian relief to Yemeni civilians in Marib.

*Answer.* The short time that passed between the designations and their revocations limited the impact that designations could have had on humanitarian assistance and commercial imports. The situation has been especially critical in Marib, where the escalation of hostilities has caused additional needs and secondary displacement. Critically, delivery has safely continued of life-saving food, emergency shelter, water, and sanitation and hygiene supplies, as well as essential non-food items, such as blankets and water containers.

*Question.* In May 2014, you criticized the United States Government for having done "little to follow up" on calls to create distance between the U.S. and Nigerian security forces, who you described as "barely more palatable" than Boko Haram fighters who had kidnapped hundreds of girls. In contrast, many in Congress and across the federal government see the Nigerian Government as a critical national security partner.

- Do you continue to believe that the U.S. should limit security cooperation with the Government of Nigeria?

*Answer.* Nigeria faces numerous security threats, including terrorism, rural banditry, kidnapping for ransom, herder-farmer violence, separatist attacks, maritime piracy, and rampant criminality. I understand the U.S. Government's strategy takes a holistic approach to help Nigeria address insecurity by harnessing a range of security, governance, and development tools. Nigeria is an important national security partner and has taken some steps to investigate alleged abuses by both the police and the military, which are essential steps to addressing longstanding impunity. A central part of U.S. security cooperation is focused on helping Nigeria build capable, well-equipped, professional, accountable security forces that effectively respond to threats, protect civilians, and respect human rights. U.S. Government also supports rule of law capacity building efforts, community-based conflict prevention and peacebuilding programs, livelihoods programs, and provides humanitarian assistance to build resilience among conflict-affected populations.

If confirmed, I will support the U.S. goal of a stable and secure Nigeria while ensuring the United States continues to use its engagements with the Nigerian Government to prioritize respect for human rights and accountability for past human rights violations and abuses

*Question.* What specific steps do you envision pursuing in your role as Assistance Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, should you be confirmed, that would limit cooperation with either the Government of Nigeria or Nigerian security forces?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would underscore that the United States expects the Nigerian Government and security forces to demonstrate a strong commitment to respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, and to prioritize accountability for past human rights violations and abuses. Assessing credible information of gross violations of human rights, consistent with the Leahy Law, and consulting with the Africa bureau would be an essential part of assessing whether cooperation should be limited. If confirmed, I would support the thorough vetting of Nigerian security force units, consistent with U.S. law, to ensure that we are not providing assistance to those units where there is credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights.

*Question.* How would you characterize the professionalism of Nigerian armed forces today?



Answer. Nigeria has an estimated 120,000 active-duty personnel in the military with a 70,000-person army. I understand the Nigerian Police Force lacks appropriate staffing and resources with only 375,000 police in a country of over 200 million citizens. The military is deployed on operations in 35 of the 36 states to support Nigeria's overstretched police force, but the reality is both are stretched.

According to the State Department's Human Rights Report, there were reports that members of the Nigerian security forces committed human rights abuses in 2020 and impunity remained a significant problem. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts across the U.S. Government as well as international partners to convey the consistent message that we need to see steady improvement toward more professional and accountable Nigerian security institutions.

*Question.* How would you characterize the Buhari administration in the context of counter-terrorism operations?

Answer. Defeating Boko Haram, ISIS-West Africa, and other violent extremist organizations is essential for the security and prosperity of Nigeria and the broader Lake Chad Basin. Violent extremist groups have caused at least 35,000 deaths in northeast Nigeria in the last decade, as well as displaced more than two million persons. In the Northeast, Nigeria is fighting insurgencies against ISIS-West Africa and Boko Haram with an increasingly overstretched and undermanned Nigerian Army. Lacking manpower, the armed forces desperately need an increase in resources. Additionally, support for non-military responses to countering terrorism—including increased development, good governance, and economic opportunities remain vital. Beyond being stretched, limited capability and uneven local government willingness to intervene present counter-terrorism challenges.

*Question.* Which countries would you advocate to be added or removed from the State Department's Country of Particular Concern list?

Answer. The law gives the Secretary of State the responsibility of making CPC designations, which provides important leverage to engage on religious intolerance, a central human rights concern. The 2020 International Religious Freedom Report was released in May, and Secretary Blinken will now have his first opportunity to undertake the annual designations, and without prejudging Secretary Blinken's CPC designations, I am confident the Secretary will carefully review the religious freedom situation in all countries and make designations based on the criteria set forth in the IRF Act.

These designations are one of a range of tools the Department has to promote accountability for governments and non-state entities that are religious freedom violators, and it is a very important tool. If confirmed, I will support the implementation of the full range of these tools, in partnership with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom.

*Question.* In December 2020, the Department of State designated Nigeria as a country of particular concern (CPC) in response to pervasive and egregious violations of religious freedom. Do you believe Nigeria should remain or be removed from the State Department's Country of Particular Concern list?

Answer. There are serious human rights issues in Nigeria. Although I cannot forecast any decisions regarding potential designations, I share Congressional concern about religious freedom issues in Nigeria. Religious freedom is a key U.S. foreign policy priority and I understand the Department continues to closely monitor human rights and the religious freedom situation in Nigeria. As with every region, the causes of conflict in Nigeria are complex. In addition to religious differences, ethnicity, politics, lack of accountability, access to justice, and competition over land resources are also drivers of the violence. Under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, as amended, the Secretary takes into consideration all relevant information available in his annual review of designations. If confirmed, I will make Nigeria a priority and I commit to work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to address religious freedom concerns in Nigeria.

*Question.* Please describe the degree to which you consider anti-blasphemy laws to be acute threats to global or regional human rights?

Answer. I understand that the U.S. Government uniformly opposes apostasy, blasphemy, and anti-conversion laws, which are frequently used to oppress those whose religious beliefs differ from the majority. If confirmed, I will urge governments to eliminate such laws.

Laws against blasphemy or apostasy are too often used and abused by governments, as a means of protecting or extending their powers, to target political dissenters or members of religious or ethnic minority groups. These laws are also too

often used and abused by individuals as a pretext to justify violence against those whose religion or ethnicity differs from their own or to settle personal grievances. When governments actively or passively support such individuals, instead of protecting members of minority groups, those in society who want to take the law into their own hands are empowered to use violence against these victims.

Therefore, I consider these laws to be acute threats to human rights, especially freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you orient the bureau to mitigate the effects or erode the scope of blasphemy laws?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom to urge governments to annul these laws and to oppose the enforcement and abuse of these laws, especially enforcement with criminal penalties.

*Question.* Can you commit to ensuring that unclassified information is not unnecessarily comingled with classified information in notifications provided by the State Department to Congress? If not, why not?

Answer. Yes. I recognize that there are times when unclassified information from various sources, taken together, can result in revealing classified information damaging to our national security. In those instances, that information must be secured. If confirmed, I commit to avoiding the over-classification of materials required by Congress for the oversight of the Department.

---

## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m., in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Kaine, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, and Young.  
Also Present: Senator Graham.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here to consider nominations for four important positions—Senator Jeff Flake to be Ambassador to Turkey, Ambassador Mark Gitenstein to be the U.S. Representative to the European Union, Ms. Cindy McCain to be the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, and Governor Jack Markell to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD.

So congratulations on all your nominations, as well as to your families who are part of the sacrifice in this process. We certainly appreciate them as well.

The four of you have a distinguished history of public service and advocacy, and I appreciate your willingness to serve the country in this capacity.

I understand that Senator Coons will be introducing Senator Flake—in a great, grand show of bipartisanship at a time that it is difficult to achieve it here—and Governor Markell. And that Senator Graham, who we welcome back to the committee—he left us precipitously—will be introducing Ms. McCain.

So, Senator Coons?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE**

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch.

Before proceeding with more detailed introductions, I ask unanimous consent to add a statement from my predecessor, former Senator Ted Kaufman, a detailed statement of introduction in support of Mark Gitenstein to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the EU.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, so ordered.  
[The information referred to follows:]

INTRODUCTION OF HON. MARK GITENSTEIN BY FORMER SENATOR TED KAUFMAN

Senator KAUFMAN. As a former member of this committee and as a friend and colleague of Mark Gitenstein, I am pleased to introduce Mark to this committee to be Ambassador to the European Union.

I have known Mark for over 40 years and have worked closely with him as a colleague on the staff of then-Senator Biden and later in then-Senator Biden's transition to the vice presidency. More recently, I worked closely with Mark in setting up the Vice President's transition to the presidency.

I know him to be a man of integrity, principle, intelligence and drive.

He also brings exactly the right experience to the job.

From 2009 to 2012, he was the U.S. Ambassador to Romania. The U.S.-Romanian Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement was negotiated and signed during his tenure.

In 2012, Romanian President Traian Basescu awarded Mark with the "Star of Romanian Grand Cross," the country's highest civil order.

Mark also led efforts to strengthen the rule of law and fight corruption in Romania, doing so with considerable diplomatic skill and success. In the midst of this struggle to preserve the rule of law in Romania, he was honored in 2011 by Nine O'clock, the premier English speaking journal in Romania, as the best foreign diplomat in Bucharest.

He developed deep expertise in rule of law and intelligence issues in his 17 years working on the Senate staff. These included his tenure as Chief Counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee, and its Subcommittee on Criminal Justice. He also served as counsel to the Senate Intelligence Committee, and the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights.

Mark has spent over 25 years in private law practice. Especially in the last eight years, he has focused on strengthening energy independence for Romania, a key issue he will face for all of Central and Eastern Europe should he become Ambassador to the EU.

Mark has the core values and toughness to deal with the Russians. He also possesses the keen ability to build consensus and enhance our relationships with European allies. As a creature of the Senate, Mark will also be very mindful of, and responsive to, this committee's oversight responsibilities.

He knows well the President and the key leaders of the administration's foreign policy and national security teams.

Having Mark in Brussels will greatly enhance the ability of this administration to accomplish one of its critical goals: to rebuild multilateralism by rebuilding trust between the U.S. and the EU. The sooner we can get Mark to Brussels, the better.

Senator COONS. And I join Senator Kaufman in urging support for Mark Gitenstein, who I know will be a very capable and experienced Ambassador, his second term of service as an Ambassador to now an entire region so critical to all of us.

I have known Jack and his wonderful wife, Carla, for 32 years. In Delaware, we pride ourselves on being able to work together. We are a State of neighbors, a State that cares about solving problems and doing the right thing. And no one epitomizes that more than our former Governor and State treasurer, Jack Markell.

As State treasurer for 10 years, Governor for 8 years, Jack has been guided by strong values and a sharp intellect. His passion for helping others is rooted in his faith and strengthened when, at age 17, he had a chance to travel to India and to see profound inequality and deep poverty. And in the decade since, he has built a remarkable record of achievement, of creating opportunity, of not just talking the talk, but of taking effective action.

Across two decades in leadership, he led innovative financial literacy and banking access initiatives; managed a severe fiscal crisis that affected our whole country, but did so responsibly in Delaware; helped grow our local economy; and showed real vision in

creating new opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities. He helped create Pathways to Prosperity in the State of Delaware, a national model for helping workplace experience and college credit opportunities for young people, and launched one of the best language immersion programs in kindergarten.

He has a deep understanding of the private sector and economic development. He has an MBA from the University of Chicago, and helped launch and create the telecom company Nextel, a company now valued at \$35 billion. So he understands both how to solve complex problems and how the United States can work with our OECD partners to put in place policies to create conditions for economic growth.

He led both the Democratic Governors Association and the National Governors Association, and today, he is leading Operation Allies Welcome, the resettlement of thousands of the Afghan partners who served alongside us in our 20 years of conflict.

A dedicated and capable public servant, with the experience, intelligence, and character to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the OECD, I look forward to supporting him not just in his nomination, but in his service and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if I might, I am also honored to introduce my friend and our former colleague, Senator Jeff Flake.

Senator Flake, to be clear, is a conservative Republican from Arizona, and I am a Democrat from Delaware. In the 6 years we served alongside each other, we voted on the opposite way of virtually every vote we ever took in the Senate. But during those 6 years, I came to know Jeff as an honorable man, as a principled public servant, as a patriotic American, and a loyal friend.

We traveled together to more than a dozen countries—West Africa, East Africa, and Northern Europe. We had the bonding moment of both being chased by elephants in Mozambique. We worked together on legislation to protect wildlife from trafficking, to protect the rule of the law on the Judiciary Committee, to promote free and fair elections and economic reforms in Zimbabwe, where he did his mission service.

Senator Flake has long championed American leadership around the world by promoting the rule of law, protecting human rights, and through strong international agreements. And his deep sense of right and wrong has not wavered. I am confident that his commitment and character thoughtfulness and skills will serve him well in a very demanding post as Ambassador to Turkey, where his abilities will be greatly needed to navigate difficult security issues and one where his service will reinforce the importance of bipartisanship in foreign policy.

I know he will be even more successful with his amazing wife, Cheryl, by his side, and I look forward to supporting Senator Flake's nomination and encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Coons.

I noticed you said you are a Democrat from Delaware. You did not define what type of Democrat from Delaware, but in any event—

Senator RISCH. There are different types?

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Well, he said Senator Flake was a conservative Republican. So I thought maybe he wanted to share some light—we have to have a little fun here. Otherwise, it is tough to get through the day.

To our dear colleague, Senator Graham.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSEY GRAHAM,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator GRAHAM. Glad to be back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

Our good friend Chris Coons is a short Democrat from Delaware, as I am a short Republican from South Carolina. We literally see eye-to-eye on everything.

So I just want to let the committee know when Cindy called me last week and asked me to introduce her to the committee, I stopped for a second and thought, wow, I am very proud to do it. I know John is looking down with pride. President Biden chose wisely.

She is being nominated to be the Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome. So all of us will be visiting you.

I am very familiar with this program because, along with Senator Coons, I am the vice chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee that deals with the State Department's budget and the United Nations' budget. And the World Food Program just received the Nobel Peace Prize. That is run by David Beasley, the former Governor of South Carolina.

They received the Nobel Peace Prize because the World Food Program has made a huge difference. With the advent of war and climate change, there are so many people in this world not knowing where their next meal comes from, and the World Food Program has stepped up to the plate, and the American taxpayer should be proud. The agency that Cindy has been nominated to lead as an Ambassador I think is the key to this whole problem. It is one thing to provide meals. It is another thing to provide the ability to grow your own food.

And Senator Risch, I am going to be all in working with this committee as an appropriator, along with Senator Coons, to beef up the capability of people throughout the world in impoverished regions to be able to farm as if it were the 21st century, not the 18th century.

Cindy has a heck of a resume. I think we all know Cindy in a variety of roles. She has been a public figure for a long time. But to those who have not followed her career, you should have. She has been deeply involved in the human trafficking scourge of the planet. She has been to the developing world, particularly Africa, numerous times, dealing with women's issues and humanitarian problems.

But I know her best from traveling with her where we went to Africa with the Gates Foundation and others to look at how to modernize farming practices. We visited a woman who had two daughters, basically farming with her two daughters, and the Gates Foundation and Department of Agriculture was trying to provide her with seeds that were more drought-resistant and over

time to increase her family's capability to feed itself and actually earn money.

So I am excited about this part of the World Food Program, this agency, and I want to pledge to Cindy that I am going to do everything I can to increase your capability to provide the best farming practices for those people who are on the bubble in terms of being able to live and those people in dire situations to turn their lives around.

And one thing that Cindy and I were talking about was water. Water is the new oil. And this agency, I think, is going to be very aggressive in how to manage water and make sure that we get the best utilization where water exists and desalinization programs where it does not. So, Mr. Chairman, Senator Risch, I am going to be talking to you a lot about the portfolio under Cindy's control.

And I just end with this. I have never known a more decent, capable person in my life. An Ambassador is supposed to represent America in the best fashion. I think the two nominees here today that I know, Jeff and Cindy, will be the best advocates for American interests in Turkey, and I can assure you that when Cindy McCain shows up in the room anywhere in the world, people already know her, they respect her, and she will be a great face for America. And working with Governor Beasley, we are going to turn this world around when it comes to feeding people.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

I know that both of our colleagues have other obligations, and so they should feel free to leave when they need to.

Let me turn to our nominees. Senator Flake, welcome back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Given Turkey's aggressive actions in the region as well as the repressive tactics used by the Erdogan regime against its own people at home, we need an Ambassador who will not hesitate to hold Turkey accountable and will push it to live up to the principles that undergird NATO membership—individual liberty, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Erdogan's repression is unbecoming of a democracy and unbecoming of a NATO ally. Democracies do not jail journalists, intimidate academics, and infringe upon freedom of religion. They do not renege on their commitments to stop violence against women, and they do not put political opponents in prison.

So, Senator, you will have your work cut out for you, and I look forward to hearing how you plan to address some of these challenges awaiting in Ankara.

Ambassador Gitenstein, we welcome your nomination to this post at a critical time in the transatlantic relationship. The bond between the United States and the European Union has been tested in recent years. Former President Trump repeatedly mocked our European allies while sabotaging the strategic relationship at seemingly every turn. I believe that close ties between Brussels and Washington are not just in our national interest, but in the interest of democracies everywhere.

Going forward, smart diplomacy, careful coordination with our European allies will be critical to dealing with the challenges we both face, whether it be Russia's ambitions in Eastern Europe, Chi-

na's growing soft power influence and investment in the Balkans, or Turkey's aggressive behavior in the Eastern Mediterranean. Having an Ambassador who works with our European allies will be an important first step.

As Nord Stream 2 continues to be a concern, I hope you will develop a strategy with our European friends on a comprehensive energy plan that shields Europe from extortion at the hands of the Kremlin. In short, we need someone with your knowledge, expertise, and proven record as a diplomat in Brussels as quickly as possible.

Ms. McCain, congratulations on your nomination. I admire your years of advocacy for vulnerable peoples around the world, including your commitment to combatting human trafficking globally. You shared that powerful commitment with your husband of almost 40 years and our much-admired and missed colleague, Senator John McCain.

For these reasons, I believe you are a superb choice to serve as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. The challenges these U.N. agencies face today, as you and I discussed yesterday, are enormous.

In this year alone, the number of people in need of urgent food assistance is expected to reach 270 million people, double that of 2020. Conflict and instability continue to push millions of people into acute food insecurity. Climate change threatens food production, and the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change exacerbate the situation even further.

Your role at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organizations are of the utmost importance in supporting the United Nations work to eradicate poverty, hunger, food insecurity, and promote sustainable agriculture-led economic growth. Your strong leadership will be essential to empowering, supporting, and guiding these agencies in this critical work.

Governor Markell, congratulations on your nomination. Appreciate your service not only as the Governor of Delaware, but most recently as the White House coordinator for Operation Allies. At a time of growing nationalistic sentiment, we have to remain at the leadership of international economic and financial institutions, not abdicate that role. We have to work with our allies to create a stronger, more inclusive global economy that benefits everyone.

The OECD is an important tool for U.S. diplomacy. Together, with OECD member states, which account for 63 percent of the world's GDP and three-quarters of all of the world trade, we can confront the challenges of a global economy. So I look forward to hearing how you plan to approach the OECD upon your confirmation and how you will use your position to advance U.S. interests, such as free markets and good governance, in the liberal international order.

With that, let me turn to our distinguished ranking member for his opening comments. Senator Risch?

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that.



Good morning, and thank you, all four of you, for your willingness to serve in these capacities. And to your families, as noted by the chairman that families certainly share the sacrifice.

On the nomination of the Ambassador to the European Union, the EU was one of the world's key economic unions, and its regulatory regimes are increasingly attempting to set standards for the world. This week, the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council will meet for the first time in Pittsburgh. There are a lot of trade and regulatory issues to discuss, and the results, or lack thereof, are likely to impact our joint ability to stand up against China's predatory trade practices with which we are all familiar.

I was very glad to see that last year, the EU and U.S. started a U.S.-EU dialogue on China. We need to use these discussions to start advancing shared priorities and policies, including those raised in my recent report on transatlantic cooperation on China.

Sadly, European leaders have grown louder in their calls for strategic autonomy, an idea in which European Union nations should decrease their interconnection with the U.S. or contribute to an EU member-only military force. Proponents of this movement claim it will enhance NATO capabilities and will allow Europe to engage in military operations that are outside of U.S. interests. I remain concerned that it will, in fact, deepen divisions within NATO.

Europe is and will continue to be one of our closest allies. There are very few places on the planet where our culture and our values are as congruent as they are with our European friends. As together, their population is much equivalent to the United States, and it is going to take the work of both in order to stand up to the 1.5 billion people of China.

Finally, the Balkan nations are under heavy pressure from China and Russia, which could be better resisted if there was greater integration with the rest of Europe. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on all of these important issues.

On the nomination of Ambassador to Turkey, the relationship between the United States and Turkey has been at an impasse over Turkey's purchase and deployment of Russian S-400 missile launchers. As everyone knows, the system is not interoperable with NATO, and Erdogan, not understandably, insists on buying—it has the S-400 missiles and which makes collaboration with NATO more difficult at best.

Erdogan has claimed that we would not sell them the Patriots that are in the same class as the Russian S-400. We know that is not true. Senator Shaheen and I delivered a letter in 2012 to the Turks at the time they were shopping, telling them they should buy, and we were ready to deliver as many as they needed. Erdogan shrugged when I handed him that letter.

The human rights situation in Turkey also remains difficult. Turkey is one of the highest jailers of journalists and opposition activists in Eurasia and has persecuted multiple locally employed staff of our U.S. missions there. This is not acceptable.

To be fair, Turkey was a key collaborator in Afghanistan, and our military-to-military contacts remain strong. Turkey also continues to house millions of Syrian refugees, and its cooperation is key to delivering aid and assistance to Syria.

Senator Flake, I know that you will be able to straighten these matters out, and happy to be sending you to Turkey to do so.

On the nomination of Ambassador to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, for 60 years, the OECD has been an important part of our foreign economic policy. As China seeks OECD membership, it is important that our Ambassador understands the challenges we face today from a rising China that promotes a socialist model.

This model seeks to undermine and replace the private sector growth model that has lifted hundreds of millions, indeed, billions of people out of poverty around the world and has led to the greatest period of prosperity in human history. Today, many regret letting China into the WTO. We should not repeat past mistakes.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter and to working with you to meet this challenge head on.

On the nomination of Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, the United States is the most generous donor of humanitarian assistance globally. We need a strong and capable representative to the U.N. agencies in Rome—the World Food Program, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development—to ensure that these agencies are as efficient and effective as possible so we can spread our assistance further and save more lives.

Additionally, our representative must fight against malign Chinese influence in the U.N. I believe you are up to the task, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these matters.

Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

With that, we will start with our nominees' testimony. We ask you to summarize your testimony in about 5 minutes. Your full statements will be included in the record without objection.

And we will start with Governor Markell and work our way down to Ms. McCain.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JACK A. MARKELL OF DELAWARE, NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to start by thanking Senator Coons for his generous introduction. The Senator and Annie have been great friends of Carla and mine for three decades, as he mentioned. We are all incredibly proud of the work he is doing in the U.S. Senate for the people of Delaware and the country.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear as the nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I am indebted to my family, who have played an important role in my being here. My wife, Carla, who is with me today; our kids, Molly and Michael; as well as my mom and sister and her family.

I am also grateful to my father and brother who are no longer with us, as well as to my brother's family.

We are at an inflection point in human history with democratic norms receding in many parts of the world and the global economic system under strain from COVID-19. The OECD has long been a forum to advance our common values and demonstrate what democracies can deliver. But the United States and our allies must continue to demonstrate that democracy, human rights, free markets, and capitalism better deliver growth and innovation and a good quality of life for all our citizens.

The more we show that, as Secretary Blinken has said, the more we can refute the lie that authoritarian countries love to tell. The OECD provides the policy rationale that underlies our economic system and magnifies our voice. President Biden has said we are in competition with China and other countries to win the 21st century. We have to do more than just Build Back Better. We have to compete more strenuously.

Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch, you deserve enormous credit for your bipartisan work on the Strategic Competition Act, which strengthens the U.S. response and abilities to confront the threat of the PRC. The world's authoritarian regimes are trying to show the world that their autocratic systems of single party rule and state-driven economics deliver better results. The OECD is so important, given the democratic community's ongoing competition with the world's autocratic and authoritarian regimes.

I believe I come to the committee with the right package of skills and experiences to advocate on behalf of the United States. After graduating from Brown University, I earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. My private sector career is primarily focused on telecommunications. As Senator Coons mentioned, I helped lead the wireless revolution as the 13th employee and senior vice president at Nextel.

I had long been interested in a career in public service. I always believed that my country had given me enormous opportunities, and I wanted to play a role in ensuring that similar opportunities are available to future generations.

As Governor, I was concerned about the impacts of globalization and automation. I knew that the States and countries that out-educate today will outcompete tomorrow. That is why I have worked hard to ensure that our children had opportunities to thrive in school. For those who wanted to go to college, my team worked to secure opportunities for them to do so, even when they could not afford it.

And we also recognized that many of our young people wanted to go directly to work. So we created terrific new programs to help them do exactly that with the skills needed for good-paying jobs. Good jobs are the best way to solve social problems.

I served as chair of the bipartisan National Governors Association. I learned so much from my colleagues of both parties, and I imagine that the former Governors on this committee also had the chance to learn from and share with their colleagues when they served as Governors.

Although Governors compete with each other to deliver the best economic climate for their constituents, we realize that our States

do better when the U.S. does better, and that is one reason OECD is so important.

I will close on a personal note. Both of my parents were first-generation Americans. My dad signed up to fight in the Army during World War II at the earliest opportunity, and he served proudly in Europe. My grandparents left Belarus, Latvia, and Lithuania at the turn of the 20th century, seeking a better life in the United States.

It would have been beyond my grandparents' wildest imagination when they left Eastern Europe that their grandson would have the opportunity to serve Delaware as Governor and then potentially our country as the U.S. representative to a multilateral institution that fosters prosperity for all. They came to the United States in the first place seeking exactly that. It would be an extraordinary honor to play a small part in shaping policies that provide those same benefits for future generations.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Markell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JACK A. MARKELL

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear as the nominee to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence.

I am indebted to my family for the love and support which have played an important role in my being here—my wife, Carla, our kids, Molly and Michael, as well as my mom and sister and her family. I am grateful to my father and brother who are no longer with us, as well as to my brother's family.

We are at an inflection point in human history, with democratic norms receding in many parts of the world and the global economic system under strain from COVID-19. The OECD has long been a forum to advance our common values and demonstrate what democracies can deliver.

But the United States and our allies must continue to demonstrate that democracy, human rights, free markets, and capitalism better deliver growth and innovation and a better quality of life for all our citizens. And as Secretary Blinken has said, "The more we and all democracies can show the world that we can deliver—for our people, for each other—the more we can refute the lie that authoritarian countries love to tell." That's why the OECD is so important—it provides the policy rationale that underlies our economic system and magnifies our voice and our partners' on the many issues where we share common values.

As President Biden has said, "We are in competition with China and other countries to win the 21st Century. We have to do more than just build back better ... We have to compete more strenuously."

Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch: You deserve enormous credit for your bipartisan work on the Strategic Competition Act, which strengthens the U.S. response and abilities to confront the threat of the PRC

The world's authoritarian regimes—like the PRC and the Russian Federation—are trying to show the world their autocratic system of single party rule and state-driven economics is more efficient and delivers better results for their people.

The OECD is more important now than ever before given the democratic community's ongoing competition with the world's authoritarian regimes. That's why I am so honored about the opportunity to serve.

I believe I come to the committee with the right package of knowledge, skills, and experiences to effectively advocate on behalf of the United States with other Ambassadors to the OECD as well as with the OECD itself.

After graduating from Brown University, I earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. My private sector career was primarily focused on telecommunications. I helped lead the wireless revolution as the 13th employee and Senior Vice President at Nextel.

I had long been interested in a career in public service. I always believed that my home state and my country had given me enormous opportunities, and I wanted

to play a role in ensuring that similar opportunities are available to future generations.

As Governor of Delaware, I was concerned about the impacts of globalization and automation on the people of my state. I knew the states and countries that out-educate today will out-compete tomorrow. That's why I worked hard to ensure that our children had opportunities to thrive in school. For those who wanted to go to college, my team worked to secure opportunities for them to do so, even when they couldn't afford it. And we also recognized that many of our young people wanted to go directly to work so we created terrific new programs to help them do exactly that, with the skills needed for good-paying jobs.

I believe strongly that good jobs are the best way to help solve social problems.

I was honored to serve as chair of the bi-partisan National Governors Association. I learned so much from my colleagues of both parties. I imagine that Ranking Member Risch along with Senators Kaine, Romney, Rounds and Shaheen also had the chance to learn from and share with their colleagues when they served as Governors.

Although Governors compete with each other to deliver the best economic climate and quality of life for our constituents, we realize that our states do better when the United States does better. That's one reason OECD is so important.

I will close on a personal note.

Both of my parents were first generation Americans. My dad signed up to fight in the Army during World War II at the earliest opportunity and he served proudly in Europe.

My grandparents left Belarus, Latvia, and Lithuania at the turn of the 20th century seeking a better life in the United States.

It would have been beyond my grandparents' imagination when they left Eastern Europe that their grandson would have the opportunity to serve Delaware as Governor and then, potentially, our country, as the U.S. Representative to a multilateral institution that fosters prosperity for all. They came to the United States in the first place seeking exactly that. It would be an extraordinary honor to play a small part in shaping policies that provide those same benefits for future generations.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador? If you could just put your microphone on, please?

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Can you hear me now?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GITENSTEIN OF WASHINGTON,  
NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, WITH THE  
RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY**

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored by President Biden's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to the European Union.

If confirmed, serving as this Nation's Ambassador to the EU would culminate my work with the President, beginning with our days together as young men, when I joined his Senate staff in the 1970s, to four decades later in my recent work as U.S. Ambassador to Romania during the Obama-Biden administration.

First, I want to acknowledge my family's role in making my appearance here possible. My late parents and grandparents taught me that patriotism and my Jewish faith are the guideposts of my actions. My sisters taught me that independent, intelligent women are the light of the world.

My children and grandchildren prove that our future is bright because the next generation is undaunted by many of the challenges we face. Most of all, my wife, Libby, who is with me here today—my partner and the love of my life—who still believes in

me, especially at those moments when a touch on the shoulder and a word of reassurance are essential.

I grew up in Alabama and graduated from high school in Birmingham when the United States was confronting its own crisis in democracy during the 1960s. As I pursued my undergraduate degree in history from Duke, I watched with awe and pride as the civil rights movement gained its footing against Bull Connor and George Wallace.

In my summers, I worked with reform-minded politicians in Alabama and in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, acting in my home State to dismantle segregated schools. I came to understand in a very vivid way how a strong Constitution and civil rights protections in a federated system can bring Democratic and Republican principles to the rule of law in a recalcitrant locale.

This experience drove my passion as Ambassador in Romania to help the EU strengthen democracy and free markets in Romania and taught me how, in 21st century Europe, the EU continues to hold dear its founding documents and values. I know firsthand how the United States, working with multilateral and regional organizations, especially the EU, can strengthen democracy, build free markets, and act as a bulwark against autocracy.

If confirmed, I promise to carry forward those values and principles both at the U.S. Mission at the U.N. and to the work of the EU itself.

One other aspect of my history is also relevant. My father's family was Moldovan and Romanian, my mother's Polish and Austrian. Going to the EU, like serving in Bucharest, is a return to my family's roots. I do so with great humility, recognizing that we have as much to learn from the Europeans and the EU, as they do from us.

If confirmed, my top goal will be revitalizing and raising the level of ambition in the U.S.-EU relationship and supporting the deep and ongoing cooperation between the United States and the EU at all levels, including between the Congress and the European Parliament. I will work to advance the agenda President Biden and his EU counterparts set at the June 2021 U.S.-EU summit. This includes working together to end the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future global health challenges; protecting our planet and fostering green growth; strengthening our trade, investment, and technological cooperation; and building a more democratic, peaceful, and secure world.

The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council meeting taking place tomorrow in Pittsburgh and our joint pledge earlier this month to reduce global methane emissions are two perfect examples of the kind of values-driven, future-focused cooperation with the EU that I would prioritize as Ambassador, if confirmed.

In a very real sense, both the EU and the United States are evolving, dynamic experiments in democracy. Both seek to form a "more perfect union." While at different stages, neither side is finished with its work.

I can think of no greater privilege than to be part of what President Biden calls the challenge of our generation, proving that democracy and strong, independent institutions are the best form of governance. They are, indeed, the shortest and surest route to the pursuit of happiness.

I know from my experience in Romania that serving as Ambassador is a great challenge, but it is also one of the best jobs in government. If confirmed, I will use that position to strengthen U.S.-EU relations and build support for the administration's foreign policy in the interests of all Americans.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.  
[The prepared statement of Ambassador Gitenstein follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GITENSTEIN,

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, I am deeply honored by President Biden's nomination to be U.S. Ambassador to the European Union.

If confirmed, serving as this Nation's Ambassador to the EU would culminate my work with the President beginning with our days together as young men when I joined his Senate staff in the 1970s, to four decades later in my recent work as U.S. Ambassador to Romania during the Obama-Biden administration.

First, I want to acknowledge my family's role in making my appearance here possible: my late parents and grandparents taught me that patriotism and my Jewish faith are the guideposts of my actions; my sisters taught me that independent, intelligent women are the light of the world; my children and grandchildren prove that our future is bright because the next generation is undaunted by the many challenges we face. Most of all, my wife, Libby—my partner and the love of my life—who still believes in me, especially at those moments when a touch on the shoulder and a word of reassurance are essential.

I grew up in Alabama and graduated from high school in Birmingham when the United States was confronting its own crisis in democracy during the 1960s. As I pursued my undergraduate degree in history from Duke, I watched with awe and pride as the civil rights movement gained its footing against Bull Connor and George Wallace. In my summers, I worked for reform-minded politicians in Alabama and in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, acting in my home state to dismantle segregated schools. I came to understand in a very vivid way how a strong Constitution and civil rights protections can bring democratic and republican principles to the rule of law in a recalcitrant locale.

This experience drove my passion as Ambassador in Romania to help the EU strengthen democracy and free markets in Romania and taught me how, in 21st-century Europe, the EU continues to hold dear its founding documents and values. I know firsthand how the United States, working with multilateral and regional organizations, especially the EU, can strengthen democracy, build free markets, and act as a bulwark against autocracy. If confirmed, I promise to carry forward those values and principles both at the U.S. Mission to the EU and to the work of the EU itself.

One other aspect of my biography is also relevant. My father's family was Moldovan and Romanian, and my mother's Polish and Austrian. Going to the EU, like serving in Bucharest, is a return to my family's roots. I do so with great humility, recognizing that we have as much to learn from Europeans and the EU, as they do from us.

If confirmed, my top goal will be revitalizing and raising the level of ambition in the U.S.-EU relationship and supporting the deep and ongoing cooperation between the United States and EU at all levels, including between the Congress and the European Parliament.

I will work to advance the agenda President Biden and his EU counterparts set at the June 2021 U.S.-EU summit. This includes working together to end the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future global health challenges; protecting our planet and fostering green growth; strengthening our trade, investment, and technological cooperation; and building a more democratic, peaceful, and secure world. The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council meeting taking place tomorrow in Pittsburgh and our joint pledge earlier this month to reduce global methane emissions are two perfect examples of the kind of values-driven, future-focused cooperation with the EU that I would prioritize as ambassador, if confirmed.

In a very real sense, both the EU and the United States are evolving, dynamic experiments in democracy. Both seek to form a "more perfect union." While at different stages, neither side is finished with its work. I can think of no greater privilege than to be part of what President Biden calls the challenge of our generation: proving that democracy and strong independent institutions are the best form of

governance. They are, indeed, the shortest and surest route to the “pursuit of happiness.”

I know from my experience in Romania that serving as ambassador is a great challenge, but also one of the best jobs in government. If confirmed, I will use that position to strengthen U.S.-EU relations and support the administration’s foreign policy in the interests of the American people.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Senator Flake?

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE OF ARIZONA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

Senator FLAKE. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today.

It is an honor to be nominated as U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, and I am grateful for the trust that the President and Secretary of State Blinken have placed in me.

I have the greatest respect for this committee. It was my home when I was in the Senate. I have served with most of you. I know of your experience, your expertise, your deep commitment to the national interest. If confirmed, I look forward to maintaining a close, consultative relationship with each of you.

I would like to start by thanking my family—my wife, Cheryl, and our five children—Ryan, Alexis, Austin, Tanner, and Dallin. They have sacrificed much through the years and yet still have managed to continually assume the best and look for the good. I am more grateful than I can express.

I should note that more than 30 years ago, when we were in college, my wife was part of a singing-dancing touring group at BYU called the Young Ambassadors, and they traveled to Turkey. So when I was asked if I might want to be Ambassador to Turkey, Cheryl said, “I suppose it is your time now.” And I look forward to traveling with her and cannot wait for the Turkish people to meet my wife, Cheryl.

I am well aware that, if confirmed, I will be the first political appointee to this position in more than 40 years. I will arrive at a particularly pivotal moment in U.S.-Turkey relations. The United States has a longstanding and complex relationship with Turkey, a NATO ally for nearly 70 years. There are areas where our interests intersect and where we are firmly aligned. There are areas where we profoundly disagree.

As this committee is well aware, we have for decades worked closely with Turkey to advance our national security interests, from Korea to Afghanistan and beyond. Our partnership with Turkey enables us to defend NATO’s eastern flank and project U.S. power in the region.

But our interests extend beyond the security realm. Turkey is an important economic partner, hosting more than 1,900 U.S. companies, including some of our largest and most recognized brands, and the United States is Turkey’s fourth-largest source of imports. If confirmed, I look forward to robustly fostering this vital economic relationship.



Having said that, our relationship also faces profound challenges. Despite the United States' efforts to address Turkey's security needs, Turkey still chose to purchase and test fire the Russian S-400 system. This action ran counter to the commitments all allies made at the 2016 NATO summit and rightly triggered Turkey's removal from the F-35 program and the imposition of CAATSA sanctions.

If confirmed, I will consistently reiterate that disposing of this system is the path to removing CAATSA sanctions. I will also warn Turkey that any future purchase of Russian weapons risks triggering further CAATSA sanctions in addition to those already imposed.

At the same time, we should encourage Turkey to purchase U.S. defense items that keep the Turkish military interoperable with NATO. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee to determine what defense trade with Turkey is in the U.S. national interest.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, as we all know, the authoritarian, anti-democratic impulse is resurgent in the world. There is no value that defines us more as Americans than the rights of free people to determine the course of their lives and the destiny of their countries. In my career, I have not hesitated to speak out on such issues.

I am troubled by Ankara's democratic backsliding and the negative trajectory in terms of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly in Turkey. Restoring the full freedoms of the Turkish people is a good in itself, and rebuilding confidence in the rule of law in Turkey would go a long way toward expanding the potential for further economic investment and international partnerships. If confirmed, I will challenge Turkey to uphold its domestic and international human rights commitments while also pushing Turkey to live up to its status as a NATO ally.

While some of Turkey's recent actions have advanced U.S. interests in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Black Sea, other actions have been destabilizing and unhelpful. If confirmed, I will encourage Turkey to support efforts to find a sustainable long-term solution to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and encourage peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to disagreements in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Despite the very real challenges to U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkey is an indispensable ally, anchored in NATO and acting as both a bridge and a buffer to a region in constant flux. Our national interest is served when the United States and Turkey work together to confront the very real threats to global peace and security that emanate from Russia, from Iran, and elsewhere in the region.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, if confirmed, I am committed to working with you, as both former and future colleagues, to advance our national interests, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Senator Flake follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an honor to be nomi-

nated to be the United States Ambassador to Turkey. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

I have the greatest respect for this committee. It was my home when I was in the Senate. I have served with most of you. I know of your experience, your expertise, and your deep commitment to the national interest. If confirmed, I look forward to maintaining a close, consultative relationship with each of you.

I would like to start by thanking my family—my wife Cheryl and our five children—Ryan, Alexis, Austin, Tanner, and Dallin. They have sacrificed much through the years and have somehow managed to continually assume the best and look for the good. I am more grateful than I can express.

I am well aware that, if confirmed, I will be the first political appointee to this position in 40 years, and will arrive at a particularly pivotal moment in U.S.-Turkey relations. The United States has a longstanding and complex relationship with Turkey, a NATO ally for nearly 70 years. There are areas where our interests intersect and we are firmly aligned, and there are areas where we profoundly disagree.

As this committee is well aware, we have for decades worked closely with Turkey to advance key national security interests, from Korea to Afghanistan and beyond. Our partnership with Turkey enables us to defend NATO's eastern flank and project U.S. power in the region. Turkey has submitted a credible plan to meet defense spending commitments by 2024 and regularly provides forces for NATO missions in the region, such as its recent deployment of F-16s to Poland.

Our interests extend beyond the security realm. Turkey is an important economic partner hosting more than 1,900 U.S. companies, including some of our largest and most recognized brands, and the United States is Turkey's 4th largest source of imports. If confirmed, I look forward to robustly fostering this vital economic relationship.

However, our relationship also faces profound challenges. Despite the United States' tireless efforts to address Turkey's security needs, Turkey still chose to purchase and test fire the Russian S-400 system. This action ran counter to the commitments all Allies made at the 2016 NATO Summit and rightly triggered Turkey's removal from the F-35 program and the imposition of CAATSA sanctions.

If confirmed, I will consistently reiterate that that disposing of the system is the path to removing CATSAA sanctions. I will also warn Turkey that any future purchase of Russian weapons risks triggering further CAATSA sanctions in addition to those already imposed.

At the same time, we should encourage Turkey to purchase U.S. defense items that keep the Turkish military interoperable with NATO. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee to determine what defense trade with Turkey is in the U.S. national interest.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, as we all know, the authoritarian, anti-democratic impulse is resurgent in the world. There is no value that defines us more as Americans than the rights of free people to determine the course of their own lives and the destiny of their countries. In my career, I have never hesitated to speak out on such issues. I am troubled by Ankara's democratic backsliding and the negative trajectory in terms of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly in Turkey. Restoring the full freedoms of the Turkish people is a good in itself and rebuilding confidence in the rule of law in Turkey would go far toward expanding the potential for further economic investment and international partnerships. If confirmed, I will challenge Turkey to uphold its domestic and international human rights commitments while also pushing Turkey to live up to its status as a NATO Ally.

While some of Turkey's recent actions have advanced U.S. interests in the Middle East, Mediterranean, and Black Sea, other actions have been destabilizing and unhelpful. If confirmed, I will encourage Turkey to support efforts to find a sustainable long-term solution to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and encourage peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to disagreements in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Despite the very real challenges in U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkey is an indispensable Ally, anchored in NATO and acting as both a bridge and a buffer to a region in constant flux. Our national interest is served when the United States and Turkey work together to confront the very real threats to global peace and security that emanate from Russia, Iran, and elsewhere in the wider region.

Mister Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, if confirmed, I am committed to working with you, as both former and future colleagues, to advance our national interests. I look forward to taking your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Ms. McCain?

**STATEMENT OF CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN OF ARIZONA, NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE**

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and the distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be here.

Sitting here in the place that my husband, John, loved the most is a little bit bittersweet for me. Senator Graham, although he is not here now, thank you for all that you said, your kind words. We are so lucky to have him as part of our family.

I am pleased to join my colleagues on this panel today, especially Senator Jeff Flake. Both our family and the entire State of Arizona are grateful for your leadership and for your friendship.

I am grateful and honored to be President Biden's nominee as the United States Representative to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Agencies in Rome. I hope to bring honor, civility, and transparency to the role that you have entrusted me to accept.

One in three people globally do not have access to enough food, and that, simply said, is not okay. I plan to spend my time, if confirmed, working tirelessly to lower that number. I would be honored to help advance U.S. values and worldwide global food security efforts.

The goal is simple to state, but very difficult to achieve. Alleviate hunger and promote agricultural development to increase food access and stability for the hundreds of millions of food insecure around the world. I am very optimistic that with the partners and team we currently have in place in Rome and around the world, we can build on all of the already impressive accomplishments in this arena.

There has never been a more important time for the U.S. leadership on food and agricultural issues both within the U.N. agencies and around the world. I have been working on humanitarian issues the majority of my adult life. My parents taught me that as a woman, I could do anything. My husband, though, instilled in me the desire to serve a cause greater than myself.

I have had the opportunity to pull landmines out of the ground in Mozambique, Angola, and Cambodia. I worked on school feeding programs in Congo and Uganda. I have been able to elevate the plight of Syrian refugees in Greece, Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon as they fled conflict in their home country. I have battled human trafficking not only here in the United States, but in Southeast Asia and in Europe.

Early in my humanitarian journey, I led a group of medical professionals to multiple conflict zones. I have witnessed firsthand what hunger, conflict, and the ravages of natural disaster can do to communities and families. I have seen U.N. agencies at their best, and at their worst. If confirmed, I will welcome your guidance and wisdom on how best to represent U.S. policies and priorities in Rome.

There are certain things that I look forward to focusing on. Being from Arizona, water has always been an issue. I would like to focus

on the intersection of access to water and agricultural needs. I hope to promote American thought leadership, innovation, and technology so others may use less water to feed more people.

I will also focus on representing and fostering U.S. values and integrity. We need to guard against malign actors in the U.N. system and hold others accountable for good governance and transparency. I take very seriously my role in ensuring that the U.S. taxpayer money is not being misused or misspent and will work to reduce redundancy, sharpen focus, and improve efficiency.

The U.S. leadership in this fight against hunger is a tribute to the work of this committee and our workers on the ground around the world, but government contributions just are not enough to take on all of the current global crises we face. I would like to expand public-private partnerships, to bring both new ideas and new donors to fight hunger and food insecurity. I look forward to developing new relationships as we develop local economies and fight poverty.

I have seen firsthand the use of hunger as a weapon in conflict, and it is simply unacceptable. It goes against everything we stand for as a country, and I would like to use the reach and the power of our diplomacy to ensure no person goes hungry at the hands of another person.

Finally, I would like to close by paying a brief tribute to my late husband and your former colleague, John McCain, and to the great cause of his decades of service, human dignity. His efforts to defend human rights wherever they were denied and to advance the values of our democracy to every corner on Earth were undertaken to serve that one end, respect the dignity of every human life.

John believed he had as much dignity as any other person on the Earth, but not one measure more, and he felt a personal responsibility to those of his fellow human beings who suffered oppression and deprivation. Should I be confirmed, he would expect me to use my opportunity to serve the same end, and I will do my very best to do so and hope that he would be proud of me.

Thank you, and I welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McCain follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, I am honored to be here. Sitting here in the place that my husband John loved the most, is bitter-sweet. Senator Graham, thank you for the kind introduction, we are so lucky to have you as part of our family. I am pleased to join my colleagues on this panel, especially Senator Jeff Flake, both our family and the entire state of Arizona are grateful for your leadership and friendship.

I am grateful and honored to be President Biden's nominee as the United States Representative to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome. I hope to bring honor, civility and transparency to the role you have entrusted me to accept. One in three people globally don't have access to enough food, and that, simply, is not OK. I plan to spend my time, if confirmed, working tirelessly to lower that number.

I would be honored to help advance U.S. values and worldwide global food security efforts. The goal is simple to state but difficult to achieve: alleviate hunger and promote agricultural development to increase food access and stability for the hundreds of millions of food insecure around the world. I am very optimistic that with the partners and team we currently have in place in Rome and around the world, we can build on all of the already impressive accomplishments in this arena. There

has never been a more important time for U.S. leadership on food and agricultural issues both within the U.N. agencies and around the world.

I have been working on humanitarian issues the majority of my adult life. My parents taught me that as a woman, I could do anything I wanted to. My husband instilled in me the desire to serve a cause greater than myself. I have had the opportunity to pull landmines out of the ground in Mozambique, Angola and Cambodia. I have worked on school feeding programs in Congo and Uganda. I was able to elevate the plight of Syrian refugees in Greece, Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon as they fled conflict in their home country. I have battled human trafficking not only here in the United States but in South East Asia and in Europe. Early in my humanitarian journey I led a group of medical professionals into multiple conflict zones. I have witnessed firsthand what hunger, conflict, and the ravages of natural disaster can do to communities and families. I have seen U.N. agencies at their best, and at their worst.

If confirmed, I will welcome your guidance and wisdom on how best to represent U.S. policies and priorities in Rome. There are certain things that I look forward to focusing on.

Being from Arizona, water has always been an issue. I would like to focus on the intersection of access to water and agricultural needs. I hope to promote American thought leadership, innovation, and technology so that others may use less water to feed more people.

I will also focus on representing and fostering U.S. values and integrity. We need to guard against malign actors in the U.N. system and hold others accountable for good governance and transparency. I take very seriously my role in ensuring that U.S. taxpayer money is not being misused or misspent, and will work to reduce redundancy, sharpen focus, and improve efficiency.

The U.S. leadership in the fight against hunger is a tribute to the work of this committee and our workers on the ground around the world, but government contributions just aren't enough to take on all of the current global crises we face. I would like to expand public-private partnerships, to bring both new ideas and new donors to fight hunger and food insecurity. I look forward to developing new relationships as we develop local economies and fight poverty.

I have seen firsthand the use of hunger as a weapon in conflict—and it is simply unacceptable. It goes against everything we as a country stand for, and I would like to use the reach and power of our diplomacy to ensure no person goes hungry at the hands of another person.

Finally, I'd like to close by paying brief tribute to my late husband, your former colleague, John McCain, and to the great cause of his decades of service—human dignity. His efforts to defend human rights wherever they were denied and to advance the values of our democracy to every corner on earth were undertaken to serve that one end—respect for the dignity of every human life. John believed he had as much dignity as any other person on earth, but not one measure more, and he felt a personal responsibility to those of his fellow human beings who suffered oppression and deprivation.

Should I be confirmed, he would expect me to use my opportunity to serve the same end, and I will do my best to do so in the hope that he would be proud of me. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. McCain. I am sure he will be.

Let me, before I start my questions, ask questions on behalf of the committee as a whole. These are questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from each of you. So I would ask each of you to provide a simple yes or no answer to the following questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff, when invited?

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep the committee fully and currently informed about the activity under your purview?

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.  
 Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.  
 Senator FLAKE. Yes.  
 Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.  
 Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.  
 Senator FLAKE. Yes.  
 Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And lastly, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Mr. MARKELL. Yes.  
 Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Yes.  
 Senator FLAKE. Yes.  
 Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, thank you. All of the nominees have answered yes to all four questions.

So we will start a round of 5 minutes. I will start off with myself.

Senator Flake, for many decades, the Armenian genocide has been denied by the descendants of those who perpetrated it. In 2019, the Senate recognized the Armenian genocide for the first time. In April of this year, on Armenian Remembrance Day, President Biden joined us in acknowledging this truth.

In the past, you voted against resolutions which recognize the genocide. Will you join this body and the administration in reaffirming the Armenian genocide?

Senator FLAKE. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

If you are confirmed, will you reiterate that commitment on April 24, which is Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day?

Senator FLAKE. I will.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We have talked here, your own testimony this morning, I must say I listened to your statement, and it certainly is more positive than I would have posited as it relates to Turkey. I guess that is the role of a potential Ambassador. Certainly, when we talk about arms sales again, as the committee that has jurisdiction over arms sales, I see no arms sales going to Turkey unless there is a dramatic change-around on the S-400 and moving forward.

His latest calls, Erdogan's latest calls for supposedly purchasing more is certainly not an invitation to find a pathway to arms sales from the United States. So I just put that out there as something that is truly concerning to me. I wish it was different. I wish he would change course.

Senator Risch spent a lot of time with President Erdogan in the previous administration trying to convince him of a different pathway and was largely rebuffed. And so I think we have given off-ramps to Turkey. Unfortunately, they have chosen not to take it. So that is a concern as well.

If President Erdogan makes additional significant purchases from the Russian defense sector, I assume you will strongly support the imposition of additional CAATSA sanctions?

Senator FLAKE. I will. As I mentioned in the statement, they need to know that any purchase of additional Russian weapons will result in additional CAATSA sanctions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator FLAKE. And these CAATSA sanctions will not be lifted until they have disposed of the current system they have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

More than 35,000 Turkish troops remain in Northern Cyprus, now almost 5 decades after Turkey first invaded in 1974. Most recently, President Erdogan now pushes for a two-state solution, something that is not recognized by the United Nations, something that is not recognized by our Government, and flagrantly violates the U.N. Security Council resolutions on the occupied section called Varosha.

Will you commit to speak out publicly and privately in the event that Turkey continues to violate Cyprus' exclusive economic zone?

Senator FLAKE. I will. I was pleased to see after the December visit by Erdogan to Cyprus that the United States Government spoke out, as did the U.N., that any of the action that was contemplated with Varosha, for example, would violate Security Council Resolutions 550 and 789.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And then we will—and I will look forward to your—you said in your opening statement, so I will not explore it more with you, other than to say there are more lawyers and journalists in Turkish jails today than in any other part of the world. That is saying something, considering some parts of the world that are pretty authoritarian.

So the question of human rights is something we would expect you to also engage vigorously upon your confirmation.

Let me turn to Ambassador Gitenstein. France's reaction to AUKUS, I understand the French concern about the consequences or the economic impact of the cancellation of their agreement with Australia, not with us. But France is a vital partner in dealing with China and other global challenges. How do you intend to go about strengthening the U.S. relationships with European allies like France to work together to meet the China challenge?

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, first of all, I was very pleased to see that the President and President Macron had apparently a very good conversation. They reached some common ground. And if I were confirmed and I were sitting in Brussels right now, I would immediately reach out to the leadership of the EU and to the French Ambassador and try and build a personal relationship like I did in Romania and try and strengthen those relationships.

But to the extent the French intend to pursue a strategy, I think as the Ranking Member Risch referred to, in terms of an independent military strategy, it has to be very carefully coordinated with NATO. I have become very friendly with the proposed U.S. Ambassador to NATO Julie Smith. We intend to meet on a very regular basis and develop a common message point and platform and communication with the EU on these very issues.

So while we want to work with the French, it has to be consistent with our national security needs and especially as it relates to NATO.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. One last question.

What steps will you take to increase pressure on the Kremlin and work more closely with the EU to support, you know, a more robust—we have had a series of economic sanctions and other things for Russia's transgressions. The annexation of Crimea, its constant engagement in Ukraine, its use of chemical weapons against its opponents, and so much more. But we have not always been able to get our European allies to join us in a more robust multilateral approach.

How would you approach that?

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. With respect to the Russians?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, I think this is a vital concern to the United States right now. I am sure someone is going to ask me sometime later about Nord Stream, and I see that I do not have much time to respond to that right now, but I believe that the malign activity of the Russians in the EU and the European region has been demonstrable.

I spent most of the last 10 years of my life in and out of Romania and Central and Eastern Europe, and their efforts are relentless. And they are intended to divide the EU and to divide the EU from us, and it is extremely dangerous. And it is extremely insidious.

I saw it throughout my time as Ambassador in Romania, especially on energy issues, and I think the first step in this regard is to build a unified position with respect to energy issues, but a lot more with respect to Europe. And so I intend to work very hard on that, and indeed, one of the main reasons I talked to the President and the now Secretary of State about wanting this job was because I saw the power that the EU can play on anti-corruption and energy security if all the players in the EU work together, and especially if the Central and Eastern European countries, as I call the borderlands, which are very much the targets of this effort.

And I want to work directly with them and directly with the leadership of the EU on all of these issues. That is why I want to be the U.S. Ambassador to the EU, and I hope you will confirm me.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate your answer.

I have questions for the other nominees, but in deference to our colleagues, I will turn to the ranking member.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Flake, let me say having known both you and your lovely wife, whoever made the decision to send her instead of you with the singing and dancing ambassadors made the right decision. So thanks to whoever made that decision.

Senator FLAKE. Well said.

Senator RISCH. On a much, much, much more serious note, this deterioration of the relationship between Turkey and the United States is—just heartbreaking really for us. They have been a really good ally over the years, and we have done such good things with them. The country itself has made huge strides in its economy and everything else.



The S-400s, I guess, is the apex of our problems, but I hope you will put in your pocket a copy of the letter that Senator Shaheen and I delivered in Ankara in October of 2012, when Turkey was in the process of buying the kind of missiles they were looking for. Both Erdogan and the many, many diplomats, ministers, and everything else we have met with from Turkey tell us, oh, no, we had to buy the S-400s because you would not sell us the Patriots.

Well, Senator Shaheen and I know better than that. We hand delivered that letter to the foreign minister in Ankara in his home and urged them, and the letter itself you can see urges them to buy those.

Why they have turned to Russia is actually beyond me, especially when you look at the history between those two countries that is centuries old and the problems and the animosity they have had. For whatever reason, just absolutely Erdogan—and I think this all comes down to Erdogan. Erdogan himself just has no interest in promoting this relationship with us and with NATO, which is absolutely stunning, given the fact that many, many, many nations on the planet would give a whole lot to be part of NATO. And here they are, tearing the relationship apart.

I have explained to him and others have explained to him that they cannot be part of the military actions that NATO takes or part of the defense system that we have had if they are putting S-400 missiles in their country. It just cannot be done.

And to show you how determined they are, they paid for 5 of the F-35s that are sitting here in the United States. The chairman and I will not allow those planes to be delivered. We have told them that as long as they got S-400s in the country, they cannot have the F-35s. And we are very determined on this, and not only that, they were making 900 parts for the F-35, and we pulled those back.

And so that is how determined they are on this. I do not understand it. I do not get it. And I have spent a lot of time talking with them, and maybe when you come back, you will have some answers for us.

But if I were you, I would take that letter along so when they try to tell you what the facts are, you can show them the facts are not as they say. So it is a real problem, and gosh, we would sure like to welcome Turkey back into the fold. But I think as long as Erdogan is there, I think we have got a serious problem.

So good luck, and we will help you as we can. Is that the letter you have in your hand?

Senator FLAKE. Thank you. I do have it right here.

Senator RISCH. Good for you. You got my vote, Senator. I appreciate that. Thank you.

Let us move over. Governor, China is seeking membership in the OECD, and gosh, we had a real disappointment when they were let into the WTO. And it is not getting any better that is for sure.

Tell me your thoughts about letting China into the OECD.

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you for the question.

One of the core strengths of the OECD is the shared values amongst the members, a commitment to democracy, a commitment to a market-oriented economic system. While there may be some who see the growth in OECD membership as a metric that mat-

ters, I do not. I think it is incredibly important that we continue to have allies who maintain those same values.

In fact, one of the real strengths of the OECD, the data that they put out, the research that they put out, is that they are very well positioned to call out China on issues that matter, on the export—credit subsidies and the like. So I think we should have an incredibly high bar when it comes to accession into OECD membership, and that is the position that I will certainly be taking there and certainly something I look forward to consult with this committee on as well.

Senator RISCH. Well said. I think your description, too, of the requirements for membership is very clear, and it certainly does not describe China by not even close. So thank you for that.

Ambassador Gitenstein, you are going to a place where we, as Americans, have over the years unfortunately not fully appreciated our cousin's view of things and have not worked as hard as we should to keep this together. Things like the European strategic autonomy discussion is occurring, and I think that is tragic. There is no place on the planet that is closer to us on values and on culture than our friends in Europe.

So you have got your work cut out for you, but we need to convince them that with the dangers in the world, with the rising of China, with the malign activity of Russia, there is nothing more important than the strategic relationship between the United States of America and our European cousins. I hope you will work at that.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. I read your report on China, and I thought it was excellent. One of the first things I will do is encourage them to read that report because it makes a very strong case for the threat that China presents to the European Union and to Europe generally and that the notion of developing a common platform between the United States and the EU is important to both the United States and the EU to their strategic interests. And it is extremely important that we reach common ground on these issues, from regulatory issues to strategic issues.

And as I said earlier to the chairman's question, we cannot do anything on military strategic independence without carefully coordinating it with NATO.

Senator SHAHEEN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator Risch. Next, we have Senator Cardin on Webex.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

And let me thank all four of our nominees for their willingness to continue to serve our Nation, and I particularly also want to thank your families. This really is a day for the Senate family with Jeff Flake and Cindy McCain. So it is particularly gratifying to see both of you before us, and both of you stressed in your opening statements the importance of advancing American values and human rights in the posts that you have been nominated to.

Ms. McCain, I particularly appreciate your just desire to follow in the late Senator McCain's path in regards to advancing human rights, advancing his legacy, and building on his legacy. I miss your late husband and his passion in the United States Senate and his partnership in advancing so many important issues, including the Global Magnitsky law.

And Senator Flake, I very much appreciated our opportunity to have a conversation in regards to Turkey. As you have heard from many of us, Turkey presents enormous challenges through our relationship. We recognize the strategic importance of Turkey, and we want to build on that relationship. We recognize the important partnership they have in NATO, but we cannot allow the security breaches that we have seen. You have already heard from our chairman and ranking member on that.

I want to drill down a little bit on human rights. As Senator Menendez said, they have more journalists in prison than any other country. You really cannot challenge the Erdogan Government and be safe from harassment or arrest.

What is your strategy to advance democratic values and human rights in Turkey as our representative in Turkey when you are confirmed?

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you.

This issue particularly of press freedom is one that has been an issue of mine for years during my time in the House and the Senate. I have spoken out on this on a number of occasions, and it is a concern. Turkey currently detains more journalists than any country but China. That is not consistent with the values that we all share in terms of plurality—or pluralism and religious freedom, press freedom, freedom of assembly. A number of issues come to mind.

But I think that I will, if I am confirmed, continue the practice of speaking truth to power, of speaking out and being frank, as our current Ambassador has done and as the State Department and our President has done on this issue. So that is what I intend to do is to be frank.

Senator CARDIN. As you know, you will have partners in this committee that will support your efforts and do whatever we can to help. We want our embassy to be welcoming to those that are speaking on behalf of human rights within Turkey.

Ambassador Gitenstein, I very much appreciated our conversation and your knowledge and commitment in a large part of Europe, particularly those in the developing democratic societies. We have two countries, in addition to Turkey, that are very much backsliding on democratic values and institutions in Hungary and in Poland.

Tell me what you have learned from Romania and how you would apply that to dealing with strengthening democratic institutions in those parts of Europe where we are seeing a backsliding.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, thank you for that question, Senator.

Well, first of all, I have discussed this extensively with the President over the last 5 or 6 years, and he knows about the work that I did in Romania. And he feels very strongly that one of the primary goals of his foreign policy is to stand up to autocracies wherever they occur. And as you and I discussed, if we cannot get this right in the EU, we probably cannot get it right anywhere.

And I think one of the most encouraging things that is happening within the EU is that they are conditioning their EU structural funds on reporting requirements as they relate to the rule of law and anti-corruption. And I saw in Romania how valuable that

is because, as you know, Romania was admitted to the EU on condition, which is known as the cooperation verification mechanism, which is a benchmarking and reporting system that has worked quite well in Romania, and it should work well in Hungary and Poland.

And this will depend entirely on whether the EU continues to press with the conditions they have set on those funds. And as an Ambassador, I will certainly argue for that.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator Cardin.

Next, we have Senator Young on Webex. Actually, I am told he is not ready. So we will go to Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you. Excuse me, thank you, Madam Chair.

Let me just thank all four of you for your willingness to continue serving our Nation. We have known each other in various roles and various ways over decades or over years, and I know each of you to be a person of great skill and character and capability. You are going to places where we need you, and we need to continue to reinforce that America sends its best and brightest to represent us around the world.

I am excited to hear how you will work together with the EU and the OECD and, in partnership with our NATO Ambassador, will reinforce our values. And Senator Flake, you are going to have quite a challenge dealing with Turkey and trying to strike a balance between their dramatic backsliding on human rights and transparency and democracy, and our strategic relationship is still trying to bring them, as it were, back into the fold.

And Mrs. McCain, we have traveled to many countries together, African countries in particular, and I know your passion, your skill, and your determination has already earned the admiration of all of us here for your hard work combatting human trafficking, fighting for a better future for women and girls, and bringing American values that are rooted in our shared commitment to democracy to your advocacy around the world.

So I look forward to supporting all four of your nominations. If I could briefly, both for Ambassador Gitenstein and for Governor Markell, one of the most challenging issues for the global digital economy is determining the right balance, when law enforcement authorities should have access to citizens' personal data and balancing legitimate security concerns with individual privacy.

And in particular, the safety of human rights advocates and minority party politicians in increasingly repressive countries. We have referenced in your earlier conversations Hungary, Poland, and others.

The OECD has often excelled, Governor Markell, at finding sensible solutions and setting implementation standards for democratic governors, part of why I agree with you. We should be very cautious about China's engagement.

But on this issue, the OECD has hit a road block, and the EU has been reluctant to move multilateral talks forward. As Ambassador to the OECD, how would you work together with Amba-

sador Gitenstein at the EU to balance data privacy and security interests?

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you for the question, Senator Coons.

I will say this is one of those issues not only are there differences between the U.S. and Europe, there are some, frankly, philosophical differences even within our own country about how this ought to be addressed. Ambassador Gitenstein and I have actually talked a couple times about opportunities to work together. This is one of them.

This is actually also an area where I think it would be important to consult with this committee to get your sense of this particular issue. The OECD excels when it is focused on technical issues like standards, data, research, and reports that ensure that the policy-makers can make the best possible decisions. But I do think this is one of those places where there is so much overlap between the work of the OECD, the influence of the European Union, as well as negotiations backdrop.

So Ambassador Gitenstein and I have developed an excellent relationship, and I know that on this particular issue it is one that we will engage with together frequently.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

And Ambassador Gitenstein, you referenced the EU-U.S. Trade and Technology Council convening in Pittsburgh. I am glad Secretaries Blinken and Raimondo and Trade Representative Tai will attend, and I am interested in hearing how you think we should move forward, both on that balance that Governor Markell was speaking to and how we work together on a raft of new regulations with the EU on AI and digital platforms as well.

I also think on climate and on a border carbon adjustment, we have an enormous opportunity with the EU. I would be interested to hear your views on these complex issues.

Ambassador GITENSTEIN. Well, I am as anxious as you are to see what happens in Pittsburgh tomorrow. You know, because I am not yet confirmed, I am not cleared on all the pre-decisional materials that have been prepared for that, but I can just speak as from my experience, which is I first got to know then-Senator Biden working on the FISA statute, Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which grew out of the work that I did on the Church committee. And I know how difficult it is to strike the balance between national security and privacy, but it has to be improved, and I think that statute needs to be improved.

And as the Europeans have begun to break new ground in this area with GDPR, I have some questions about how effective that is, and it needs—and you know, because of the Schrems decision, the Europeans are insisting, rightfully, I think, that there be some consolidation of positions between the EU and the United States on those issues. And I think they are going to be difficult issues to resolve, but I intend to put a lot of energy into that.

This is just on the digital privacy and security issues. We will work closely with Jack. Jack and I have become very good friends, and I hope we will meet regularly on this. But the OECD and the EU need to be on the same page, and I will certainly argue for that within the administration and within the EU.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Senator Flake, you are going to have a difficult balancing act. There is a lot of issues on which to hold Turkey accountable, from Cyprus to repression of religious minorities to the ongoing tense relations with Greece, to the Armenian genocide recognition. There is lots of other things in addition to the S-400 and their human rights violations.

Are there any areas where you think we can actually increase our collaboration partnership and work with them in a positive way or hold that out as a carrot at the same time that you are holding to a tough line on CAATSA sanctions and on insisting that they pull back from their embrace of Russia?

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you.

As I mentioned in my remarks, there are areas where we have worked with them and continued to work closely with them. They have pushed back against Soviet—Russian aggression in Ukraine and with Georgia. They have supported those countries' aspirations to become members of NATO. So they have been useful there.

They help, to some degree, with the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Syria and were willing to help with regard to Afghanistan and the airport and were with us to the end there. So there are some things that we can build on. But as you mentioned, there are a lot of issues that are challenging, and we will work with them where we can, challenge them where we must.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

Mrs. McCain, the chairman, having returned, notes that I have taken great liberties with the time allowed for questioning—

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Great liberties.

[Laughter.]

Senator COONS.—I look forward to talking with you separately about public-private partnerships and look forward to supporting your important work and the ambassadorship in Rome.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Van Hollen, I understand, is next on our list.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations, and thank you for your willingness to serve in these important capacities.

And I just want to endorse the comments my colleague Senator Coons made with respect to both our Ambassador to the EU and OECD. We do have to dramatically expand the cooperation between the United States and these two entities, and not just saying it, but taking the practical steps to implement it, especially with respect to the challenge from China around the globe and look forward to working with both of you on that.

Mrs. McCain, congratulations on your nomination. Look forward to supporting you in this important post.

Senator Flake, great to see you and appreciated the conversation that we had. As we discussed, I grew up in a Foreign Service family, spent many of my early years in Turkey. I have great affection for the people of Turkey.

But President Erdogan has taken Turkey way off track and in the wrong direction, both with respect to NATO commitments overall, as well as other actions, malign actions in the region, and un-

dermining human rights at home. And some of them have already been mentioned. He doubled down just this weekend on national TV here on taking another round of S-400s. That means that we will continue to discontinue any cooperation on the F-35s, given the security compromises that would exist.

We need to make sure we implement fully the CAATSA sanctions, and I understand that you have already said in this hearing that you would support an increase in CAATSA sanctions if they proceed with the next purchase. Is that correct?

Senator FLAKE. That is correct.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. You also know that Turkey is out to destroy the Syrian Kurds. Would you agree that the Syrian Kurds have been the tip of the spear for us in our fight against ISIS?

Senator FLAKE. They have been an effective partner with us in defeating ISIS, yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. So here we have an erstwhile ally trying to destroy the major partner we had in the fight against ISIS.

I heard my colleagues raise the issue of the situation in Eastern Med and Cyprus. In Cyprus, President Erdogan is going backwards, right? They have now retreated from what had been the agreed-upon approach to the talks there, bizonal, bicomunal approach. And recently, would you agree that his actions in Varosha violated U.N. Security Council resolutions?

Senator FLAKE. Yes, most definitely.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. We also have seen him aiding and abetting the attacks against Armenia. And then, at home, an ongoing effort to actually disqualify and ban the HDP, which is the third-largest political party in Turkey, is it not?

Senator FLAKE. It is.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Okay. Senator Langford and I are going to be soon sending a bipartisan letter to the President raising concerns about these issues, but my question to you is this. President Erdogan has repeatedly taken these actions. He has said very publicly that he does not care what the United States says, does not care what we say. He said that just 6 weeks ago.

So really what matters is what we do. The CAATSA sanctions have gotten their attention, although they have not changed their conduct yet, but it is having an impact on their military. With respect to the HDP and actions on Cyprus, what do you propose that we actually do beyond words to get Turkey's attention?

Senator FLAKE. Well, thank you. Thank you for the question.

And let me just say and commend this committee for pushing so hard for CAATSA sanctions, Section 231. When people say you guys talk but do not do anything, this committee and the Congress and the administration did. And it has had an impact, a significant impact on Turkey's economy because their defense industry is a big part of their economy. And being out of the F-35 program has hurt, and they know that.

With regard to other issues, obviously Cyprus, it was in violation—the action or the statements that were made in July with regard to Varosha, regard to a two-state solution. There is no two-state solution in Cyprus. As you mentioned, it needs to be a bizonal, bicomunal federation negotiated between the parties. That has been our consistent position, and it needs to continue to be.

With regard to banning of political parties and some of the other democratic backsliding, we need to make clear, as we have, and continue to make clear that that is inconsistent with democratic values and inconsistent with commitments that have been made. And so I think that we will continue to speak out on those issues and continue to act with regard to new arms purchases with additional sanctions, and that has got their attention. It has hurt, and it needs to, and I want to commend this committee for doing it.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you. I just hope we will take those kind of actions with respect to these other activities that are being taken, and the EU has an important role to play in concert with the United States.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I understand Senator Young is with us virtually.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, Chairman, thank you.

Ms. McCain, the Chinese Communist Party is actively seeking to use the U.N. standard-setting bodies to their own unique advantage. From telecommunications to international aviation and, yes, agriculture, the authorities in Beijing understand that the U.N.'s specialized agencies possess an outsized ability to help them reshape the global order.

If confirmed, how would you use your position to ensure that FAO is actually seeking to accomplish its core missions and that its activities are free from bias, including from its senior leadership?

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you. Thank you for the question, Senator.

First of all, if I am confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. leadership and partnerships will not falter on my watch. I am also concerned about their leadership positions and where they are damaging and undermining organizations with malign influences and nefarious practices.

I will be watching very closely to ensure that the FAO DG is following our leadership, which ensures our values and transparency, building coalitions to ensure our leadership remains strong, and I am also committed most definitely to food safety and its global impact. Best-case scenario in what I am saying is that I am watching.

Senator YOUNG. All right. Thank you for that answer.

So the FAO has been doing very important work for a number of years, staving off hunger for millions. And this has been due in large measure to the resources that it can bring to bear in moments and in places of great crisis. Its record in supporting and growing ag capacity and resiliency in the developing world is, however, less positive.

One overlooked dynamic at play is the success that regulators overseas, especially within the European Union, have had in keeping U.S.-led Ag tools like groundbreaking development of genetically modified crops out of the FAO's toolbox, even as they would potentially reduce the threat of drought in paths from crucial staple crops. If confirmed, how would you seek to ensure that the FAO embraces all possible means of supporting the resiliency of agricultural systems, including ones widely practiced in America?

In short, how would you seek to ensure that the FAO actually embraces science in furtherance of feeding those who are hungry?



Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you for the question. Oh, sorry. There, is that—can you hear me?

Senator YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. MCCAIN. I apologize. Thank you for the question.

It is, indeed, an issue, and it is a problem. What I would do is, number one, as I mentioned earlier, is building coalitions and bringing in more of our technology and our biotech overall. And most of all, making sure that we keep track of not just what our leadership is doing, but how we can best strengthen our ability, our multilateralism, our advancement in other areas.

The science and technology are key to our ability to be able to help grow more food with less water, grow more food independently, build sustainable villages, and build sustainable crops. I am a very strong supporter of that. Without that, I do not see how we go any farther with it. We are not going to be able to feed the multitudes that we have unless we consider every option.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you for embracing that. It will require, I think, some robust and tenacious diplomacy to persuade some of our European friends of the merits of that position. But I suspect you are going to be doing that. So, thank you.

Ms. MCCAIN. Senator, I have been compared to a chihuahua before in that I bite the ankles and bark enough until people listen to me. And so you have my commitment to being not only determined, but one that will follow through and make sure people hear.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Ms. McCain.

I think I have 1 minute left, and so I will very quickly ask a question of Mr. Markell. Mr. Markell, the members of the OECD collectively produce 60 percent of the world's goods and services, and they account for 75 percent of global trade. As was indicated earlier, China is not a member, but you indicated I think they are seeking membership.

I understand that India may also be hesitant to join, as they are a large but still emerging economy. What would the consequences be for India becoming a member, and is this something you would advocate for?

Mr. MARKELL. Senator, I am not sure I—

The CHAIRMAN. I think you are good now.

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you. Senator, I could not understand the entire question. I think it had to do with the accession of other countries into OECD membership.

Senator YOUNG. India. Yes, India in particular.

Mr. MARKELL. Okay. So one of the real strengths of the OECD is that its members share a number of common values, not only democracy, not only a commitment to free market systems, but also to a level playing field. Things like a real commitment to anti-bribery, to intellectual property protections, and the like.

The bar for entrance for any new country, including India, is extraordinarily high, and my commitment is certainly to consult with this committee, but also to—should I be confirmed—to bring to my position at the OECD a real sense that we do have a very high bar which is only met through actions, not words.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Senator Kaine?

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member Risch.

And congratulations to this very finely qualified panel of nominees. I have the good fortune to consider three of you as friends.

Jack, you and I worked together as Governors, and you did such good work as a Governor and as chair of the National Governors Association.

Jeff Flake, you were a partner on so many initiatives on this committee, somebody I deeply admire and miss as a member.

And Cindy, we have worked together, and I had the pleasure of sitting with your husband, both on this committee and on the Armed Services Committee. And I will never forget the first time I traveled with your husband, Senator McCain, on a bipartisan delegation, and I think it was to the Middle East and the first press event we did. He said something, and I was stepping to the microphone to dramatically disagree with him. I had been in the Senate for about 2 months and wondered how he would take it.

So I said, "I am going to disagree with you." And he said, "Get up there and disagree with me. We need to show them that we are not all a monolith here." And we were fast friends from that moment.

So thank you all for your service. Ambassador Gitenstein, you are the only one with the good fortune not to have had to work with me in the past.

Let me ask to, Ms. McCain, the three food programs that are based in the U.N. that you will work in representing the United States, they have all faced major challenges because of COVID, which both affect donors, increase food insecurity, and then also make the task of delivery of programs more difficult. So if you could share a little bit about the challenges that this last 18 months has meant for these programs and, as you are starting in to contemplating the position, the kinds of things we should be thinking about from Congress' side to help get through this tough chapter.

Ms. McCain. Well, first of all, thank you very much for the question. And I am glad you survived the trip to the Middle East we used to call the "McCain death march." So I am glad you made it through.

I would like the committee to know that I am very committed to keeping U.S. leadership within the World Food Program and others. That is of deep importance to me and I think also to the United States. And that has never been more present and more definitive than the fact that World Food Program won the Nobel Peace Prize as a result of the good work that they do.

But the U.S. is the largest donor by far. We have to continue to do more. We have to. Whether it is thinking outside the box, bringing new people in, putting together groups that we can discuss good ideas, bad ideas, whatever it may be. But I am committed to making sure that we talk to everybody and we understand issues and consider new ideas in all of this.

I also want to encourage new donors and more country involvement. We carry the load of this, which we do brilliantly, but I would like to make sure that we are able to bring in more people,

more ideas, as I said, and more countries to be a part of this. It is important.

Our public-private partnerships have to be expanded as well, and they do a marvelous job. But I am very committed to making sure that we expand our public-private partnership options here.

And also to consider a push for diversity and inclusivity, which is the question—the prior question that you asked me, and more. And most of all, making sure within that diversity and inclusivity that we have a safe workspace for people to work in. And of course, pushing for more technology and innovation in all of this is part of what I feel is not only important, but it is imperative in what we do.

And I would like to get on the ground and really examine what is going on with the issues that you initially talked about and see what can be done, what changes can be made, if that is the case.

Senator Kaine. Thank you, Ms. McCain. I think that you are very well suited for the position.

Senator Flake, the questions that I wanted to ask you have generally been covered by my colleagues. But I guess, you know, maybe big picture, here would be something I hope after some time there you might come back and educate us on.

I think we all share this frustration with the Erdogan and feel like there was some promise at the start, and then it has taken this turn in a number of ways that have been hostile to the United States. But friends of mine who are in Turkey basically say it is not that hard to understand Erdogan's position vis-a-vis the United States if you look at the Turkish population's attitude about the United States.

Now these things can self-reinforce, but you know, leaders are not going to be warm and fuzzy to the United States if the populations have a lot of anti-U.S. sentiment. And I do not know this as an expert on Turkey, but people I know who are experts point out to me a lot that the Turkish population's view of the United States is quite negative. And as an Ambassador, A, you would be in a position to dig in and find out if that is true and then share with us why, but also you will have a unique opportunity with your own diplomatic background from having been in the Senate to, having shared why, giving us strategies and undertaking efforts yourself to start turning that around.

We are not going to have a government that is going to really be a great ally of the United States if their population is very anti-U.S. in their public sentiment, and I would look forward to having that conversation with you, should you be confirmed—and I am confident you will be—down the road after you have been in Turkey for a while.

Thank you very much to the panel, and yield it back, Mr. Chair.

The Chairman. Thank you. Senator Shaheen?

Senator Shaheen. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to each of our nominees this morning. We are especially delighted to see our former Senate family back here again.

I am going to begin with you, Mrs. McCain, and I would have identified you more as a Great Dane than a Chihuahua. So I have had Afghans since the takeover of the Taliban who have said to me that they really hope that the United States and the international

community will not prevent humanitarian aid from going to the Afghan people because of our opposition to the Taliban. We know there are 14 million in Afghanistan who are food insecure, 2 million of them children who are malnourished.

Winter is coming. So the situation is only going to get worse. So can you talk a little bit about how you will work with the U.N., with the United States, to ensure that desperately needed food gets to those Afghans who are really in need.

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you for the question, and it is like many of you and all of you, I mean, having had two sons in Afghanistan, I have watched with great interest and many times great horror, seeing what is actually occurring and has occurred there.

Once again, our most vulnerable are being preyed upon, which is the usual drill in a lot of these countries. The U.S. is the largest single donor, though, to humanitarian assistance within Afghanistan and within the region as well. I commit that we will continue the lifesaving support that those need, if I am confirmed.

Most of all, if I am confirmed, I will support all efforts to ensure that humanitarian assistance and in Afghanistan benefits those that it is going to, which is, as you know, is about transparency and the ability to really have good partners on the ground. And I will also continue to monitor what is going on within the country. It is a dicey project, and I know you know that.

It is certainly an evolving situation as well, much like Yemen and Ethiopia right now, and we will continue to work on best practices in addressing the needs of the conflict zones in that area. And if I am confirmed, you have my commitment to do the best I can.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you very much for that answer, and if I can be helpful, please let me know.

Ms. MCCAIN. Thank you. I would rely on the entire committee for help.

Senator SHAHEEN. Absolutely. I know that we are ready to help.

Senator Flake, tomorrow President Erdogan is supposed to meet with Vladimir Putin. They are ostensibly discussing cooperation in Syria, and yet given the surge of Turkish troops in Northwestern Syria to combat Russian airstrikes this week, is there still a threat of a Russian-Turkey joint offensive in Syria, do you think? And how should we respond to that in the United States?

Senator FLAKE. Thank you, Senator.

I have not had classified briefing yet. I have not been confirmed. So I would defer questions to Department of Defense on the possibilities there.

But the meeting with Putin, obviously Ankara has had at least a transactional relationship with Russia on a number of issues. As we mentioned, the purchase of weapon systems. But they have also pushed back in a number of areas as well. Crimea, been consistent in saying that that is part of Ukraine territory and the selling arms to Ukraine and also supporting Ukraine and Georgia in their sovereignty.

So, yes, it is an interesting relationship. I will be very interested to see what comes out of that meeting, to the extent that we know. But with regard to Syria, I would defer to those who know more than I do right now.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, I hope when you get confirmed that that will be an area of focus.

Senator FLAKE. It will.

Senator SHAHEEN. Because, obviously, it is a very difficult situation in the country, as you know.

Governor Markell, as you are probably aware, we are having negotiations around tax policy right now, and it is an issue that the OECD has also been working on. They have had an ambitious framework for how to coordinate tax policy. How optimistic are you that their process can result in agreement, and what should we be thinking about with respect to that as we are looking at what we might do on taxation of income of multinational corporations?

Mr. MARKELL. Well, thank you very much for the question, Senator.

Since I have not been confirmed, I have not been read into all the details yet. My sense is that it is the Treasury Department that has really taken the lead in those negotiations, but the OECD has an important role to play because it provides so much of the technical assistance.

And so, should I be confirmed, obviously I will be supporting the position of the administration, and I look forward to consulting with this committee for your guidance as well.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you. I know of no other members seeking recognition. So I have one or two final questions before we close.

Ms. McCain, what you and I spoke about yesterday, the reality of in the context of food insecurity a disproportionate impact upon women and girls, 10 percent higher among women as of 2019. So will you make it part of your advocacy, upon confirmation, for women and girls who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic-related food insecurity?

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes, Senator. And may I say that from my experience around the globe and everything that I have done, and all too often our women and children are disposable. And that simply, in this case that I do not buy that, and it is not going to happen.

The CHAIRMAN. Fine, thank you.

And also I think you referred to some of your experiences on water and what not. But part of our challenge globally in terms of food supply chain is the question of climate change, which the Food and Agriculture Organization approaches in a national, regional, and global context using the Paris agreement as structure to which the entity collaborates with member nations.

I hope that as we—in the first instance, this program is about helping people in need, the emergent nature of it. But the question becomes once we have a population that we are directly feeding through these programs, there is an opportunity to also change and transform their lives and how we ultimately create more food, as you suggested, with less water. I hope that you will make that a significant part of your mission upon confirmation.

Ms. MCCAIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Finally, Governor, one of our former colleagues questioned you only about India, but I am more interested as well about the expansion of OECD membership. There are 38 members in the OECD, along with 5 partner countries and 6 countries vying to become full-fledged members. Two of those partner countries include China and India. Russia has been trying to get in for several years but was basically shut out after their invasion of Ukraine in 2014.

What are your thoughts on the accession program for countries trying to join the OECD?

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you for the question.

There should be a very high bar. The OECD, unlike many other multilaterals, has characteristics and qualifications for membership, which are very much focused on a commitment to democracy, a commitment to market-oriented economic systems. And it has just never been more important that countries that share those values demonstrate that we can deliver better than those who have other approaches.

And so there are some who believe that increasing the membership of the OECD is a metric that we should care about. I do not agree with that. I think the OECD is extraordinarily valuable to its member countries. I think it is a great place for convening of like-minded countries, and so I think the bar to accession is extremely high.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I share your view. Expansion should be based upon those who can meet and share the same values, not just simply for the sake of expansion. So I appreciate that.

And the other point about the OECD, I am increasingly concerned that the United States is not well positioned to engage in economic statecraft for the 21st century, both including promoting U.S. jobs, business investments, engaging in development, financing for infrastructure, and setting standards for emergent technologies and the digital economy. These are all incredibly important areas, as well as that, you know, an American company goes abroad and has maybe got the best product, maybe they got the best performance, maybe they got the best delivery, but they cannot suborn that foreign government under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

Unfortunately, other countries in the world do engage in that process, including countries or companies within the European Union. How do you see, view your role in the OECD in both helping us in these different areas of economic statecraft?

Mr. MARKELL. Well, thank you for that question as well.

My view is that American businesses and American workers can compete successfully anywhere so long as there is a level playing field. And I believe that one of the most critical goals and pieces of the OECD mission is to ensure that there is, in fact, a level playing field.

The OECD's Anti-Bribery Convention is one of the most important things that the OECD has ever done. It ensures that not only member countries live up to those standards, but it sets a model for other countries as well. I know that Senator Cardin on this committee has done some really important work over the years, including the CROOK Act, which he has been pushing.

So whether it is things like anti-bribery, whether it is around issues of stopping the theft of intellectual property, whether it is making sure procurement opportunities are available to U.S. businesses, this is just one of the most important parts of what the OECD does, and I will—if confirmed, I will ensure that focusing on a level playing field is at the very top of my priority list.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

And I will just call to your attention, I am sure you are familiar with this, adherence to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which is a key international framework on responsible business conduct, are required to establish a national contact point to help promote the guidelines to businesses and other stakeholders.

I hope that when you are confirmed, you will work to make that system strong and effective to deal with some of the challenges we have been talking about.

Mr. MARKELL. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

All right. I understand there are no other members seeking recognition.

With that, with our thanks to the nominees, the record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, Wednesday, September 29. To colleagues on the committee, please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than tomorrow, Wednesday, September 29.

To the nominees, there will inevitably be questions for the record. I would urge you to answer the questions expeditiously and fully so that your nominations can be considered before a full business committee.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JACK A. MARKELL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEZES

*Question.* Can you expand upon how you view your role at the OECD, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish US economic statecraft instruments?

*Answer.* The work of the OECD rests on the shared values of the member nations: a commitment to democracy, human rights, transparency, and open market based economic principles. If confirmed, I will work to coordinate U.S. Government agency engagement with the OECD to ensure the organization's recommended policies and regulations reflect those values and interests and will secure the agreement of other member nations. The resulting policies and regulations will, in turn, help create and expand legitimate investment and financing opportunities for U.S. business and promote U.S. job creation.

*Question.* Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

*Answer.* I see the most pressing challenge today is building back our economies and societies after the COVID-crisis in a better, more inclusive way. This brings with it opportunities to address the climate crisis, to ensure the gains of trade are shared by all, to manage the disruptive impact of critical and emerging technologies, and to find inclusive and equitable economic strategies consistent with our shared values. If confirmed, I will work to keep the OECD focused on its strengths of high-quality, unbiased data collection and evidence-based analysis to make policy recommendations in those areas. It is here where U.S. engagement and leadership can

ensure the organization remains an effective institution that benefits the American people.

#### *OECD Guidelines Review*

*Question.* The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises are a pioneering set of standards that promote responsible business conduct. The guidelines were last updated in 2011, and the OECD is currently undertaking a stocktaking to see if they are still fit for purpose or need revision. Several stakeholders have identified gaps in the guidelines, particularly in the areas of gender, environmental impacts, and protections of human rights defenders.

- How will you ensure that the potential updated guidelines are strengthened to further incorporate high standards in these areas?

*Answer.* I agree with you on the importance of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (Guidelines), a key set of recommendations from governments to businesses that promote responsible business conduct. I understand the ongoing stocktaking exercise will assess the guidelines, their implementation, and the OECD's overall work on Responsible Business Conduct. If confirmed, I will work with officials from the State Department and other U.S. Government agencies to take into account stakeholder input and consider ways to further strengthen the guidelines consistent with our shared values.

*Question.* How will you ensure that this review results in a strengthening—rather than a weakening—of the current standards?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with officials from the State Department and other U.S. Government agencies to take into account the input of all relevant stakeholders, including affected groups, and consider ways to further strengthen the Guidelines consistent with our shared values. I agree on the need to avoid a weakening of the guidelines.

*Question.* As the U.S. Representative to the OECD, how will you ensure that the NCP system is strong and effective to address business and human rights grievances?

*Answer.* The U.S. National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (Guidelines) serves an important role in promoting and implementing the Guidelines, and in facilitating the resolution of allegations brought against a company. The Guidelines provide important government recommendations to companies on responsible business practices, including with respect to human rights. If confirmed, I will work with the State Department and other agencies to review the current work of the U.S. NCP, consider feedback from concerned stakeholders, and take appropriate steps to ensure the mechanism we have in place is a meaningful one.

#### *China*

*Question.* As you know, this committee has been very focused on reframing our relationship with China through the lens of strategic competition—as evidenced by our bipartisan approach in passing the Strategic Competition Act. This historic, bipartisan legislation is clear-eyed about the challenges we face, and is designed to meet this consequential moment in U.S.-China relations.

- How do you plan on using your position at the OECD to effectively confront and compete with China?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the People's Republic of China (PRC) actions in international organizations that aim to reshape the international order to align with its authoritarian system. If confirmed, I will keep at the forefront of my actions the focus that any OECD engagement with the PRC must support member nation interests and uphold the norms, high standards, and practices that underpin the rules-based global economic order. Additionally, I will work to leverage the OECD's role in developing best practices for global trade, digital economy policy, anti-corruption, infrastructure, and other policy areas to counter alternative models pushed by authoritarian states that undermine global values, rules, and norms.



RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK GITENSTEIN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*U.S.-EU trade*

*Question.* Economic ties between the United States and the EU were damaged under President Trump, particularly with the imposition of tariffs on EU food and beverage imports. These tariffs put additional financial strain on families in my home state of New Jersey, many of whom work in food processing, as well as many restaurants who tried to stay afloat during the pandemic. President Biden suspended these destructive tariffs in March 2021. How will you advance stronger trade ties between the United States and the EU as ambassador? Will you commit to seeking a permanent resolution of the large civil aircraft dispute so that consumers, restaurants, and food importers have certainty in the U.S.-EU trade relationship?

*Answer.* The United States and the European Union represent the largest economic relationship in the world. The Transatlantic trade and investment relationship is vital for our mutual prosperity. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and member states to resolve or deescalate difficult bilateral issues, including in trade, with the EU and other partners. I will work together with our European partners to protect the rules-based global trading system—a system under threat from non-market economies. This includes resolution of the large civil aircraft dispute. In addition, I will work with our trade experts in the U.S. Government, in consultation with business, labor, and other stakeholders to support policies that advance our trade and investment objectives with the European Union for our mutual benefit.

*China*

*Question.* The United States has expressed strong support for the Three Seas Initiative as an alternative for Chinese investment plans like the 17+1 format. How do you plan to engage European members on Three Seas and other proposals to reduce Chinese malign influence in Europe?

*Answer.* I agree with Secretary Blinken that the Three Seas Initiative (3SI) is an important tool to bring the private sector to the table alongside governments to make infrastructure projects happen and to develop robust connections among our Central European Allies that link them closer to each other and to Western European countries. If confirmed, I will work with the EU to support resilient infrastructure in Europe, including through the 3SI and the Build Back Better World and Blue Dot Network initiatives. If confirmed, I will use all the tools at our disposal to work with our EU partners to promote an affirmative vision that is rooted in our shared values and promote high-quality, resilient infrastructure both in Europe and globally.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK GITENSTEIN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Russia has been slowing its supply of natural gas through Ukrainian pipelines, which has left some EU members at an all-time low in pre-winter stores of fuel. These empty tanks have pushed energy prices in Europe up very high. EU energy regulations state that no single pipeline owner may supply more than 50 percent of the EU's energy capacity.

- Should the flow of Russian natural gas not return to normal before winter, do you believe that the EU will consider suspending or breaking its regulations with regard to Russian supplier, Gazprom, and allow it to provide more than 50 percent of its natural gas supply to fulfill the increased demand in the winter months?

*Answer.* I am concerned gas storage in Europe is low and the market is undersupplied compared to prior years. The lower-than-normal levels of gas storage illustrate the importance of diversified energy supplies and suppliers to meet Europe's energy security goals. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the European partners to enhance energy security for member states.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to calling on the European Union to implement the rules and regulations required by the Third Energy Package on Nord Stream 2 as well as on the Turk Stream 1 and 2 pipelines?

*Answer.* The Nord Stream 2 pipeline is a Russian geopolitical project that undercuts the energy security of a significant part of the Euro-Atlantic community. I un-

derstand the administration continues to work with Germany, Ukraine, and other European Allies and partners to reduce the risks of an operational Nord Stream 2 pipeline. This includes the package of measures detailed in the July 21, 2021 U.S.-Germany Joint Statement on support for Ukraine, European Energy Security, and our Climate Goals. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the European Union to apply Third Energy Package directives to ensure that all energy projects in Europe are implemented in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner that promote competition.

*Question.* Some leaders have been discussing the concept of strategic autonomy in Europe's security posture for almost a decade, and in recent years discussion of it has risen due to the perceived decline of American leadership in the world and a weakening of relations with Europe. Strategic autonomy has now become a major topic of discussion among EU leaders following the U.S. surrender of Europe's energy security to Russia through the concession of Nord Stream 2, the disastrous Afghanistan withdrawal that exposed our allies' vulnerabilities in conducting security operations without close U.S. involvement, and the recent AUKUS deal, which, while a good move for our mutual interests in the Indo-Pacific, left a major ally feeling disenfranchised, overall sending a poor message on how the United States values its allies.

- Is it in the interests of the United States for EU nations to pursue strategic autonomy and develop a military that launch major operations outside of our transatlantic military alliances?

*Answer.* The administration is committed to re-engaging allies and partners and revitalizing our alliances. I welcome European efforts to strengthen European defense that would enhance Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and member states to ensure that this work is complementary to and not duplicative of NATO's efforts and strengthen practical participation by the United States in EU defense programs. I look forward to engaging with Allies and EU partners to reinforce the unparalleled value of Transatlantic cooperation and the NATO Alliance.

*Question.* How would strategic autonomy improve the issue of burden sharing in defense cooperation between the U.S. and EU members?

*Answer.* The EU and EU member states are important partners in addressing key foreign policy, security, and economic issues. A strong EU and strong EU member states committing more resources to defense contribute to the goal of enhanced Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to promote greater U.S. participation in European defense projects and ensure that EU Defense initiatives are coherent, interoperable, complementary to and not duplicative of NATO efforts. If confirmed, I will support continued NATO-EU cooperation and to ensure increased burden sharing by Allies.

*Question.* How would the formation of a European army open the door to the EU pursuing unilateral security interests that diverge from those of the United States?

*Answer.* A strong Europe, including EU member states should contribute to the goal of enhanced Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to ensure greater U.S. participation in EU defense initiatives and that these initiatives remain coherent, interoperable, complementary with, and not duplicative of, NATO efforts. Additionally, if confirmed, I will seek ways to support continued NATO-EU cooperation.

*Question.* Should the EU focus efforts more on expanding its membership, or more on helping current members improve their political and economic situations?

*Answer.* The EU is an important partner in addressing key foreign policy, security, and economic issues. Member states with durable and capable democratic institutions and strong economies enhance this partnership. Closer integration into key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has strengthened democratic institutions and rule of law in aspirant countries, contributing to political stability and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and member states to maintain a focus on governance, rule of law, anti-corruption reforms, independent media, and vibrant civil societies—in short, urging the EU to both support accession-related reforms in candidate states and help current members improve democratic governance and rule of law.

*Question.* What is the consensus in the EU about expansion, given that some members, such as Hungary, have seen democratic backsliding in recent years?

*Answer.* I am concerned about backsliding on democratic principles and institutions in some EU member states, including in, but not only in, Hungary. The trans-

atlantic relationship is deeply rooted in the United States' and European Union's shared commitment to democratic values, including the rule of law, judicial independence, and media freedom. These values are an essential part of our relationship with the EU and a topic of frank discussions with member states; a demonstrated commitment to democracy and its institutions is also a prerequisite for EU accession. The administration supports the EU and EU member states' efforts to reverse democratic backsliding within the bloc, and we work alongside the EU to support democratic institutions and promote rule of law reforms in states working towards EU accession. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and member states to support and strengthen democracy across Europe.

*Question.* China has already been making inroads in Europe by laying debt traps in the Balkans, building the PEACE cable to France, buying stakes in major seaports, and creating formats that divide Europe, like the 17+1. Fortunately, European nations have begun to recognize the threat that China poses and have shut down Chinese attempts to influence educational institutions and businesses.

- What are some concrete ways you will help the United States Government coordinate with and provide mutual support to EU members to combat China's influence?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with the EU and member states on collective approaches to challenging non-market policies and coercive economic practices that undermine the fair and transparent operation of the global economy, including those from the PRC. If confirmed, I will also work with the EU to support resilient infrastructure, including through the Build Back Better World and Blue Dot Network initiatives and the Three Seas Initiative. Finally, if confirmed, I will use all the tools at our disposal—including the U.S.-EU dialogue on China and the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council—to address the challenges posed by the PRC and promote rules of the road that reflect the democratic values shared by the United States and Europe.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States should honor its earlier commitment to have the Development Finance Corporation invest \$300 million in The Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund?

*Answer.* I understand that U.S. International Development Finance Corporation continues to strongly support the Three Seas Initiative (3SI) and is engaged in promising discussions with the investment adviser of the 3SI Investment Fund. The relevant parties are working intensively on a vehicle to enable DFC to announce its support to the fund consistent with U.S. legal and regulatory requirements. DFC financing can serve as a catalyst in developing renewable and reliable energy networks that can drive development and growth across priority regions. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the EU to promote investments in quality infrastructure and exploring ways to align our respective infrastructure initiatives.

*Question.* Will you work to urge the European Union to increase its investments in eastern and southern European infrastructure projects (even those outside of the EU), improve its oversight of strategically-important asset sales?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to working through the G7's Build Back Better World initiative and the Blue Dot Network to support quality, inclusive, sustainable, and high-standard infrastructure development, including in Europe. We also are a strong supporter of the Three Seas Initiative. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the EU to promote investments in quality infrastructure and exploring ways to align our respective initiatives. Also, if confirmed, I will continue discussions on investment screening approaches under the framework of the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council.

*Question.* What strengths do you see in the European Union's recently-released EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific? What do you see as the main weaknesses in this Strategy?

*Answer.* The United States and EU share a vision of the Indo-Pacific that is inclusive and based on the rule of law and democratic values and that contributes to the security and sustainable development of the region. Both prioritize cooperation to promote secure, sustainable, free and open maritime supply routes and supply chains. I was glad to see the President and Secretary of State welcomed the EU's new strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the EU as we each implement our respective Indo-Pacific strategies to ensure our approaches are complementary, are rooted in our shared values, and support shared initiatives like Build Back Better World.

*Question.* The Balkans, as the poorest and least Euro-integrated region on the continent, have come under heavy pressure from Russia and China.

- How could greater integration with the rest of Europe help reverse and resist these outside forces that seek to use the Balkans as an inroads to Europe and establish a beachhead of influence on the continent?

*Answer.* Closer integration with key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has proven to contribute to political stability, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law and advancing economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will work to support the countries of the Western Balkans as they seek to join the Western community of democracies, including by undertaking the required reforms. These efforts will buttress them against malign actors who seek to undermine democratic principles, subvert the rule of law, and divert these countries from their Western paths.

*Question.* How great of an obstacle do good governance issues, such as corruption, rule of law, and electoral problems pose to Balkan integration into Europe?

*Answer.* Closer integration with key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has proven to contribute to political stability, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law and advancing economic prosperity. The people of the Western Balkans states deserve transparency, rule of law, multi-ethnic democracy, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will work to support their aspirations and support the reform process to help these countries maintain their paths toward the Western community of democracies.

*Question.* How would the efforts to improve corruption, rule of law, and economic issues in the Balkans benefit from an increase in effort from the EU to integrate the region?

*Answer.* Closer integration with key European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has proven to contribute to political stability, strengthening democratic institutions and rule of law and advancing economic prosperity. The people of the Western Balkans states deserve good governance, rule of law, multi-ethnic democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and economic opportunity. However, disillusionment with delays on the Western Balkans' EU path opens the door for harmful influences from our strategic rivals. If confirmed, I will work to support the Western Balkans' European aspirations and support the reform process to help these countries maintain their paths toward the Western community of democracies.

*Question.* In the wake of Brexit, the UK, Ireland and the greater European Union have been left to tackle the issue of the EU-UK customs border between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

- How will you engage in negotiations on this issue to ensure that U.S. trade interests are protected, and that the Good Friday Agreement is preserved?

*Answer.* The United States supports a close and cooperative relationship between the United Kingdom and the European Union, based on a shared understanding of democratic values, national security, law enforcement, and a broad range of other interests. The United States also wants to see a confident, forward-looking Northern Ireland with a prosperous economy that reflects the identity and aspirations of every tradition. If confirmed, I will encourage both sides to keep the door open to continued dialogue that will enhance the prospect for long-term, positive solutions and promote strong trade and investment ties with the EU, while preserving the Good Friday Agreement.

*Question.* Should the EU-UK customs border be formed along the border of Ireland and Northern Ireland, or between the island of Ireland and the island of Great Britain, with Northern Ireland receiving a special condition to maintain unity with the rest of the UK? Do you believe there is a better proposal for a solution to the customs border issue?

*Answer.* Recent unrest in Northern Ireland underscores the importance of safeguarding the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. If confirmed, I will encourage all parties to prioritize political and economic stability and to negotiate when differences arise. I would emphasize the need to ensure any Brexit outcomes do not undermine the progress made since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. If confirmed, I will support the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and welcome the provisions in both the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the Northern Ireland Protocol which help protect hard-won gains.

*Question.* In July 2020, the European Court of Justice struck down the Privacy Shield program, invalidating a critical mechanism for transferring personal data from the EU to the U.S. This has raised significant concerns about the continued viability of transatlantic data flows at an important moment for U.S. economic re-

covery, as data flows support more than \$245 billion in U.S. digital exports to Europe. There is an ongoing interagency effort to negotiate a successor privacy framework with our European partners, without which U.S. companies are likely to increasingly face barriers to engaging in cross-border digital commerce with Europe.

- If confirmed, will you prioritize the on-going negotiations to replace the Privacy Shield program?

Answer. I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

*Question.* Toward that goal, what steps do you plan to take to support a swift and successful conclusion to the efforts to produce a successor Privacy Shield framework?

Answer. I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

*Question.* This month saw the launch of the U.S.-EU Trade & Technology Council (TTC). While the TTC will cover a broad set of issues, it is well-suited to support U.S. engagement with the EU's proposed Artificial Intelligence Act. As with GDPR, the AI Act is likely to be enacted and set a global benchmark for AI regulation.

- If confirmed, will you seek to engage with your EU counterparts—both directly and through the Trade and Technology Council—as the EU's AI Act moves forward toward avoiding divergent regulatory approaches while supporting interoperability in AI governance?

Answer. The United States welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the EU on governance approaches to technology that advance innovation, take a risk-based approach that reflects our shared democratic values, and address shared global challenges. The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council is a key forum for joint efforts to foster trustworthy, secure, and responsible AI that reflects our shared values and commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of all our citizens. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing this effort and to ensure our respective regulatory frameworks maintain a risk-based, innovation-friendly approach.

*Question.* Given the importance of the EU-U.S. bilateral and the breadth of pressing tech-related issues, how will you seek to comprehensively balance the interests of U.S. businesses with the strategic goal of enhancing a steadfast relationship with our European allies?

Answer. Building on our shared democratic values and economic relationship—the world's largest—if confirmed, I will use my role as U.S. Ambassador to the EU to implement and inform an agreed interagency approach to achieve an appropriate and comprehensive balance between national security and economic security goals. In my previous experience as U.S. Ambassador to Romania, engaging with government officials and stakeholders from business, labor, and civil society was essential to build relationships and find common ground, even on tough issues.

*Question.* What are your thoughts regarding restarting the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) talks with Europe? What are your thoughts regarding completing free trade agreement talks with the U.K.?

Answer. The administration is reviewing its policies on trade agreements to ensure that trade supports middle-class jobs and labor. If confirmed, I will work with our trade experts in the U.S. Government, as well as business, labor, and other stakeholders to support policies that advance our trade and investment objectives with Europe our mutual benefit.

*Question.* The U.S. and the EU have, generally speaking, highly developed regulatory processes based on science that are intended to keep our people healthy and safe. As part of the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) talks under President Obama, exploratory efforts were made to find ways to better coordinate or to find equivalence in our respective regulatory processes. Studies conducted at the time of TTIP suggested significant potential cost savings to both sides through potential alignment on regulatory outcomes. Sometimes these savings were far greater than a simple tariff cutting trade agreement would have provided. In addition, to the extent the U.S. and EU could agree on common approaches to regulation, we together could set global standards for others to follow. What are your

thoughts about strengthening engagement on the regulatory front between the U.S. and the EU? Is this a realistic goal to think we could create some convergence between us on the regulatory front? How would you contribute to pursuing it, if confirmed?

*Answer.* President Biden and his EU counterparts established the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council in June 2021 as a forum to shape the rules of the road for the 21st century economy and demonstrate how democratic approaches to trade, technology, and innovation can improve the lives of our citizens. The inaugural ministerial meeting took place in Pittsburgh on September 29. The two sides intend to discuss ways to avoid non-tariff barriers, particularly in emerging technology such as artificial intelligence. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our respective regulatory frameworks maintain a risk-based, innovation-friendly approach.

*Question.* For decades, China has been underwriting steel production through cheap loans and other government interventions. Such Chinese Government support to Chinese steel has hurt the steel industry in the U.S. This overproduction has also injured many other countries as excess Chinese steel (produced according to political directives and not necessarily in response to market demand) is dumped, creating ripple effects throughout the rest of the world including in Europe. Europe should be a potential natural ally in forming a coalition to pressure China to reform its steel practices. What are your thoughts on how we might partner with Europe on countering such anti-market practices by China?

*Answer.* The United States and the European Union committed in May to enter into discussions that would address global steel and aluminum excess capacity and the deployment of effective solutions, including appropriate trade measures to preserve our critical industries. By working together with our allies to address excess capacity and non-market practices, we can support strong domestic steel and aluminum production, inputs in supply chains critical to our national security. If confirmed, I will support efforts to resolve or deescalate difficult bilateral issues with the EU and other partners and focus on the shared threat we face from non-market economies.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK GITENSTEIN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* What is the unify vision of the European Union?

*Answer.* The President has emphasized the United States' continued commitment to the goal of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. A strong relationship with a united European Union will be essential to face the challenges of the present and future. If confirmed, I will work to revitalize and raise the level of ambition in our relations with the EU to address the challenges we face and promote an affirmative vision rooted in our shared democratic values.

*Question.* Do you support a European Union having its own Army?

*Answer.* A strong Europe, including EU member states, should contribute to the goal of enhanced Transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to ensure greater U.S. participation in EU defense initiatives, and that these initiatives remain coherent, interoperable, complementary with, and not duplicative of, NATO efforts. Additionally, if confirmed, I will seek ways to support continued NATO-EU cooperation.

*Question.* How do you plan to plan to foster a "transatlantic view" for security vs. the "Europe alone" attitude espoused by President Macron?

*Answer.* The EU is a vital partner in addressing key foreign policy, security, and economic issues. A strong EU contributes to enhanced transatlantic security. If confirmed, I will work with the EU and EU member states to ensure that EU security and defense initiatives are coherent, complementary, and interoperable with and not duplicative of NATO efforts. If confirmed, I will seek ways to support and enhance continued NATO-EU cooperation to address the multiple and evolving security challenges confronting the United States, NATO Allies, and EU member states. There is strength in numbers. We are more effective in facing common threats if we work together and combine our resources and expertise than if we work separately.

*Question.* How can the EU work with NATO to advice the common interest of European Security?

*Answer.* The administration has committed itself to re-engaging European allies and partners. I welcome European efforts to strengthen European defense including by spending more on defense. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and EU member states to ensure that defense efforts should be coherent, complimentary, and interoperable with and not duplicative of NATO efforts. If confirmed I will seek to strengthen NATO-EU cooperation and work with Allies and partners to enhance Transatlantic security. Julie Smith, if confirmed, and I have committed to meet weekly in Brussels towards this goal.

*Question.* Would you say that Russia, not climate change is the biggest threat to European Security?

*Answer.* The administration has worked with the EU on strengthening our mutual ability both to resist Russian use of energy as a weapon and to combat climate change, and if confirmed I will continue to do so.

*Question.* How can the EU stand up to Russia when it continues to peruse Russian energy?

*Answer.* Europe's continued reliance on Russia for its energy supply remains a top threat to its energy security. Russia is the main EU supplier of crude oil, natural gas, and solid fuels. Russia's nuclear fuel supply monopoly in Central and Eastern Europe is also a matter of concern. The administration strongly supports diversification of energy supplies to diminish the role of geopolitics in energy markets, reduce consumer prices, and enhance energy security. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the European Union on enhancing energy security for member states and pushing back against Russia's attempts to use energy as a weapon.

*Question.* Would you oppose further European joint energy projects with Russia?

*Answer.* The administration strongly supports diversification of energy supplies to diminish the role of geopolitics in energy markets, reduce consumer prices, and enhance energy security. If confirmed, I look forward to working with European Union on enhancing energy security for member states and pushing back against Russia's attempts to use energy as a weapon.

*Question.* What should be the lesson the EU should learn from Ukraine who has had their energy turned off by Russia and now faces severe energy shortfalls this winter?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support the administration's efforts to work with our allies and partners to promote a more secure and sustainable energy future for Ukraine and frontline NATO and EU countries, and to push back against Russian attempts to use energy as a weapon.

*Question.* Do you see Turkey becoming an EU member in the foreseeable future?

*Answer.* Turkey will need to meet the EU accession conditions, including implementing reforms that ensure respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic institutions. To do this, Turkey will need to undertake reforms to reverse the democratic backsliding that has occurred. If confirmed, I will encourage both the EU and Turkey to continue to concretely advance a positive EU-Turkey agenda and to encourage Turkey, in coordination with our embassy in Ankara, to undertake the necessary reforms.

*Question.* What would have to change to make that happen or happen faster?

*Answer.* Turkey will need to meet the EU accession conditions, including implementing reforms that ensure respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic institutions. It will also have to make more technical reforms ranging from customs union modernization to migration cooperation. If confirmed, I will encourage both the EU and Turkey to continue to concretely advance a positive EU-Turkey agenda and to encourage Turkey, in coordination with our embassy in Ankara, to undertake the necessary reforms.

*Question.* How can the EU work with Turkey to manage the humanitarian crisis that is still ongoing in southern Europe?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with our partners in the European Union and member states on providing humanitarian assistance and diplomatic engagement with Turkey and other countries to respond to the humanitarian issues in the southern Europe. We have encouraged Turkey to maintain its close coordination with the EU and international organizations to promote coordinated, effective, and efficient humanitarian responses in southern Europe.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you prioritize the on-going negotiations to replace the Privacy Shield program?

**Answer.** I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

**Question.** What steps do you plan to take to support a swift and successful conclusion to the efforts to produce a successor Privacy Shield framework?

**Answer.** I understand the urgency of this issue for American businesses and for our Transatlantic ties more broadly. If confirmed, I would prioritize continued U.S.-EU negotiations on an enhanced Privacy Shield Framework to facilitate continued transatlantic data flows while ensuring sufficient privacy protections for individuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

**Question.** If confirmed, will you seek to engage with your EU counterparts—both directly and through the Trade and Technology Council—as the EU’s AI Act moves forward toward avoiding divergent regulatory approaches while supporting interoperability in AI governance?

**Answer.** Yes. The United States welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the EU on governance approaches to technology that advance innovation, take a risk-based approach, reflect our shared democratic values, and address shared global challenges. The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council is a key forum for joint efforts to foster trustworthy, secure, and responsible AI that reflects our shared values and commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of all our citizens. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing this effort and to ensure our respective regulatory frameworks maintain a risk-based, innovation-friendly approach.

**Question.** Given the importance of the EU-U.S. bilateral and the breadth of pressing tech-related issues, how will you seek to comprehensively balance the interests of U.S. businesses with the strategic goal of enhancing a steadfast relationship with our European allies?

**Answer.** Building on our shared democratic values and economic relationship—the world’s largest—if confirmed, I will use my role as U.S. Ambassador to the EU to implement and inform an agreed interagency approach to achieving an appropriate and comprehensive balance between national security and economic security goals. In my previous experience as U.S. Ambassador to Romania, engaging with government officials and stakeholders from business, labor, and civil society was essential to build relationships and find common ground, even on tough issues.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

**Question.** The Azerbaijani military attacked ethnic Armenian positions using Turkish drones during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War. Satellite images showed Turkish F-16s at an airport in Azerbaijan, and Armenia claims that a Turkish F-16 shot down one of its planes in Armenian airspace in September 2020. Reports indicate that Turkey recruited and paid Syrian mercenaries to aid Azerbaijan’s military. What tools would you use as Ambassador to hold the Turkish Government accountable for its role in exacerbating international conflicts as it did in Nagorno-Karabakh?

**Answer.** Over the past several years Turkey has pursued a more independent foreign policy that has at times advanced American interests and in some cases has been unhelpful and destabilizing. If confirmed, I will work with counterparts in the Departments of State, Defense, Treasury, and the United States Congress to encourage and, if necessary, pressure Turkey to take actions in line with NATO and U.S. interests in the region. If confirmed, I will support efforts to engage bilaterally and multilaterally to advance conflict resolution and normalization in the Caucasus.

**Question.** Ever since the 2016 coup attempt, the Erdogan regime has engaged in increasingly systematic human rights violations, including through mass detentions, undermining elections, arbitrary arrests, indefinite detention, and in some cases, torture. President Erdogan has undermined the judiciary, attacked the free press, and repressed civil society and the political opposition. How will you use your role as Ambassador to highlight these abuses and put pressure on the regime to meet its values oriented commitments as a NATO ally?

**Answer.** It is in the U.S. national interest for Turkey—a key player on regional issues—to be a stable, democratic, prosperous, and reliable Ally and partner. If con-



confirmed, I will reinforce the importance of democracy and human rights to our bilateral relationship and urge the Government to make the necessary reforms to reverse democratic backsliding. If confirmed, I will urge the Government of Turkey to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, uphold fair trial guarantees, enable civil society and independent media to operate, support the empowerment of women, and defend the rights of all. I will call for the immediate release of all those incarcerated for exercising their fundamental freedoms and participate in events that promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* As recently as last week, 22 Turkish fighter jets committed 17 violations of Greek airspace in the Aegean Sea. This behavior is emblematic of past Turkish violations of Greek airspace, as well as forays into the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone. How will you engage the Turkish Government on these issues of aggression against U.S. allies and partners?

*Answer.* I understand the United States has been clear with Turkey that military flights through Greek airspace are unhelpful and provocative. If confirmed, I will encourage Ankara to respect the sovereign airspace of other countries and to operate state aircraft with due regard for the safety of navigation of civil aircraft. Where disagreements exist over the limits of a country's territorial airspace, I will urge coordination and discussion. Disagreements between Greece and Turkey should be resolved through diplomacy and engagement.

*Question.* Turkey's military efforts against the Syrian Kurds, including through Turkish-sponsored Syrian proxies, undermine U.S. counterterrorism objectives and serve as a major point of friction in what could be a more unified U.S. and Turkish approach to Syria. Previous administrations actively worked to manage and mitigate Turkish concerns with U.S. support to the Syrian Democratic Forces. If confirmed, will you pledge to reinvigorate diplomacy on this front, despite its role as a cross-Bureau issue within the Department?

*Answer.* Turkey is an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. If I understand correctly, the administration is cognizant of Turkey's long-standing concerns about U.S. cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the counter-ISIS campaign. The SDF's efforts were critical to collapsing ISIS's fraudulent "caliphate" and remain essential to further degrading the group. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States, its partners and allies. If confirmed, I pledge to fully engage with my counterparts across bureaus in the Department of State and in the Department of Defense to advance U.S. policy goals in Syria.

*Question.* The Turkish Government is actively seeking U.N. approval and cooperation to facilitate the return of Syrian refugees in Turkey to Syria, despite the unsuitable ground conditions for doing so. This reflects the efforts of select European nations, but poses an unacceptable humanitarian and political precedent. If confirmed, will you pledge to advocate against these actions with the Turkish Government, and work collaboratively to identify opportunities to reduce tensions associated with Syrian refugees communities in Turkey?

*Answer.* The administration appreciates Turkey's generosity in hosting four million refugees, 3.6 million of whom are from Syria, and acknowledges the challenges of doing so both for the Turkish Government and local communities. In line with U.N. assessments, the administration does not believe conditions in Syria at this time are conducive for any systematic or large-scale returns, and I agree. Consistent with international principles, refugee returns should be safe, dignified, informed, and voluntary. If confirmed, I will work with Turkey in line with these principles and explore ways to reduce tensions related to Syrian refugee communities in Turkey and reinforce the administration's position on returns.

*Question.* The maritime boundary agreement between Turkey and Libya is based on a flawed reading of international maritime law and infringes on the legitimate maritime claims of Turkey's Mediterranean neighbors, especially Greece. What will your message be to Turkey on this? Will you call on them to respect the legitimate claims of their neighbors?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the United States generally does not take a position on other states' maritime boundary disputes and calls on all parties to refrain from all actions that risk heightening tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. If confirmed, I will consistently urge Turkey to resolve maritime delimitation issues with its neighbors peacefully through dialogue and in accordance with international law. In addition, consistent with my understanding of the administration's policy, if I see provocative action being taken I will not hesitate to call it out.

*Question.* Turkish-backed fighters in Libya pose a significant threat to that country's stability and its upcoming elections, as do Russian-backed fighters from Wagner. Will you urge Turkey to withdraw these Syrians and commit to Libya's political process?

*Answer.* The administration made public statements strongly supporting the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will call on the Turkish Government to use its influence to encourage all Libyan parties to establish the framework and constitutional basis for on-time national elections on December 24.

*Question.* The EMGF is a great consortium of regional energy players, but its focus on natural gas is not sustainable. In order to avoid the most catastrophic consequences of climate change, all countries need to reduce their reliance and usage of fossil fuels to ensure that global warming does not exceed 2 degrees Celsius. While natural gas is less polluting than oil and coal, it is not a sustainable alternative. How do you think the United States should leverage its role as an official observer to push this forum past an explicit focus on natural gas to one that is focused on a diverse and sustainable regional energy mix?

*Answer.* The Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum presents new opportunities for collaboration with allies and key partners. The Forum can help promote greater cooperation, energy security, and economic prosperity throughout the region. If confirmed, I will build on the work between colleagues in the Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs, Energy Resources, and European and Eurasian Affairs to coordinate our engagement and am eager to learn more about the EMGF's announcement earlier this year that it plans to work with specialists to discuss and promote gas decarbonization. I will also take steps to encourage Turkey, which is not a member of the EMGF, to collaborate with regional partners in incorporating more renewable energy sources for their energy needs.

*Question.* Turkey is increasingly dependent on energy imports, especially fossil fuels. Turkey's nationally determined contribution (i.e. its Paris Agreement commitment) is critically insufficient to uphold the 2 degrees Celsius global warming limit outlined in the Paris Agreement. Turkey has not submitted an updated nationally determined contribution (required under the Paris Agreement) and their path to a 2 degree Celsius-aligned economy is unclear. How can the United States support lowering the carbon intensity of Turkish energy consumption and increase their climate ambition in line with the 2 degrees Celsius Paris Agreement target?

*Answer.* Turkey is a leader in renewable energy, producing almost half its electricity from renewable sources, especially hydropower. However, Turkey's current pledge to reduce levels of greenhouse gas emissions is weak and would still allow a doubling in the volume of Turkey's emissions over the next decade. If confirmed, I will engage with the Turkish Government and private sector to seek collaboration on technologies and investment in infrastructure critical to increasing Turkey's energy security and reducing emissions. I will urge Turkey not only to follow through on President Erdogan's very welcome announcement regarding its plan to ratify the Paris Agreement, but also to put forward a strengthened 2030 emissions reduction target consistent with achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* This is a sensitive ongoing investigation and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. I understand a major interagency effort is investigating what is causing the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports an anomalous health incident receives immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that any employee or family member who reports a possible anomalous health incident receives immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and, of course, to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy community. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Relations between Turkey and Greece have been strained in recent years, with exclusive economic zone disputes in the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, pressures from mass migration, and tensions over Cyprus. How would you work with the U.S. mission in Greece to take a coordinate approach to protecting U.S. interests affected by the Greco-Turkish relationship?

Answer. The administration has been clear that it supports all efforts to reduce tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean and welcomes exploratory talks between Greece and Turkey. The Biden administration has also made clear that it is committed to ensuring stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries should be respected and protected, and that disagreements in the region should be resolved through diplomacy. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with our Ambassador in Athens to pursue opportunities for the United States Government to encourage these two important NATO Allies to take the necessary steps to reduce tensions and resolve disputes.

*Question.* Since its initial intervention in January 2020, Turkey has deployed hundreds of troops and Syrian militia fighters to Libya in support of the then internationally recognized government, the Government of National Accord. After months of fighting between the Turkish-backed GNA and its eastern based rival, the Libyan National Army (LNA), which garnered support from Russia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) among others, a ceasefire agreement was reached in October 2020. Under the terms of the U.N. brokered agreement, both sides and their respective backers agreed to withdraw all foreign forces and mercenaries from the country. Despite the October 2020 ceasefire agreement, the U.N. Secretary General, in address to the Security Council remarked that thousands of foreign forces remained in Libya as of early September 2021, "with no discernible abatement of their activities." Furthermore, there continues to be ongoing violations of the U.N. arms embargo on Libya by a variety of actors.

- Please provide your assessment of Turkey's role in the conflict in Libya.

Answer. Turkey joins the United States and others in supporting the Libyan-led, U.N.-facilitated political process, including elections on December 24 this year. The administration also publicly and strongly supported the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will stress to our Turkish colleagues and all parties involved that it is essential to end the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and through ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Since its initial intervention in January 2020, Turkey has deployed hundreds of troops and Syrian militia fighters to Libya in support of the then internationally recognized government, the Government of National Accord. After months of fighting between the Turkish-backed GNA and its eastern based rival, the Libyan National Army (LNA), which garnered support from Russia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) among others, a ceasefire agreement was reached in October 2020. Under the terms of the U.N. brokered agreement, both sides and their respective backers agreed to withdraw all foreign forces and mercenaries from the country. Despite the October 2020 ceasefire agreement, the U.N. Secretary

General, in address to the Security Council remarked that thousands of foreign forces remained in Libya as of early September 2021, “with no discernible abatement of their activities.” Furthermore, there continues to be ongoing violations of the U.N. arms embargo on Libya by a variety of actors. Please provide your assessment of Turkey’s role in the conflict in Libya.

Answer. The United States has been clear that all foreign fighters and forces need to withdraw from Libya, including Turkish forces. Turkey supports a staged, coordinated withdrawal of its forces that is matched to a withdrawal of other foreign forces in the country. Turkey joins the United States and others in supporting the Libyan-led, U.N.-facilitated political process, including elections on December 24 this year. The presence of foreign fighters in Libya undermines U.S. goals of this Libyan-led political process to resolve the conflict. However, it is also the case that Turkey’s intervention in 2020 secured Tripoli, preventing the fall of the Government of National Accord and averting a humanitarian crisis. As I understand, Turkey’s foreign policy on Libya is aimed at cementing the position of an internationally recognized government in Tripoli that is friendly to Ankara’s security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa.

If confirmed, I will stress to our Turkish colleagues and all parties involved that it is essential to end the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and through ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you propose to work with the U.N. to advance efforts to ensure Turkey’s fully complies with the October 2020 ceasefire agreement?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts in the State Department’s Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) to ensure Mission Turkey informs and advances U.S. policy in Libya. In coordination with my colleagues in NEA and the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, I will also work with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya to create the conditions for successful elections in Libya in December of this year.

*Question.* What are the prospects for a full Turkish withdrawal from the country to include its troops, mercenaries, and military equipment?

Answer. I understand the United States supports UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts across the State Department to ensure Mission Turkey informs and advances U.S. policy in Libya.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* What are the prospects for a full Turkish withdrawal from the country to include its troops, mercenaries, and military equipment?

Answer. While I am not able to comment on a hypothetical, as I understand, Turkey believes that its direct military intervention helped enable the then U.N.-recognized interim Government of National Accord (GNA) to repel a Russian-supported offensive. Turkey has also claimed credit for the de facto ceasefire since June 2020 that enabled a U.N.-led political process to take hold and the formation of a unity government.

However, the presence of foreign fighters in Libya undermines our goal of a Libyan-led political process to resolve the conflict. Turkey supports a staged, coordinated withdrawal of its forces that is matched to a withdrawal of other foreign forces in the country. We stand ready to facilitate such an agreement, and if confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts across the State Department to ensure Mission Turkey informs and advances U.S. policy in Libya.

*Question.* In your view, what interest does Turkey have in remaining involved in Libya?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to call on Turkey to operationalize UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and support an end to the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

#### FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* In your view, what interest does Turkey have in remaining involved in Libya?

*Answer.* Turkey's foreign policy on Libya aims to cement the position of an internationally recognized government in Tripoli that is friendly to Ankara's economic and security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa. Turkey also hopes to secure a new Arab ally, preferably with an Islamist outlook, in a region where it has few. If confirmed, I will continue to call on Turkey to operationalize UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and support an end to the Libya conflict through an inclusive political process, providing essential public services, and ensuring free, fair, and credible elections.

*Question.* Do you see Turkey's interest in remaining involved in Libya changing over the next year?

*Answer.* The administration made public statements strongly supporting the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. If confirmed, I will continue to call on all parties to support the U.N.-facilitated, Libyan-led political process to ensure free, fair, and credible elections.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

*Question.* Do you see Turkey's interest in remaining involved in Libya changing over the next year?

*Answer.* The administration made public statements strongly supporting the operationalization of UNSC resolution 2570 (2021) and full implementation of the October 23 Libyan ceasefire. Current U.S. outreach to Turkey on Libya is focused on pressing Ankara to use its influence with Libyan parties to get them to reach an agreement on an electoral framework that would enable on-time national elections in December 2021. If confirmed, I will continue to call on all parties to support the U.N.-facilitated, Libyan-led political process to ensure free, fair, and credible elections.

*Question.* Turkey's objectives in northeast Syria run counter to U.S. interests, particularly with respect to the so-called Operation Peace Spring Zone, which it seized following an offensive in 2019, while we tacitly support their activities in the northwest.

- How do we reconcile these two contradictory policies?

*Answer.* The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to 3.6 million Syrian refugees in Turkey and for being a critical partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance, including through the continuation of cross-border assistance in northwest Syria. Turkey has also been an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies, to include through a limited military presence in northeast Syria. The Syrian Democratic Forces remain a capable and effective partner to U.S. forces on the ground. If confirmed, I will ensure we consult Ankara on Syria policy and seek areas for understanding while also making clear the United States' enduring security interests where we disagree.

*Question.* To what extent do you feel we share overlapping objectives in Syria?

*Answer.* The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to 3.6 million Syrian refugees and for being a critical partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance, including through the continuation of cross-border assistance in northwest Syria. Turkey has also been an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies.

*Question.* Please provide your assessment of how Turkish-Russian cooperation in Syria impacts U.S. national security objectives, including with respect to the fight against terror.

*Answer.* Turkey worked with Russia to maintain the ceasefire in northwest Syria agreed to in March 2020. The maintenance of this ceasefire supports U.S. efforts to advance the political process as outlined in UNSCR 2254. The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to 3.6 million Syrian refugees who fled the conflict. Turkey is also an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and

other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies.

*Question.* What are your plans for navigating our relationship with Syria given Turkey's longstanding concerns with respect to U.S. Syrian Kurdish partners?

*Answer.* The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syria civil war. It is my understanding that the administration continues to consult Ankara on Syria policy and seeks areas for cooperation. Additionally, the United States recognizes Turkey as an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS while being cognizant of Turkey's long-standing concerns about U.S. cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the counter-ISIS campaign. The SDF is the primary counter-ISIS partner of the United States in Syria. The efforts of the SDF were critical to collapsing ISIS's fraudulent territorial "caliphate" and remain essential to degrading the group. The Biden administration remains committed to countering ISIS and other terrorist threats to the security of the United States and its partners and allies. If confirmed, I will continue to work together with Turkey and local Syrian partners for the safety and security of U.S. forces, partner forces, and civilians.

*Question.* In your view, can the U.S. find a way to balance Syria-Turkish policy short of reaching a solution to the Kurdish issue?

*Answer.* If I understand correctly, the administration's view is that stability in Syria, and the greater region, is best served through a political process that produces peaceful outcomes in Syria. The United States has committed to working with allies, partners, and the U.N. to ensure that a durable political solution remains within reach. I will continue work to address Turkish concerns while advancing critical U.S. national security interests.

*Question.* How do you plan to work with Turkey to ensure the continued delivery of humanitarian aid to Syria?

*Answer.* The United States is grateful for Turkey's continued support to millions of Syrian refugees who fled the conflict. Turkey has also remained an important partner in ensuring Syrians in Syria have access to life-saving assistance. This includes the facilitation of humanitarian assistance to those in need. Turkey was instrumental in the recent passage of UNSCR 2585, allowing for cross-border access for humanitarian aid to Syria. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Turkey to expand humanitarian access to reach those in need.

*Question.* To what extent are you concerned about allegations of human rights abuses carried out by Turkish backed forces, including HTS, in Syria?

*Answer.* I am gravely concerned by continued reports that some Syrian groups that Turkey supports are violating the law of armed conflict and committing human rights abuses in Syria. On July 28, the United States imposed sanctions on Ahrar al-Sharqiya - an armed Syrian opposition group known to be receiving support from Turkey - for committing human rights abuses. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor these reports and would urge Turkey to reconsider its relationships with any groups that commit human rights abuses, use its influence to press them to cease human rights abuses, hold perpetrators accountable, and take steps to prevent any such abuses.

*Question.* Can you commit to working with Turkey to ensure unfettered access to the areas under its control?

*Answer.* Turkey has remained an important partner in ensuring Syrians have access to life-saving assistance. This includes the facilitation of humanitarian assistance to those in need inside Syria and helping to support Syrian refugees living in Turkey. If confirmed, I will work to ensure those in areas under Turkish control in northwest Syria have unfettered access to critical humanitarian assistance.

*Question.* In many ways, the growing rivalry between the United Arab Emirates and Turkey has played a key role in reshaping the Middle East and North Africa region, while simultaneously having a notable impact in countries across Africa as well.

- Please provide your perspective on the role the United States should play in mediating tensions between Turkey and our Gulf partners?

*Answer.* I think I can safely say that the United States would welcome and support efforts by Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to decrease tensions and strengthen cooperation. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Turkey to increase prosperity and security between the two countries and across the wider region.

*Question.* To what extent do you see this rivalry as having negative implications on U.S. national security interests?

*Answer.* I think I can safely say that tensions and rivalry between Turkey and the UAE only benefit our adversaries. The United States welcomes efforts to improve the relationship between Turkey and the UAE. If confirmed, I will encourage our NATO Ally Turkey to resolve disagreements in the region through diplomacy.

*Question.* The security relationship between the United States and Turkey has been at an impasse over the issue of Turkey's purchase and deployment of Russian S-400 missile launchers. How will you communicate to the Turkish Government that while we value Turkey as an ally, there is a limit to the anti-alliance behavior the U.S. will tolerate?

*Answer.* Turkey is a NATO Ally with which we have many common interests, as well as disagreements. Turkey had the opportunity to buy Patriot surface-to-air missile systems but chose to acquire and test the Russian S-400. This action resulted in significant negative impacts to Turkey, including the imposition of CAATSA sanctions and Turkey's removal from the F-35 program. If confirmed, I will be crystal clear that Turkey should not retain the S-400 system and that any new Russian arms purchases risk triggering new CAATSA sanctions in addition to those already imposed.

*Question.* Turkey is in increasingly difficult economic straits. Meanwhile, in 2019 and 2020, there was much talk of a U.S.-Turkey trade deal as a potential piece of a larger agreement to smooth over the issues in the bilateral relationship.

- Do you see the realization of a U.S.-Turkey trade deal as a realistic possibility in the next three years?

*Answer.* I see significant opportunities for the United States and Turkey to continue strengthening our trading relationship. If confirmed, I will seek to promote high-level trade and investment engagement with Turkey, including under the umbrella of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

*Question.* Do you believe that a trade deal with Turkey would be beneficial to the United States?

*Answer.* I believe that enhanced trade and investment ties with Turkey will help the United States and our business community by creating new trade opportunities for our companies, in particular through reducing barriers to market access. If confirmed, I will work with our trade experts in the U.S. Government and business leaders to ensure that any trade arrangements with Turkey are in the best interests of the United States and our business community.

*Question.* Do you believe that a trade deal with Turkey would be beneficial to Turkey?

*Answer.* I believe that enhanced trade and investment ties with Turkey will be beneficial to Turkey by lowering market barriers between our countries, which will be critical to encouraging businesses on both sides to explore new commercial opportunities.

*Question.* Three current or (now) former locally-employed staff in our embassies and consulates in Turkey currently face restrictions on their freedom for having allegedly taken part in the 2015 coup against Erdogan in some small way. These allegations have very little substance to back them up, and these men are either in prison or unable to leave their home or the country.

- If confirmed, do you commit to be increasingly vocal with the Turkish Government about its role in this abuse of power and to advocate for the full release of these men and an end to their persecution?

*Answer.* I am deeply troubled by the ongoing legal proceedings, imprisonment, or controls targeting of U.S. locally employed staff—Metin Topuz Mete Canturk and Hamza Ulucay—in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties. It is my understanding that the United States Government remains deeply concerned by the prosecutions and detentions and follows their cases closely. If confirmed, I will advocate with the highest levels of Turkish officials for the immediate cessation of all judicial processes and restrictions targeting our locally employed staff s.

*Question.* Such realities are certain to have had an impact on the morale of locally-employed staff at Mission Turkey, and may have even impacted the Mission's ability to hire and retain good staff.

- What is your understanding of morale in Mission Turkey, particularly among LES?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the administration has repeatedly expressed concerns regarding Turkey's continued unjust legal proceedings and judicial controls targeting local staff working for our diplomatic mission in Turkey. If confirmed, I will reiterate to Ankara the importance of the immediate cessation of all judicial processes and restrictions targeting our locally employed staff. And if confirmed, I will ensure that the Department of State remains focused on this issue.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across the Embassy and Consulates?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will build on the work of my predecessor, along with the rest of the leadership team of the Embassy and Consulates, to be a firm advocate for the welfare, safety and security of all staff members of Mission Turkey, and especially for the locally employed staff. I will, if confirmed, convey clearly to all members of the Mission Turkey team that the safety and well-being of the staff are my highest priorities.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Turkey?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will immediately assess the situation that prevails across Mission Turkey, review and update the Mission's priorities, strategy, and activities in full alignment with the strategy and priorities of the President and the Secretary of State. As Chief of Mission, I will continually maintain security, morale, well-being, productivity, and effectiveness across all of Mission Turkey -- Embassy and Consulates equally - throughout my tenure.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you engage with the Turkish Government to push for significant human rights reforms, including rights for religious minorities and women and girls?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will publicly and privately urge the Government of Turkey to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, enable the participation of civil society and independent media, uphold fair trial guarantees, support the empowerment of women and defend the rights of all, including freedom from gender-based violence. If confirmed, I will also host and participate in events that promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is in the U.S. national interest for Turkey to be a stable, democratic, prosperous, and reliable Ally and partner. Although Turkey has withdrawn from the Istanbul Convention on the prevention of violence against women, I will urge them to honor their commitments made in that treaty. If confirmed, I will work with Turkey on areas of mutual concern, reinforce the importance of democracy and human rights to our bilateral relationship, and urge the Government to make the necessary reforms to reverse democratic backsliding.

*Question.* In the 2021 State Department Human Rights Report, Turkish authorities were described as using "antiterror laws broadly against opposition political party members, human rights activists, media outlets, suspected PKK sympathizers, and alleged Gulen movement members or groups affiliated with the Gulen movement, among others, including to seize assets of companies, charities, or businesses."

- Please describe your engagements, if confirmed, to address these egregious human rights concerns in Turkey?

*Answer.* The July 2016 coup attempt was a deeply traumatic event for Turkey. I understand and appreciate the Government of Turkey's need to bring the alleged perpetrators of the 2016 coup attempt to justice, but the quality and impartiality of justice matters. Strong judicial independence and respect for the rule of law must accompany any investigation, legal process, or detention to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will urge Turkey to revise its antiterrorism laws in line with the recommendations outlined by the United States during Turkey's 2020 Universal Periodic Review and in accordance with international standards. Strong democratic institutions and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms would expand our potential for partnership in Turkey and around the world.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps can the United States Government take to hold Turkey accountable for their excessive numbers of unlawfully held detainees?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will call for the immediate release of all those incarcerated based on limited or dubious evidence or on a seemingly arbitrary basis, such as in connection with exercising their fundamental freedoms. Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtas are two such cases. I will also urge the Turkish Government to reduce pre-trial detention lengths and revise their antiterrorism laws to meet international standards. Prosecutions must be based on evidence, respect the rule



of law, and be consistent with Turkey's domestic and international commitments and obligations to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* Open source reporting has indicated Turkey is abusing the INTERPOL red notice system to target individuals who dare to criticize or belong to a movement the Government does not agree with. Turkey's abuse of an international organization to subvert fundamental human rights cannot stand. What actions will you take, if confirmed, to demonstrate this practice is not tolerated?

*Answer.* I understand and appreciate the Government of Turkey's need to bring the alleged perpetrators of the 2016 coup attempt to justice, but the quality and impartiality of justice matters. If confirmed, I will urge Turkey to conduct any investigation, legal process, or extradition against individuals alleged to be involved in this crime, or any other, in a manner that respects human rights, due process, and the rule of law.

Prosecutions and extraditions must be based on evidence, respect the rule of law, and be consistent with Turkey's domestic and international obligations to human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will also urge third-country partners to resist pressure and follow due process standards in cases where Turkey seeks politically motivated deportations, removals, or expulsions that may violate international norms or agreements.

*Question.* According to the 2021 State Department International Religious Freedom Report and Human Rights Report, Turkey has very little tolerance for religious freedom, a fundamental human right. How will you continue to bolster religious freedom in country and work with civil society to increase understanding?

*Answer.* I understand the Turkish Government maintains several restrictions on the exercise of freedom of religion or belief of concern to the United States. These include limitations on the rights of members of religious minority groups.

If confirmed, I will publicly and privately urge the Government of Turkey to respect freedom of religion or belief and the rights of members of religious minority groups. I will also advocate for issues of top importance to religious minority leaders, such as free and fair religious foundation board elections and the reopening of the Greek Orthodox Halki Seminary.

*Question.* Internet freedom, or the ability to use the internet without state-sponsored censorship, is limited in Turkey. What can you do, if confirmed, to support this crucial tool for civil society?

*Answer.* I also have concerns about the Government of Turkey's use of censorship and overly broad terrorism and insult laws to silence critical voices. The Turkish Government's efforts to restrict freedom of expression online, including on social media, run counter to democratic values.

If confirmed, I will convey my firm belief that freedom of expression - including online - strengthens democracy and needs to be protected. I will also urge the Government to revise existing laws to meet international standards, ensure appropriate judicial oversight on media or online regulations, and to refrain from passing new laws that further restrict the freedom of expression online.

*Question.* President Erodgan's involvement in the Cyprus issue is increasingly concerning. If confirmed, what actions will you take to promote peace and potential reunification between the Republic of Cyprus and the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus?"

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to make clear to Turkey and Turkish Cypriots the U.S. position in support of a Cypriot-led comprehensive settlement to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicommunal federation consistent with U.N. Security Council resolutions to benefit all Cypriots and the wider region. Calls for a two-state solution are unhelpful and will not find an audience in the international community. We appreciate the U.N. Secretary-General's efforts to facilitate the relaunch of political discussions. The status quo is unacceptable, and we hope both sides will engage with the U.N. Secretary-General and his team with openness, flexibility, and compromise to find common ground to restart formal talks. Ultimately though, the responsibility for finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves.

*Question.* Turkey jails more journalists than any other country on earth. If confirmed, what steps will you take to advocate for freedom of the press in country?

*Answer.* I understand Turkey remains second only to China in numbers of incarcerated journalists, and uses censorship, insult, and antiterror laws widely to silence critical voices. If confirmed, I will make clear to the Turkish Government the integral role a free and independent press plays in any democracy. I will urge the Gov-

ernment of Turkey to revise laws or regulations that restrict media freedom and urge that they refrain from passing additional, restrictive laws. I will also engage with Government of Turkey interlocutors to encourage the release of all media workers incarcerated in connection with exercising their fundamental freedoms. I will also engage with media workers and civil society in Turkey to listen to and elevate their concerns on media freedom.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work with the Turkish Government to end the practice of forcible repatriation of Uyghurs to China?

*Answer.* President Erdogan referred to the PRC repression targeting Uyghurs in Xinjiang in 2009 as a genocide. I understand that Turkey currently hosts between 30,000-60,000 Uyghurs. Turkey has welcomed Uyghurs for more than two decades under a variety of visa and immigration statuses. If confirmed, I will continue the administration's efforts to meet regularly with the Turkish Government to discuss Turkey's continued support for Uyghurs in the face of PRC pressure.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In April of this year, President Biden formally recognized the Armenian genocide, something that I, and others, welcomed as it has been an overdue action that I have advocated for years for. However, more work needs to be done. We should continue to press countries that still deny this genocide, like Turkey and Azerbaijan, to end their denials and take the steps necessary to accept responsibility for this crime.

- In your opinion, do you recognize the Ottoman Empire's actions against the Armenians in 1915 as a genocide?

*Answer.* Yes. President Biden's statement for Remembrance Day this year noted that the United States mourns the one and a half million Armenians who were victims of the Armenian genocide during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. We welcome efforts by Armenians and Turks to acknowledge and reckon with this painful part of their histories, which is a critical step towards building a foundation for a more just and tolerant future.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions will you take to press the Turkish Government, and others, to stop denying the Armenian genocide?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will implement the administration's policy, honoring the victims of the Armenian genocide and encouraging Turkey to acknowledge and reckon with this painful part of its history.

*Question.* Turkey has been a NATO member since 1952. However, under President Erdogan, Turkey has not lived up to the values of the NATO Alliance. Its dismal human rights record, purchase of the Russian S-400 missile system despite U.S. objections, and its aggression towards other U.S. allies, like Cyprus, Greece and Israel suggest that Turkey is more of an adversary than a partner to the United States.

- Do you believe that Turkey may be more of an adversary?

*Answer.* Turkey is a NATO Ally with whom we have many common interests, as well as profound disagreements. If confirmed, I will work with you to encourage and, if necessary, pressure Turkey to take actions in line with U.S. interests in the region and its responsibilities as a NATO Ally. If confirmed, I will continue to collaborate with Turkey in areas of common interest including in Central Asia, Syria, the Black Sea, and others. Working with Turkey to address some of its legitimate security concerns will assist us in that effort. I will also speak clearly and frankly when Turkey's actions or words run counter to our interests.

*Question.* What is your opinion of the state of democracy in Turkey?

*Answer.* Turkey is a key NATO Ally and critical regional partner, and the United States is committed to improving the relationship between our two countries. It is in our interest to keep Turkey anchored to the Euro-Atlantic community. We work together closely to confront the serious challenges that face both of our countries. While we may have differences of opinion on some topics, I want our Turkish partners to understand that U.S. concerns come from an Ally and friend that seeks to preserve and deepen our relationship in every dimension.

The United States continues to emphasize the importance of the Turkish Government's adherence to policies and actions that build public trust in the country's

democratic institutions and the rule of law, as well as upholding human rights commitments. If confirmed, I will publicly and privately urge the Government of Turkey to make meaningful reforms that ensure human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those of speech and assembly, are guaranteed in accordance with Turkey's own constitution. I will urge the U.N. to restore judicial independence, uphold fair trial guarantees, respect the rule of law, and enable civil society and independent media to function freely.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to improve Turkey's interactions with other NATO members?

*Answer.* Turkey's relations with NATO member countries run the gamut between close cooperation to outright antagonism. As the second largest military in NATO, host of the NATO Land Component Command, and a regular contributor of forces to NATO regional missions, Turkey plays a major role in keeping NATO's collective defense credible. If confirmed, I will encourage additional Turkey-NATO collaboration in areas of common interest, including in Central Asia, Syria, and the Black Sea. I will also speak clearly and frankly when Turkey's actions or words run counter to NATO's interests and work with my fellow Ambassadors in other NATO member countries to do so.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JEFFREY LANE FLAKE BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Last year, a Turkish court sentenced several locally-employed staff of our diplomatic mission to Turkey to lengthy prison sentences for allegedly supporting groups opposed to the Erdogan Government. If confirmed, what will be your strategy for supporting these individuals, including seeking their prompt release and supporting their family?

*Answer.* I am deeply troubled by the ongoing legal proceedings and controls targeting U.S. locally employed staff in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties on behalf of our Government. If confirmed, I will support and defend our locally employed staff. In my understanding that the U.S. Government remains deeply concerned by the prosecutions and detentions and follows their cases closely. If confirmed, I will work to ensure all judicial processes, including movement restrictions, are lifted for Metin Topuz, Mete Canturk, and Hamza Ulucay. It is my understanding that the United States Government continues to consult with our locally employed staff and their families and to advocate with the highest levels of Turkish officials for their immediate release from all judicial processes.

*Question.* How will you ensure that Turkish nationals who directly assist our diplomats are off-limits to the Government's own brand of justice?

*Answer.* I am deeply troubled by the ongoing prosecution, imprisonment, or legal controls targeting U.S. locally employed staff—Metin Topuz, Mete Canturk, and Hamza Ulucay—in Turkey based on unsubstantiated charges related to their official duties. It is my understanding that the U.S. Government remains deeply concerned by the prosecutions and detentions and follows their cases closely. If confirmed, I will advocate with the highest levels of Turkish officials for the immediate cessation of all judicial processes and restrictions targeting our locally employed staff. The safety and security of all employees of U.S. Embassy Ankara and our consulates in Istanbul and Adana will be my highest priority, if confirmed.

*Question.* Erdogan has made the production, use, and export of highly capable combat drones a pillar of his country's defense industry and security partnerships throughout not just the region, but the world. The Turkish military has utilized and advised on the use of drones in Iraq and against Nagorno-Karabakh, in many cases drawing no separation between legitimate military targets and civilians. If confirmed what steps should we take to rein in this behavior?

*Answer.* Turkey is one of the top producers and exporters of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in the world. As Turkey is a relatively cost-effective supplier of advanced drone technology, NATO Allies such as Poland and partners such as Ukraine have sought to purchase Turkish UAVs. Turkey has sold UAVs to countries with whom we would not share this technology. If confirmed, I will stress the importance of Turkey using its capabilities to bolster NATO efforts and to advance mutual U.S. and Turkish goals.

*Question.* How does Turkish drone proliferation affect our own security partnerships in the region?

*Answer.* Turkey is one of the top producers and exporters of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in the world, specializing in the production of cost effective unmanned aerial systems. Turkish UAVs in most cases do not directly compete with more advanced U.S. platforms. Turkey's willingness to sell UAVs to countries with whom we would not share our own technology has at times been problematic for regional security. If confirmed, I will stress the importance of Turkey using its UAV capabilities to bolster NATO efforts and to advance mutual U.S. and Turkish goals. This approach would support our policy of preventing state or non-state actors from gaining capabilities that would undermine the safety and security of the United States and our allies and partners.

*Question.* What have the intervening two years taught us about both the limits of our diplomacy towards Turkey, but also how we must adapt to secure our national interests?

*Answer.* Over the past several years, Turkey has pursued a more independent foreign policy that has at times advanced U.S. interests but which in some cases has been unhelpful and destabilizing. If confirmed, I will commit to working with colleagues in the executive branch and Congress to find ways to continue strengthening our longstanding relationship with Turkey, while not shying away from identifying and addressing the areas where we disagree.

*Question.* How have the past several years instructed your views on the appropriateness of our continued military presence at Incirlik Air Base? Should we refocus that presence elsewhere within NATO?

*Answer.* Our military presence in Turkey, including at Incirlik Air Base, allows for a better defense of NATO's Southern flank and for supporting United States interests in the region. The United States benefits from our presence at Incirlik, and, if confirmed, I will not seek to relocate or reduce this presence. At the same time, the U.S. should continue to maintain and pursue new security partnerships with our Allies throughout the region.

*Question.* In his interview with CBS this weekend, President Erdogan noted that his Government's preference would be that the United States withdraws all of our troops from Syria, who are active in our efforts to fully defeat ISIS. Given Turkey's own continued presence in Syria, and especially considering the speed and indiscriminate nature of its invasion in 2019, how do you interpret Erdogan's desire for our withdrawal?

*Answer.* As I understand, Turkey has long-standing concerns about U.S. cooperation with the Syrian Democratic Forces, which Ankara views as tied to Kurdistan Workers Party. The United States has an interest in advancing the campaign against ISIS, to include through preserving a limited military presence in northeast Syria. The Syrian Democratic Forces remain a capable and effective partner to U.S. forces on the ground. If confirmed, I will ensure we consult Ankara on Syria policy and seek areas for understanding while also making clear the United States' enduring security interests.

*Question.* What do you believe is Erdogan's goal for Syria?

*Answer.* The United States and Turkey share an interest in sustainably ending the Syrian civil war. We will continue to consult Ankara on Syria policy and seek areas for cooperation. Turkey is an important member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. I understand that the administration's view is that stability in Syria, and the greater region, can only be achieved through a political process that represents the will of all Syrians and that the United States is committed to working with allies, partners, and the U.N. to ensure that a durable political solution remains within reach.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEZES

*Conflict & Food Insecurity*

*Question.* Today, conflict drives the top ten worst food crises in the world. Food insecurity in conflict-affected countries continues to deteriorate, and people there rely more and more on the U.N. food agencies to provide food relief.

- How can the World Food Program improve its work in conflict-affected countries? What should it do to expand the reach of its food assistance?

Answer. Armed conflict is the primary driver of acute food insecurity globally, impacting eight of the ten worst food crises in the world. U.N. Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018) emphasizes the link between armed conflict and food insecurity and lays out clear expectations regarding the need for unfettered and unhindered humanitarian access. If confirmed, I will work to ensure concerted and collective diplomatic pressure to enable humanitarian access in conflict-affected countries.

*Question.* How can the U.N. food agencies increase the effectiveness of their aid efforts in the face of national government actions that hinder humanitarian access and deliberately perpetuate food insecurity?

Answer. National interference in aid operations and the obstruction of humanitarian access are unacceptable. If confirmed, I will apply strong diplomatic advocacy on behalf of the Rome-based agencies, including in coordination with like-minded countries, to exert pressure on United Nations Member States denying humanitarian access to their citizens. If confirmed, I will work with our colleagues across the respective U.S. Missions to the United Nations, interagency partners in Washington, and other United Nations Member States to leverage diplomatic engagement and demand full access in conflict-affected and food insecure countries.

*Question.* How would the principles, priorities and recommended approaches detailed in the Global Food Security Strategy influence your work, if confirmed, at U.N.-FAO?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. engagement continues to be aligned with the principles and priorities outlined in the Global Food Security Strategy. The U.S. commitment to invest \$10 billion domestically and internationally toward transforming food systems to be more effective and inclusive was a first step and clear demonstration of U.S. leadership in accelerating progress toward global food security.

#### *Afghanistan*

*Question.* How can U.S. leadership at the U.N. food agencies promote sustained international engagement in Afghanistan to ensure that millions of people are not pushed to the brink of starvation?

Answer. All three Rome-based food security agencies—FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and WFP—have continued their operations in Afghanistan and are working in at least 28 of the country's 34 provinces. U.S. diplomatic and financial leadership has proven critical to these operations. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to enable the Rome-based agencies to carry out their life-saving work, ensure that aid reaches the most vulnerable, and pursue burden-sharing with allies and partners to ensure sustainability.

*Question.* You have been a fierce advocate for women and girls throughout your life. If confirmed, how do you plan to advocate for the women and girls who have disproportionately been impacted by pandemic-related food insecurity?

Answer. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically and disproportionately impacted women and girls; the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity is 10 percent higher among women than men, compared with 6 percent in 2019. If confirmed, I will work with FAO, WFP, and the Rome-based International Development Law Organization (IDLO) to ensure implementation of their gender action plans, and the delivery of concrete results that advance gender equality. If confirmed, I will also continue U.S. support for the innovative partnership between FAO and the IDLO focused on ensuring women and girls' access to affordable and nutritious food even as countries adopt emergency measures in response to health crises.

*Question.* How can FAO facilitate collaboration across U.N. organizations (like the U.N. Environment Program, UNICEF, and U.N. Development Program) to promote adaptation and resilience in developing countries' agricultural and food production sectors?

Answer. FAO's recently approved Strategic Framework (2022–2031) elevates climate change and prioritizes climate action in the food and agriculture sectors, noting in particular the need to increase adaptation activities. The FAO also plays a key role in implementing the One Health approach, which takes as a whole human health, animal health, and environmental health through a formal tripartite agreement between FAO, WHO, and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) with U.N. Environment Program (UNEP) participation. FAO, WFP, and IFAD conduct regular Rome-based agency coordination on climate change and other topics.

If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that FAO works with WFP, IFAD, and other U.N. agencies to match science and evidence-based solutions to national development plans, as part of the follow-up to the U.N. Food Systems Summit held on September 23.

*Question.* What role should FAO have in assisting member nations in developing their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)?

*Answer.* As the lead U.N. agency for agriculture, FAO provides expert guidance to countries on the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors in their NAPs. Through targeted guidelines, FAO plays a pivotal role in assisting members in reducing vulnerability of the agriculture sectors to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacities and resilience, addressing agriculture in the formulation and implementation of NAPs, and enhancing the integration of adaptation in agricultural development policies, programs and plans. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that FAO continues to integrate climate change adaptation into all of its programs and provides better climate-adaptation evaluations and data.

*U.S. Leadership & Donor Engagement:* Donor investments to U.N. food agencies increased in 2020, but the increase did not match the surge in global food needs, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Up to 161 million more people faced hunger in 2020 compared to 2019. As you know, humanitarian appeals, including those focused on food assistance, often remain grossly underfunded. The United States is the largest financial contributor to the U.N. food agencies.

*Question.* How much funding do you think the United States should provide to the U.N. food agencies in Rome?

*Answer.* The United States is the largest single financial contributor to the Rome-based agencies, and our generosity to this partnership has saved millions of lives. With the generous bipartisan support of the Congress, U.S. financial contributions have remained relatively steady over the last few years. The United States needs to continue to press others to do their share in shouldering their financial obligations to support these agencies. If confirmed, I will continue to press other countries and stakeholders for an equitable division of funding responsibility and burden sharing to fulfil humanitarian and development needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, you will help lead donor engagement. In what ways can the agencies improve their outreach efforts given that current engagement has not resulted in adequate fundraising?

*Answer.* It is critically important that other countries and non-state actors step up to match the incredible generosity of the American people. Humanitarian needs are increasing globally, and they will continue to rise if we continue to see growing conflicts, pandemics, and climate shocks. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Rome-based agencies apply a focused and coordinated approach towards resource mobilization and financing throughout each organization. If confirmed, I will also press the agencies to identify new sources of revenue and will urge other donor countries to maintain or increase their contributions in the face of increasing needs.

#### *Climate*

*Question.* In 2010, FAO launched climate-smart agriculture designed to help develop technical, policy, and investment conditions to achieve sustainable and secure agriculture development under climate change.

- Should the United States increase its technical and financial contributions to support this initiative?

*Answer.* The FAO's Climate Smart Agriculture initiative is an important part of the U.N.'s commitment to address climate change, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the FAO to ensure that the initiative advances our climate change goals. Additionally, if confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that U.S. leadership, led by the Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Partnership Initiative recently announced by Secretary Vilsack, will guide FAO's work in this initiative.

#### *Agriculture*

*Question.* Agriculture, including forestry, fisheries, and livestock production, generate around a fifth of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. The Mitigation of Climate Change in Agriculture (MICCA) program generates technical knowledge, working on the ground to monitor, assess, and implement mitigation strategies.

- How can this program be strengthened?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to ensure that farmers have access to available tools and scientific advancements, especially new technologies for sustainable, climate-smart agriculture. In particular, USDA's new Climate-Smart Agriculture Part-

nership Initiative can provide guidance to the Rome-based agencies to enhance and create new markets and streams of income for farmers while strengthening rural economies and improving tracking and monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration.

*Question.* How should FAO engage to address global agriculture's contribution to the climate crisis (i.e., reducing agriculture's carbon footprint and increasing the capacity of Agricultural activities to capture carbon) and prioritize climate mitigation?

*Answer.* FAO has a key role in ensuring the development of agri-food systems that produce more food with more socio-economic benefits, but less impact on the environment and natural resources. If confirmed, I will ensure FAO continues to support countries to enhance capacities to implement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change through evidence-based programs and projects related to the agriculture, land, water, and food sectors.

*Question.* How should FAO approach aquatic resource protection and better integrate marine-based foods (seafood) into its programming?

*Answer.* Seafood from fisheries and aquaculture are a vital source of food and nutrition in the diets of many around the world—supplying both critical protein and high-quality nutrition to billions—and they are crucial components in sustainable development and developing climate-resilient food systems. If confirmed, I will strongly support efforts by the FAO to recognize the unique role of fisheries and aquaculture in the global food system and promote actions to protect the important contributions of fisheries and aquaculture to global food security.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CINDY HENSLEY MCCAIN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Humanitarian Assistance*

*Question.* Long-established humanitarian principles suggest that food aid should be “agnostic,” meaning that it should be targeted toward those with the greatest need regardless of their affiliation. Unfortunately, there is also a long history of food aid being used by malign actors as a weapon against those it is meant to help.

- If confirmed, are you prepared to halt aid deliveries to areas where it is being manipulated by malign actors?

*Answer.* The World Food Program has significant experience programming humanitarian assistance in conflict settings and continues to strengthen its systems of oversight to ensure that assistance is not misused. With U.S. support, the World Food Program (WFP) has developed robust systems for beneficiary identification and risk mitigation and has stopped distributions-in Yemen, Syria, and elsewhere-when it determined food risked being stolen or diverted. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that assistance is delivered to those who most need it and is not manipulated by malign actors.

The World Food Program takes a blended approach in its food aid programs: it provides commodities in areas where food is scarce and market-based assistance (electronic transfers, vouchers, etc.) where food is available but inaccessible. When providing commodities, the agency often has to provide “blanket” feeding. When providing market-based assistance, there is room to target assistance more deliberately. There are benefits and risks associated with each of these approaches. If confirmed, it will be your job to find ways to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks associated with each of these approaches, so that the WFP can reach the right people with the right support in the right place at the right time.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to advocating for the use of biometrics within the World Food Program and across other U.N. agencies, particularly when providing market-based assistance, in order to more effectively target assistance, verify beneficiaries, and eliminate duplication and waste?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will advocate for the implementation of effective and context appropriate accountability and monitoring mechanisms, in addition to coordinated needs assessments, to ensure that food assistance reaches the people who need it most. Biometrics is an appropriate accountability tool in contexts with the requisite technology, and if confirmed, I will support the implementation of the most effective accountability tools.

*Question.* Beyond biometrics, are there other ways in which you would seek to enhance the WFP's efficiency and effectiveness, so we can stretch U.S. food aid dollars farther and save more lives?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government and WFP work closely together to refine methods for beneficiary targeting and identification, to seek efficiencies in the transport and delivery of food, and to monitor and evaluate programs to improve impact and minimize opportunities for waste, fraud, abuse or diversion. The United States has partnered with WFP to advance technical solutions and innovations, in order to ensure more efficient delivery of assistance. If confirmed, I will take an active interest in further enhancing our collaboration to ensure the most efficient use of taxpayer funds to reach the largest possible number of people in need.

#### *Balanced Assistance*

*Question.* The United States works both bilaterally and through multilateral institutions - including the United Nations food and agriculture agencies in Rome—to ameliorate humanitarian conditions, promote food security, and catalyze agriculture-led economic growth in developing countries.

- In your view, what is the appropriate balance between U.S. bilateral and multilateral assistance for food aid and food security?

*Answer.* Given the growing complexity and number of global humanitarian crises, the flexibility to use the right tool in each intervention and to work with a range of implementing partners is critical. The U.S. Government relies on U.N. partners, including the U.N. World Food Program and the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, as well as a number of NGO partners to implement food and nutrition programs around the globe. Each crisis calls for a unique blend of partners and assistance modalities to ensure that beneficiaries are reached with the right assistance. Both bilateral and multilateral assistance is critically important, and the appropriate balance varies across countries and contexts. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that we utilize appropriate, accountable, and cost-effective humanitarian assistance mechanisms to meet food security needs.

*Question.* Are there instances when U.S. bilateral assistance might be more appropriate than assistance delivered through the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture?

*Answer.* The United States provides robust bilateral and multilateral assistance through USAID. USAID works with a range of implementing partners, including U.N. agencies and NGO partners, to carry out its mission of saving lives and reducing food insecurity. If confirmed, I am committed to evaluating and supporting effective, efficient, and accountable delivery of food assistance through the most appropriate means, whether bilateral or as delivered through the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture.

*Question.* What role could or should the private sector play in promoting food security and catalyzing agriculture-led economic growth?

*Answer.* Improving U.N. food security agencies' agility in terms of creative and innovative partnerships, including with the private sector, has been a long-term U.S. policy priority. The United States consistently emphasizes the need to integrate private sector views, expertise, and resources during the U.N. Food Systems Summit planning process. This includes the need to account for the aspirations and daily concerns of farmers themselves. If confirmed, I will not support the private sector as an indispensable part of the solution to today's challenges and will its critical role in advancing food security and agriculture-led economic growth.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to advancing science-based approaches to promoting food insecurity at the Food and Agriculture Organization, including through the use of innovative agricultural technologies?

*Answer.* Advancing science-based approaches is at the core of this administration's policies on addressing food insecurity. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture and other United Nations Member States to press for science-based decision making and greater acceptance of biotechnology.



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:07 p.m. by video-conference, Hon. Chris Van Hollen, presiding.

Present: Senators Van Hollen [presiding], Menendez, Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Merkley, Booker, Schatz, Risch, Rubio, Johnson, Romney, Portman, Paul, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

Also Present: Senators Duckworth, Udall, and Graham.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Good afternoon, everybody, officially. Welcome to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing.

We have some terrific nominees we are going to hear from this afternoon. Before I give some brief opening remarks, though, in deference to our colleagues who are here to introduce some of our nominees, I am going to turn it over to them.

I understand we have Senator Markey here to introduce Leader Cronin. We have Senator Barrasso here to introduce Dr. Gawande, and we, I think, are expecting Senator Duckworth to introduce Captain Sullenberger.

Why don't we kick this off? I see Senator Barrasso.

Senator Barrasso, why do not you kick us off and please introduce Dr. Gawande?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN BARRASSO, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING**

Senator BARRASSO. Thanks so much, Mr. Chairman, and I am pleased to welcome to the committee and to the Senate Dr. Atul Gawande, who is a fellow physician, and President Biden has nominated him to be Assistant Administrator for Global Health at USAID.

Dr. Atul Gawande is truly a highly respected and well known voice in American medicine. He is a surgeon. He is a writer. He is a researcher. In domestic health care discussions, he normally needs no introduction.

Dr. Gawande has devoted his life to public health as well as to medicine. His appreciation for the field started with his parents. They were both physicians, doctors, who emigrated from India to the United States.

He earned a Bachelor's degree in biology and political science from Stanford University. He is a Rhodes Scholar, earned a Master's degree in philosophy, politics, and economics at Oxford. Graduated from Harvard Medical School. Also earned a Master's of public health.

Dr. Gawande completed his general surgical residency training at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, and in 2006, he was named a MacArthur Fellow for his work researching and explaining problems faced by surgeons in training.

Dr. Gawande continues caring for patients as a general and endocrine surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He is a professor at Harvard Medical School.

He is training the next generation of doctors and, as a professor, he is focused on surgical safety, avoiding errors, and health system innovation.

Mr. Chairman, over the years, Dr. Gawande has come to this very office in this room where I am sitting today doing this introduction to meet in a bipartisan way with groups of senators to discuss issues of health care, and he and I know that there are a number of political issues on which he and I do not agree.

But let me just tell you why I am here in front of the committee today. For nearly 20 years, I have been pointing to his remarkable books, and when I talk with medical students I bring the books.

When I talk to sometimes lay organizations and groups, I talk to the books. When I talk about health care and health care providers, I talk to the books. I have all four of them here.

The first one I read was called "Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science." Knowing how realistic he is and understanding even though you do your very best and put forth your best efforts, it does not always work out the way you would like as a surgeon.

The next book I read was one called "Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance," all aimed at improving performance, in getting better. Even though we live in a world that is complicated, we can always try to do better.

And then we have Sully up here going to be nominated. "The Checklist Manifesto," taken from pilots, what pilots have learned and how we can apply those in the operating room and we have, certainly, done that at the Wyoming Medical Center and at hospitals all across the country, and I believe thousands of lives have been saved by avoiding medical errors as a result of the work that he has done.

And then the book that Senator Booker made reference to, Atul Gawande "Being Mortal," what happens as we age in life and how we care for our parents, and then how our children end up caring for us.

Dr. Gawande has a commitment to excellence, and you read through his books and you come up with the words of diligence, overcoming obstacles, avoiding errors, which is why I believe he would be a very valuable asset and why I am happy to introduce him today.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Barrasso, and thank you for being here to introduce Dr. Gawande.

And now I am going to turn it over to our colleague, Senator Markey, who is going to be introducing Leader Cronin, who has been nominated to be our Ambassador to Ireland.

Senator Markey?

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It is my pleasure today to introduce my friend, Claire Cronin, as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, and I would also like to take this time to send my warmest regards to her husband, Ray, and two daughters, Kara and Kerry, who I am sure are watching right now.

Claire, fittingly, comes before us today as a proud public servant from eastern Massachusetts. In her hometown of Brockton, Massachusetts, the city of champions, the undefeated Rocky Marciano shattered boxing records to earn Brockton that title.

The Marvelous Marvin Hagler amplified the legend, and Claire Cronin continued in that tradition by shattering glass ceilings and being a champion in her own right.

The Massachusetts State Legislature, also known as the General Court, traces its earliest origins back to 1629 and the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Claire wrote one of its latest chapters by becoming the first female chair of the Judiciary Committee, and more recently, the first female majority leader of the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

And while Claire will not be the first female U.S. Ambassador to Ireland, I will note that the only two others to hold that honorable posting also hail from Massachusetts.

As a legislator, former litigator, professional mediator, Claire has always taken the time to listen and respond to the needs and concerns of a diverse set of constituents and stakeholders.

I have seen the way she builds genuine deep bonds within her community by fighting to improve the lives of those she represents. Her commitment to public service, diplomatic acumen, and work ethic are supreme and all critical skills that will serve her well in Dublin.

Claire's leadership has also earned her multiple honors. Most recently, she was awarded the Jewish Community Relations Council Legislative Leadership Award, and was also named the Emerge Massachusetts 2020 Woman of the Year.

The U.S.-Ireland relationship is one of the warmest and closest we have. Our shared values and ancestral ties serve as a bedrock of our modern dynamic relations in the area of commerce, education, culture, and research.

As a proud Irish American, Claire understands that foundation well, and as a maverick public servant she is the ideal candidate to deepen and expand the cross community engagement and ties between our two nations.

There is an old Irish proverb that says, may the hinges of our friendship never grow rusty. I have the utmost confidence that

with Claire at the helm, our relation with Ireland will flourish very, very greatly for the 21st century.

Congratulations on your nomination, Claire. I look forward to seeing the history you write in the next chapter.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Markey, for being here with those good words.

And I see my colleague and friend and ranking member of the Africa Subcommittee, Mike Rounds, is here now and we are both honored to be chairing this full committee hearing for these great witnesses.

Now let me turn it over to Senator Duckworth who is going to be introducing Captain C. B. "Sully" Sullenberger III to be the representative to the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Senator Duckworth, take it away.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS**

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. It is so hard to follow Senator Markey. I am not as poetic as he is, but I will do my best.

[Laughter.]

Senator DUCKWORTH. It is a real privilege to join the committee today to introduce my good friend, fellow pilot and President Biden's nominee for the distinguished rank of ambassador and U.S. Representative to the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization, Captain Chesley Burnett "Sully" Sullenberger III.

Mr. Chairman, Captain Sullenberger has dedicated his entire professional life to the pursuit of aviation safety. I commend President Biden for nominating him to represent our nation before ICAO and I am confident that his expertise, experience, and dedication to public service will strengthen our efforts to achieve greater cooperation in international air transportation.

He will restore America's leadership in international institutions at a time when our adversaries are openly questioning our capabilities. The United States' FAA and our aviation regulations are the gold standard for the world.

This gold standard has been tarnished by the failures in oversight of the Boeing MAX-8's development and deployment. We are fixing these failures here at home, but our adversaries seek to undermine America's leadership by exploiting tragedy for their geopolitical gain.

Captain Sullenberger's confirmation as Ambassador to the ICAO will immediately send a signal to the world that United States excellence in aviation and aviation safety is here to stay.

While he is best known for piloting the Miracle on the Hudson, Captain Sullenberger is a longtime aviation safety expert, a renowned public speaker, and a successful author.

Born and raised in Denison, Texas, Captain Sullenberger pursued his childhood love of aviation by learning to fly while still in high school. He pursued his passion for flying at the United States Air Force Academy, where he received the Outstanding Cadet in Airmanship Award.

He went on to serve as a fighter pilot in the United States Air Force, serving in both North America and Europe, and became a flight leader and training officer attaining the rank of captain.

After serving our nation in uniform, Captain Sullenberger became an airline pilot with Pacific Southwest Airlines in 1980, which was then later acquired by U.S. Airways, and he flew with U.S. Airways until his retirement in 2010, though he still flies privately.

Throughout his career, Captain Sullenberger has been an active and passionate safety advocate. While in the Air Force, he was selected to perform accident investigation duties and later he also served as a representative of the Airline Pilots Association during National Transportation Safety Board accident investigations.

Captain Sullenberger served as APA's local air safety chairman, where he contributed to FAA advisory circulars. He was also instrumental in developing, implementing, and eventually teaching U.S. Airways' crew resource management course.

Of course, Captain Sullenberger may be best known for his heroic actions on January 15th of 2009 when he and his crew safely guided U.S. Airways Flight 1549 through an emergency water landing in New York City's Hudson River after their Airbus A-320 lost thrust following bird strikes in both engines.

Thanks to the calm and collected leadership of Captain Sullenberger and his fellow crew members, tragedy was avoided that day and all 155 people aboard Flight 1549 were rescued and reconnected with their families.

Because of him and his crew, children still have their parents, grandmothers and grandfathers were there for the birth of their grandchildren, and many more lives were impacted positively than just the 155 he saved on that day.

Time Magazine ranked Captain Sullenberger second in its top 100 most influential heroes and icons of 2009, and France awarded him their highest order of merit, the Legion of Honor.

Captain Sullenberger is presently an international lecturer and keynote speaker focusing on the importance of aviation safety, high-performance systems improvement, leadership and crisis management, among other topics.

It speaks to Sully's love of country that after already serving his nation in uniform and after a second career ensuring the safety of the flying public he is now willing to take on this new tour of duty.

When he called me and said he was thinking of accepting this nomination, I both cheered him on and offered him words of caution because he is taking on a heck of a lot, and I am so grateful that he is willing to do it.

We Americans are lucky to have Captain Sullenberger on our side and that he will be our representative, and the world is lucky that he will be there, once confirmed, as Ambassador to the ICAO to truly regain aviation safety as a premier institution when it comes to the traveling public.

If confirmed, I have no doubt that Captain Sullenberger will continue his long-standing passion for safety and cooperation in global air travels as our nation's Ambassador to the ICAO.

I thank the committee for allowing me to introduce my friend and strongly encourage all senators to support Captain Sullenberger's nomination to be ICAO Ambassador.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Duckworth, for that very eloquent and, I would say, poetic as well introduction.

And I am just going to introduce briefly the members of our second panel. I will have a fuller introduction later. We just had introductions from the three distinguished nominees on our first panel. We have another round of equally distinguished nominees on the second panel and I am just going to go through that list.

We have with us Mr. Kent Doyle Logsdon to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Ms. Sharon L. Cromer to be Ambassador to the Republic of Gambia, Ambassador Virginia E. Palmer to be our Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana, and Howard A. Van Vranken to be Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana.

I am going to keep my opening remarks short because we have a lot to cover, and as Senator Rounds and my colleagues know, we also have a couple of votes that are scheduled to take place shortly. We will have to juggle those.

These hearings, of course, are a very important part of the Senate's constitutional responsibility of advice and consent, and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has historically taken this responsibility very seriously.

This hearing is part of that process. I will say, and the chairman of the full committee, Senator Menendez, has mentioned this, we do have a backlog of nominees who have been appointed by the President, recommended by the President, but still do not have hearings scheduled.

And so it is really important as we do our constitutional duty and also make sure that we are addressing the national security and foreign policy concerns of our country that we get those folks through the hearing process just as quickly as possible.

With that said, I am pleased that we have these seven exceptional nominees before us today on two panels. These nominees, if confirmed, will help promote the United States' interests on issues of central importance to our country and to this committee, including aviation safety, climate change, bolstering the global pandemic response and vaccine rollout, and strengthening our relationships in key countries in Europe and in Africa.

We have big challenges ahead but I am made more optimistic by the sterling credentials, diverse backgrounds, and impressive careers of today's nominees.

We are joined by several distinguished career members of the Foreign Service, a Senate-confirmed Ambassador, a respected state legislator, a leading surgeon and public health researcher and writer, and one living breathing Miracle on the Hudson.

And by the way, if you have not seen the movie "Sully" I recommend it to you. I just saw it again recently.

Welcome to all of you. Now I want to turn it over to my colleague, Senator Rounds, for any opening remarks, and then we will begin with witness testimony.

Senator Rounds?

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROUNDS,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon to all of you on what is no doubt one of the proudest days of your life and that of your families. Your commitment to public service is commendable. I want to thank you and your families for your willingness to serve.

Let me just begin by just saying I am a part of the Sully Sullenberger fan club. Captain Sullenberger, you were piloting U.S. Airways Flight 1549 on January 15 of '09 when it struck a flock of geese, taking out both engines. Your quick action to ditch the plane in the Hudson River saved all 155 souls on board.

After serving as an Air Force pilot and 30 years as an ATP—an air transport pilot—you have spent the last 10 years as an international lecturer and keynote speaker on a number of topics, including aviation safety.

I will be interested to hear about your concerns and priorities for the ICAO, China's rising influence in international bodies such as the ICAO, and whether ICAO might play a role in helping restore post-pandemic international air travel.

Dr. Gawande, if confirmed, you will bring decades of experience in medicine and public health to the USAID. I believe your work running various public health nonprofits may provide management and logistics experience relevant to USAID's enormous global health supply chains.

If confirmed, you will need to navigate a highly fractured U.S. Government response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. You will also have to manage USAID's relationship with the CDC, which for decades has been fraught with conflict, particularly in countries where both agencies have a presence.

I will be interested to hear your views on how you plan to help elevate global health security and pandemic preparedness as a national security priority.

As the ranking member of the Africa and Global Health Policy Subcommittee, I would appreciate hearing your views about the future of U.S.-China collaboration on public health in Africa generally and the Africa CDC specifically.

I also note that you have described abortion as a woman's right to choose. I am pro-life. I would like to hear whether you think USAID funding should go to support abortion in foreign countries.

Ms. Cronin, as we all know, the United States and Ireland enjoy close relations and have extensive historical and cultural ties. More than 31.5 million U.S. citizens and residents claim Irish ancestry, and I suspect even more on the 17th of March.

Ireland is a reliable international partner and is currently a rotating member of the U.N. Security Council. We have worked closely with Ireland, particularly on pushing back on China's abuses.

That does not mean there is not hard work to be done. There is room for improvement in the area of countering human trafficking, for example.

It will also be a challenge to persuade Ireland to adopt widely-accepted economic measures that it perceives might make it less attractive for foreign investment, such as the 15 percent global corporate tax minimum.

I also look forward to hearing about how you might draw upon your background as an attorney, mediator, and skilled politician to reinvigorate implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in the wake of COVID and the post-Brexit and Northern Ireland Protocol.

Thank you all for being here today and I look forward to your comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Now we will go straight to our witness testimony and why do not we lead off with Captain Sullenberger?

Captain Sullenberger, let me turn it over to you.

**STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN C.B. SULLENBERGER III OF TEXAS,  
NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA ON THE COUNCIL OF THE INTER-  
NATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION WITH THE RANK  
OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE**

Captain SULLENBERGER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee, I am deeply honored to be with you today as the President's nominee to become the U.S. Representative on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Please allow me to begin my statement today with a few comments about my biggest supporters, my wife, Lorrie, and our two daughters, Kate and Kelly. Kate, our older daughter, is a doctor of veterinary medicine in an emergency clinic. Kelly is working full time as a manager of enrollment for a major university and will finish her Ph.D. in the spring.

My wife, Lorrie, put her career on hold to stay home with our girls when, as an airline pilot, I was gone two-thirds of every month. We were equal partners in leading our family through decades of airline life, and we are so grateful that both of our young women found their life passions early and have pursued them so enthusiastically and successfully. If confirmed, Lorrie and I are looking forward to an exciting new chapter in our lives.

Mr. Chairman, I am deeply grateful to the President for this nomination and the confidence in me that he and Secretary of State Blinken have shown by asking that I assume this important role.

I seek this position because I want to once again serve this nation that has afforded me such wonderful opportunities that have filled my life with purpose and meaning.

In leveraging my life experience, I want to help restore and rebuild U.S. leadership in global aviation and increase economic opportunity for all Americans while improving their safety and security when they travel by air.

With COVID, climate change, and security threats, we are at an inflection point. While we are facing great challenges, we also have great opportunities to positively affect global aviation standards and recommended practices for decades to come.

At several points in my over half-century aviation career, along with my many colleagues, I have made significant contributions to our aviation progress.



At each juncture, after each success, I have hoped that my greatest contributions might still lie ahead, and at this juncture that is still my hope and my goal.

The International Civil Aviation Organization may be far from a household name but its purpose and performance are crucial to U.S. national security, and it benefits from the history of American leadership, dating to its founding in 1947.

A remarkable growth in civil aviation over the last 75 years is a testament not just to American innovation but also to the tangible value in multilateral bodies such as ICAO that facilitate cooperation, coordination, and mutual benefit.

If confirmed, I would strive to extend the legacy of U.S. leadership on matters related to aviation safety and security and to harmonize the global aviation standards.

I would underscore the administration's commitment to meaningful action on carbon offsets, sustainable aviation fuels, and gradual direct emissions reductions.

I would also focus intently on actions to strengthen ICAO's culture of transparency and accountability, actions that cannot be delayed, given the recent history of mismanagement at the organization.

I believe corrective measures became more achievable with the recent election of Juan Carlos Salazar as the organization's new secretary general and, if confirmed, I would be a relentless advocate for necessary reforms.

I would also be attentive to the risks posed to international organizations such as ICAO by authoritarian states who see benefit in undermining the purpose and performance of these multilateral venues.

Standard-setting bodies such as ICAO must work for the benefit of all its members, and in keeping with their intended roles, principles, and values. For ICAO, that means the safety, security, and sustainability of civil aviation.

That mission is threatened when member states disregard their international commitments, as in the case of the Belarus Ryanair incident or the repeated unannounced launch of missiles by the North Korean regime.

I also understand that successful American engagement at ICAO requires the strongest possible relationships across federal agencies, including the Federal Aviation Administration, the Transportation Security Administration, and the Department of Transportation, and continuous conversation with aviation industry groups.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I would succeed many capable American representatives before me, and I would make every effort to live up to their collective standard.

If I am fortunate enough to represent the United States at ICAO it would be the honor of my lifetime.

Thank you, and I welcome your questions.

[Prepared statement of Captain Sullenberger follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHESLEY BURNETT SULLENBERGER III

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee: I am deeply honored to be with you today as the President's nominee to become the U.S. Representative on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Please allow me to begin my statement today with a few comments about my biggest supporters, my wife Lorrie and our two daughters, Kate and Kelly. Kate, our older daughter, is a doctor of veterinary medicine in an emergency clinic. Kelly is working full time as a manager in enrollment for a major university and will finish her PhD in the spring. Lorrie put her career on hold to stay home with our girls when as an airline pilot I was gone two thirds of every month. We were equal partners in leading our family through decades of airline life. And we are so grateful that both of our young women found their life passions early and have pursued them so enthusiastically and successfully. If confirmed, Lorrie and I are looking forward to an exciting new chapter in our lives.

Mr. Chairman, I am deeply grateful to the President for this nomination and the confidence in me that he and Secretary of State Blinken have shown by asking that I assume this important role.

I seek this position because I want to once again serve this nation that has afforded me such wonderful opportunities that have filled my life with such purpose and meaning. In leveraging my life experience, I want to help restore and rebuild U.S. leadership in global aviation and increase economic opportunity for all Americans, while improving their safety and security when they travel by air.

With COVID, climate change, and security threats, we are at an inflection point. While we are facing great challenges, we also have great opportunities to positively affect global aviation standards and recommended practices for decades to come.

At several points in my over half-century aviation career, along with many colleagues, I have made significant contributions to our aviation progress. At each juncture, after each success, I have hoped that my greatest contributions might still lie ahead. And at this juncture, that is still my hope and my goal.

The International Civil Aviation Organization may be far from a household name, but its purpose and performance are crucial to U.S. national security, and it benefits from a history of American leadership dating to its foundation in 1947. The remarkable growth in civil aviation over the last 75 years is a testament not just to American innovation, but also to the tangible value in multilateral bodies such as ICAO that facilitate cooperation, coordination, and mutual benefit.

If confirmed, I would strive to extend the legacy of U.S. leadership on matters related to aviation safety and security, and to harmonize global aviation standards. I would underscore the administration's commitment to meaningful action on carbon offsets, sustainable aviation fuels, and gradual direct emissions reductions.

I would also focus intently on actions to strengthen ICAO's culture of transparency and accountability—actions that cannot be delayed given the recent history of mismanagement at the organization. I believe corrective measures became more achievable with the recent election of Juan Carlos Salazar as the organization's new Secretary General, and if confirmed, I would be a relentless advocate for necessary reforms.

I would also be attentive to the risks posed to international organizations such as ICAO by authoritarian states who see benefit in undermining the purpose and performance of these multilateral venues. Standard-setting bodies such as ICAO must work for the benefit of all its members and in keeping with their intended roles, principles, and values. For ICAO, that means the safety, security, and sustainability of civil aviation. That mission is threatened when member states disregard their international commitments, as in the case of the Belarus Ryanair incident, or the repeated, unannounced launch of missiles by the North Korean regime.

I also understand that successful American engagement at ICAO requires the strongest possible relationships across federal agencies, including the Federal Aviation Administration, the Transportation Security Administration, and the Department of Transportation, and continuous conversation with aviation industry groups.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed I would succeed many capable American representatives before me, and would make every effort to live up to their collective standard. The United States has every reason to be proud of its leadership and continued pre-eminence in civil aviation, and I carry that pride with me. If I am fortunate enough to represent the United States at ICAO, it would be the honor of my lifetime.

Thank you, and I welcome your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Captain Sullenberger.

And as I mentioned, we are going to have some votes going on but we are going to try and keep this hearing going.

And I understand my colleague, Senator Rounds, is going to go vote and then he will return and I will go vote.

Next, let us turn it over to Dr. Gawande, who has been nominated to be Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development for Global Health.

Dr. Gawande?

**STATEMENT OF DR. ATUL A. GAWANDE OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE  
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOP-  
MENT**

Dr. GAWANDE. Thank you.

Senator Van Hollen, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee, I am honored to appear today as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Administrator for Global Health at USAID.

I am immensely grateful to President Biden and Administrator Power for putting their trust in me at this critical time. Serving in this role would be a privilege and responsibility my parents could not have imagined for a child of theirs when they met in Brooklyn in the 1960s as young new doctors from India.

I would like to thank my late father, and among my family attending I would like to thank my mother and my sister, Sumeeta, for their love and support, my children, Walker, Hattie, and Hunter, who have made me so proud, and my wife, Kathleen, whose encouragement and sacrifices have made this opportunity possible.

I have been among the beneficiaries of USAID's vital work. My father grew up in a village in Maharashtra that went from suffering recurrent famine and praying for food aid to growing cash crops like sugar cane and cotton for export, thanks to USAID's critical support of agricultural development in India years ago.

Then as a child born in New York, I had an anaphylactic reaction to the smallpox vaccine, preventing my ability to complete vaccination and travel abroad.

USAID's leadership in helping eradicate smallpox in 1979 meant that I could not only travel and work in global health but even be nominated to lead the bureau and dedicated people behind that effort.

If I am confirmed, I commit to working with you and others in Congress in a bipartisan manner to strengthen and support USAID's staff and to further the agency's longstanding leadership in global health, and I will seek to specifically address three simultaneous colossal needs: controlling COVID-19, preparing for the next pandemic, and strengthening global health systems to regain the massive ground lost in advancing life expectancy.

The global health challenges that are facing USAID and our country are daunting. But if I am confirmed, I believe my career as a surgeon, journalist, and public health leader have prepared me for service as assistant administrator.

Over the last two decades, I have had a singular focus on reducing suffering and saving lives through leadership and innovation, to reduce disparities in systems of health care and public health worldwide.

In my research and writing, I have endeavored to expose gaps and produce solutions, and then in my public health roles I have worked to deliver those solutions widely.

And from this firsthand experience, I have learned not just how to make investments but how to use them to make systems work across a wide range of domains in health.

For instance, I led a global partnership that created a two-minute surgical safety checklist that was found in a trial in hospitals from Seattle to rural Tanzania to reduce complications and deaths by more than one-third. Then I helped lead a decade of work that has produced daily use of that checklist in 75 percent of surgical procedures globally.

Through Lifebox, an NGO I co-founded, we lowered the cost of oxygen-monitoring equipment for operating rooms in low income countries by 80 percent.

I also co-founded Ariadne Labs, a center for health systems innovation where we have improved the safety of childbirth in India and sub-Saharan Africa, strengthened outbreak response in the H1N1 Ebola and coronavirus pandemics, and improved primary care in low income countries.

Early in 2020, I turned my work toward the coronavirus pandemic. I co-founded CIC Health, a public benefit corporation to provide logistics and operations for U.S. COVID-19 needs that our existing health system struggled to meet.

We have provided now 3 million coronavirus tests and vaccinations across the Northeast and are now feverishly working to deliver testing capacity for thousands of schools in need.

This experience, along with my publications in medical journals, the New Yorker, and elsewhere during the pandemic led to two additional roles.

I was privileged to serve on the Biden-Harris Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board and then as a co-leader of STAT, a Rockefeller Foundation-supported alliance of COVID-19 officials for 40-plus states who have met weekly in a bipartisan manner for the last year to design and share solutions for controlling the pandemic.

Across my work, I have seen the quiet unrecognized heroism of the people in our public health and development agencies across the country and the world.

They have saved and are saving more lives than most will know by taking on the toughest health challenges of our time, and that is why I could not be more excited by the possibility of joining them at USAID.

It is an extraordinary privilege to be here. I look forward to answering your questions.

[Prepared statement of Dr. Gawande follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. ATUL GAWANDE

Senator Van Hollen, Senator Rounds, members of the committee, I am honored to appear today as President Biden's nominee for Assistant Administrator for Global Health at the U.S. Agency for International Development. I am immensely grateful to President Biden and Administrator Power for putting their trust in me at this critical time.

Serving in this role would be a privilege and responsibility my parents could not have imagined for a child of theirs when they met in Brooklyn in the 1960s as young new doctors from India. I would like to thank my mother, my late father, and my sister, Sumeeta, for their love and support; my children-Walker, Hattie, and Hunter-who have made me so proud; and my wife, Kathleen, whose encouragement and sacrifices have made this opportunity possible.

I have been among the beneficiaries of USAID's vital work. My father grew up in a village in Maharashtra that went from suffering recurrent famine and praying for food aid to growing cash crops like sugar cane and cotton for export, thanks to USAID's critical support of agricultural development in India. Then, as a child, I had an anaphylactic reaction to the smallpox vaccine, preventing my ability to complete vaccination and travel abroad. USAID's leadership in helping eradicate smallpox in 1979 meant that I could not only travel and work in global health, but even be nominated to lead the bureau and dedicated people behind that effort.

If confirmed, I commit to working with you and others in Congress in a bipartisan manner to strengthen and support USAID's staff and to further the agency's long-established leadership in global health. And I will seek to specifically address three simultaneous, colossal needs: controlling COVID-19; preparing for the next pandemic; and strengthening global health systems to regain the massive ground lost in advancing life expectancy.

The global health challenges facing USAID and our country are daunting. But if confirmed, I believe my career as a surgeon, journalist, and public health leader have prepared me for service as Assistant Administrator. Over the last two decades, I have had a singular focus on reducing suffering and saving lives through leadership and innovation to reduce disparities in systems of health care and public health worldwide. In my research and writing, I've endeavored to expose gaps and produce solutions. In my public health roles, I've worked to deliver those solutions widely. And from this first-hand experience, I've learned not just how to make investments, but how to use them to make systems work across a wide range of domains in health.

For instance, I led a global partnership that created a two-minute surgical safety checklist that was found in a trial in hospitals from Seattle to rural Tanzania to reduce complications and deaths by more than one-third. Then I helped lead a decade of work that has produced daily use of the checklist in 75 percent of surgical procedures globally. Through Lifebox, an NGO I co-founded, we lowered the cost of oxygen-monitoring equipment for operating rooms in low-income countries by 80 percent. I also founded Ariadne Labs, a center for health systems innovation that has improved the safety of childbirth in India and sub-Saharan Africa; improved U.S. care in serious, life-limiting illness; strengthened outbreak response in the H1N1, Ebola, and coronavirus pandemics; and improved primary care in low-income countries.

Early in 2020, I turned my work toward the coronavirus pandemic. Nothing has made the gaps in the delivery of health and survival clearer. I co-founded CIC Health, a public benefit corporation to provide logistics and operations for U.S. COVID-19 needs that our existing health systems struggled to meet. We have provided three million coronavirus tests and vaccinations across the northeast and are now working to deliver testing capacity for thousands of schools in need. This experience—along with my publications in medical journals, the New Yorker, and elsewhere during the pandemic—led to two additional roles. I was privileged to serve on the Biden-Harris Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board, and as co-leader of STAT, a Rockefeller Foundation-supported alliance of COVID-19 officials for 40-plus states who have met weekly for the last year to design and share solutions for controlling the pandemic.

Across my work, I have seen the quiet, unrecognized heroism of the people in our public health and development agencies across the country and the world. They have saved and are saving more lives than most will ever know by taking on the toughest health challenges of our time. That is why I could not be more excited by the possibility of joining them at USAID.

It is an extraordinary privilege to be here. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Leader Claire D. Cronin, who has been nominated to be our Ambassador to Ireland.

Leader Cronin?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. CLAIRE D. CRONIN OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO IRELAND**

Ms. CRONIN. Thank you to Senator Markey for the kind introduction.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee, it is my honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence.

If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with Congress and the administration to advance United States priorities and reinforce our shared values in Ireland.

First, I would like to thank my husband, Ray, as well as our daughters, Kara and Kerry, for their love and support. I am also grateful to have the strong support of my brothers and sisters, and my close extended family—in-laws, cousins, nieces, and nephews, and of course, my dear friends, who have become a second family to me.

My career is rooted in public service and the law. My path was shaped by the example set by my parents. My mother was a public school teacher and my father a Pearl Harbor survivor who served in the Pacific throughout World War Two. He attended law school with the help of the GI Bill when he returned home.

I was honored to be elected to serve in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 2012. I was grateful for the opportunity to serve as the first woman to chair the Judiciary Committee in the House and today as the first woman House Majority Leader.

My experience as a mediator shaped my ability to work within the House in a constructive and bipartisan manner. When my grandfather left Donegal for the promise that America held, I cannot help but wonder what he would have thought if he knew his granddaughter will one day be testifying before this esteemed committee as the nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland.

The Irish first arrived on our shores before the founding of our nation. Their significant contributions, sacrifice, and hard work helped define the American spirit and shape our success today.

Over 30 million Americans claim Irish heritage. The historical, cultural, and economic ties between the United States and Ireland are undeniable and will forever unite our countries.

This strong relationship is demonstrated within my own family. We are blessed and forever enriched by the addition of my sister-in-law Breffni, who was born and raised in Dublin.

If confirmed, the safety and security of Americans in Ireland will be my top priority. If confirmed, I will also advance the shared values that are the bedrock of our enduring ties.

These priorities include addressing global challenges together, increasing our shared prosperity, and strengthening our people-to-people ties.

Ireland has a strong commitment to multilateral institutions, which is central in promoting peace, prosperity, and stability.

While maintaining a policy of military neutrality, Ireland continues to be a valuable partner in maintaining global security through sustained contributions to U.N. peacekeeping, dependable humanitarian assistance, and membership in the D-ISIS Coalition.

If confirmed, I will work with Ireland to ensure that addressing global challenges and partnering in global security continue to be strong elements of our bilateral relationship.

Our economic relationship is the pillar of our strong ties. The U.S. is Ireland's strongest and largest trade and investment part-

ner. More than 900 U.S. firms operate in Ireland, and Ireland is currently the ninth largest investor in the U.S.

If confirmed, I will promote the United States as an investment and exchange destination for Irish companies and individuals, and advocate for increased two-way trade and investment to create jobs in the United States and Ireland.

The United States and Ireland remain committed to the Belfast Good Friday Agreement, which has been the bedrock of peace, stability, and prosperity in Northern Ireland.

If confirmed, I will encourage the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Ireland to engage in productive and cooperative dialogue to resolve the differences over the Northern Ireland Protocol. Our relationship is close and enduring, one that will continue to grow ever stronger as we work together on a range of shared issues.

If confirmed, I will advance our shared priorities and values, expand our rich economic and commercial cooperation, and strengthen our people-to-people ties.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Cronin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CLAIRE D. CRONIN

Thank you, Senator Markey, for the kind introduction.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee, it is my honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with Congress and the administration to advance United States priorities and reinforce our shared values in Ireland.

First, I would like to thank my husband, Ray, as well as our daughters, Kara and Kerry, for their love and support. I am also grateful to have the strong support of my brothers and sisters and extended family, in-laws, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

My career is rooted in public service and the law. My path was shaped by the examples set by my parents—my mother was a public school teacher and my father a Pearl Harbor survivor who served in the Pacific throughout World War II. He attended law school with the help of the GI Bill when he returned home.

I was honored to be elected to serve in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 2012. While serving, I was grateful for the opportunity to serve as the first woman chair of the Judiciary Committee in the House, and today as the first woman House Majority Leader.

My experience as a mediator shaped my ability to work within the House in a constructive and bipartisan manner.

When my grandfather left Donegal for the promise that America held, I can't help but wonder what he would have thought if he knew his granddaughter would one day be testifying before this esteemed committee as a nominee to be the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland.

The Irish first arrived on our shores before the founding of our nation. Their significant contributions, sacrifice, and hard work helped define the American spirit and shape our success today. Over 30 million Americans claim Irish heritage. The historic, cultural, and economic ties between the United States and Ireland are undeniable and will forever unite our countries.

This strong relationship is demonstrated within my own family. We are blessed and forever enriched by the addition of my sister-in-law, Breffni, who was born and raised in Dublin.

If confirmed, the safety and security of Americans in Ireland will be my top priority.

If confirmed, I will also advance the shared values that are the bedrock of our enduring ties. These priorities include addressing global challenges together, increasing our shared prosperity, and strengthening our people-to-people ties.

Ireland has a strong commitment to multilateral institutions, which are central in promoting peace, prosperity and stability.

While maintaining a policy of military neutrality, Ireland continues to be a valuable partner in maintaining global security through sustained contributions to U.N. peacekeeping, dependable humanitarian assistance, and membership in the D-ISIS coalition.

If confirmed, I will work with Ireland to ensure that addressing global challenges and partnering in global security continue to be strong elements of our bilateral relationship.

Our economic relationship is a pillar of our strong ties. The United States is Ireland's strongest and largest trade and investment partner. More than 900 U.S. firms operate in Ireland and, Ireland is currently the ninth largest investor in the United States.

If confirmed, I will promote the United States as an investment and exchange destination for Irish companies, and advocate for increased two-way trade and investment to create jobs in the United States and Ireland.

The United States and Ireland remain committed to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, which has been the bedrock of peace, stability, and prosperity in Northern Ireland.

If confirmed, I will encourage the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Ireland, to engage in productive and cooperative dialogue to resolve differences over the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The United States' relationship with Ireland is close and enduring—one that will continue to grow ever stronger as we work together on a range of shared issues.

If confirmed, I will advance our shared political priorities and values; expand our rich economic and commercial cooperation and strengthen our people-to-people ties.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Leader Cronin, and thank all of the nominees for their testimony here today, and now we will begin questions. We have got a lot of ground to try to cover.

Let me start with you, Captain Sullenberger, and it really is a two-part question. You referenced in your testimony the fact that ICAO is conducting an investigation of the May 2021 forced landing by Belarus of Ryanair.

That was the flight bound for Lithuania, and they did it in order to arrest a dissident journalist, a flagrant violation of human rights, assault on the free press, and potentially a contravention of international aviation law.

What options does ICAO have to address this kind of conduct in order to prevent a repeat of these kind of actions?

Captain SULLENBERGER. Mr. Chairman, thank you for that important question, and it is a very important question internationally.

The forced diversion of Ryanair Flight 4978 by Belarus for the arrest of an opposition journalist showed flagrant disregard for international norms of aviation security and safety and, clearly, undermined the critical trust between pilots and air traffic control in the flight information region.

ICAO, as a U.N. organization responsible for setting global standards for the safety and security of international civil aviation, must ensure that those standards are upheld.

If confirmed, I will continue to encourage our partners and allies to fully participate in the ICAO investigation by sharing all information relevant to the incident with ICAO's investigative team and to push for substantive findings, including a chronology of events to be presented to the Council in November.



Already steps have been taken to sanction those involved, including the Belarus minister of transport, the air navigation commissioner, and another official.

I think more action needs to be taken. There is, in the ICAO Charter Article 88, that in certain conditions we can temporarily remove the voting rights of a state for violating international norms.

I think it requires a whole-of-government approach. We should be pulling every lever necessary to hold accountable those responsible for this act.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you for that response. Let me ask you briefly about the issue of climate change and ICAO's role in curbing carbon emissions from international aviation.

I know you are aware of the CORSIA initiative. What more should we be doing in this area and what role can you and ICAO play in making even more progress, going forward?

Captain SULLENBERGER. CORSIA is an important interim step and it is important that we begin immediately.

As you know, with any crisis any denial or delay lowers our chances of success. The sooner we start, the more options we are going to have to deal with this existential threat, the better those options will be, and the lower the cost total in the long run.

The administration supports legislative action to enable full U.S. implementation of CORSIA and, if confirmed, I will support this effort. Many U.S. airlines are already voluntarily beginning taking such action. Those actions remain voluntary through 2026.

I think, again, a whole of government approach. Everything we can be doing we should be doing, including a wide distribution of sustainable aviation fuels in particular.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I am now going to—I see Senator Rounds has returned and I am going to turn it over to him for questioning and go vote.

And Senator Rounds, I see Senator Shaheen is next after you but let me turn it over to you. I will be back. Thank you all.

Senator ROUNDS. [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just curious, will we be doing separate questioning for each of the members or can we discuss our questions with the entire panel at this time?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I think—feel free to ask anybody. If there is interest, we can do another short round for this panel because I did have some questions for some of the other witnesses on this panel as well.

Senator ROUNDS. Excellent. If it is okay with you, Mr. Chairman, I will do my questions with the entire panel and allow Senator Shaheen to do the same, and by that time you should be back in charge again.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. Take care. Thanks. Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just begin, first of all, by thanking all of you once again for participating and I want to begin with Captain Sullenberger.

In your opening statement, you identified some priority areas that you will focus on at the I-C-A-O, or ICAO. Can you elaborate on what you see as the major U.S. interests for participation in

ICAO, and also what benefits does the United States receive from membership?

Captain SULLENBERGER. Thank you, Senator, for that important question.

And that is part of why I want to serve in this capacity. I think it is important that we raise the level of awareness among the American people about what ICAO is and what it does and why it is important, and I want to use my public profile to help do that along with all my colleagues at FAA, at DOT, at TSA and in conference with your committee and the members.

It is important that the American people understand that in ICAO they are responsible for setting and enforcing the best practices, the standards and recommended procedures that airlines and all aviation operators use globally, and it is important for safety and security of everyone who travels internationally by air that those standards be as high as are practicable and that they are uniform and harmonized throughout the world.

And for American companies it is important that we try to harmonize these standards and practices globally so there are not great differences in procedures and standards between areas of the world, and it makes the whole use of airspace more efficient and makes our companies more successful and profitable.

It is important that we—go ahead.

Senator ROUNDS. No. Please finish.

Captain SULLENBERGER. It is important in advancing U.S. economic interests, and one of the things that has been brought up already that we really need to do is to restore and make more robust U.S. leadership in global aviation because we have powerful strategic competitors out there, and particularly the PRC.

And so we need to rally our allies, our partners, and like-minded states to promote values of democracy, of free markets, and not some of the values of autocratic states that appear in some ICAO documents at the request of the PRC that have been certified by the Communist Chinese Party, or that may include some of their rhetoric and their ideology.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you. That kind of leads into my second question, sir. Some policymakers are concerned about the increasing influence and role of countries that are viewed as U.S. competitors in U.N. bodies.

For example, in recent years, U.N. specialized agencies, including ICAO, are increasingly being led by Chinese nationals. What is your assessment of China's efforts to increase its standing and influence in ICAO?

Captain SULLENBERGER. Currently, because of the methodology that is used based upon nations' contributions to U.N. agencies, we are allowed certain members of U.S. nationals to work in certain U.N. agencies.

Based upon our contributions and our funding for U.N. agencies, we should have at ICAO over 30 U.S. employees and now we have less than 10.

That is one of the things that is foremost in my mind is to improve opportunities for employment at ICAO for Americans who have the knowledge, the skill, the expertise to improve aviation globally and to advance U.S. values and interests and not those of

authoritarian states. That is one of the most important things that we can do.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir. And, look, I appreciate your stepping forward and participating in the public policy discussions. Thank you.

Dr. Gawande, various provisions of law restrict the use of U.S. taxpayer funds to perform or promote abortion overseas. If confirmed, will you commit to upholding these laws in both letter and spirit?

Dr. GAWANDE. I am very clear Congress makes the laws. USAID is not permitted to fund abortion and I am committed to continuing to comply with the laws and regulations that are—that pertain here.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

The committee recently passed a bill to elevate global health security and pandemic preparedness as a national security priority, including by establishing a global health diplomacy lead at the State Department to better align the work of USAID and CDC in the field.

If confirmed, will you commit to working with this committee to make sure it is faithfully implemented?

Dr. GAWANDE. I will, certainly, work closely with the committee if the bill goes through to law to make sure it is appropriately—that we are in compliance with the law and that it is implemented.

I strongly support improving our pandemic preparedness and global health security response and look forward to working with you for ways that we can expand our capabilities even further.

Senator ROUNDS. Dr. Gawande, thank you very much.

Ms. Cronin, Ireland's economic environment attracts foreign investment due to its low tax rates. There has been tension over Ireland's resistance to the 15 percent global corporate tax minimum that over 130 countries have already signed on to.

How will you support efforts to advance solutions on tax issues with Ireland? And also, how would you help reconcile Ireland's differences with the global corporate tax minimum, or is there an alternative to be pursued?

Ms. CRONIN. Thank you very much, Senator, for your question. It is, certainly, an issue that has driven a great amount of discussion and, at times, controversy as we are moving forward with the U.S. proposed global minimum tax rate.

As you rightly stated, over 130 countries have come to reach consensus on this rate, and the idea behind it to level the playing field relative to foreign direct investment in other countries.

Ireland is one of the three countries within the EU who has not agreed to the minimum tax rate. I, certainly, recognize their desire for tax sovereignty, although Ireland has a very strong and positive climate for investment.

They have a well-educated English-speaking and multilingual workforce, a strong judiciary, proximity to both the United States and the EU, good transportation links. All of these things are factors that businesses do consider when they decide to locate in another country or do business there.

I think we have already seen that we have many, many industry leaders have a footprint in Dublin or in Ireland. Certainly, the tax

rate—the 12.5 percent tax rate—is something that may have been attractive to those seeking to invest.

But as I said earlier, there are many, many other factors which come into that decision. I think it is important to note the minimum global tax is a floor, not a ceiling. It does still allow good competition and a level playing field.

I know Ireland is very committed to work within a multilateral framework. I would work, try to facilitate discussions with tax experts from the U.S. to meet with Irish Government officials, work within the EOCED to, hopefully, over time, promote this minimum tax with Ireland and hope that without too much longer that they may join with 130 other countries who have agreed to do so.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, and thank you once again for stepping forward. My time has expired, and at this time I would turn to Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Senator Rounds, and congratulations to all of the nominees this afternoon. We look forward to the opportunity to serve with you.

I want to begin, Captain Sullenberger, with you, because you mentioned in your opening remarks the Ryanair flight, and I had the opportunity to be in Lithuania shortly after that flight was brought down by Lukashenko in Belarus.

And there was a real outrage not just in Lithuania but in Eastern European countries about the impact of a dictator being able to bring down a flight and how that would affect the freedom of all air travel.

I wondered if you could speak to what you think ICAO could do to address any future attempts like we saw in Belarus that brought down a plane just for political purposes.

Captain SULLENBERGER. It is very clear to me, Senator, that the United States must have an effective leadership role, again, with our allies, our partners, our like-minded states, to strengthen ICAO's standards so there is not a gap that autocrats can use and use our freedoms against us through deception, through coercion, to pose a situation where they say that there is a bomb threat and that the device might detonate if they fly into the next airspace or destination and that they must be diverted to Belarus.

And again, that fractures the trust between air traffic in that region and—air traffic control and the pilots and it violates every norm.

There is a debate about whether or not it violates international law. Perhaps the laws and the requirements, the standards, need to be strengthened to close these gaps that others might use to do something similar.

We should be using every lever of power, every bit of influence we can, to isolate, to punish those who do these kinds of acts and make it less likely that anyone else will do that.

But it is going to require a whole of government approach and a real effective partnership achieving consensus among many nations to do what needs to be done. It is going to be hard, but we have to start right now.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much for that response, and I hope you will, once confirmed, take the lead in trying to help make that happen at ICAO.

Dr. Gawande, I want to follow up with you. I remember your—some of your articles were, really, blueprints as we were looking at trying to do the Affordable Care Act and put in place an improved health care system. Thank you so much for all of your writings and your research.

I want to ask you about the global gag rule, because when the Biden-Harris administration took over one of the first things they did was to rescind the global gag rule, which I think has been very important to women and to families around the world because we know that it affects the ability of family planning agencies to really engage—often engage with their patients.

Can you speak to the difference that that makes in the ability to provide for the health of women around the world?

Dr. GAWANDE. Thank you, and thank you for the kind words, Senator.

First, I want you to understand I am a strong believer in the evidence that voluntary family planning and reproductive health services are essential to women's health and that there is ample evidence of benefit to infant and child health as well.

Second, I know there is a strong difference of views about the global gag rule and President Biden's decision to rescind the policy.

But I think we can agree that we have had now decades of bipartisan support that has made the U.S. government the global leader in funding voluntary family planning. And not only that, it has made USAID the global leader in technical expertise for enabling voluntary family planning support.

My core commitment, if I am confirmed to the agency, is going to be to, first, follow the law and applicable regulations, and then also advance our leadership in this space.

The global gag rule rescission allows the reach of our programs at USAID to a wider range of organizations that are having a remarkable commitment while also complying with the laws that require that USAID not fund abortion.

And so that ability to expand that leadership and that reach is the primary value that comes from that policy decision.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I really appreciate that answer and pointing out that family planning is not abortion, and we should stop including those organizations that help women determine their children, and how many children they can have and want to have and how to space out their families is different than abortion and we should stop treating them the same way. I appreciate that.

Ms. Cronin, congratulations to you as well. As a neighbor—a neighboring legislator, I appreciate the barriers that you have broken in Massachusetts.

And I wanted to—I am also the chair of the Subcommittee on Foreign Relations that deals with Europe and so I have been following the challenges relating to the implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocols as Britain has left Brexit.

Can you talk about how you will work to ensure that the U.S. upholds its commitment to support trade to Northern Ireland and help ensure that the issues are being addressed in the framework of the protocol?

Ms. CRONIN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen. And not only are we neighbors, I lived in Londonderry, New Hampshire, when you were elected as governor.

Senator SHAHEEN. Oh, good.

Ms. CRONIN. Yes.

[Laughter.]

Ms. CRONIN. Clearly, President Biden has stated that he is unequivocally committed to the preservation of the Good Friday Agreement. This is also very clearly shown with strong bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate in Congress—the Senate—and very strong bipartisan support as well.

This will be a shared priority for both the United States and, certainly, for Ireland as well. They have repeatedly expressed great concern that the hard-fought gains of the Good Friday Agreement have been maintained.

Recently, there has been some unrest regarding the Northern Ireland Protocol and its implications. If I were confirmed, I would work with Embassy London, Consul General in Belfast, and the Irish government to make sure that everyone would still come to the table and do everything possible and engage in constructive dialogue in order to preserve the hard-fought gains of the Good Friday Agreement.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I think that will be a real challenge as you take over your post, once confirmed.

I look forward to working with all of you—I am sure I am out of time at this point—and really appreciate your responses.

Ms. CRONIN. Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

I know that our chairman is on his way back, and prior to stepping into the next panel, I just—I wanted to ask Dr. Gawande one more question.

I wanted to ask you a question touching on China, Africa, and public health. Amid an otherwise increasingly challenging relationship, the United States and China collaborated to assist the African Union stand up the Africa CDC.

This offered hope that we and China could work together to address some of the world's most challenging problems. Has that collaboration continued in the wake of COVID-19 and will China's construction of the Africa CDC headquarters in Addis give China leverage when it comes to addressing public health concerns in Africa?

Dr. GAWANDE. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

Africa CDC has been an important organization for building capacity in Africa for public health services, public health structures and organization, and I think the critical part of my role, if I am confirmed, to the Global Health Bureau would be to engage directly with Africa CDC to ensure that our leadership, our close connection to Africa CDC, is sustained and that the global values that are reflected by the way we do our work are continued.

We know that China has approached our—their contributions on COVID vaccines in a very transactional way. Where we have donated at the world's most massive level to COVAX and bilateral agreements for vaccines, China has approached it by only providing—primarily providing sales for profit and not upholding the

same kinds of values and standards. I do think it is very important for us to be engaged in these organizations like Africa CDC.

I will, lastly, point out that President Biden has elevated the Africa CDC director to become the head of PEPFAR and lead HIV/AIDS here as a nominee, and so he will come before this group as well, I suspect, and I think that this is all an important reflection of how much value Africa CDC has added in a short period of time.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Doctor.

And, Mr. Chairman, I will turn the virtual gavel back over to you, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN [presiding]. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Rounds, and thank you all for your indulgence of all of us as we go to vote.

And Senator Rounds really covered the question to Dr. Gawande that I want to focus on and just elaborate a little bit, because I think we are all pleased with the leadership that President Biden has shown in working to get vaccines deployed around the world and our contributions to COVAX.

But we have got a long way to go, we, meaning the international community, especially in Africa where we have got 17 percent of the world's population but only 2 percent of all the shots that have been delivered to date have been in Africa.

And according to the most recent estimate from the World Health Organization, less than 4 percent of the African continent's population has been fully inoculated.

We, on this committee and on the Africa Subcommittee and African Global Health Subcommittee, are going to want to work with you to address those issues.

My final question is also to you, which is, obviously, we want to have all hands on deck to defeat the pandemic. But as you well know, there are all sorts of other diseases that claim people's lives around the world, including especially in Africa. And in many cases, as we have sort of surged resources to deal with COVID we have seen spikes in some of the other areas—diseases in other areas.

Could you just talk a little bit about how we address both at the same time, even with the limited resources that we have got?

Dr. GAWANDE. Yes. These are colossal and daunting challenges to both take on the COVID-19 threat that we have right in front of us, prepare for the next pandemic, but realize that the response and the effects of COVID have severely damaged health care systems and public health gains we have made over the last couple of years.

We have seen vaccination for other conditions, for childhood illnesses, retreat. We have seen progress in preventing maternal and child death retreat. We have seen some of the same kinds of losses in our TB work.

And I think the most critical opportunities that we have there are to now reengage, understanding that we still have—we will have well into 2022 and beyond coping with COVID and, therefore, we will have to reinvigorate our prevention of maternal and child death programs, our HIV/AIDS work, and our TB work.

There are many opportunities to use our focus on COVID to strengthen the systems as a whole, help them get back on their

feet, and make it possible to move forward on basic fronts like primary care and delivery of these kinds of capabilities.

I think the bottom line will be that we have a extensive capability at USAID in those global health arenas. I think everybody has been all hands on deck on the COVID work and this is our opportunity to enable those teams now to also get back to advancing their lines of work, and if I am confirmed that is exactly what I will want to make sure we are doing.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Doctor.

And Leader Cronin, I think Senator Shaheen asked one of the questions I was going to pose to you regarding Ireland and our efforts to establish at least some minimum international corporate tax and, really, the role that you will play in urging Ireland to really support that effort to prevent a race to the bottom.

And I am going to submit for the record a couple questions regarding Brexit and its impact in relations with Northern Ireland and Ireland and the Good Friday Agreement.

But let me say to all of you what a terrific group of nominees with great experience, and we are looking forward to, hopefully, having a fairly rapid markup and vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on all your nominations.

I thank all of you for joining us, and now we are going to go to the second panel, unless there are any other members who have anything else to say.

If not, round one is over and we are going to start the second round. Thank you all for being here and for joining us, and congratulations on your nominations.

Dr. GAWANDE. Thank you.

Captain SULLENBERGER. Thank you.

Ms. CRONIN. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Ms. CRONIN. Thank you very much.

[Pause.]

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. I, certainly, see some of the nominees for the second panel and I am going to kick this off with introductions for each of you, and then you can make your statements and then we will have a round of questions.

I see another vote has just started so Senator Rounds and I will try to juggle this the way we did before.

Let me just introduce all of our distinguished nominees. We have Kent Doyle Logsdon, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and has spent the bulk of his three decades-long career in the European and Eurasia regions.

He is currently chief of staff to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment. Among his past assignments he served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Energy Resources, Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, and chief of staff to both the Deputy Secretary of State for Management Resources and the Deputy Executive Secretary of the State Department.

He is the recipient of Presidential Meritorious Service Awards—the Presidential Meritorious Service Awards, as well as numerous other State Department performance awards.



He speaks Russian, Ukrainian, Thai, and German, holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame and a Master's degree from the University of Virginia.

Welcome to you, Mr. Logsdon.

We also have Sharon L. Cromer, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as the USAID Mission Director at the U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana. Among her many past assignments, Ms. Cromer served as USAID Mission Director at the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam and at the U.S. Embassy in Abuja.

Ms. Cromer has also served in USAID as the Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator and Acting Assistant Administrator in the Africa Bureau, as Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Management Bureau, and as Acting Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator and Acting Assistant Administrator in the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance.

She is a recipient of a Presidential Rank Award, the USAID Administrators Reengineering Award, and a State Department Superior Honor Award.

Ms. Cromer earned her BA from Barnard College and her JD from Georgetown University Law School.

Welcome to you, Ms. Cromer.

Ambassador Virginia E. Palmer is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as both Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and as Acting Assistant Secretary for the State Department's Bureau of Energy Resources.

Previously, she served as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi where she oversaw an annual bilateral assistance budget of over \$500 million and the work of 11 U.S. government agencies.

Among her other past assignments Ambassador Palmer has also served as Deputy Chief of Mission and charge d'affaire ad interim at the U.S. Embassy in South Africa and Deputy Chief of Mission and charge d'affaire ad interim at the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam.

Ambassador Palmer is the recipient of numerous superior honor, meritorious honor, and senior performance awards and speaks both Chinese and French. She received her Bachelor's of Science in Foreign Service degree from Georgetown University and her MA from the University of Virginia.

Welcome to you, Ambassador Palmer.

And Howard A. Van Vranken is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Secretary at the State Department's Executive Secretariat.

He previously served as Executive Director and Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, and as Deputy Executive Director in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, and South and Central Asian Affairs.

Earlier, Mr. Van Vranken served as Management Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, Morocco, and as Deputy Political Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Past postings also include assignments in Norway, Yemen, Lebanon, Tunisia, Ireland, and the U.K. He is the recipient of multiple State Department awards and the Presidential Distinguished Service Award, and speaks Arabic, Farsi, and Norwegian. Mr. Van

Vranken received his BA from UC Davis and his MA from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Welcome to Mr. Van Vranken.

I am now going to—I do not know, Senator Rounds, if you have any statements here. If not, I was going to turn it over and begin the testimony.

Senator ROUNDS. Mr. Chairman, I will tell you what. I will enter my statement for the record and allow you to begin the testimony, and if you would like to coordinate a plan for both of us getting in to vote in a timely fashion, I would be all ears.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. I am happy to go first—vote first or second, whichever your preference is.

Senator ROUNDS. I will head out right now and, hopefully, get back in time to spell you sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. Thank you.

All right. Again, to all our nominees, thank you for your understanding. Senator Rounds is going to go vote, and then he will return and I will go vote as well.

Let us please begin in the order in which I made the introductions and we will begin with Mr. Logsdon.

**STATEMENT OF KENT DOYLE LOGSDON OF PENNSYLVANIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

Mr. LOGSDON. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee, I am honored to appear today as President Biden's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova.

I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with Congress to advance our nation's interests in Moldova.

I would not be here without the love and support of my family: my wife, Michelle, who just retired after 35 years of service as a Foreign Service officer, initially with the U.S. Information Agency and then as a public diplomacy officer at the State Department, our children, who accompanied us to our overseas postings. We are very proud of their resilience and achievements.

Nora is a law student at the University of Virginia and Will is studying music production at Shenandoah University.

And, of course, my parents, who encouraged me in this career—my mother, Carroll, who passed away last year after contracting COVID, and my father, Bill, who just retired after nearly 60 years as a patent attorney.

The world changed after I joined the Foreign Service. The Berlin Wall and the USSR disappeared and the Cold War ended. My wife and I joined many of our colleagues in establishing and building relationships with new countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

I focused most of my diplomatic career working in or on issues involving the countries in this region, and it is exciting to see their progress and development in the past 30 years.

If confirmed, leading our mission in Chisinau would be a highlight of my diplomatic career. The U.S.-Moldova relationship is grounded in shared democratic values and support for a democratic, secure, and prosperous Moldova, anchored in Europe.

With an historic mandate, President Sandu and a reform-oriented government have launched an ambitious program to establish a more transparent and accountable democracy, build a stronger economy, and combat endemic corruption.

At the U.N. General Assembly, President Biden told the world about Moldovan voters' success in delivering a landslide victory for the forces of democracy with a mandate to fight graft to build a more inclusive economy.

Corruption threatens Moldova's economic prospects and democratic future. We must continue to support the Moldovan government's efforts to strengthen the capacity of its institutions to identify, investigate, and prosecute corruption. If confirmed, I will make the fight against corruption one of my top priorities.

We must also continue to be a steadfast partner to civil society, independent media, and other organizations committed to developing participatory democracy and promoting good governance.

Progress in the fight against corruption will strengthen Moldova's investment climate and ensure a level playing field for U.S. business. Moldova has strengthened its financial sector oversight and transparency, and continued reforms will help Moldova unlock further budgetary support from the European Union and IMF to strengthen its economy in the wake of the COVID pandemic.

Support from the United States and the European Union is helping Moldova expand trade and market linkages with the West. The EU is now Moldova's largest trading partner. Moldova is linking its energy infrastructure to Europe and diversifying its energy supply to reduce dependence on Russian gas imports.

Moldova is also committed to transforming its defense forces and their capacity to contribute to international security and peacekeeping missions. U.S. security assistance has been key to this effort. The United States respects Moldova's constitutional neutrality and welcomes its efforts to build a more modern military equipped to counter emerging threats.

Russian malign influence and disinformation threaten Moldova's democratic development, ambitious reform agenda, and European trajectory.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the government leaders, civil society, and international partners to support Moldova's democratic reform agenda and build resiliency against malign influence and disinformation.

Resolving the Transnistria conflict remains a priority. The United States supports OSCE-led efforts to uphold Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity while acknowledging a special status for Transnistria.

We need to continue to press Russia to honor its commitments to withdraw its troops and munitions from Moldova, and we are committed to protecting the fundamental freedoms of citizens on both sides of the Dniester River.

If confirmed, I will continue to promote confidence-building measures and seek tangible results through the OSCE-led 5+2 process.

The Moldovan people have chosen a bold path of reform and Western integration. It is in our interest to support them. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of this committee and the Congress to do just that.

Improving Moldova's democracy, prosperity, and security will help us develop a key partner in Eastern Europe.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Logsdon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENT D. LOGSDON

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee, I am honored to appear today as President Biden's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova. I am grateful to the President and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with Congress to advance our nation's interests in Moldova.

I would not be here without the love and support of my family. My wife Michelle, who just retired after 35 years of service as a foreign service officer, initially with the U.S. Information Agency, and then as a public diplomacy officer at the State Department. Our children, who accompanied us to our overseas postings. We are proud of their resilience and achievements—Nora is a law student at the University of Virginia and Will is studying music production at Shenandoah University. And my parents, who encouraged me in this career—my mother Carroll, who passed away last year after contracting COVID, and my father Bill, who just retired after nearly 60 years as a patent attorney.

The world changed after I joined the foreign service. The Berlin Wall and the USSR disappeared, and the Cold War ended. My wife and I joined many of our colleagues in establishing and building relationships with new countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. I have focused most of my diplomatic career working in or on issues involving the countries in this region and it is exciting to see their progress and development in the past thirty years. If confirmed, leading our mission in Chisinau would be a highlight of my diplomatic career.

The U.S.-Moldova relationship is grounded in shared democratic values and support for a democratic, secure, and prosperous Moldova, anchored in Europe.

With an historic mandate, President Sandu and a reform-oriented government have launched an ambitious program to establish a more transparent and accountable democracy, build a stronger economy, and combat endemic corruption. At the UN General Assembly, President Biden told the world about Moldovan voters' success in delivering "a landslide victory for the forces of democracy with a mandate to fight graft, to build a more inclusive economy."

Corruption threatens Moldova's economic prospects and democratic future. We must continue to support the Moldovan Government's efforts to strengthen the capacity of its institutions to identify, investigate, and prosecute corruption. If confirmed, I will make the fight against corruption one of my top priorities. We must also continue to be a steadfast partner to civil society, independent media, and other organizations committed to developing participatory democracy and promoting good governance.

Progress in the fight against corruption will strengthen Moldova's investment climate and ensure a level playing field for U.S. business. Moldova has strengthened financial sector oversight and transparency. Continued reforms will help Moldova unlock further budgetary support from the European Union and IMF to strengthen its economy in the wake of the COVID pandemic.

Support from the United States and the European Union is helping Moldova expand trade and market linkages with the West. The EU is now Moldova's largest trading partner. Moldova is linking its energy infrastructure to Europe and diversifying its energy supply to reduce dependence on Russian gas imports.

Moldova is also committed to transforming its defense forces and their capacity to contribute to international security and peacekeeping missions. U.S. security assistance has been key to this effort. The United States respects Moldova's constitutional neutrality and welcomes its efforts to build a more modern military equipped to counter emerging threats.

Russian malign influence and disinformation threaten Moldova's democratic development, ambitious reform agenda, and European trajectory. If confirmed, I will work closely with government leaders, civil society, and international partners to support Moldova's democratic reform agenda and build resiliency against malign influence and disinformation.

Resolving the Transnistria conflict remains a priority. The United States supports OSCE-led efforts to uphold Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity while acknowledging a special status for Transnistria. We need to continue to press Russia to honor its commitments to withdraw its troops and munitions from Moldova. And we are committed to protecting the fundamental freedoms of citizens on both sides of the Nistru River. If confirmed, I will continue to promote confidence building measures and seek tangible results through the OSCE-led 5+2 process.

The Moldovan people have chosen a bold path of reform and Western integration. It is in our interest to support them. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of this committee and the Congress to do just that. Improving Moldova's democracy, prosperity, and security will help to develop a key partner in Eastern Europe.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
I look forward to your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you for your testimony.  
Next, we will hear from Ms. Cromer.

**STATEMENT OF SHARON L. CROMER OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA**

Ms. CROMER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today.

I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have shown in me as their nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of the Gambia.

If confirmed, I will collaborate closely with you and other distinguished members of Congress to advance our nation's security and foreign policy interests.

Mr. Chairman, I am here today the product of a loving family. My mother, Thelma Cromer, now deceased, showed me how to care for others and live abundantly despite having so little.

My father, Walter Cromer, Sr., drove a taxi right here in the nation's capital for 60 years and inspired in me the desire to explore the world.

My loving husband of 33 years, Arnold Sobers, Jr., supported me every step. Together, we raised two brilliant daughters, Courtney and Simone, and we now have two adorable grandchildren, Tanoor and Dunia.

I am very grateful to all of my family, friends, colleagues, and mentors across the globe. They are my heroes.

I have served proudly the American people for the past 35 years as a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

I successfully advanced U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa and managed programs to reduce poverty, halt HIV/AIDS, eradicate malaria, and promote girls' education and women's economic empowerment.

I have mentored and sponsored employees of every race, gender, and sexual orientation, helping them to grow professionally and

fully contribute to advancing U.S. goals. I am committed to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce and in our programs.

As a young university student traveling in the Gambia, I experienced the warm hospitality and proud traditions of the Gambian people.

Today, Americans and Gambians share ideals of democracy, religious tolerance, good governance, and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will strengthen the U.S.-Gambian partnership.

After 22 years of authoritarian rule, in 2016 Gambians voted for a new president and commenced the transition from dictatorship to democracy. While some reforms have occurred, more must be done to realize the aspirations of Gambians for transparent, democratic, and accountable governance.

If confirmed, I will be a staunch advocate of the Gambia's ongoing democratic transition. I will combat corruption, promote economic prosperity, speak up for human rights, explore ways to improve the primary health care system, and maintain a strong security partnership.

I will pursue U.S. national security and foreign policy interests by helping the Gambian people achieve their goal to become a prosperous, secure, and democratic nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to address you today. I am happy to answer questions.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Cromer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHARON L. CROMER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have shown me as their nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia. If confirmed, I will collaborate closely with you and other distinguished members of Congress to advance our nation's security and foreign policy interests.

Mr. Chairman, I am here today, the product of a loving family. My mother, Thelma Cromer, now deceased, showed me how to live a life of abundance despite having so little. My father, Walter Cromer, Sr., drove a taxi right here in the nation's capital for over 60 years and inspired me to explore the world. My loving husband of 33 years, Arnold Sobers, Jr., supported my every step. Together, we raised two brilliant daughters, Courtney and Simone and we now have two adorable grandchildren. I am very grateful to all of my family, friends, colleagues, and mentors across the globe. They are my heroes.

Mr. Chairman, I have proudly served the American people for the past 35 years as a Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development. I successfully advanced U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa and managed large, complex inter-agency programs, including the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the President's Malaria Initiative, Feed the Future, Power Africa, and wildlife anti-trafficking. I championed girls' education, women's empowerment, youth employment, and the rights of marginalized people, including LGBTQI+ communities, to prosper and live in peace and dignity. I have enjoyed mentoring and sponsoring employees of every color, race, religion, gender and sexual orientation; helping each one to grow professionally, assume greater responsibilities, and fully contribute to advancing U.S. goals. If confirmed, I will continue to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in the workforce and in our programs.

Mr. Chairman, the U.S. and The Gambia have a close bilateral relationship based on shared ideals of democracy, religious tolerance, good governance, security, and economic prosperity. As a young, university student traveling in The Gambia, I experienced the warm hospitality and proud traditions of the Gambian people. It was clear then, and I believe it is true today, that Gambians admire American culture

and traditions. If confirmed, I will strengthen the U.S./Gambian partnership for the benefit of both countries.

After 22 years of authoritarian rule, in 2016 Gambians voted for a new president and commenced the transition from dictatorship to democracy. While some promised reforms have been implemented, much more remains to be done if the aspirations of the Gambia people for a transparent, democratic government accountable to the people are to be realized. The upcoming December presidential election will be an opportunity for Gambians to show the world that they are committed to solidifying their hard-won democratic gains. The U.S. has been a steadfast partner, supporting the Independent Election Commission's successful voter registration effort and helping civil society organizations empower citizens through voter education. This December, Gambians will determine their path forward through a free, fair and peaceful election.

Given the opportunity, I will support The Gambia's ongoing democratic process. I will combat corruption and promote economic prosperity which will allow both U.S. and Gambian firms to invest and create good jobs. I will encourage trade and the use of the American Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA). I will speak up for human rights, and explore ways to improve the primary health care system. Of paramount importance is the need to maintain a strong security partnership. I will pursue U.S. national security and foreign policy interests by helping the Gambian people achieve their goal to become a prosperous, secure, and democratic nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee for the opportunity to address you today. I am happy to answer any questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you for your testimony.

Next, we are going to hear from Ambassador Palmer, who has been nominated to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana.

Ambassador Palmer?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. VIRGINIA E. PALMER OF VIRGINIA,  
A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE,  
CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AM-  
BASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF  
GHANA**

Ms. PALMER. Thank you, Senator Van Hollen.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as America's Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana.

I appreciate the confidence that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me and [inaudible] today to have the opportunity to publicly thank my family for their love and support.

My husband Ismail Asmal, a retired Foreign Service Officer, is a wonderful partner and helpmate. My daughters Aliya and Nadia Amal and my son-in-law Paul Adamson are a source of great joy and pride and have a wonderful commitment to helping others. And my mother, Becky Palmer and late Richard Palmer, I want to thank them for their encouragement and example and for letting me take the grandbabies overseas.

I have had the great fortune to represent the country I love around the world for 35 years, 15 in Africa. I have worked in models of democracy and governance and private sector-led growth.

As Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi I oversaw an annual budget of \$500 million and led a talented team which helped Malawi achieve HIV epidemic control, improve food security, and serve as a democratic model for the continent. If confirmed, my experience gained as deputy coordinator [inaudible] to support Ghana's work to counter the spread of violent extremism, and as Principal

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Resources to help Ghana deal with significant energy sector challenges.

I bring to the job a commitment to the security and well being of embassy staff and a passion for diversity and inclusion, essential to getting policy right and to properly representing our values overseas.

Our close partnership with Ghana spans more than 60 years and is rooted in our shared commitment to democracy and human rights for all, peace and security and economic opportunity and prosperity. Ghana's long democratic tradition, robust media, religious tolerance, and strong civil society make it a leader in West Africa and a model for the continent. With democratic backsliding in the region, Ghana's example and leadership are now more important than ever.

If confirmed, my priorities will be encouraging inclusive economic growth and strengthening regional stability to make the United States—and Ghana—more secure and more prosperous. Essential to success in these endeavors will be work to help Ghana strengthen its democracy and accountability institution.

Until COVID-19 disrupted global markets around the world, Ghana's economy was one of the fastest growing in the world. With the economy beginning to recover from the pandemic, close to 120 American businesses are active in Ghana.

If confirmed, I will be a vigorous advocate for American companies and innovation, and will ensure U.S. public and private investments continue to support pandemic recovery in Ghana's journey to self-reliance.

We will do this by facilitating trade, improving access to credit, boosting agricultural production and enhancing domestic resource mobilization, and improving health and education outcomes.

Working in partnership with our Ghanaian friends to combat corruption and ensure a transparent business environment will be fundamental to these efforts.

Ghana is a key security partner and its leadership is critical to U.S. efforts to promote regional stability and combat violent extremism. We enjoy robust military and law enforcement cooperation.

Ghana is one of the top 10 contributors to U.N. peacekeeping missions and regularly hosts regional military exercises with the United States. It is an exporter of security.

If confirmed, I will work to drive integrated programs on economic growth, rule of law strengthening, security cooperation, and maritime and border security.

I also look forward to working with Ghana as it chairs the Economic Community of West African States, takes up a seat on the U.N. Security Council, and hosts the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, which will create a trading bloc of more than 1.3 billion people.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to partnering with you to advance America's interests in Ghana and stand ready to answer any questions you may have now and in the future.

[Prepared statement of Ms. Palmer follows:]



## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. VIRGINIA E. PALMER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, It is a great honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana. I appreciate the confidence the President and Secretary Blinken have placed in me by putting my name forward for your consideration. I am deeply grateful for the love and support of my husband Ismail Asmal, a retired Foreign Service Officer, my daughters Aliya and Nadia Asmal and son-in-law Paul Adamson, my mother Becky Palmer and late father Richard Palmer. I would also like to thank my foreign and civil service colleagues across the Government and Embassy locally engaged staff who do tremendous work, in very challenging circumstances, to strengthen U.S. partnerships with countries around the world.

I have had the good fortune to have represented the country I love in fascinating countries around the world for 35 years, 15 in Africa. Throughout my career, I have worked to share American models of democracy and governance and private sector-led growth. As Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi, I oversaw an annual budget of \$500 million and led a talented team which helped Malawi achieve HIV epidemic control, improve food security, and serve as a democratic model for the continent. As Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires in South Africa, I helped manage one of our largest missions and most complex relationships in Africa. If confirmed, I will also draw on experience gained as a leader of the State Department's Counter Terrorism Bureau to support Ghana's work to counter the spread of violent extremism in the region, and as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Resources to help Ghana deal with significant energy sector challenges—and opportunities. I bring to the job a commitment to the security and well-being of Embassy staff and a passion for diversity and inclusion, essential to getting policy right and properly representing our values overseas.

Our close partnership with Ghana spans more than 60 years and is rooted in our shared commitment to democracy and human rights for all, peace and security, and economic opportunity and prosperity. Ghana's long democratic tradition, robust media, religious tolerance, and strong civil society make it a leader in West Africa and a model for the continent. With democratic backsliding in the region, Ghana's example and leadership is ever more important.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and Congress to advance U.S. interests in Ghana. My priorities will be encouraging inclusive economic growth and strengthening regional stability to make the United States—and Ghana—more secure and more prosperous. Essential to success in these endeavors will be work to help Ghana strengthen its democracy and governance institutions.

Close to 120 American businesses are active in Ghana and the country's economy is beginning to recover from the pandemic. Until COVID-19 disrupted global markets, Ghana's economy was one of the fastest-growing in the world, with GDP growth of seven percent from 2017 to 2019. Bilateral trade exceeded \$1.5 billion in 2020. If confirmed, I will be a vigorous advocate for American companies and innovation and will ensure U.S. public and private investments continue to support pandemic recovery efforts and Ghana's journey to self-reliance. We will continue to help Ghana create an enabling environment for inclusive private sector-led growth by facilitating regional trade, improving access to credit, improving agricultural production and market access, enhancing domestic resource mobilization, and improving health and education outcomes. Working in partnership with our Ghanaian friends to combat corruption and ensure a welcoming and transparent environment for business will be crucial to success of these efforts.

Ghana is a key security partner, and its leadership is critical to U.S. efforts to promote regional stability and combat violent extremism. We enjoy robust bilateral military and law enforcement cooperation. Ghana is among the top dozen contributors to U.N. peacekeeping missions and regularly hosts regional military exercises in partnership with the United States, including this year's Gulf of Guinea maritime security exercise, Obangame Express. If confirmed, I will work to drive integrated programs on economic growth, security sector cooperation, cyber security, and maritime and border security through our bilateral Security Governance Initiative. I also look forward to working with Ghana as it chairs the Economic Community of West African States, serves on the U.N. Security Council, and hosts the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, which will create a trading block of more than 1.3 billion people.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to partnering with you to advance America's interests in Ghana and stand ready to answer any questions you may have now and in the future.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you for your testimony.

And now we will hear from Mr. Howard Van Vranken, who has been nominated to be Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana.

I turn it over to you, and I see that my colleague, Senator Rounds, has returned. I apologize. I am going to go vote. But I got somebody here who is going to report to me on your testimony when I return.

All right. I turn it over to you, Senator Rounds.

And Mr. Vranken, please proceed with your testimony.

Senator ROUNDS. [presiding.] Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**STATEMENT OF HOWARD A. VAN VRANKEN OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

Mr. VAN VRANKEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee. It is a great honor and privilege to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the next Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana.

I thank the President and Secretary Biden for the—excuse me, Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. I am also grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration.

I am especially grateful for my wife, Rebecca, who supported me during nearly two decades of marriage in the Foreign Service and for the endurance of my children—Grace, Robert, and Victor. I would not be here today without their tremendous and ongoing support.

Finally, I want to thank my parents, Robert and Helen, who tirelessly inspired me to explore and embrace the world beyond my native California. I am forever grateful for their sacrifices on my behalf.

During my 33 years of service with the Foreign Service, my work in Africa and the Middle East as well as assignments in Washington have prepared me to deliver impactful results for the American people in the important role for which I have been nominated.

I have served in senior leadership positions in a number of posts, including most recently in Morocco and in Iraq. If confirmed, I will work diligently and with integrity to further strengthen ties between the United States and Botswana.

Botswana is a strategically important and reliable partner on the African continent. We work with Botswana to advance shared global priorities including strengthening democratic institutions and promoting the respect for human rights, ending HIV and the COVID-19 pandemic, and advancing global health security.

Together, we also work on regional and bilateral priorities, including conserving the environment and natural resources, expanding trade and investment, and addressing regional transnational criminal and security challenges.

Our relationship is further strengthened through our valuable university partnerships and education linkages. If confirmed, as we emerge from the pandemic I will look to expand our in-person en-

agement to advance these priorities, especially through programming focused on youth and young women and girls.

Economic ties between the United States and Botswana were growing before the pandemic. Even as the United States remains the world's top purchaser of Botswana's diamonds, we will support Botswana's efforts to diversify its economy, to build a knowledge-based economy, and to improve opportunities for American businesses.

U.S. tourists attracted to the country's globally significant national parks and reserves will continue to present an important opportunity for Botswana as the pandemic recedes and travel resumes.

If confirmed, I will work with Botswana to deter and dismantle poaching organizations. I will also work with Botswana to realize the potential offered by Power Africa's mega solar project, an initiative which would transform Botswana into a regionally significant solar power producer, consumer, and exporter.

If confirmed, I will also continue to advance the priorities articulated in the DELTA Act to promote responsible natural resource and wildlife management practices in the Greater Okavango River Basin.

The United States has invested more than a billion dollars in Botswana's health sector through the President's emergency plan for AIDS relief, the PEPFAR program.

While there is still an estimated 9,000 new HIV infections annually in the country, Botswana has made impressive progress in its fight against HIV and it is near epidemic control.

That said, the threat posed by HIV cannot be underestimated. If confirmed, I look forward to securing the sustainability of our PEPFAR investment and leading our interagency health team as we continue to work with the government of Botswana on its HIV response.

If confirmed, I will also work to affirm President Biden's commitment to deliver additional COVID-19 vaccines to Botswana and its neighbors.

The Botswana Defense Force is one of the most professional militaries on the continent and our military engagement remains strong. The United States also sponsors the International Law Enforcement Academy, which has trained more than 12,000 law enforcement and criminal justice professionals from Africa, the Americas, and Southeast Asia.

Support for these institutions improve the rule of law in the country and on the continent, including the capacity to effectively respond to global issues like wildlife and timber trafficking, violent extremism, cybercrime, corruption, and trafficking in persons.

If confirmed, I will work to expand the U.S.-Botswana military partnership and our regional security role through education and training programs.

We expect to see a resurgence in the number of Americans visiting Botswana once we emerge from the pandemic. If confirmed, the safety of our staff and U.S. citizens in Botswana will remain paramount.

The U.S. Ambassador to Botswana also serves as a U.S. representative to the Southern African Development Community, and

I am excited about the opportunity to work towards increased security, health, and economic development across the region with our Southern African nation partners.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Van Vranken follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HOWARD A. VAN VRANKEN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, it is a great privilege and honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the next Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana. I thank the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. I am also grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration. I am especially grateful for my wife, Rebecca, who has supported me during nearly two decades of marriage, and for the endurance of my children, Grace, Robert, and Victor. I would not be here today without their tremendous support. Finally, I can say that my parents, Robert and Helen, tirelessly inspired me to explore and embrace the world beyond my native California and I am forever grateful for their sacrifices on my behalf.

During my thirty-three years in the Foreign Service, my work in Africa and the Middle East, as well as assignments in Washington, have prepared me to deliver impactful results for the American people in the important role for which I have been nominated. I have served in senior leadership positions in a number of posts including, most recently, in Morocco and Iraq. If confirmed, I will work diligently and with integrity to further strengthen ties between the United States and Botswana.

Botswana is strategically important and a reliable partner on the African continent. We work with Botswana to advance shared global priorities, including strengthening democratic institutions and promoting respect for human rights, ending AIDS and the COVID-19 pandemic, and advancing global health security. Together, we also work on regional and bilateral priorities, including conserving the environment and natural resources, expanding trade and investment, and addressing regional transnational criminal and security challenges. Our relationship is further strengthened through our valuable university partnerships and education linkages. If confirmed, as we emerge from the pandemic, I will look to expand our in-person engagement to advance these priorities, especially through programming focused on the youth and young women and girls.

Economic ties between the United States and Botswana were growing before the pandemic. Even as the United States remains the world's top purchaser of Botswana's diamonds, we will support Botswana's efforts to diversify its economy, to build a knowledge-based economy, and to improve opportunities for American businesses. U.S. tourists, attracted to the country's globally significant national parks and reserves, will continue to present an important opportunity for Botswana as the pandemic recedes and travel resumes. If confirmed, I will work with Botswana to deter and dismantle poaching organizations. If confirmed, I will work with Botswana to realize the potential offered by Power Africa's Mega Solar project, an initiative which could transform Botswana into a regionally significant solar power producer, consumer, and exporter. If confirmed, I will also continue to advance the priorities articulated in the DELTA Act to promote responsible natural resource and wildlife management practices in the greater Okavango River Basin.

The United States has invested more than \$1 billion in Botswana's health sector through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program. While there are still an estimated 9,000 new HIV infections annually in the country, Botswana has made impressive progress in its fight against HIV/AIDS and is near epidemic control. That said, the threat posed by HIV/AIDS cannot be underestimated. If confirmed, I look forward to securing the sustainability of our PEPFAR investment and leading our interagency health team as we continue to work with the Government of Botswana on its HIV response. If confirmed, I will also work to affirm President Biden's commitment to deliver additional COVID-19 vaccines to Botswana and its neighbors.

The Botswana Defense Force is one of the most professional militaries on the continent, and our military engagement remains strong. The United States also sponsors the International Law Enforcement Academy, which has trained more than 12,000 law-enforcement and criminal justice professionals from Africa, the Americas, and Southeast Asia. Support to these institutions has improved rule of law in

the country and on the continent, including capacity to effectively respond to global issues like wildlife and timber trafficking, violent extremism, cyber-crime, corruption and trafficking in persons. If confirmed, I will work to expand U.S.-Botswana military partnerships and our regional security role through education and training programs.

We expect to see a resurgence in the number of Americans visiting Botswana once we emerge from the pandemic. The safety of our staff and U.S. citizens will remain paramount.

The U.S. Ambassador to Botswana also serves as the U.S. representative to the Southern African Development Community, and I am excited about the opportunity to work towards increased security, health, and economic development across the region with other southern Africa nations.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Van Vranken.

I have submitted my opening statement for the record. But I really feel it is important that we just share with you personally that I would suspect that every career diplomat wonders whether someday, after years of service, they might be nominated by the President of the United States to serve as an ambassador somewhere.

I just want to say congratulations, because after today none of you will have to ask that question again. For Ambassador Palmer, this is twice.

To all of you, thank you for your public service and your continued service on behalf of our country.

I have got a series of questions that I will start with, and then by then I would suspect that our chairman will be back in as well, and I am sure that he has a series of questions as well.

Let me begin with Mr. Logsdon. If confirmed as Ambassador, you will be going to Moldova at a very important time in its history. The president, Maia Sandu, and the new parliament have been elected on a platform of reform and plan to make changes to fight corruption across government, especially in the judiciary.

As Ambassador, how will you work with the new government to support the reforms and see them through to success?

Mr. LOGSDON. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate that question. And, obviously, as you mentioned, this is an historic moment, I think, for the government of Moldova, the people of Moldova, and the United States and our opportunity to assist.

It will not be just us saying we think these are good reforms. This is something we can do to assist the government. The government of Moldova has asked for some very specific kinds of support.

We have worked for many years with different parts of the government and with civil society, and I think the goal for us now is to find ways that we can continue to support President Sandu and her government's desired end state, which is to push back on corruption. That is exactly why the government and President Sandu were elected by the people of Moldova.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir.

Ms. Cromer, the Gambia's democratic transition, spurred by the ouster of dictator Yahya Jammeh at the ballot box in 2016 was an unexpected victory for democracy on the continent.

Given recent challenges to democracy in West Africa, including four coups in the last year, what are the regional implications for Gambia's continued democratic development and what tools can

the U.S. consider to continue to appropriately support democratic and economic reforms as well as economic recovery from the Jammeh era, and more recently, the impacts of COVID-19?

I know I am giving you a multiple question item, but if you could, please, and I will ask again if there is any part of it that you are not comfortable with.

Ms. CROMER. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate the question.

First of all, let me say that the Gambians have decided their own fate. They have voted back in 2016 a new president and have moved on the path from authoritarianism to democracy. It is a difficult path, it is a lengthy path, and it takes a steadfast partner like the U.S. to help them build that democracy.

The top priorities of the U.S. Government, ones which, if given the opportunity to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Gambia, I would lead, would be, one, to help build a truly democratic state in the Gambia.

The second would be advancing country-owned, country-led, and sustained development that improves the lives and well being of Gambians.

And third, promoting an investment climate where both U.S. and Gambian enterprises can thrive and trade between the two countries creates good jobs and economic prosperity.

On the COVID front, I had the opportunity this morning to take a walk to the Washington Monument, and on the grounds of the monument there are over 660,000 flag, small flags that have been put in the soil of the Washington Monument grounds, each representing—each flag representing an American who has died of COVID.

This is a moving, beautiful, but sobering memorial to American lives and precious souls, and I would just like to say that the Gambia and other countries in Africa do not have the equipment, the vaccines, the trained staff, PPEs, to address the COVID pandemic, and the capacity to fight COVID-19 and future pandemics is extremely limited in the Gambia.

If confirmed, I will work with the stakeholders on the ground in the Gambia and here in Washington to see what more we can do to build up the Gambia's capacity.

Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Ms. Cromer.

Ambassador Palmer, Ghana has long been seen as a key U.S. ally in Africa and held up as a stable, democratic, and economic partner and a regional leader. I was impressed by what I saw when I visited Ghana in early 2020.

Given the deeply worrying trends in West Africa, does the U.S. need to adjust its engagement with Ghana to support the resiliency of its institutions and its leadership in the region? If yes, what would be your recommendations?

Ms. PALMER. Thank you for that that question, Senator.

I believe that, indeed, Ghana's example and leadership are very important in the context of democracy backsliding in the region.

I think we need to continue to work to fight corruption in Ghana and to ensure the sanctity of contracts so that Ghana can continue to be a welcoming environment for investment and trade and that sort of beacon or bastion to countering violent extremism.

I do not think we need to reorient. I think we need to continue to integrate our work to ensure inclusive economic growth, particularly in the north, to strengthen Ghana's accountability institutions and work, as I said, to improve contract sanctity and fight corruption.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Mr. Van Vranken, Botswana is a key partner in southern Africa, particularly given its historic credentials in democracy and maintaining stability and security.

However, challenges and opportunities in the southern Africa region abound including with a mounting extremist threat in Mozambique, the ongoing political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, efforts to address significant levels of corruption in Angola and South Africa, and the recent democratic transition in Zambia.

As the U.S. Ambassador to Botswana, how will you engage with our Botswanan partners on issues of regional significance? And also, do you view Botswana as an opportunity for bolstered U.S. trade and investment and, if yes, what tools will you employ to encourage increased trade and investment in a diversity of sectors including but beyond the tourism and extractive industries?

Mr. VAN VRANKEN. Thank you for those questions, Senator. They are very pertinent.

In terms of regional challenges, I think that, as you rightly identified, Botswana has a long tradition of democracy and, in that sense, stands as an example in the region.

The government of Botswana has also been a founding member of the Southern African Development Community, the group of Southern African nations, and the government of Botswana has never been shy about voicing outspoken views on regional peace and security issues, and sometimes differing publicly with the policy of the Southern African Development Community.

I think we should continue to encourage the engagement that Botswana has had in the recent past through the Southern African Development Community.

I would note that it was through SADC that Ghana or, excuse me, Botswana deployed nearly 300 troops as part of a standing force to northern Mozambique, and I think that that is something that we should applaud and encourage.

Regarding economic development and, particularly, trade and investment beyond the extractive or diamond sector as well as tourism, I think that there are areas that we can support Ghana.

We have already initiated an agreement—excuse me, a memorandum of intent between Botswana and Namibia for the Power Africa, the mega solar project. That would provide two to five gigawatts of solar power and would replace coal—imported coal-fired electricity that Botswana currently imports from South Africa, and would enable it to be a—potentially, a significant exporter of solar power in the region.

I think that there is ample opportunity for American firms in a project such as that. I also think that we should continue to find areas in AGOA as well as through Prosper Africa to facilitate trade between the two countries.

I do think that this is a potential area where we can collaborate to both of our satisfaction.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir.

And I know that our chairman is on his way back from the vote. I am going to take advantage of a few more minutes here to ask a couple of questions, and when the chairman comes in I know he will have a hard stop, but he is going to try to get some questions in. I see the chairman has just arrived back on the thing.

Mr. Chairman, I finished with my questions. I know that you have a hard stop coming up. Whenever you are completed it is fine with me if you close the meeting, sir.

And once again, I want to say just thank you to all of our guests here today in front of us, our applicants. Clearly, we have to say thank you for their hard work and dedication to public service and to the State Department here in our country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Rounds, and thank all of you for your testimony. And I got a report on the questions that Senator Rounds asked, not surprisingly because we work together. He covered a lot of the territory that I would have between his questions and your comments.

I would, Mr. Van Vranken, just like to follow up on the issue of loss of dollars in Botswana as a result of the huge drop off in tourism because of COVID-19.

One of the other issues, though, in Botswana, as you know, in terms of their long-term sustainability and the sustainability of—continue to attract tourists is protection of wildlife, and there is a serious poaching issue still in Botswana.

Can you just talk a little bit about how the United States, through your efforts and USAID and others, can help address that poaching issue?

Mr. VAN VRANKEN. Thank you very much, Senator.

That is an excellent point. There has been a significant drop off in tourism dollars. To date, the United States has provided very important support to the government of Botswana to help them combat wildlife trafficking.

We have helped to build the capacity of the government to conduct intelligence-led operations focused on poachers. We have, for more than a decade, have provided wildlife trafficking intervention training through our International Law Enforcement Academy in Botswana.

That has helped not only Botswana but also regional partners. I think that we should sustain those efforts and continue to work through the Southern African Development Community on law enforcement and anti-poaching efforts.

Thank you, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I also had one follow-up as well on Ghana for Ambassador Palmer, because as you indicated, Ghana has had a robust democracy and peaceful transitions of power and have been supporters, overall, of human rights.

There was, though, a recent report by Human Rights Watch regarding discrimination—harsh discrimination against the LGBT community there as well as a proposed draconian anti-LGBT bill.

Could you just comment on that and what your role can be in addressing that matter?



Ms. PALMER. Thank you for that question, Senator.

It is an issue of a great deal of concern to me. I think it is important that we note that we are not asking for special rights for members of the LGBT community but only the rights that other Ghanaians enjoy under the Ghanaian constitution and the international human rights charters to which Ghana is a signatory.

There are moral and legal reasons for ensuring that the rights of the LGBT community are respected. But, importantly, there are also public order and public health reasons why draconian legislation and discrimination are a bad idea.

I think it is also very important to think about this just in terms of discrimination. What the LGBT community in Ghana is asking for, I understand, is freedom from violence, freedom from harassment, freedom from discrimination.

I am not equating my situation with that, but when I was falling in love with a nonwhite South African 35 years ago, our relationship was illegal and that is because his humanity was not respected and was not believed to be the same as mine. And, fortunately, those laws have changed and we think now how could that ever have been.

And I hope that that will be the case all over for vulnerable groups, including women and girls and the LGBT community, and I will work to ensure that those human rights are respected.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you for that statement, and also your own experiences and how they can relate to this situation.

I want to thank all of you. I want to thank your family members, who you introduced. Usually, we have a chance to meet people in the hearing room. Unfortunately, we are not able to do that now.

As Senator Rounds said, I have a hard stop at 4:00 o'clock, but I do not know, Mike—Senator, if—I am happy to turn this over to you for additional questioning if you would like or we can close the hearing now.

Senator ROUNDS. Mr. Chairman, I intend to submit a couple of questions for the record. But other than that, I am prepared to close it at this time, sir.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Okay.

Let me just, again, underscore the comments my partner, Senator Rounds, made just a few minutes ago and thanking all of you for your service.

As somebody who grew up in a Foreign Service family, I am proud of the service of our Foreign Service officers and the entire family at the State Department, and look forward to supporting your confirmation.

And maybe Senator Rounds and I will have a chance to come visit those of you in your countries where you are going to be representing the United States.

Thank you all very much.

[Whereupon, at 4:01 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CAPT. C.B. SULLENBERGER III BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*COVID-19*

*Question.* What actions do you believe ICAO should take to protect the air traveling public, and flight crews aboard commercial airlines, from the COVID-19?

*Answer.* The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on civil aviation is unprecedented. ICAO moved quickly to establish the Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) to provide guidance to governments and industry operators to restart the international air transport sector safely and promote recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 on a coordinated global basis.

ICAO is convening a ministerial conference on COVID and aviation in mid-October to rally governments from every region to implement the CART recommendations and enable the recovery of international civil aviation. I believe these are the right first steps to move toward a safe restart of the aviation sector, and if confirmed, I will continue to promote these efforts to protect the air travelling public and flight crews aboard commercial airlines.

*Question.* Do you believe the global airline industry will adopt adequate policies to protect its customers and employees?

*Answer.* Airlines have already taken significant steps to protect customers and employees by implementing health mitigation measures such as requiring the use of masks on board aircraft, enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures, health assessments of crew and passengers, enhancing airport security checkpoint procedures, and the minimizing of in-person interaction through use of new technologies. For transportation and travel to resume safely and sustainably, it is in the best interest of the global airline industry to continue all of these measures, and if confirmed, I will continue to promote these actions.

*Question.* Do you believe ICAO has the authority and mandate to coordinate and establish some set of uniform standards or protections against the spread of the COVID-19?

*Answer.* The United States participated actively in ICAO's CART task force, which has issued three reports since the beginning of the pandemic. Each report provided substantive and actionable recommendations for promulgating a framework for the detection and control of COVID-19 among air passengers and crew such that more stringent control measures, such as mandatory quarantines, could be relaxed or removed entirely.

In the long-run, ICAO must continue to work with member States and the WHO to implement WHO recommendations on science and public health in the civil aviation domain, as well as to facilitate the efficient and secure flow of limited health information among air passengers and States to prevent and mitigate the effects of future pandemics on air transport. If confirmed, this will be a top priority of mine at ICAO.

*Climate Change*

*Question.* The ICAO Assembly at its 40th Session in 2019 adopted a resolution that reiterated two aspirational goals for the international aviation sector: a 2 percent annual fuel efficiency improvement through 2050 and carbon neutral growth from 2020 onwards.

- Do you think these goals is adequate?

*Answer.* It is important that ICAO Member States were able to come together to adopt these goals. If confirmed, I look forward to working with colleagues across the government to determine how best the United States can help achieve the existing climate goals and lead efforts to increase ambition where possible, consistent with the President's policy to press for enhanced climate ambition and the integration of climate considerations across a wide range of international fora, including on aviation. Aviation's recovery from the global pandemic also provides ICAO an opportunity to reassess whether these current goals are truly sufficient in light of the global recognition of the need to address climate change.

*Question.* What do you foresee as the biggest challenges to meet these goals?

*Answer.* Some of the biggest challenges ahead include making sure there is robust global participation, particularly for countries with significant international aviation activity, on ICAO measures like CORSIA, and accelerating both state and private sector deployment of cleaner technology, sustainable aviation fuels, and implementa-

tion of more efficient operations. Different countries have different profiles for aviation growth: some have very developed networks and industries with more opportunities for reducing emissions, while others are seeing significant expansion of aviation markets and are less likely to support increased ambition globally if they believe it will affect their industry.

*Question.* What tools should the Biden Administration provide to meet these goals?

*Answer.* The United States already plays a critical role at ICAO. To achieve these goals or to push for more ambitious goals, the United States needs to be a leader, and needs to work to develop a strong coalition of states to work with us both bilaterally and at ICAO. The Biden Administration is committed to working toward reducing the sector's emissions in a manner consistent with the goal of net zero emissions for our economy by 2050.

*Question.* In September 2021, a coalition of 100 environmental groups called on the Biden Administration to strengthen greenhouse gas emission standards in the airline industry.

- Do you think the current ICAO standards are sufficient? If not, what changes do you believe are necessary?

*Answer.* The current standards represent the first ever greenhouse gas emission standard for commercial aircraft. Establishing this global standard was an important achievement and a critical first step, but it is likely to be insufficient as technology advances. It will be critically important to strengthen these standards, and, if confirmed, that is something that I plan to pursue in ICAO.

*Question.* ICAO adopted the Carbon Offset and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) in 2016 and in 2018 the parties to ICAO took further action to advance the CORSIA through the establishment of Standards and Recommended Procedures (SARPs) for parties to comply with the CORSIA.

- Does FAA have sufficient authorities to comply with the CORSIA that would meet the threshold of the SARPs?

*Answer.* It will be critical for the United States to be in a position to fully implement CORSIA, which U.S. airplane operators have broadly supported. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress, in coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, and Department of State colleagues to ensure there is the necessary legislative authority to implement CORSIA and other ambitious climate measures.

*Question.* Will you commit to working with FAA on advising Congress on the development of legislation that may be necessary to ensure the U.S. is in full compliance with ICAO's CORSIA?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress, in coordination with FAA, DOT, and DOS colleagues to ensure there is the necessary legislative authority to implement CORSIA and other climate measures.

#### *Malevolent Influence in International Organizations*

*Question.* Will you commit to working with likeminded countries to ensure the agenda and decisions of ICAO and Parties to the Chicago convention operate transparently, and that you will maintain vigilant of the weight and influence of countries that do not share the U.S.' values and economic interests?

*Answer.* Standard-setting bodies are essential to the national security and economic security of the United States, our partners, and allies. Organizations such as ICAO must remain transparent and accountable to member states, focused on mandates and core competencies, and led by independent, qualified individuals. If confirmed, I will prioritize working with allies and partners to strengthen ICAO's governance and its ability to fulfill its mandate: the safety, security, and sustainability of civil aviation. This will include opposing efforts by states, including the PRC, that seek to make ICAO and other international organizations less transparent and accountable or to use the organization to advance their own interests. If confirmed, I will also continue to support greater U.S. representation at ICAO, including by advocating for qualified and independent candidates.

#### *Air Safety and Boeing 737 Max*

*Question.* What role do you believe ICAO has to intervene or resolve country decisions to ground or prohibit Boeing 737 Max from their airspace?

*Answer.* It is up to a State's regulatory authority to determine whether to allow an aircraft to conduct operations within its territory. On November 18, 2020, the

FAA published the final Airworthiness Directive with its findings and decisions regarding recertification of the Boeing 737 MAX flight control systems. The FAA worked alongside Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA), the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the National Civil Aviation Agency of Brazil (ANAC) in approving all the design changes to the Boeing 737 MAX. Following the FAA's rescission of its prior grounding order on November 18th, 2020, over 178 countries have since taken steps to allow the reintroduction of the aircraft.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CAPT. C.B. SULLENBERGER III BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In 2019, the State Department withheld about \$2 million in contributions pursuant to Sec. 7048(a) of the FY2019 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which mandates the withholding of 15 percent of contributions to international organizations that do not implement sufficient whistleblower protections. After the adoption and implementation of key ethics and oversight reforms, the U.S. restored full funding.

- If confirmed, will you direct the U.S. Mission to ICAO to push for the full adoption and implementation of the remaining ethics and oversight reforms?

*Answer.* The Administration is committed to improving transparency and accountability at ICAO, including eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse, as well as protecting whistleblowers from retaliation. If confirmed, I will focus intently on and fully support actions to help ICAO leadership develop a culture of transparency and accountability within the organization—actions that cannot be delayed given the recent history of mismanagement.

*Question.* How will you hold the body accountable for doing so given it has fallen way short in the past?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be a relentless advocate for necessary reforms. I believe corrective measures at ICAO became more achievable with the recent election of Juan Carlos Salazar, the former head of Colombia's civil aviation authority, as the organization's new Secretary General. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. engagement with ICAO leadership and other member states to ensure that ICAO's transparency and accountability mechanisms meet UN System-wide best practices.

*Question.* Are you familiar with the whistleblower scandal at ICAO in recent years where the secretary general of ICAO, Fang Liu, was accused by a senior official-turned-whistleblower of "toxic and hostile" leadership marked by "cronyism" and "favoritism," and where no investigation place and the whistleblower was fired by ICAO?

*Answer.* I am familiar with the whistleblower scandal that occurred at ICAO, and with the cyberattack that spurred it. Following a high-level claim of retaliation in June 2019, I understand that the U.S. Mission increased its efforts to address deficiencies in ICAO's ethics framework, investigation procedures, and Secretariat transparency. Concerted action on the part of the United States led to ICAO's adoption of a new whistleblower protection policy and new procedures for investigating complaints of staff misconduct in 2020. If confirmed, I will continue to work to assure that whistleblowers can report wrongdoing without fear of reprisal and will also commit to working closely with the organization to ensure it is effectively implementing its new whistleblower protection policy.

*Question.* In brief, a breach of ICAO's servers by a Chinese state-sponsored hacker group which took place in 2019 and revealed in 2019. The hackers reportedly gained access to the agency's system through a compromised laptop belonging to the son of then-ICAO Council President Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu. The hackers compromised the laptop of an ICAO official was in Beijing. Leaked documents show that ICAO staff sought to cover up the incident, and Liu reportedly ignored internal recommendations to investigate further. Are you familiar with this case which has been widely reported on?

*Answer.* Yes, I am familiar with the serious cyberattack at ICAO that was revealed in 2019, and the deeply flawed response within the organization. Important reforms were subsequently put in place to deal with the lack of accountability in the handling of this issue, and if confirmed, I will press for continued implementation of those reforms to ensure enhanced transparency in the handling of these types of cases.

*Question.* What is your perspective on protecting whistleblowers and do you commit to withholding the legislatively mandated portion of funds from ICAO if the agency reneges on its whistleblower protection reforms?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will push to ensure that ICAO's transparency and accountability mechanisms meet UN System-wide best practices, and I will work closely with the organization to ensure it is effectively implementing its new whistleblower protection policy. I will also work to ensure that whistleblowers can report wrongdoing without fear of reprisal. I will ensure that the Department's actions with respect to ICAO are consistent with U.S. law, and that all options are explored in support of the organization's whistleblower protections.

*Question.* On January 8, 2020, the Islamic Republic of Iran shot down Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752, a civilian aircraft departing a Tehran airport. 176 innocent passengers and crew members were killed, including 138 people with ties to Canada. More than a year after the downing, the governments of Canada and Ukraine have rejected Iran's handling of, and investigation into, the PS752 downing, pushing for Iran's full adherence to international conventions. The G7 Summit Communique reaffirmed the G7's commitment to addressing this case.

- If confirmed, will you commit to publicly and meaningfully supporting our allies and partners in Canada and Ukraine to pursue full accountability, transparency, and justice in this case, including at ICAO?

*Answer.* The United States participated in the investigation of the shoot down of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752, with the inclusion of an accredited representative on the investigation team. I understand that the ICAO Accident Investigation Panel formed a working group to continue to discuss some of the unique circumstances raised by the accident. If I am confirmed, I am committed to continuing to work with our international partners to ensure the integrity of the accident investigation process, to push for accountability for those responsible for the shoot-down of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752, and to call on Iran to uphold its responsibilities to the victims and families of this tragic incident.

*Question.* Since 2013, Taiwan has been systematically excluded from participating at ICAO, including during key discussions to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the early days of the pandemic. Taiwan operates one of the busiest airports by passenger and cargo traffic in the world.

- Can you commit to championing Taiwan's bid to attain observer status at ICAO?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will be committed to supporting Taiwan's meaningful participation in ICAO, in line with longstanding U.S. policy. Aviation security, safety, and environmental impacts are matters of global importance, and should involve all interested stakeholders, including Taiwan, which has a major aviation sector and can both benefit from and contribute to technical discussions on aviation safety and security based on its own aviation experiences.

*Question.* How will the U.S. Mission to ICAO, in conjunction with the State Department, specifically work to assist Taiwan in its bid?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will press ICAO leadership to provide meaningful participation for Taiwan at all appropriate levels and events. It is critical that Taiwan both contribute to and benefit from technical aviation safety and security discussions that occur at ICAO in various fora. If confirmed, I will make this a priority at ICAO and work with the State Department and other agencies to identify opportunities and events to support Taiwan's participation so that the international community can benefit from its contributions on this important issue.

*Question.* On May 23, 2021, Ryanair flight FR4978 was forcibly diverted by the government of Belarus and a passenger was arrested. ICAO has taken up an investigation of this event.

- Can you commit to ensuring that the fact-finding investigation into Ryanair Flight FR4978 is completed with transparency?

*Answer.* The forced diversion of Ryanair Flight 4978 by Belarus and subsequent arrest of an opposition journalist and a colleague showed flagrant disregard for international norms of aviation security and safety and undermined the critical trust between pilots and air traffic control. ICAO, as the UN organization responsible for setting global standards for the safety and security of international civil aviation, must work to ensure those standards are upheld.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure our partners and allies, and all related parties fully participate in the ICAO investigation by sharing all information relevant to the

incident with ICAO's investigative team and to push for substantive findings, including a chronology of events, to be presented to the ICAO Council in November.

*Question.* How will you work to combat malign Chinese influence at ICAO?

*Answer.* Standard-setting bodies are essential to the national security and economic security of the United States and our partners, friends, and allies. Organizations such as ICAO must remain transparent and accountable to membership, focused on mandates and core competencies, and led by independent, qualified individuals. If confirmed, I will prioritize working with allies and partners to strengthen ICAO's governance and its ability to fulfil its mandate: the safety, security, and sustainability of civil aviation. If confirmed, I will oppose efforts by states, including the PRC, that seek to make ICAO and other international organizations less transparent and accountable or to use the organizations to advance their own interests. If confirmed, I will also continue to support greater U.S. representation at ICAO, including by advocating for qualified and independent candidates.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CAPT. C.B. SULLENBERGER III BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* What leadership role, if any, do you think ICAO could and should take in lifting travel restrictions and restoring post-pandemic international air travel?

*Answer.* The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on civil aviation is unprecedented. ICAO moved quickly to establish the Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) to provide guidance to governments and industry operators to restart the international air transport sector safely and promote recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 on a coordinated global basis.

While it is up to member states to lift restrictions on travel across borders, ICAO can continue to play an important role in identifying the tools and resources necessary to do so. In the long run, ICAO must continue to work with member states and the World Health Organization to ensure a more robust disease surveillance and contact tracing capability in the civil aviation domain, as well as to facilitate the efficient and secure flow of limited health information among air passengers and states to prevent and mitigate the effects of future pandemics on air transport. If confirmed, this will be a top priority of mine at ICAO.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DR. ATUL A. GAWANDE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*COVID-19*

*Question.* Nearly two years into the COVID-19 pandemic access to the COVID-19 vaccine in poor and developing nations remains a challenge. For example, Africa has vaccinated only 3 percent of its population due to lack of supply.

- What are the major challenges to increasing the global supply of COVID-19 vaccines produced in the United States and Europe and what role if any will you play relative to helping overcome those challenges?

*Answer.* While there have been significant improvements and scale-up in global manufacturing, there remain constraints in the supply of some key input materials, as well as constrained capacity to "fill and finish" vaccines into vials. I understand that USAID is working closely with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation and other partners to expand global vaccine manufacturing, including by supporting efforts to build human resource capacity for vaccine production and enabling the regulatory environment to review the safety and quality of vaccines before sale and use. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the U.S. Government to spur innovative solutions to these challenges.

- What is your understanding of the efficacy of vaccines produced in China and Russia, and if confirmed what messages, if any, should you deliver to countries about the safety and efficacy of these vaccines?

*Answer.* While Sinopharm and Sinovac have been shown in certain studies to be less effective than several other COVID-19 vaccines, studies against prior prevailing SARS-CoV-2 strains have shown Sinopharm and Sinovac have a favorable protective impact against critical illness and both have received Emergency Use Listing from the World Health Organization (WHO). Russia's Sputnik V vaccine produced by Gamaleya Research Institute has not yet received Emergency Use Listing from the

WHO or a stringent regulatory authority. I note that the Biden-Harris administration is dedicated to increasing U.S. vaccine sharing efforts and ensuring broad availability of safe and effective vaccines to more countries in need, through COVAX and bilaterally, and continues to call on others to do the same.

- Assuming availability of supply comes on line, what will be the most significant challenges to what is commonly referred to as “putting shots in arms” in countries with weak health systems, and what role will you play if confirmed to ensure those challenges have been addressed prior to COVID–19 vaccination doses become available?

Answer. Accelerating worldwide vaccine administration is an even bigger challenge than increasing supply. If confirmed, I will support USAID’s efforts in this area as a top priority. Bolstering country readiness is critical to the success of the U.S. donation of Pfizer doses and other vaccines, in particular. I understand that the President has announced that USAID plans to allocate additional American Rescue Plan funds for vaccine readiness. This builds on previous investments to support partner countries to strengthen their vaccination programs, including setting up vaccination sites, training vaccinators, providing logistics support to the “last mile,” fighting vaccine misinformation, and securing cold chain equipment.

- If confirmed, what actions would you plan to take, related to implementing the objectives of the September 2021 U.S. COVID–19 Summit?

Answer. At the September COVID–19 Summit, the President announced that USAID plans to provide \$195 million in support for country vaccine readiness efforts in support of the “Vaccinate the World” target and \$50 million to expand access to oxygen in support of the “Save Lives Now” target. I understand that USAID will provide an additional \$100 million for rapid response interventions, including addressing needs in COVID–19 hot spots and will also play a key role supporting the administration of an additional 500 million Pfizer vaccines to be donated by the United States. If confirmed, I commit to supporting these efforts as well as working with our partners, the private sector, and other countries to support reaching the Summit targets.

- What is your view of the role the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) can play in combatting the COVID–19 pandemic, and future pandemics, and what level of funding should USAID provide to the organization?

Answer. I understand that USAID currently provides support to CEPI’s core vaccine development program. If confirmed, I intend to consider all possible avenues where USAID can improve country COVID–19 vaccine capacity. CEPI has been an effective innovator. If I am fortunate enough to lead the Bureau for Global Health, I will explore how CEPI’s work aligns with the U.S. funding portfolio for efforts to expand use of existing vaccines and prepare for new variants.

#### *Health Systems Strengthening*

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you prioritize Health Systems Strengthening? Will you commit to consulting with my staff on your plans in this area, if confirmed?

Answer. Health systems strengthening has been a major focus of my career, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with USAID colleagues, and your staff, to prioritize this work. I understand that USAID recently released a new Vision for Health Systems Strengthening, and I plan to ensure that USAID’s approach described in the Vision is implemented across the Agency’s programs. In particular, I will prioritize support for local organizations and locally-derived solutions and work with countries and partners to leverage health resources across public, private, and community sectors. This includes supporting USAID’s efforts to optimize the impact of those resources to advance equity and quality of healthcare.

#### *Tuberculosis*

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you prioritize tuberculosis control efforts, in particular case finding, equitable and high quality treatment, and research and development of innovative diagnostics, therapies, and vaccines?

Answer. COVID–19 has had a devastating impact on the global tuberculosis (TB) response. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID continues its TB recovery efforts in the highest impacted countries, focusing on expanding access to TB detection, such as with TB and COVID–19 bi-directional testing and community-based contact investigations. If confirmed, I look forward to overseeing efforts to improve the quality of TB and drug resistant TB treatment through, for example, innovative digital technology, and supporting research for new and better treatment and diagnostic

tools. I will also support coordination with other partners, leveraging their additional resources for late-stage development and uptake of new TB vaccines.

*Global Women's Health*

*Question.* As the world continues to confront COVID-19, women's health services must be part of any comprehensive response to the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased incidences of sexual exploitation and gender-based violence as well as decreased access to reproductive and maternal health care. In March 2021, the United Nations Population Fund reported that an estimated 12 million women experienced disruptions in access to family planning due to the pandemic, leading to 1.4 million unintended pregnancies. These impacts have been especially devastating for women and girls already in the grip of humanitarian crises, from Afghanistan to Venezuela. Already, women's progress over the past 25 years has begun to be reversed.

- How will USAID meet the expanding health needs of women and girls impacted by the secondary effects of COVID-19, including gender-based violence? What steps will USAID's Bureau of Global Health take to halt the reversal of progress in women's health and rights?

*Answer.* U.S. investments in reproductive and maternal health, and gender-based violence prevention and response, are vital to women's health, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls. They also support the Biden-Harris administration's health and development priorities. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to reach those most vulnerable, especially women and girls; ensure continued and equitable access to life-saving voluntary family planning and maternal health care; support countries to develop enabling environments for healthy behaviors; and increase the health sector's capacity to prevent and address gender-based violence.

- How will USAID seek to ensure that women in humanitarian emergencies who have been disproportionately impacted by the secondary impacts of COVID-19 receive access to critical health care services?

*Answer.* I understand USAID's humanitarian programming in the context of COVID-19 takes an integrated health and protection approach to ensure women and girls in humanitarian emergencies have access to critical healthcare services, including antenatal care, safe delivery at birth, postnatal care, and voluntary family planning. Programs also address myths, misconceptions, and misinformation. In light of the dramatic increase in gender-based violence (GBV) resulting from the pandemic, I understand that USAID partners are expanding services to directly address pandemic-related GBV needs. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that USAID's longer term global health investments build on the important work of the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance in countries where the Agency works.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DR. ATUL A. GAWANDE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*In General*

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to upholding the statutory structure and organizational principals of the U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), whereby the agency operates as an independent agency under the foreign policy direction of the U.S. Secretary of State?

*Answer.* Yes, I will uphold the statutory structure and organizational principles by which USAID formulates and executes U.S. foreign economic and development assistance policies and programs, subject to the foreign policy guidance of the President, the Secretary of State, and the National Security Council.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working in a bipartisan manner with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including by providing timely, accurate, and complete information on relevant U.S. global health strategies, initiatives, and funding?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Waste, Fraud, and Abuse*

*Question.* A recent report by the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) Anti-Corruption and Governance Center suggests that an estimated five to ten percent of annual humanitarian aid is lost to corruption, while an estimated seven percent of global spending on public health is lost to waste, fraud, and abuse.



The United States is, by far, the single most generous donor of both humanitarian and global health assistance.

- If confirmed, will you commit to upholding a zero tolerance policy for waste, fraud, and abuse in the programs under your purview?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you also uphold a zero tolerance policy for USAID staff and implementing partners who engage in the sexual exploitation and abuse of the vulnerable communities they are meant to serve?

Answer. Yes.

#### *Management*

*Question.* USAID has a diverse workforce, supported by 22 different hiring mechanisms, that has been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to persistent management challenges, budget uncertainty, and COVID-19 and its associated stresses. To further complicate matters, if confirmed, you will be charged with managing an operational bureau that consumes roughly one third of the USAID budget and programs that cut across nearly every development sector. With the perceived importance of bureaus and initiatives all-to-often measured by the resources they manage, competition can be fierce and cooperation difficult.

- What is your understanding of morale within the Bureau for Global Health?

Answer. I understand that the COVID pandemic has created challenges for the entire Federal workforce, and USAID has the relatively unique additional challenges of a substantial overseas workforce. More broadly, I understand that USAID has been asked to take on expanding duties, and the staff at the Bureau have been under tremendous pressure for the past 18 months as the Agency has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across the bureau?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to addressing morale and strengthening community at USAID. Among my top, early priorities will be to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues affecting morale, as well as the agency's personnel structure and human resources and management mechanisms that can be used to address the most critical issues. Through two decades of management experience, I have come to understand the value of listening to my teams, creating opportunities for personal and professional growth at all levels, and ensuring that the often incredibly difficult work undertaken by my staff or organization is publicly and privately acknowledged.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across the bureau, while also accounting for the areas of overlap with other agencies, bureaus, offices, and initiatives?

Answer. I understand that the size and scope of the Global Health Bureau can create coordination challenges within the Agency, and across other departments and agencies. At the same time, I see tremendous opportunity in leveraging the expertise and experience of the Global Health Bureau in coordination with the State Department, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, and others, at a policy level and on specific public health issues. If confirmed, I commit to building constructive relationships with my colleagues and counterparts at USAID and across the interagency to further U.S. foreign policy interests and strengthen global health.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I work hard to be an effective leader of leaders. That means, in managing organizations small and large, I've worked to establish, communicate, and win support for clear priorities; to secure the leaders and resources to achieve them; and to build the transparency and relationships that enable people to pull together in the same direction. When these come together, extraordinary things happen.

*Question.* In your view, how would your management style translate in a USAID setting, where your workforce is composed of career foreign and civil servants, as well as a dizzying array of political appointees, Foreign Service Limited appointments, Participating Agency Service Agreements, contractors, and grantees?

Answer. Establishing clear priorities, the needed talent and resources, and the strong relationships required for execution is particularly challenging in federal government. But these principles of effective leadership apply equally in the public sector as the private sector.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career foreign or civil servant, do you believe it is incumbent upon Agency leaders to integrate themselves into bureau operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe that USAID is made stronger as an Agency by combining the talents and skill sets of all its staff, regardless of their hiring mechanism. If I am confirmed, I will seek to integrate myself into that ecosystem, both to understand how the Global Health Bureau works and to add my perspective as a physician and public health leader. If confirmed, I will do this by holding listening sessions to understand the challenges facing current staff and solicit advice on how we can create a workforce that is more diverse and inclusive.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or in private?

*Answer.* No.

*Question.* In order to incentivize and ensure employee excellence at USAID, accurate performance reviews for all categories of employees are critical, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes, I do. I understand that USAID has five performance management systems which emphasize ongoing, constructive feedback and require formal conversations during the annual performance cycle. USAID also has a robust awards and recognition program that includes annual performance bonuses and incentive awards. If confirmed, I commit to working within these systems to encourage employees to achieve success both within and on behalf of USAID.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage the managers in your bureau to provide clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes. I would encourage managers to continue providing clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees on a regular basis and as part of their annual performance appraisals. Constructive feedback is critical to helping employees be successful and to ensure that underperforming employees get back on track. It also allows managers to recognize and reward individuals and groups for contributions to the accomplishment of USAID's mission, goals, and objectives.

#### *Global Health Security*

*Question.* Should the United States engage in highly risky public health research—such as gain-of-function or other life sciences research that poses dual-use concerns—in cooperation with countries that do not have adequate biosecurity standards, that have violated or failed to uphold the International Health Regulations, or where the United States cannot certify that such country is in compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention?

*Answer.* I do not support USAID conducting research that would make viruses more lethal or transmissible in cooperation with such countries. Furthermore, it is my understanding that USAID does not fund gain-of-function research, and that USAID has not funded or conducted any studies or experiments anywhere in the world that would make viruses more lethal or transmissible.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you ensure USAID's research and development grants are fully vetted and do not flow to partners, including through sub-grants, engaged in such research, particularly in countries with lax biosecurity standards?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID provides clear guidance in all Global Health Security (GHS) programming to implementing partners on compliance and adherence to rigorous biosafety and security protocols and that USAID does not fund any gain-of-function research through prime or sub-partners. USAID requires regular reporting on implementing partners' activities supported with its funding, which must adhere to the criteria laid out in the award. This reporting is closely monitored by USAID staff to ensure compliance with U.S. Government regulations pertaining to GHS research. If confirmed, I will continue to implement this guidance and will not fund any gain-of-function research with USAID funds.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you enhance USAID's monitoring and evaluation of sub-grants related to life sciences research?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that for all awards, USAID requires regular reporting on partners' activities supported with Agency funding, which must adhere

to the parameters of each award. If confirmed, I will work to ensure USAID continues to provide robust oversight of awards to monitor activities and the appropriate use of funds, and that award-level safeguards related to monitoring sub-awards are included in each applicable award.

*Question.* In your private capacity, you have asserted that the “lab leak” theory—i.e. that the COVID-19 pandemic may have its origins in an accidental exposure or leak from a lab in Wuhan, China—is plausible and merits further investigation.

- If confirmed, will you commit to conducting a comprehensive review, to include lessons learned, of all USAID grant funding to entities in the People’s Republic of China for the previous 10 years and sharing the results of such review with this committee?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to engaging with the committee regarding USAID-funded global health activities in the People’s Republic of China. Lessons learned from past programming can and should help shape the Agency’s future approaches. I supported the President’s decision to direct the Intelligence Community to conduct a full investigation into the origins of COVID-19, as well as administration efforts with partners and allies to seek a second phase study by the WHO. We also know getting to the bottom of the origin of this pandemic will help us understand how to prepare for the next pandemic.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you also commit to providing this committee with all requested information on USAID funding to EcoHealth Alliance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to responding to the committee’s requests for information on USAID’s prior funding for EcoHealth Alliance which, I understand, has concluded.

*Question.* In your testimony, you indicate that your top three priorities as USAID Assistant Administrator for Global Health would be to accelerate the global response to COVID-19, prepare for the next pandemic, and strengthen health systems. In July, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed S. 2297, the International Pandemic Preparedness and COVID-19 Response Act, with overwhelming bipartisan support. The top three priorities you have outlined align with this bill.

- Are you familiar with S. 2297, the International Pandemic Preparedness and COVID-19 Response Act?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree with the legislation’s basic principles that: (1) U.S. global health security and diplomacy are inextricably linked; (2) enhanced leadership by the Department of State will be required to advance an effective U.S. global health security and diplomacy strategy overseas; (3) while a competent entity at the Department of State should align and coordinate U.S. foreign assistance efforts, the technical experts at USAID and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should be trusted to lead in design and implementation of programs under such strategy; (4) international early warning systems are lacking and must be strengthened; and (5) an international financing mechanism that incentivizes countries to identify and close measurable gaps in health security, including through enhanced early warning, will be required to help us get ahead of the next pandemic.

*Answer.* I support the idea of improving our pandemic preparedness and global health security activities, and I agree that diplomacy and assistance are both critical tools in these efforts. I know that USAID works closely with the Department of State, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others to ensure the U.S. is best positioned to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease threats. If confirmed, I commit to working with you on all efforts to advance global health security.

*Question.* USAID missions have the authority to make cross-cutting investments in health systems strengthening while implementing disease- and sector-specific initiatives, yet often fail to do so. S. 2297 thus seeks to incentivize USAID investments in health system strengthening through the creation of a pilot program.

- If confirmed, which countries and investments would you prioritize under such a pilot program?

*Answer.* Health systems strengthening (HSS) has been a major focus of my career, and if confirmed, I look forward to working within the Agency to ensure this work is prioritized, including by identifying opportunities for future investments in specific partner countries. I understand USAID recently released a Vision for Health System Strengthening, which outlines a clear approach for designing, implementing and monitoring HSS activities. If confirmed, and if such a pilot program is created,

I will seek to partner with countries interested in fully implementing USAID's HSS approach.

*Question.* Where are the greatest opportunities for success, and where are the greatest obstacles?

*Answer.* Since programs have the opportunity to make efficiency gains by addressing common health system challenges, I think the countries that implement a range of global health programs offer the greatest opportunity for success. I also understand that this same dynamic can be an obstacle to integrated programming because different programs operate under their own unique sets of objectives. If confirmed, I will work to better integrate global health programming to overcome this obstacle.

*Question.* The President's FY2022 budget request for the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs proposes a substantial increase for global health security.

- If confirmed, which partners and investments would you prioritize?

*Answer.* I understand that the President's FY2022 budget request would increase global health security funding with a significant portion focused on USAID. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you, the National Security Council staff and relevant Departments, and colleagues at the Agency on potential plans to scale up bilateral country programs as well as support multilateral organizations working to develop tools to end the COVID-19 pandemic and more effectively prevent and respond to future ones. I will also work to ensure that USAID's Global Health Security programming continues to build resilience for future epidemics and pandemics by supporting partner countries scale up the core public health capacities that are needed to prevent avoidable epidemics, detect threats early, and respond rapidly and effectively to disease outbreaks to stop them from becoming national or global emergencies. Moreover, I will ensure that global health security investments complement the broader approach to health systems strengthening so that USAID's investments help countries withstand future shocks.

#### COVID-19

*Question.* The American Rescue Plan (ARP) provided USAID with \$905,000,000 to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, to include support "for a multilateral vaccine development partnership to support epidemic preparedness." Though there was virtually no consultation on the authorizing language, the authors reportedly intended to require USAID to dedicate a substantial portion of this amount for a substantial contribution to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). More than six months later, the substantial contribution envisioned in the ARP has yet to materialize. This has raised questions about the level of confidence USAID has in CEPI's model and operations.

- If confirmed, will you commit to provide to this committee a complete, detailed spending plan for the funds received through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for the international COVID-19 response, to include all aspects of the response, from vaccine sharing to second order impacts?

*Answer.* I understand that the State Department and USAID provide Congressionally-mandated reporting on COVID-19 funding, including obligations and disbursements by country and partner, every 60 days. If confirmed, I will ensure consultations with the committee continue and that USAID provides regular briefings on the use of American Rescue Plan funding.

*Question.* If confirmed, would it be your intention to engage with CEPI for the research and development of COVID-19 vaccines, including vaccines to combat COVID-19 variants, as well as vaccines to disrupt transmission of new and emerging infectious diseases with pandemic potential?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID currently provides support to CEPI's core vaccine development program. While I am not privy to administration discussions on the use of American Rescue Plan funding, if confirmed, I intend to consider all possible avenues where USAID can improve COVID-19 vaccine capacity. CEPI has been an effective innovator. If I am fortunate enough to lead the Bureau of Global Health, I will explore how CEPI's work aligns with the U.S. funding portfolio for efforts to expand use of existing vaccines and prepare for new variants.

*Question.* What is your assessment of CEPI's performance to date? For what reason might USAID be hesitating to make contributions?

*Answer.* While I am not privy to administration discussions on the use of American Rescue Plan funding, if confirmed, I will assess how CEPI's capabilities would

advance the administration's efforts to support a multilateral vaccine development partnership to enhance epidemic preparedness and look forward to consulting with you on those efforts.

*Question.* USAID, in coordination with the U.S. Department of State, currently is managing United States contributions to COVAX.

- How would you assess the performance of COVAX to date?

*Answer.* I understand that COVAX has performed well in the context of unforeseen and ongoing constraints to the global vaccine supply, including the restricted export of vaccines from India. While it appears that COVAX is below its original delivery projections, vaccine donations from the United States and other donors continue to increase the immediate supply to low and lower-middle income countries. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to expand the availability of safe and effective vaccines globally to bring this pandemic to an end.

*Question.* How can USAID ensure that COVAX is working expeditiously to get shots in arms while guarding against waste, fraud, and abuse?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that USAID's \$4 billion in contributions to Gavi/COVAX in 2021 was provided in tranches, allowing USAID to ensure Gavi/COVAX obtained the funding needed from other donors to scale up global vaccine access, while closely monitoring COVAX's performance. USAID also participates in Gavi's Audit and Finance Committee, and has the opportunity to regularly review risks involved in procuring and delivering COVID-19 vaccines. It is my understanding that Gavi/COVAX has established methods for receiving reports of fraud, and that all allegations are overseen by Gavi's Investigation Managing Director and Whistleblower Compliance Officer. If confirmed, I will support efforts by USAID to strengthen and reinforce existing systems to mitigate these threats to multilateral and bilateral vaccine campaigns and strengthen fraud awareness and reporting.

*Question.* How can USAID ensure that U.S. financial contributions to COVAX are not used to underwrite the purchase and distribution of substandard Chinese COVID-19 vaccines, particularly following the announcement that COVAX would, in fact, begin making major purchases of Chinese vaccines?

*Answer.* My understanding is that Gavi allocated the \$4 billion contribution from the U.S. prior to the decision to purchase Sinopharm and Sinovac vaccines, and that no U.S. funds were used for those purchases. If confirmed, I look forward to working within the administration and with Congress to make certain that the U.S. continues to engage constructively with Gavi to ensure a robust supply of safe, effective, and high-quality vaccines to COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) countries.

*Question.* Under what circumstances would U.S. bilateral vaccine contributions be more appropriate than contributions via COVAX?

*Answer.* Donating doses through the multilateral COVAX initiative is, in most cases, generally more cost-effective and efficient than a bilateral donation, as it allows the U.S. Government to utilize COVAX's existing legal agreements with manufacturers and countries, and ensures that countries have access to necessary ancillary materials (e.g. syringes) and logistics support. Bilateral donations, in contrast, require the U.S. Government to arrange logistic support directly with recipient countries and develop new legal agreements. In some specific instances, particularly with high-income countries, bilateral donations offer a faster and more direct route for sharing vaccines.

*Question.* The Biden administration has identified critical shortages in COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccine readiness, particularly in developing countries. Within the Access to COVID-19 Tools (Act) Accelerator, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's COVID-19 Response Mechanism is responsible for the diagnostics and health systems strengthening pillars. The United States has committed \$3.5 billion to the Global Fund for this purpose.

- Given your own private sector experience in expanding access to COVID-19 diagnostics, what is your assessment of the Global Fund's performance to date? What is the Global Fund getting right, and what would you do differently?

*Answer.* The Global Fund (GF), a valued U.S. Government partner, moved quickly to announce COVID-19 funding that allowed countries to respond to the escalating crisis. I understand that GF has leveraged volume commitments to reduce the cost of rapid antigen based test kits by 40 percent and is expected to supply more than 110 million tests during 2021. If confirmed, I will work with the GF to provide robust assistance to countries to support the achievement of GF grant targets, while acknowledging that adjustments may be necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If confirmed, I will also work with the Global Fund to ensure their core mission remains fulfilled, given the increased needs globally to address HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

*President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)*

*Question.* USAID overseas missions have a long history of stretching the boundaries when it comes to permissible uses of PEPFAR funds, including when using PEPFAR funds to finance the construction of schools in Malawi despite the availability of education funds earmarked by appropriators annually for this purpose, or when using PEPFAR funds statutorily set aside to support children who have been made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS for activities with no discernable connection to HIV/AIDS.

- If confirmed, will you commit to working closely with the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (OGAC) at the U.S. Department of State to ensure that USAID's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS are efficient, effective, aligned and complementary to the work of OGAC?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to working with OGAC to ensure USAID's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS are efficient, effective, aligned, and complementary to the work of OGAC. I understand that USAID has established planning, monitoring, and oversight procedures and has dedicated personnel for monitoring activities to foster greater accountability for the use of resources toward epidemic control and the attainment of PEPFAR goals. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that USAID employs the core principles that have been paramount in realizing programmatic success to date, including: demonstrating clear outcomes and impact of U.S. Government investments through robust data and analytics, finding efficiencies to increase impact, and managing for results and accountability.

*Question.* Will you work to ensure that USAID missions meaningfully contribute to, but also adhere to, PEPFAR's Country Operating Plan (COP) process?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that USAID Missions continue to contribute and adhere to PEPFAR's COP process. It is my understanding that USAID Mission teams engage actively in strategic planning discussions with their interagency team, USAID Global Health Bureau counterparts, and local stakeholders -- including the host government and implementing partners -- to analyze new data, discuss prior performance, and reach consensus on the new COP's direction to ensure full accountability and ownership.

*Multilateral and Bilateral Global Health Programs*

*Question.* There has been strong focus over the last year and a half on multilateral institutions to address global health challenges, including but not limited to the U.S. international response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Recognizing that multilateral and bilateral programs work collaboratively, and that each have their own unique strengths and challenges, what would you consider to be the appropriate balance between multilateral and U.S. bilateral global health assistance and programs to address existing and emerging global health challenges?

*Answer.* Multilateral institutions bring together bilateral donors, foundations, and other entities and support global alignment around common objectives. I think it is critical that USAID engage with global institutions to influence and support policy and practice worldwide. At the same time, USAID's bilateral programs work directly with country institutions on implementation. USAID's comparative advantage is its collaboration globally and at the country level with multilateral and bilateral partners. That collaboration is the catalyst for sustainability and the achievement of U.S. foreign policy and development goals.

*Family Planning and Reproductive Health*

*Question.* The President's FY2022 budget request for the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs proposes a substantial increase for Family Planning and Reproductive Health (FP/RH), through both bilateral aid programs and contributions to the U.N. Population Fund.

- If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring full and complete USAID compliance with current law, which prohibits the use of U.S. foreign assistance to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, support involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion overseas?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you recognize the fungibility of U.S. foreign assistance? If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that U.S. foreign assistance does not enable implementing partners to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, perform involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion?

*Answer.* USAID funding does not support abortions or involuntary sterilizations. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to comply with all applicable laws, including the Helms and Siljander amendments, in implementing the Agency's programs.

*Question.* To your knowledge, is the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-led government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) deploying coercive abortion, forced sterilization, or other involuntary population control measures in Xinjiang Province?

*Answer.* While I do not have direct knowledge nor have I studied the documentation on this issue, I do know that the People's Republic of China is committing atrocities against Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang Province.

*Question.* You have written extensively about the correlation between increased access to contraception and reduced demand for abortion. If confirmed, will you ensure that information on family planning is locally sensitive and includes options for natural family planning?

*Answer.* Yes.

#### *Preventable Maternal and Child Deaths*

*Question.* Thanks in large part to commitments under the 2012 global Call to Action, and subsequent U.S. leadership and investment through USAID's Acting on the Call strategy, significant gains have been made in reducing preventable maternal and child deaths around the globe. Unfortunately, much of this progress is now at risk.

- USAID's Acting on the Call strategy expired in 2020. If confirmed, how would you renew and reinvigorate the strategy to reflect the unique challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, ensure local input, and galvanize other donors to join the fight to end preventable child and maternal deaths by 2030?

*Answer.* I understand that USAID is finalizing a new strategy to guide its child and maternal programming, and will prioritize proven interventions and support countries in their efforts to end preventable child and maternal deaths by 2030. If confirmed, I commit to working with the global health community to continue focusing on building healthier, stronger, and more self-sufficient partner countries, and to leverage other donor, private sector, and host country resources towards addressing this shared goal.

*Question.* How important is restoring access to routine vaccinations to this effort, particularly in areas plagued by insecurity and conflict?

*Answer.* Restoring access to routine vaccinations is critical to USAID's efforts to prevent child and maternal deaths. WHO-UNICEF global immunization estimates indicate 23 million children missed out on basic vaccines through routine immunization services in 2020—3.7 million more than in 2019. Most of these children live in communities affected by conflict, in under-served remote places, or in informal or slum settings with limited access to basic health and key social services. If I am confirmed, restoring and shoring up immunization services will be an urgent priority in order to stop a wave of preventable outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles, and backsliding in child mortality gains made over the past two decades.

#### *Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene*

*Question.* Access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in healthcare facilities is critical to: establishing and sustaining strong health systems; preventing the spread of infectious diseases; addressing the growing challenge of antimicrobial resistance; and to ensuring quality care and the safety of patients and health workers. Yet, a recent WHO/UNICEF report cited that globally, 1-in-3 healthcare facilities does not have access to safe drinking water, soap, and hand sanitizers, and every year 17 million women give birth in facilities without adequate WASH.

- If confirmed, would incorporating WASH into the bureau's health systems strengthening programs, and particularly those led by the Office of Health Systems, be a priority?

*Answer.* As a medical professional, I understand that access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in healthcare facilities is essential to providing quality healthcare and protecting healthcare workers and patients from infections, such as

COVID-19. I have also seen firsthand how the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of WASH in disease prevention and infection control. If confirmed, I commit to working with public and private development partners to strengthen WASH in healthcare facilities to improve quality of care.

*Question.* Will you commit to working with the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security and the USAID Global Water Coordinator to prioritize WASH across each of the bureau's health programs, ensure alignment of effort, and eliminate duplication and waste?

*Answer.* Health is one of the most critical and well demonstrated WASH benefits. My understanding is that there is strong coordination between the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS) and the Global Water Coordinator. This includes intra-agency coordinating groups and the integrated management of programs and Mission support by the RFS Center for Water, Security, Sanitation, and Hygiene; GH Office of Maternal, Child Health and Nutrition; and Regional Bureaus. If confirmed, I commit to continue to ensure effective collaboration through existing platforms and to work with colleagues to improve internal USAID WASH program alignment.

#### *Polio*

*Question.* USAID has long worked with U.N. agencies and private sector partners, including Rotary International and the Gates Foundation, to eradicate polio. These efforts have achieved notable success. Since the launch of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, more than 2.5 billion children have been immunized, two of the three known strains of wild poliovirus have been eradicated, and global cases have been reduced by 99 percent. Today, wild poliovirus remains endemic in just two countries: Pakistan and Afghanistan. Still, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan threaten to reverse these gains.

- If confirmed, will you prioritize efforts to eradicate polio globally, including through the reinvigoration of public-private partnerships and utilization of innovative approaches to track infections and expand access to vaccinations in vulnerable, hard to reach communities?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to continuing USAID's 25-year history of collaborating with public and private partners to eradicate polio, including through the use of international and local non-governmental organizations, and community and faith-based organizations, to reach the hardest-to-reach communities through gender-inclusive and equity-focused approaches.

*Question.* How can USAID and its partners expand the reach of polio vaccines in Pakistan and Afghanistan while ensuring the protection of vaccinators?

*Answer.* The threat to polio workers continues to be grave; in this year alone, more than 10 people have been killed while supporting polio eradication efforts. I understand that USAID's polio work in Pakistan and Afghanistan has focused on funding a network of staff to detect, track, and report wild and vaccine-derived polio cases. This surveillance data is essential for WHO, UNICEF, and others to plan polio campaigns and to implement timely outbreak response measures. USAID collaborates with multilateral organizations and other partners to mitigate risks to healthcare workers that support polio eradication. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure USAID and its partners maintain and expand access to polio vaccines, while prioritizing the safety and security of all polio program staff.

#### *Localization*

*Question.* Successive administrations—both Democrat and Republican—have launched initiatives to “localize” U.S. foreign assistance, including by building the capacity of local partners to design programs and manage U.S. funds directly, rather than working as sub-awardees to large, U.S.-based development contractors and non-governmental organizations. Each of these initiatives has had mixed results.

- What is your view of “localization”?

*Answer.* In my view, localization can increase the input, ownership, and decision-making of the people who live development challenges daily in their communities. If confirmed, I will support Bureau approaches to localization efforts that reinforce implementation of global health activities that are guided by the people and institutions who drive change in their own countries and communities. I understand this is a key feature of USAID's Vision for Health System Strengthening that guides the work of the Office of Health Systems.

*Question.* How can the Bureau for Global Health more effectively empower local partners through its program consultation, design, and implementation processes?



*Answer.* Local capacity for development program design and management often requires development itself. I agree it is important that USAID work to support and grow a diverse set of partners who understand specific development needs and challenges, and continue to ease their access to Agency grant and contracting opportunities. If confirmed, I will work with USAID's global health programs and broader Agency efforts that I understand to be underway, to better enable local actors to define priorities and lead their communities' and countries' development agendas.

*Question.* Is it appropriate to set targets for "localization" and, if so, what would you consider to be reasonable and appropriate?

*Answer.* I do not believe that localization can be solely based on providing increased numbers of grants to local organizations or management targets that emphasize inputs over impact. If confirmed, I will work with USAID's global health programs and broader Agency efforts that I understand to be underway, to better enable local actors to define priorities and lead their communities' and countries' development agendas.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DR. ATUL A. GAWANDE BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In 1998, you wrote an article titled, "The Human Cost of Crippling Castro" where you criticized the longstanding U.S. policy of withholding financing and support for the Castro and Diaz-Canel regimes. For years, I have sought to clarify that the U.S. does not sanction Cuba, or sanction the Cuban people, but on a regime that is the number one reason why Cuba is the only country in the world where Cubans cannot succeed. For proof, we just need to look at the most recent protests in July, where Cubans across the island took to the streets against the regime's long history of economic mismanagement and violation of Cuban's basic rights.

- Understanding that you wrote this article more than two decades ago, do you oppose U.S. efforts to deny funding to the Castro-Diaz-Canel regime in Cuba?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will abide by existing restrictions concerning Cuba, including the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996. As you rightly note, the Cuban regime's violent crackdown on dissent both preceding and in response to the July 11 protests demonstrates the Government's blatant disregard for its people and economic mismanagement. I agree that no funding for Cuba should go to the regime. I understand that current funding only benefits the Cuban people, carried out by independent organizations and strictly adheres to the relevant U.S. laws governing the provision of assistance in Cuba.

*Question.* In that same article, you praise the high quality of Cuba's medical sector, which the regime uses to promote its international medical missions. However, the U.S. State Department, in its most recent Trafficking in Persons Report, found that these missions are only possible through forcing Cuban doctors to work.

- In your opinion, is a health care system that relies on the forced labor of its doctors and nurses really something to admire?

*Answer.* Based on these findings and evidence that has emerged in recent years, I believe this system ultimately is exploitative and coercive to its participants. Any system that relies on systematic and deliberate violations of people's human rights should be publicly denounced. As stated in the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report with regard to participants in Cuba's international medical missions, "The Government failed to inform participants of the terms of their contracts, which varied from country to country, confiscated their documents and salaries, and threatened medical professionals and their family members if participants left the program."

*Question.* You have written significantly on the subject of abortion. Some of this writing indicates a seemingly nonchalant attitude to abortion as a method of family planning, which raises grave concerns for your role, if confirmed, of overseeing all USAID assistance for global health programs.

- Do you support abortion as a tool of family planning?
- Do you believe the United States should no longer prohibit the use of U.S. Government funds for the performance of abortion?
- Do you support the use of partial-birth abortions?

Answer. I am clear that USAID does not fund abortions and that Congress passes the laws governing the use of U.S. Government funds. Since 1973, the Helms Amendment has prohibited the use of U.S. foreign assistance funds to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning, or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions. I take this and other restrictions, including other restrictions related to abortion, very seriously. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that USAID continues to comply with the law, including the Helms and Siljander amendments, in implementing the Agency's programs.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. CLAIRE D. CRONIN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* On September 13, the British Government unilaterally announced that customs checks on EU imports were delayed from October 2021 until January 2022. The checks were part of the Brexit deal that kept Northern Ireland within the EU single market and avoids the need for a hard border with Ireland. Will you convey to the Irish government your staunch support for the Northern Ireland Protocol in the Brexit withdrawal agreement? How will you make clear that many in Congress do not support a U.S.-UK FTA without full implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol?

Answer. If confirmed, I will protect the hard-fought gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. I will encourage all parties to prioritize political and economic stability and to negotiate when differences arise. I would emphasize the need to ensure any Brexit outcomes do not undermine the progress made since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

*Question.* The British Government has proposed an across-the-board amnesty for all criminal prosecutions related to the Troubles. This amnesty would be wider than more than 300 other post-conflict amnesties, including the one issued by Pinochet in Chile, according to a study from Queen's University Belfast. This proposed amnesty is incompatible with the human rights-related commitments of the GFA. What steps should the U.S. take to ensure that victims of Troubles-era violence and their families receive proper justice and accountability?

Answer. There are many complexities surrounding the past in Northern Ireland and addressing these issues in a constructive way is essential. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Irish government and colleagues at Embassy London and our Consulate General in Belfast to urge Northern Ireland's political parties to negotiate when differences arise in order to build a peaceful and prosperous shared future in Northern Ireland.

*Question.* Ireland was elected to the United Nations Security Council for 2021—2022. During its Presidency in September, Ireland focused on the UN-led peace process in Libya, the Middle East Peace Process, and the situations in Syria, Yemen, Sudan, and South Sudan. Given Ireland's leadership on peacekeeping, climate, and security, how will you work with Irish partners to build coalitions that address our mutual priorities?

Answer. Ireland is already a strong advocate for many shared priorities. If confirmed, I will ensure U.S. priorities remain top agenda issues for my engagement with Irish officials. I will seek the most effective ways to work with Ireland to advance key U.S. policy objectives, including expanding the bilateral business and economic relationship, combatting the global pandemic, countering the destructive influence of bad actors, strengthening transatlantic ties, and providing a safe and business-friendly environment for American citizens and companies working in Ireland.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. CLAIRE D. CRONIN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Despite generally good relations between the two countries, one of the sticking points in our relationship is the rather high level of illegal immigration of Irish citizens into the U.S. While this issue tends to fly under the radar, there are an estimated 10,000-50,000 Irish citizens residing illegally in the United States.

- Do you believe that illegal Irish immigrants should be lumped together in immigration reform bills with other groups of illegal immigrants?

*Answer.* The history of Irish immigration to the United States is as old as our country and contributes to our strong bonds of friendship and history. During President Biden's March meeting with Taoiseach Micheál Martin, the leaders expressed their support for an earned path to citizenship for immigrants to the United States, as proposed in the U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021. If confirmed, I will work to implement the applicable U.S. immigration laws and policies for Irish immigrants, in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security and other Administration partners and in support of the Administration's commitment to the humane enforcement of U.S. immigration law.

*Question.* Do you commit to working to find a legal remedy for this issue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to supporting the Administration's efforts to create a humane and effective immigration system, recognizing both that strong borders are fundamental to our national security and that welcoming immigrants is core to our national identity. I will support and defend any legal remedies to this issue, if I am confirmed.

*Question.* Many in the U.S. Congress have vocally told London that they will not ratify any U.S.-UK trade deal if the Good Friday agreements are seen to be undermined in any final post-Brexit agreements that the UK may make with the European Union.

- Do you agree with this stance? Why or why not?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will protect the hard-fought gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. I will encourage all parties to prioritize political and economic stability and to negotiate when differences arise. I would emphasize the need to ensure any Brexit outcomes do not undermine the progress made since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

*Question.* Ireland has signed on to the Paris Climate Agreement, however it has continued to lag behind its emissions reduction goals.

- How do you plan on engaging with Irish government and organizations to encourage them to reach their emissions goals under the Paris Agreement?

*Answer.* Ireland is eager to work with the United States to raise the profile of the issue. In July, Ireland passed a Climate Action Bill committing to halving carbon emissions by 2030 and reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. As member of the European Union (EU), Ireland has no country-specific Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement—they are currently working to meet the bloc's collective target. However, with agriculture constituting the biggest share of carbon emissions, Ireland is now in the process of setting ambitious legally-binding targets for climate change mitigation and adaptation. If confirmed, I will work with U.S. and Irish Government officials and scientific experts to ensure that ambitious climate goals are met.

*Question.* In May 2021, the regime of Aliaksandr Lukashenka forced down a Ryan Air flight that was in Belarusian airspace on its way from Athens, Greece, to Vilnius, Lithuania. Once on the ground, the Lukashenka regime forcibly removed Belarusian opposition journalist Raman Pratasevich and his girlfriend from the flight. Mr. Pratasevich has since been seen to be forced to make confessions of his sins against the regime on Belarusian television. Ryan Air is an Irish airline, and after the hijacking, many questions were raised about the airline's role in allowing the plane to be escorted to the ground.

- Now, after several months of EU-forced routing around Belarusian airspace, airlines are beginning to question when the restrictions will disappear. The stance of Ryan Air is particularly important. If confirmed, will you commit to working to maintain this overfly ban over Belarus?

*Answer.* Belarus's forced diversion of a commercial Ryanair flight under apparently false pretenses and the subsequent removal and arrest of Raman Pratasevich, a Belarusian journalist, and his traveling companion, was a direct affront to international norms. The United States strongly condemned these actions and has since taken measures, including issuing a Level 4 travel warning against travel to Belarus, and imposed sanctions and air travel restrictions. The United States has also strongly supported the investigation of the incident by the International Civil Aviation Organization, which is slated to present its findings in November. If confirmed, I would work with the Irish government to support the Belarusian people in their aspirations for a free, democratic, and prosperous future and support their call for the regime to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, Ireland was listed on Tier 2 Watch List for the second year in a row. Tier 2 Watch List, by definition, states:

Countries and territories whose governments do not fully comply with the Act's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and: The estimated number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing and the country is not taking proportional concrete actions; or There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year.

- Ireland seems to be in both categories. If confirmed, what steps would you take to engage with the host government on this critical issue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Irish authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Irish government. While the government recently convicted two traffickers for the first time under its trafficking law, I will continue to urge the Irish government to take concrete actions in addressing the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report. Specifically, I will encourage the government of Ireland to vigorously investigate, prosecute suspects, and convict traffickers using the human trafficking law as well as improve systemic deficiencies in their victim identification, referral, and assistance.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you engage with the office of the Ambassador at Large for Trafficking in Persons?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. authorities, including a confirmed U.S. Ambassador at Large for Trafficking in Persons, and the relevant Irish authorities, to encourage cooperation to make progress in combating trafficking in persons.

*Question.* Do you believe that progress is possible in Ireland? Is there sufficient political will to tackle this growing problem?

*Answer.* The Irish government continues to work with the U.S. government to address these issues. As noted in the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, the government made some significant efforts to combat trafficking during the reporting period, including designating an independent human trafficking national rapporteur and increasing funding for victim assistance, awareness campaigns, and training. In June 2021, Ireland convicted two Irish citizens—the first convictions under the anti-trafficking law since it was amended in 2013. In September, courts sentenced the traffickers to over five years' imprisonment. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Irish authorities to encourage cooperation and progress in combating trafficking in persons. In addition, I believe that progress can be made by effectively using public diplomacy tools to increase awareness and victim identification.

*Question.* There are certain statutory limitations on how long a country can be consistently listed on the Tier 2 Watch List. After a certain amount of time, they must improve to Tier 2 or be moved to Tier 3. What do you believe are some concrete steps that the United States and the government of Ireland can take together to prevent further slipping to Tier 3?

*Answer.* For the second consecutive year, Ireland remained on the Tier 2 Watch List in the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons report. If confirmed, I will urge the Irish government to take concrete actions in addressing the prioritized recommendations the Department highlighted in this year's Trafficking in Persons Report, especially with regard to increased prosecutions and victim identification and assistance. While the government has made some progress in recently convicting two traffickers for the first time under its trafficking law, if confirmed, I will encourage the government of Ireland to vigorously investigate, prosecute suspects, and convict traffickers of both sex and labor trafficking.

*Question.* Embassy Dublin has been under enormous stress over the past few years dealing with COVID and the local lockdowns it caused.

- What is your understanding of morale in Embassy Dublin?

*Answer.* Ireland has enforced three strict national lockdowns. The Foreign Service Officers and Locally Employed Staff at Embassy Dublin have dealt with significant challenges posed by COVID-19. I am grateful for their service, despite the difficulties. If confirmed, I will prioritize meeting with Embassy employees, including the Deputy Chief of Mission, to understand the impact of the pandemic on the mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across the Embassy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure everyone on my team is treated professionally, their rights are respected, they are safe and secure, and they have the resources necessary to perform their jobs. I believe that all members of U.S. Embassy Dublin are one team working for the good of the U.S.-Ireland relationship, and the interests of the United States and the American people.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Embassy Dublin?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure everyone on my team is treated professionally, their rights are respected, they are safe and secure, and they have the resources necessary to perform their jobs. My commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. I believe that all members of U.S. Embassy Dublin are one team working for the good of the U.S.-Ireland relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* My career is rooted in public service and my experience as a mediator shaped my ability to work with colleagues of all backgrounds in a constructive manner. My management style is also shaped by my service as the first woman House Majority Leader in Massachusetts. My leadership style is collaborative and team oriented. I regularly engage with members of my team and always seek to create a space for open dialogue and diversity of thought. Despite the team approach, I recognize that decision making authority rests with me and that I am responsible for the outcome of the decision. If confirmed, I will work hard to foster an environment of respect as the Embassy carries out important work on behalf of the American people.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* As I understand it, the State Department continuously reviews its priorities, organization, and staffing relevant to the needs of each mission. If confirmed, my commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. If necessary, I would advocate for additional resources to carry out our mission.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Dublin, including the Deputy Chief of Mission.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission to advance U.S. priorities in Ireland, including: protecting the safety and security of Americans, growing our economic relationship, and advancing shared political priorities. I expect to have a positive working relationship and to work together closely.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Dublin, including the Deputy Chief of Mission. I will consult closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission on a range of issues and value the institutional knowledge provided.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Ireland? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* The deep cultural, familial, and economic U.S.-Ireland connections provide a strong foundation on which Embassy Dublin promotes U.S. policy goals, such as recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, responding to the climate crisis, and standing up for our shared democratic values. With a sophisticated knowledge of American history, customs, and politics, many Irish enjoy positive experiences in the

United States as tourists, students, or professionals. If confirmed, I will use public diplomacy tools including cultural programming, exchanges like the Fulbright program, and traditional and social media to bolster people-to-people ties across the country and expand the pool of key influencers who advocate for U.S. interests.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. The State Department's foreign policy goals—whether in Washington, DC or Ireland—are the same. The public diplomacy team at Embassy Dublin presents information to their local audience using their understanding of that audience and the local environment. The Embassy blends rapid reposting or amplification of Department or administration messaging with post-generated content directly tailored to contextualize the material to achieve the greatest impact with local audiences. If confirmed, I will continue to deploy public diplomacy staff and resources to analyze, engage, inform, and influence Irish audiences in support of U.S. foreign policy goals.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. CLAIRE D. CRONIN BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* Recently, the COVID pandemic and the post-Brexit Northern Ireland Protocol have posed challenges to further implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. Political turmoil over the issue has again given rise to public unrest, including outbreaks of violence from loyalists in Northern Ireland in April 2021. As Ambassador, how can you use your role to facilitate dialogue and de-escalation around Northern Irish sectarian issues, from the Irish side of the border?

Answer. Recent unrest in Northern Ireland underscores the importance of safeguarding the gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. If confirmed, I would work with colleagues in London and Belfast, and with the Irish government, to encourage political and community engagement to ensure the gains of the hard-won peace are protected.

*Question.* Ireland has recently been downgraded to the Tier 2 Watch List in the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons report. Ireland has only rarely prosecuted anyone for human trafficking. As Ambassador, what will you do to raise the profile of this issue of concern?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Irish authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Irish government. While the Government has made some progress in recently convicting two traffickers for the first time under its trafficking law, I will urge the Irish government to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report. Specifically, I will encourage the government of Ireland to vigorously investigate, prosecute suspects, and convict traffickers using the human trafficking law as well as improve systemic deficiencies in their victim identification, referral, and assistance.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO KENT DOYLE LOGSDON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* In November 2017 and December 2018, parties to the OSCE's 5+2 format reached agreements on elements of the Berlin-plus Protocol. If confirmed, how will you leverage the United States' status as an observer to the format to continue to make progress towards full implementation of the protocol?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to continue our close and collaborative engagement with the OSCE and likeminded allies and partners to ensure productive, results-oriented discussions under the 5+2 format. The United States hopes to see continued progress on remaining confidence-building measures, underlying political and security issues, and maintaining a focus on advancing human rights. If confirmed, I am ready to work with the Government of Moldova and international partners under the OSCE framework to support full implementation of the protocol, including: enhanced movement through the Nistru River security zone, registration and facilitation of international traffic, and resolution of criminal cases.

*Question.* In a recent address to the U.N. General Assembly, President Sandu called for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria and the destruction

or removal of weapons caches in the region. How would you engage parties in the 5+2 format to ensure that Moldovan independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity are recognized?

*Answer.* The United States fully supports President Sandu's and the Government of Moldova's call on Russia to honor its Istanbul Summit commitments and withdraw its troops and munitions from Moldovan territory. If confirmed, I will actively continue this support through direct dialogue with our partners in the OSCE and with the parties to and mediators of the OSCE-led 5+2 process. I will uphold the U.S. commitment to the 5+2 process and its goal to achieve a comprehensive, peaceful, and sustainable settlement that upholds Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity, with a special status for Transnistria within Moldova's internationally recognized borders.

*Question.* President Sandu and Prime Minister Gavrilita have embarked on an ambitious reform agenda since Moldova's parliamentary elections in July 2021. The reforms aim to root out corruption at all levels of the Moldovan Government and have been welcomed by the international community. However, an August 2021 open letter signed by Moldovan civil society groups called for increased transparency with regard to reform efforts. How will you work to support the Moldovan Government's anti-corruption efforts while also encouraging appropriate public consultation?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to supporting President Sandu and the Moldovan Government as they pursue reforms to strengthen democratic institutions and combat corruption. Engagement with Moldovan civil society is a key component of U.S. support. Civil society plays an important role in promoting accountability of elected leaders, driving meaningful reform, promoting access to justice for vulnerable communities, and strengthening independent media. If confirmed, I will support an open and consultative reform process that incorporates a diverse range of stakeholders, including civil society and international experts. I will also ensure that the U.S. Embassy amplifies successes of the Moldovan Government's anticorruption efforts.

*Question.* LGBTI individuals in Moldova continue to be victims of discrimination, hate crimes, and verbal and physical assaults. What will be your strategy for supporting civil society groups that work with the LGBTI community?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations and likeminded international partners to urge the Moldovan Government to adopt policies to protect the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons and to address impunity for hate-based crimes against all vulnerable communities and minority groups. I will ensure the United States continues to support improving accountability for perpetrators of hate crimes against LGBTIQ+ persons and protecting the rights of victims of these crimes. If confirmed, I also will focus on building the capacity of civil society to advocate for all individuals to fully exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms and to support investigations of hate crimes against LGBTIQ+ persons.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO KENT DOYLE LOGSDON BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What areas in the U.S.-Moldova relationship do you see as most ripe for improvement?

*Answer.* The United States has two key priorities for our bilateral relations. The first is to promote the development of strong government institutions that advance accountability, democracy, and human rights, and that work for the Moldovan people. The second is to strengthen Moldova's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity to counter Russian malign influence and empower Moldovans to pursue their chosen European path. The United States, in coordination with our European partners, is focused on providing the political and technical support needed to advance the new government's reform agenda. The United States is also ready to assist Moldova's economic recovery through market-oriented reforms and increased transparency.

*Question.* Moldova's forward progress has at times been hampered by their inability to fulfil the conditions required by the IMF to receive much needed funds. As many neighboring states have moved forward economically, Moldova's economy has remained stagnant and dependent on remittances.

- As one of the major contributors to the IMF, what role do you believe the United States should play in helping rebuild ties between Moldova and the IMF?

Answer. The United States is committed to assisting Moldova in building a robust, diversified, and export-oriented economy with stronger links to Western trade partners. IMF assistance and associated reforms have helped Moldova make important progress in strengthening transparency and oversight in its financial sector. If confirmed, I will support ongoing dialogue between Moldova and the IMF on reaching agreement on future assistance packages that will encourage the strengthening of the rule of law in Moldova and deliver both important governance reforms and much-needed financial assistance as Moldova builds back its economy in the wake of the COVID pandemic.

*Question.* Moldova remains completely dependent on Russia for its gas supplies. If confirmed, do you commit to helping Moldova explore and develop other, non-Russian sources of power, and to helping push the country to implement programs that will make it more energy efficient and thus use less Russian gas?

Answer. If confirmed, I would focus on supporting Moldova's energy security and diversification by leveraging U.S. technical assistance to promote renewable energy and alternative sources of gas supply and encourage reforms to better link Moldova to European energy markets. Collectively, these efforts can help to reduce Moldova's dependence on Russian gas imports. In addition, linking Moldova's energy infrastructure to its neighbors, such as Ukraine and Romania, will support further diversification.

*Question.* Moldova's struggle with Russian-backed and institutionalized corruption are well-chronicled. In 2014, for instance, \$1 billion disappeared from Moldovan banks and has not been retrieved.

- Do you believe that the United States should assist the Government of Moldova in their fight against corruption by providing them with intelligence on the whereabouts of certain individuals or their financial accounts who are suspected of having stolen from or defrauded the Moldovan people?

Answer. We support the Moldovan Government's efforts to implement anti-corruption reforms and to investigate and prosecute those involved in corruption, including those who participated in the 2014 billion-dollar bank fraud. Corruption continues to slow economic development and threatens Moldova's European trajectory. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Moldova to promote and ensure accountability for corrupt actors and assist the Moldovan Government's investigations to hold those complicit in the 2014 billion-dollar bank fraud to account in whatever way we can.

*Question.* Do you believe that visa or financial sanctions should be utilized by the United States against the aforementioned individuals? Why or why not?

Answer. The United States stands with the Moldovan people in their fight against corruption. If confirmed, I will seek to use all available tools, as appropriate, to promote accountability for corrupt actors undermining the integrity of democratic institutions and rule of law in Moldova, regionally, and globally.

*Question.* A new anti-corruption-focused government has recently come to power in Moldova. But time is short for them to make progress, and the entrenched interests working to maintain their grip on Moldova's politics and economy are strong.

- What role do you think the United States should play in helping Moldova fight corruption?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make the fight against corruption one of my top priorities. Moldovan voters chose a new government with a clear anticorruption mandate. U.S. assistance to Moldova is focused on promoting the development of strong, independent, and democratic justice sector institutions. As the new Moldovan Government seeks to implement its ambitious reform agenda, the United States can help Moldova build capacity within key anticorruption institutions, promote global best practices, and increase the effectiveness of its justice sector.

*Question.* What tools does the new government have to begin the fight to corruption, and what new anti-corruption tools could they develop to enhance reform efforts.

Answer. Moldova's fight against corruption has benefited from an increasingly independent judiciary, the development of specialized anticorruption and integrity bodies, and robust exchanges with the United States and our European partners to implement international best practices. To achieve its anticorruption goals, the new



government can continue to strengthen accountability and transparency within judicial and prosecutorial oversight bodies. In the financial sector, Moldova is working to improve financial transparency and develop its financial intelligence capabilities. If confirmed, I would support Moldova's push to expand its anticorruption agenda, in consultation with independent experts and civil society.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Moldova was identified as remaining on Tier 2 due to lack of prosecutorial efforts and systemic corruption in law enforcement.

- How will you work with the Moldovan authorities to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage the Moldovan Government to strengthen its investigative and prosecutorial capacity to combat human trafficking, as well as press for improved government support, services, and justice for trafficking victims. U.S. support in the fight against human trafficking in Moldova is centered on victims and includes programs to increase access to services. Rooting out corruption in law enforcement and the judiciary, as well as building capacity within Moldovan law enforcement agencies, will improve Moldova's ability to prosecute and prevent trafficking.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Moldova was identified as partially tolerant of religious freedom, with noted anti-Semitic incidents.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* While Moldova's constitution and laws provide for religious freedom, discrimination against members of religious minority groups persists, particularly anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred. If confirmed, I will work closely with the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, civil society, the Moldovan Government, and religious communities to combat religiously motivated hatred and to promote respect for all religious groups. Efforts to strengthen Moldova's anti-discrimination body will support accountability for perpetrators of religiously motivated hate crimes. If confirmed, I will also work to advance freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression within the Transnistria region.

*Question.* In the 2021 Human Rights Report, Moldova was identified as having serious human rights concerns, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the freedom of expression, assembly, and movement.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* The United States welcomes the commitment of the new government to advance human rights as a policy priority. The United States remains concerned about pervasive human rights issues, including discrimination and impunity for hate crimes against members of minority groups and vulnerable communities. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Moldovan Government to improve the human rights situation in the country. The United States remains deeply concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Transnistria, including the prosecution of individuals for exercising their human right and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will press for improved protection of vulnerable communities in Transnistria.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations to help us assess human rights issues, develop programs, and advocate for stronger policies and reforms. The U.S. Embassy in Chisinau enjoys strong and longstanding relationships with civil society on human rights and democracy issues. Civil society has played an important role in promoting accountability of elected leaders, driving meaningful reform, supporting the rights of members of minority groups and access to justice for vulnerable communities, and strengthening independent media.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Embassy Chisinau?

*Answer.* Embassy Chisinau continues to attract a talented and diverse group of foreign service professionals and their families. The COVID pandemic, as well as movement restrictions and strain on Moldova's healthcare system, presented new challenges for the Embassy in Chisinau. However, access to vaccinations for all staff and U.S. family members, as well as continued U.S. assistance to support Moldova's

recovery from the pandemic, have contributed to improved resiliency and health and safety. In addition, the team in Chisinau has been energized through engagement with the new pro-reform, Western-oriented government. If confirmed, I would fully support Embassy staff and continually seek ways to promote good morale at post.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Embassy Chisinau?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my deputy chief of mission to ensure that we create an atmosphere in which our staff knows that they can bring serious issues to us and know that they are being heard at the highest level. I will ensure that everyone in the mission understands that my highest priority is the safety and security of the team. If confirmed, I will promote training and professional development, and ensure that all staff members are aware of the employee and family support resources that the Department offers to assist employees.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Embassy Chisinau?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to establish a strong team with a clear understanding of our goals and objectives, maintain open and transparent communications throughout the mission by sharing information, and seek ways to support and ensure the safety and community of the mission the community—both American and local staff.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I have a collaborative management style. I believe in sharing information and empowering my team, being open to ideas and suggestions from throughout the mission, and providing clear guidance and decisions as needed to lead.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. I do not believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* What lessons did you learn from your tenure as deputy chief of mission in Berlin?

Answer. As Deputy Chief of Mission in Berlin, I learned it is important to build a strong team and to provide the guidance needed to empower the members of your team to lead their own sections and agencies in support of overall mission goals and objectives. As Deputy Chief of Mission, I focused on increasing diversity throughout the mission, but especially within the senior team. I also learned it is important to take care of your team, including their families, especially in difficult and uncertain times.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. I have been a deputy chief of mission (DCM) twice—in Tbilisi, Georgia, and in Berlin, Germany. To be successful, a DCM must be the Chief of Mission's alter ego, confidante, and partner in managing and leading the mission. If confirmed, I fully expect to have that kind of positive relationship with my DCM in Chisinau.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I anticipate entrusting my deputy chief of mission to manage the day-to-day operations of the mission, and to be fully engaged on and informed about all aspects of policy and mission management should the deputy need to step in to lead.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Given your time as chief of staff to the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. I believe it is critical to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles. I will hold accountable those who have performance or conduct issues. This is what I have done throughout my career.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers. I will hold accountable those who have performance or conduct issues.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in Moldova.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* In my experience, U.S. diplomats have gotten outside of our embassy walls sufficiently to accomplish our mission, and if confirmed I would stress the importance of getting outside of our Embassy by example. Access to and engagement with local contacts and populations is an important part of our work overseas. Throughout my career, I have participated in public outreach to all parts of society—from students to non-governmental organizations to the media—and will continue to do so.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage embassy staff to spend time engaging with local populations and developing contacts. I will also lead by example to demonstrate to my team that it is important to engage with our local counterparts and to participate in public outreach to provide information about our goals in a country and to learn from our hosts about local conditions.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Moldova? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* The United States enjoys dynamic people-to-people ties with Moldovans through many U.S.-sponsored exchange programs, and Moldovan alumni of U.S. programs have become key leaders in government and civil society. Moldovans are eager to engage with U.S. diplomats and the Embassy has a robust program of public outreach. The media environment remains challenging, as consolidated ownership and disinformation create a narrow space for independent media. The United States has consistently supported the development of independent media and resiliency against disinformation. If confirmed, I would engage in public outreach and work to improve the ability of Moldovan citizens to get their news from reputable media outlets.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will focus on closely coordinating the efforts of Washington- and Chisinau-based public affairs teams to ensure there is a unified approach to highlighting key messages and U.S. policies in Moldova. The small size of the Moldovan media market and the great public interest in the U.S.-Moldova relationship enables the mission to take advantage of the local media platform to convey U.S. priorities and build cross-cultural ties. In addition, the embassy has focused on expanding outreach to amplify U.S. messages for a wider range of audiences outside Chisinau.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO SHARON L. CROMER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* President Adama Barrow has reneged on his promise to serve a three-year term, declaring his intention to stand for reelection in a presidential poll scheduled for December 4 of this year. In addition, his party has blocked the approval of a new constitution, which would have established presidential term limits, and he reportedly formed a political alliance with the party of his predecessor, Yahya Jammeh, whose term in office was characterized by severe political repression and human rights abuses.

- What are the prospects for credible elections in the face of what appears to be Barrow's backsliding relative to democracy?

**Answer.** Presidential elections in December 2021 will be a critical benchmark. The Government is encouraging free, fair, and transparent election campaigns in what could be the first election without government interference and intimidation in a generation. Credible ballot counting will be essential. Both the ruling party and main opposition party were responsible for blocking the constitutional referendum. That said, President Barrow's recent comments about closing down space for the opposition to operate are troubling. For the December 2021 presidential election, I understand the U.S. election observation mission will work in concert with our like-minded partners to ensure that electoral authorities are accountable to the public and that any attempt to improperly alter the election's outcome will be detected and publicized.

*Question.* What are the most significant actions the U.S. can do in support of a sustainable democratic transition?

**Answer.** Gambian democracy is still in its infancy and its steps forward are still unsteady. It will take the country significant time to put in place the institutions needed to create a vibrant democracy. The amended Constitution should be put to a referendum, the National Assembly needs to fulfill its legislative role, and the courts must address the backlog of cases which delays prisoners from getting a fair trial. If given the opportunity to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia, I will use my experience as a Mission Director and senior leadership positions at USAID headquarters to help Gambians build a truly democratic state and to advance country owned, led and sustained development that improves the lives and well-being of Gambians.

*Question.* What steps will you take, if confirmed, to support a lasting transition to democracy?

**Answer.** The courageous decision of Gambians to vote out of office the increasingly authoritarian and dictatorial former president was successful in large part due to an intervention led by the democracies of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Global democracy and governance indicators show that The Gambia is making modest progress but is still a fledgling democracy emerging from 22 years of under-investment in democratic governance and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will advocate for reforms to create a firm foundation for a transparent, democratic, and accountable system of governance. Presidential elections in December 2021 will be a critical benchmark for the democratic trajectory of the West Africa region.

The Gambia is on the Tier 2 Watch List according to the State Department's 2020 annual Trafficking in Person's Report. According to the report, "the government did not convict a trafficker for the third consecutive year, victim services remained inadequate overall, and some law enforcement officers allegedly requested bribes to register trafficking complaints."

*Question.* What programs and activities is the U.S. supporting to help the Gambia improve the conviction rate for traffickers and support trafficking victims?

**Answer.** The State Department continues to engage diplomatically and programmatically on combating human trafficking in The Gambia. In 2019, the TIP Office awarded \$750,000 to the International Organization of Migration (IOM) to work with three existing One Stop Centers for victims of gender-based violence and train staff to screen for and provide comprehensive services to victims of trafficking. The project also aims to strengthen the National Anti-Trafficking Task Force to coordinate the Government's anti-trafficking response. Additionally, IOM provides training to criminal justice practitioners on conducting proactive investigations and identifying trafficking. If confirmed, I will continue to support this important work.

*Question.* What U.S. assistance programs and activities help combat police corruption?

**Answer.** Corruption is a significant and growing problem in The Gambia. Police commonly proposition citizens for bribes at checkpoints. Unfortunately, the Department of State does not have any programming that directly addresses police corruption in The Gambia. However, the Department is aware of the harmful effect of corruption in the public sector, including in the criminal justice sector, and is considering opportunities to work with police, special investigators, and judicial actors to reduce corruption. If confirmed, I will increase engagement with my Gambian counterparts and anticorruption leaders to fight against corruption in all of its forms. I will also enlist the full resources of the Department of State's anticorruption teams and other USG resources to support these efforts.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* While I was USAID Mission Director in Tanzania in 2016, the Government raided the offices of a USAID implementing partner, broke into a USAID financed warehouse, confiscated commodities, arrested Implementing Partner employees who were providing HIV services, and demanded the confidential names of beneficiaries perceived to be homosexual. The beneficiaries feared for their lives and went into hiding, suspending provision of their life-saving HIV/AIDS care and treatment. We resolved the matter by addressing it as a public health and human rights issue. I deployed staff to meet secretly with beneficiaries to ensure their safety and collect evidence from their experiences to inform security and programmatic actions. I made the difficult decision to temporarily close outreach services for the safety of our implementing partners and beneficiaries. I engaged in quiet diplomacy with champions in the Ministry of Health who influenced decisions behind the scenes. Through these efforts, my USAID/Tanzania staff and I protected the safety of Tanzanians, reinstated needed HIV/AIDS services, and upheld American values.

As Mission Director in Ghana, I guided my democracy staff to make an award to a local partner to conduct a pre-election survey of Ghanaians' impressions of the upcoming December 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections. The survey showed that Ghanaians had considerable confidence in the upcoming election process and youth were positively engaged in the political process. The widely disseminated survey results were used to counter heated political rhetoric about the lack of confidence in elections and Ghana's security forces. In meetings arranged by the U.S. Ambassador with the top political party representatives, I advocated for party leaders to publicly commit to nonviolence by signing a Peace Accord brokered by civil society. The leading Presidential candidates agreed to do so, and the December 2020 elections were free and fair, and held peacefully.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Republic of the Gambia? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* The Gambia transitioned to democracy in 2017 after 22 years of dictatorship. As a fledgling democracy The Gambia faces challenges in implementing a democratic system, but global democracy and governance indicators show that The Gambia is making modest progress rather than backsliding. Presidential elections in December 2021 will be a critical benchmark. The Government is encouraging free, fair, and transparent election campaigns in what will be the first election without government interference and intimidation in a generation. Credible ballot counting will be essential. President Barrow has made troubling comments about closing down space for the opposition to operate. The Truth, Reconciliation, Reparations Commission (TRCC) has set the stage for accountability and transitional justice, but the Government must take the necessary action to implement those recommendations and hold accountable those most responsible for violations and abuses of human rights.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Republic of the Gambia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, advancing democratic governance and principles in The Gambia will be a key priority. I will call on political parties across the spectrum to respect the results of the presidential election. I will work to ensure that opposition activities are not unlawfully curtailed.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, supporting democracy and governance will be my top priority. USAID just launched a multi-year Promoting Rights and Justice initiative to support justice sector reform with a current value of over \$7 million, and the MCC Board just approved a Threshold Program valued at \$25 million. If confirmed, I will prioritize assistance for capacity building in the legislature and the justice sector and for electoral system reform.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Republic of the Gambia? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* Throughout the course of my career, I have worked tirelessly to promote respect for human rights and achieved goals through partnership with civil society groups and NGOs. If confirmed, I will strengthen and build on our existing relationships and look to form new relationships with worthy organizations. I will engage closely with civil society organizations and NGOs to strengthen their capacity and will call on the Government to work together with these groups to build a better, fairer, and more just country.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to strengthening the relationships our mission has built with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. I will strive to support the efforts of these figures and parties to protect the inclusive political environment in The Gambia, including their efforts to advance electoral reform and put the draft constitution to a referendum. I will urge the Government to respect the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly of all political actors, even those who do not agree with the Government. Through public statements, small grants and other programming, and direct engagement, I will advocate for a political environment that is inclusive of women, youth, minorities, and those who might otherwise be marginalized.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Republic of the Gambia on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Republic of the Gambia?

*Answer.* The power of a free press to hold government to account, to expose corruption and malfeasance, and to investigate allegations of violations and abuses of human rights cannot be understated. Fortunately, the Government of The Gambia is not currently engaged in undermining the Gambian press, but we must remain vigilant. If confirmed, my Embassy team and I will meet regularly with independent, local press and engage with the Gambian Government on issues of press freedom.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* After 22 years of dictatorship, democracy and the democratic process are still developing in The Gambia and the country is particularly vulnerable to the destructive effects of disinformation and propaganda. If confirmed, I will continue current engagement and promote new engagement with government and opposition groups, the press, and civil society organizations to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in The Gambia, including through public statements and Embassy social media platforms.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Republic of the Gambia on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* Organized labor groups, including unions, are an important element of protecting and promoting the welfare of workers. If confirmed, I will commit to actively engage with the Government of The Gambia on the right of workers to exercise freedom of association, including to form and join independent trade unions, and speak out against incidents when this freedom is restricted.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Republic of the Gambia, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Throughout my career, protection and promotion of respect for human rights has been one of my top priorities. If confirmed, I fully commit to using all available methods to promote and defend the human rights and dignity of all Gambians, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.?

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Republic of the Gambia?

*Answer.* A large majority of Gambian citizens view same-sex conduct as contradictory to their values. Faith organizations and media are unsupportive of members of the LGBTQI+ community and oppose any measure to recognize members of the LGBTQI+ community as legitimate or worthy of protection. Same-sex sexual conduct is criminalized in The Gambia. Both the Barrow administration and those campaigning for president have stated that “homosexuality is a non-issue in The Gambia” and decriminalization is neither needed nor a possibility. Due to the cultural and political environment, LGBTQI+ persons are significantly marginalized in The Gambia. The LGBTQI+ community has specifically requested that Western diplomatic missions not make their situation a highly visible aspect of our engagement specifically because it puts them at risk and undermines their own quiet efforts to change minds and attitudes among their fellow Gambians.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Republic of the Gambia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to lead the U.S. Government’s efforts to encourage change—especially decriminalization—while ensuring our efforts do not put at risk those we seek to help. I will ensure that members of the LGBTQI+ community are aware of our strong support for their dignity, for their human rights, and for their full inclusion in Gambian society and look for ways to support steps to realize this important goal.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to the Gambia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work together with the State Department’s Bureau of Legislative Affairs to respond promptly to all appropriate requests for information and briefings for members of Congress and their staff and to offer such briefings whenever I am in Washington or remotely from Post.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO SHARON L. CROMER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Given recent challenges to democracy in West Africa, including 4 coups in the last year, what are the regional implications for The Gambia’s continued democratic development?

*Answer.* The courageous decision of Gambians to vote out of office the increasingly authoritarian and dictatorial former president was successful in large part due to an intervention led by the democracies of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Global democracy and governance indicators show that The Gambia is making modest progress but is still a fledgling democracy emerging from 22 years of under-investment in democratic governance and the rule of law. If confirmed, I will advocate for reforms to create a firm foundation for a transparent, democratic, and accountable system of governance. Presidential elections in December 2021 will be a critical benchmark for the democratic trajectory of the West Africa region.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power? If confirmed, how would you respond to the Gambia doing something like this?

*Answer.* While every country retains the right to make constitutional changes, the United States government has long opposed any constitutional changes designed to favor incumbent elected leaders or the extension of an incumbent’s term in office. I believe that regular, democratic, and peaceful transitions of power yield more accountability, help build and maintain stronger institutions, and engender less corruption. According to a recent Afrobarometer survey, an overwhelming majority of Gambian citizens strongly favor term limits on the office of the President. If confirmed, I will speak out publicly against any attempt to alter the constitution or extend term limits against the will of The Gambian people.

*Question.* From your perspective, what should be the top priorities for US policy toward The Gambia?

**Answer.** Beyond serving and protecting American citizens, our key policy priorities include strengthening The Gambia's democratic institutions, encouraging good governance including supporting The Gambia's own justice sector reform initiatives and efforts to hold accountable those most responsible for the widespread violations of human rights during the Jammeh era, strengthening the capacity of Civil Society and The Gambian legislature to constructively exercise their constitutional authorities, and encouraging economic growth. If confirmed, I will continue to promote inclusive country-led development and enhance U.S. influence in the face of strategic competition. Each of these priorities furthers U.S. interests by promoting regional stability, limiting our strategic competitors' expansion, and creating new markets for U.S. goods.

**Question.** In your opinion, is The Gambia a good target for increased U.S. investment? If yes, how will you support increased U.S. trade and investment with The Gambia as ambassador, if confirmed?

**Answer.** Investors in The Gambia face multiple challenges: a small market, weak institutions, poor infrastructure, inadequate electrical supply, high tax burden on formal enterprises, corruption, and bureaucratic hurdles. Despite these challenges, U.S. companies are market leaders in telecommunications, agriculture, and health care in The Gambia, and other opportunities exist. If confirmed, I will ensure the Mission maintains close contact with the small number of U.S. businesses in The Gambia, advises firms in the United States seeking to enter the Gambian market, and coordinates with the Foreign Commercial Service to publicize public tenders of interest to American companies.

**Question.** In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in the Gambia and counter the malign influence of China?

**Answer.** The Gambia's relationship with the People's Republic of China (PRC) is defined by transactional and opaque decision making, with The Gambia providing access to natural resources in exchange for Beijing's provision of infrastructure development. PRC companies and labor are generally utilized, undermining Gambian companies and the Gambian labor force. The country's interaction with most international partners is based on financial assistance: the government often acts in direct response to requirements set forth as conditions for continued or increased aid. The EU's regular infusion of millions of Euros in direct budgetary support gives it significant leverage in The Gambia. The recent signing of a Development Objective Agreement to expand USAID operations in country and the unanimous approval of a MCC Threshold Program can help to cement the United States as a partner of choice.

**Question.** How will you work to attract U.S. investment opportunities to the Gambia?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will maintain close contact with the small number of U.S. businesses in The Gambia, regularly advise firms in the United States seeking to enter the Gambian market, work with the American Chamber of Commerce in The Gambia, and coordinate with the Foreign Commercial Service to publicize public tenders of interest to American companies.

**Question.** What particular insights and areas of expertise do you envision bringing to the role of US Ambassador to The Gambia given your significant experience with USAID, including having served as USAID Mission Director four times in Africa?

**Answer.** My experience working in fragile democracies, such as Indonesia after the downfall of President Suharto, leads me to believe that after 22 years of authoritarian rule which ended in January 2017, the Gambian government is still in its infancy and its steps toward democracy are unsteady. It will take the country significant time to put in place the infrastructure needed to create a vibrant democracy. The Constitution should be amended, the National Assembly needs to fulfill its legislative role, and the courts must address the backlog of cases which delays prisoners from getting a fair trial. If given the opportunity to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia, I will use my experience as a Mission Director and senior leadership positions at USAID headquarters to help Gambians build a truly democratic state, advance country owned, led and sustained development that improves the lives and well-being of Gambians, and promote an invest-



ment climate where both U.S. and Gambian enterprises thrive and two-way trade between our countries create good jobs and economic prosperity.

*Question.* How will you prioritize U.S. democracy and governance assistance to support the Gambia's ongoing democratic transition?

*Answer.* USAID just launched a multi-year Promoting Rights and Justice initiative to support justice sector reform with a current value of over \$7 million, and the MCC Board just approved a Threshold Program valued at \$25 million. If confirmed, I will prioritize assistance for capacity building in the legislature and the justice sector and for electoral system reform.

*Question.* What are the most urgent priorities for the Gambia in its effort to build a sustainable democracy?

*Answer.* While the Barrow government has shown admirable support for democratic norms leading to remarkable increases in rankings in press freedoms and human rights, essential reforms remain incomplete. Many core promises of Barrow's 2016 campaign remain unfulfilled. The statutory framework exploited by former president Jammeh remains in place, and The Gambian government must renew its focus on eliminating the mechanisms that supported his abuses. Key pieces of legislation, especially anticorruption measures and reforms of the criminal code, remain pending. Corruption is a particularly potent threat to democratic reform. Gambians perceive the Barrow government as increasingly plagued by both high-level and small-scale corruption, a problem that requires both urgent attention and a robust statutory framework. The Presidential election scheduled for December 2021 must be free and fair, electoral processes must be transparent, and all parties must abide by the results. If confirmed, I will advocate for a respect for human rights, the rule of law, accountability, access to justice, adherence to constitutionally-mandated term limits, and strong democratic institutions as fundamental to a country's peace and prosperity.

*Question.* How can the United States best use the tools it has to hold corrupt Gambian officials accountable for corrupt behavior? If confirmed, what would be your approach in using those tools?

*Answer.* There are no quick fixes to corruption in The Gambia, but passing comprehensive anti-corruption legislation is a necessary first step. Surveys of the Gambian public show their steadily worsening view of the government's handling of corruption, and urgent action is needed. Existing laws requiring government officials to disclose their assets are weak, unenforced, and insufficient. If confirmed, I will aggressively push the Gambian government to pass this legislation, work with civil society organizations shining a light the problem, and support the Gambians who are tirelessly working to root out corruption. I will also enlist the full resources of the Department of State's anticorruption teams and other U.S. government resources to supports these efforts.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

*Answer.* Independent monitoring efforts are essential to the U.S. objective of supporting free and fair elections, and transparent election processes in The Gambia. For the December 2021 presidential election, I understand the U.S. observation mission will work in concert with our like-minded partners to make clear to Gambian authorities that they are accountable to the public and that attempts to improperly alter the election's outcome will be detected and publicized.

*Question.* Would you support a U.S. funded, independent international election observation mission for Gambia's next general election?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would carefully consider how U.S. support to observation efforts can contribute to free and fair electoral processes in The Gambia. For the December 2021 elections, U.S. diplomats will be on the ground to determine if the government follows through on their obligations to conduct a free and fair election that reflects the will of the people. In addition, recipients of U.S. grant funds will dispatch local observers to every polling place in the country to observe the voting process and provide regular reports. Taken together, the effort will give the United States a comprehensive view of this critical juncture in The Gambia's democratic development.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Embassy Banjul?

*Answer.* Respecting this nomination process, I have not engaged directly with Embassy/Banjul staff. However, I understand morale is high despite the enormous workload.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Embassy Banjul?

*Answer.* Embassy Banjul is a small mission. There are only 12 U.S. Direct Hires which often means that staff must assume multiple roles and cover for colleagues who are on leave or away from Post, or when there are staffing gaps due to the assignment process. I understand that staff members, American and Gambian alike, are knowledgeable, collegial, and enthusiastic about their work. If confirmed, I intend to nurture that enthusiasm by identifying the talent in each individual and growing that talent, ensuring the well-being of staff members and their families, and creating a work environment that promotes respect for everyone and celebrates our teamwork and achievements large and small.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Embassy Banjul?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will create a unified “one team” approach in Embassy Banjul which draws on the expertise and talents of staff assigned to Embassy Banjul and also includes officers from USAID, Treasury, Commerce, Agriculture and other agencies who support Banjul from Embassies in Dakar and Accra, as well as Washington. Everyone who supports the mission’s integrated country strategy must feel welcomed and supported as vital member of Banjul’s team. Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* As a senior leader, I have always believed that it is my duty and responsibility to mentor and sponsor staff to make sure they grow professionally, feel appreciated and supported, and are given opportunities to take on new responsibilities and contribute to U.S. goals. For the past eight years, I have devoted each Friday to mentoring staff. I mentor staff by delegating tasks, encouraging questions and brainstorming, providing guidance, as needed, and welcoming new ideas. I never assume that I have all the answers. I communicate regularly and consult broadly, seeking out different perspectives. I lead quarterly town halls and regularly communicate via email to the entire staff on current topics. When the time comes to make a decision, I don’t hesitate to do so. When problems arise, I expect to be notified promptly so we can resolve them together rather than let them fester. I place staff wellbeing and creating a respectful working environment above all else. To accomplish this, family must come first. It is important to me to pause, acknowledge and celebrate successes both big and small and reward exceptional performance.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* It is never acceptable to berate subordinates in public or private. Such action is not only unkind and disrespectful, but also abusive and ineffective.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* The relationship between the chief of mission (COM) and the deputy chief of mission (DCM) is extremely important. The DCM serves as a trusted advisor to the COM. In this respect, trust must be built and maintained between the two for the smooth operation of the mission and the well-being of the entire staff. I intend to include the DCM in all internal meetings and keep him/her abreast of all external affairs.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* The deputy chief of mission is the chief of staff, responsible for the day-to-day management of the mission. All State Department section heads will report to the DCM. In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* It is extremely important for managers to provide accurate and constructive performance feedback to employees on a regular basis. I check in with staff frequently and offer mentoring sessions if they have any concerns about their performance or careers. I conduct formal performance feedback with direct reports on a

quarterly basis. When performance appears to be lacking, I provide immediate feedback in private and work with the employee to find ways to improve their performance. I recognize accomplishments through awards and public recognition.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

Answer. Yes. I believe that it is the responsibility of leaders to create leaders, not followers. Nurturing leadership requires clear, accurate, and direct feedback tailored to the individual's needs. I am rewarded when staffs grow and take on new roles and responsibilities that advance their careers.

*Question.* In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

Answer. It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in the Gambia. To properly execute our jobs, we must travel beyond the boundaries of the capital and engage with stakeholders throughout the country. I understand the Embassy Banjul team leaves the building to meet with local contacts, develop connections in the community, and spread America's message. There is no substitute for in-person connections, and our team relies on those links to accomplish our mission goals. Face-to-face conversations not only supply the information key to the U.S. government's decision-making process, they also provide opportunities to inform and persuade the Gambians who make the country's most important decisions. Developing those relationships consistent with appropriate security measures is a core component of our work, and the reason diplomats are stationed abroad.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

Answer. The Gambia is a diverse democracy comprised of countless social, tribal, economic, and cultural groups. If confirmed, I endeavor to meet with representatives of all of them on a regular basis. I will target outreach efforts to broaden and strengthen the country's representative democracy while also developing links to marginalized communities. Public Diplomacy programs are an essential tool to expanding this outreach effort. Exchange programs give the Embassy an unparalleled tool to influence key members of diverse communities. If confirmed, I will strive to ensure that no group is overlooked, and that the rights of members of Gambian minority groups are respected. Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in The Gambia?

Answer. In general, the Gambian people view the United States positively, based on connections with the Gambian diaspora in the United States; their appreciation for U.S. assistance, and U.S. popular culture; and a belief in our shared values of democracy, security, prosperity, and respect for human rights. If confirmed I will use public diplomacy resources to promote a favorable view of the United States and its foreign policy, advance democratic values, and encourage inclusive economic growth. I will focus the Public Affairs Section on youth and emerging voices, furnishing them with the tools needed to become entrepreneurs, civil society leaders, and advocates for democracy and good governance.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

Answer. Payment for positive press is rampant in the Gambia, causing a reduced level of trust in the media. Capacity among journalists is low. If confirmed, I will support efforts to build a free, professional, and independent press.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. In my experience, Posts have latitude to tailor our public messaging to local issues and concerns. If confirmed, our message at Post will be the same as our messaging from Washington: that Americans and Gambians share the same ideals of democracy, religious and social tolerance, good governance, security, and economic prosperity. I will ensure that our public diplomacy posture continues to play a key role in promoting our many shared values and America's generous financial assistance and support across the range of issues.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, The Gambia was identified again as Tier 2 Watch List due to lack of resources and ongoing failure to prosecute

traffickers. How will you work with the Gambian authorities to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. Although The Gambia did not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, it is making efforts to do so. Gambian courts have some recent success in convicting trafficking cases, but remain challenged by lack of resources, inadequate space for remanded prisoners, defendants absconding while on bail, and victims reluctant to testify or provide evidence due to a cultural emphasis on forgiveness or fear of retaliation. While the government is making progress towards identifying victims among vulnerable populations, such as through the adoption of a new national referral mechanism, additional improvements are needed. If confirmed, I will work with the Gambian government to address the prioritized recommendations in the 2021 TIP Report.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, The Gambia was identified as generally tolerant of religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Religious freedom is a key U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor the religious freedom situation in The Gambia. The Gambia is generally tolerant of religious freedom and members of the majority Muslim population are largely accepting of members of the Christian minority. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of continued religious tolerance and to address religious freedom concerns in The Gambia.

*Question.* As Ambassador, how would you advocate for former Gambian president Yahya Jammeh to personally face justice for the gross violations of human rights and corruption committed while president?

Answer. The Truth, Reconciliation, Reparations Commission (TRRC), established to investigate and publicize the wrongs committed during Jammeh's rule, has concluded and should issue its final report soon. A newly created National Human Rights Commission is operating with significant and notable independence. Yahya Jammeh should face justice for the crimes he allegedly committed. The United States can help through building capacity in the judiciary and publicly supporting the efforts of the TRRC, but it is up to the Gambian people and courts to decide the fate of the former dictator.

*Question.* How do you envision the United States supporting the implementation of Gambia's Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) report once it is released to the public? If confirmed as ambassador, how would you personally prioritize the report's implementation?

Answer. The TRRC is essential to The Gambia's national healing process after decades of nondemocratic rule characterized by allegations of human rights violations and abuses and lack of respect for human rights. The Commission has set the stage for accountability and transitional justice, but much hard work remains. The country has to make hard choices to hold former officials accountable and obtain justice for victims. If confirmed, I will press the government to hold accountable those responsible for the egregious crimes, violations and abuses of human rights, and affronts to dignity testified to at the Commission. In the 2021 Human Rights Report, The Gambia was identified as having some serious human rights concerns, like the use of forced disappearances, attacks on freedom of expression, and a climate of impunity.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. After the election of President Adama Barrow in 2016, the new government quickly recognized and moved to respect Gambians' human rights. This included an end to arbitrary detention, political persecution, and censorship. The Gambia is moving in the right direction, but there is still work to be done. If confirmed, I will press the Government of The Gambia to investigate allegations of human rights violations and abuses thoroughly and transparently, and to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations and abuses.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

Answer. Throughout the course of my career, I have worked tirelessly to promote respect for human rights and achieved goals through partnership with civil society groups and NGOs. If confirmed, I will strengthen and build on our existing relationships and look to form new relationships with worthy organizations. I will engage

closely with civil society organizations and NGOs to strengthen their capacity and will call on the Government to work together with these groups to build a better, fairer, and more just Gambia that respects the rights of all.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. VIRGINIA E. PALMER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* According to the State Department 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices “Impunity remained a significant problem in the Ghana Police Service. Corruption, brutality, poor training, lack of oversight, and an overburdened judicial system contributed to impunity. Police often failed to respond to reports of abuses and, in many instances, did not act unless complainants paid for police transportation and other operating expenses.” What is your understanding of the level of police corruption in Ghana?

*Answer.* My understanding of the level of police corruption in Ghana is that it remains a significant problem and is fueled by impunity, poor training, lack of oversight, and an overburdened judicial system.

*Question.* Are there U.S. funded programs aimed at addressing police corruption?

*Answer.* The Department of State does not have any programming that directly addresses police corruption in Ghana. However, the Department is aware of the harmful effect of corruption in the public sector, including in the criminal justice sector, and is considering opportunities to work with police, special investigators, and judicial actors to reduce corruption.

*Question.* How, if confirmed, will you engage on the issue of police corruption?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize working with our like-minded partners and the Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics Law Enforcement to identify opportunities to create programming that can address police corruption while empowering Ghana’s professional police officers.

*Question.* The Committee to Protect Journalists has reported on a number of worrying cases of the detention, harassment and abuse of a number of journalists in 2021, and a call from a ruling party politician that a journalist to be targeted for attack. Are media freedoms in jeopardy in Ghana?

*Answer.* Ghana enjoys a vibrant and free media, with over 350 radio stations, more than 120 television operators on air, and approximately 250 newspaper and magazine publications, plus active and growing internet use and social media presence. Freedom of speech and expression are enshrined in Ghana’s constitution. There have been a few high-profile cases of violence and threats of violence against journalists. The Government often responds appropriately to protect freedom of the press, but some of these threats have come after stories alleging official corruption. Exchange and training programs for journalists, such as fact-checking, data journalism, and even journalism ethics, are welcomed and in demand across Ghana. If confirmed, I commit to doing all I can to ensure these freedoms are protected and enhanced in Ghana.

*Question.* Are attacks on the media indicative of broader threats to the right of individuals to criticize the Government?

*Answer.* Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly, and other fundamental freedoms are enshrined in Ghana’s constitution. Although there are some reports of violence and threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecution against journalists, they are generally free to be critical of the Government without fear of reprisal.

*Question.* What steps will you take, if confirmed, to support media freedoms in Ghana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support media freedom by encouraging the Ghanaian Government to appropriately protect freedom of the press by thoroughly investigating cases of violence, threats of violence, unjustified arrests, and prosecution of journalists. I will also continue programs to enhance the professionalism and expertise of Ghana’s journalists.

*Democracy & Human Rights*

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have had the honor to work on democracy and governance issues for much of my 35-year career. I served as the Labor Officer in the PRC immediately after the Tian An Men massacres in 1989, for example, and drafted the first reporting on exports made from Chinese prison labor. I was the first Western diplomat granted access to several Chinese prisons, providing important information for human rights reporting and U.S. customs actions to ensure U.S. workers were not disadvantaged. For this work, I received a Meritorious Honor Award and runner up for the Department's 1991 Labor Officer of the Year.

In Zimbabwe from 1993-1997, I ran the Democracy and Human Rights Fund that provided project financing to ZimRights and the Legal Resources Foundation and seed money to establish the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Southern African Human Rights Research, and Documentation Trust and other groups. These groups formed the core of the Zimbabwe Election Support Network which challenged Robert Mugabe's human rights and electoral abuses from 2000-2016. I established the first Human Rights Donor Coordination Group to leverage U.S. democracy and human rights resources and avoid duplication. To address rampant child abuse and rape, I brought together officials from the Zimbabwe police, Attorney General's office, and human rights organizations, which had not previously cooperated, to draft legislation and change arrest procedures to establish the first child-friendly courts, receiving Meritorious and Superior Honor Awards for this work.

In Hong Kong, I drafted Human Rights Reports for Hong Kong and Macau and helped acquire Public Interest Benefit Parole for Chinese Christians persecuted for their beliefs but unable to apply for refugee status because they could not leave the PRC. That work contributed to better U.S. understanding of the House Church movement in the PRC.

In Vietnam, I was the Front Office's principal interlocutor with the Ministry of Public Security on human rights issues and met regularly with dissidents under house arrest or in prison. After one such visit (and lots of work from Washington and Embassy teams) Tran Khai Thanh was released from prison and allowed to travel to the United States.

In Malawi, I represented the United States on the U.N.-led Election Support Network and oversaw U.S. Government support for national elections, including an NDI-run Parallel Voter Tabulation, support for Malawi police and military providing security for the election, and U.S. participation in international election monitoring efforts. I spoke out frequently on the need for Malawi to respect the human rights of all, including LGBTQ persons. I hosted multiple gatherings of faith leaders to promote religious tolerance and respect for the human rights of all, including women and girls and LGBTQ persons.

If confirmed, I pledge to continue work to advance democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights in Ghana.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Republic of Ghana? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Ghana is widely considered to be one of the leading democracies on the African continent and generally respects human rights. Continuing problems include reports of arbitrary or unlawful killings by the Government or its agents; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest or detention; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; violence and threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecutions against journalists; serious acts of corruption; violence against women; and existence of the worst forms of child labor. Although the Ghanaian Government has taken steps to prosecute and punish officials who commit human rights violations or abuses, whether in the security forces or elsewhere in the Government, impunity remains a problem.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Republic of Ghana? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. Our close partnership with Ghana spans more than 60 years and is rooted in our shared commitment to democracy and human rights for all, peace and security, and economic opportunity and prosperity. Ghana's long democratic tradition, robust media, religious tolerance, and strong civil society make it a leader in West Africa and a model for the continent. With democratic backsliding in the region, Ghana's example and leadership is ever more important.

Strengthening democracy and governance institutions are essential to regional stability and inclusive economic growth. Potential impediments include the culture

of corruption, slow bureaucratic processes, and a lack of resources. If confirmed, I will continue aggressive programs to strengthen Ghana's anti-corruption and electoral institutions and increase Ghanaian women's participation in political life.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, combatting corruption and addressing issues related to adherence to contractual commitments will be among my top priorities. Integration of U.S. Government programs, particularly those dealing with inclusive economic growth, accountability and proper delivery of government services to Ghanaian citizens, is key to success of these efforts. I will also aggressively pursue programs to end trafficking and child labor.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Republic of Ghana? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* I will. The promotion of respect for human rights is a central pillar of our relations with Ghana. If confirmed, I will strengthen relationships with civil society leaders and human rights advocates in Ghana, the United States and internationally. I will work, where possible in partnership with diplomatic counterparts, to proactively counter any efforts to close the space for NGOs and civil society to operate, including via legal or regulatory measures.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties and to advocating for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties. To encourage genuine political competition, I will work to strengthen existing relationships and build new ones across the political spectrum.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Republic of Ghana on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Republic of Ghana?

*Answer.* Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly, and other fundamental freedoms are enshrined in Ghana's constitution. Ghana has over 350 radio stations, more than 120 television operators on air, and approximately 250 newspaper and magazine publications. If confirmed, I will lead Embassy engagement to expand Ghana's vibrant and free media. I also commit to meeting regularly with independent and local press in Ghana.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's ongoing engagements with civil society and government counterparts to promote the importance of countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Republic of Ghana on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to actively engage with Ghana on the right of workers to exercise freedom of association, including to form and join independent trade unions, and call out incidents when this right is restricted.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Republic of Ghana, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to using my position to defend human rights and the dignity of all Ghanaians, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Republic of Ghana?

*Answer.* In Ghana, people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer face increasing anti-LGBTQI+ rhetoric and actions that threaten the human rights of members of that community. Ghana's Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and expression, and freedom of assembly to all Ghanaians, not just to certain groups. These freedoms are foundational to our two democracies and must be vigorously defended. Failure to do so creates serious public order and public health problems.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Republic of Ghana?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned about the evolving situation around the LGBTQI+ community in Ghana. In his video address to the AU, President Biden affirmed the United States policy to promote respect for the human rights of all individuals, including women and girls, LGBTQI+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and persons of every ethnic background, faith, and heritage.

If confirmed, I will urge national leaders in Ghana to uphold protections provide in Ghana's constitution for all individuals, consistent with its human rights obligations and commitments. I will work with diplomatic counterparts and allies in civil society and the LGBTQI+ community to address the uptick in hateful rhetoric and intimidation tactics.

#### *Congressional Consultations*

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Ghana?

*Answer.* Yes.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. VIRGINIA E. PALMER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In your opinion, what are the most significant domestic and external threats Ghana faces?

*Answer.* Ghana and its neighbors confront significant threats from violent extremists from the north, and piracy and illegal fishing in the Gulf of Guinea. Domestically, the COVID pandemic, corruption, unemployment, burdensome fiscal deficits and debt, an uptick in hateful rhetoric and actions against members of the LGBTQI+ community pose threats to Ghana's development goals and role as democratic model.

*Question.* In your opinion, how should we strengthen our partnership with Ghana on counterterrorism operations in the region?

*Answer.* Ghana is well-respected for its proactive involvement and positive leadership on security issues throughout West Africa. If confirmed, I will support Ghana's regional leadership role and will strengthen our partnership with Ghana to counter violent extremism by continuing integrated U.S. programs on inclusive economic development, rule of law strengthening, and security and law enforcement cooperation.

*Question.* Where are the opportunities to do more with Ghana to counter threats in littoral West Africa?

*Answer.* Ghana is internationally recognized for its commitment to advancing peace on the continent, and around the world, through participation in U.N. and AU peacekeeping missions. Ghana ranks among the top ten countries worldwide for its contributions to peacekeeping operations. Currently, Ghana is supporting U.N. peacekeeping missions in South Sudan, Lebanon, and Mali.

Opportunities to do more with Ghana to counter threats in littoral West Africa include encouraging Ghana to support additional U.N. missions in the region as those environments evolve, as well as fortifying the Department of State's security assistance provided to Ghana's military and police forces through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, Foreign Military Financing (FMF), and the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) accounts. The Accra Initiative provides an important opportunity for locally-developed regional cooperation to counter violent extremism and bolster regional security. Ghana also plays an important role, as a model of democratic practice and through its leadership of ECOWAS, to counter democratic backsliding in the region.



*Question.* If confirmed as ambassador, how can you, and the U.S. more broadly, continue to build Ghana's role as an active and constructive actor in West African regional affairs?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Ghana as it chairs the Economic Community of West African States, serves on the U.N. Security Council, and hosts the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement—roles that build Ghana's profile as an active and constructive actor in West African regional affairs. In addition, I will prioritize programs like the International Police Peacekeeping Operations Support program, through which the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) provides training and assistance to the Ghana Police Service to improve the capacity of Formed Police Units and individual police officers deployed to U.N. peacekeeping missions.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should support robust democracy and governance assistance programs in comparatively stronger African democracies like Ghana? If so, what should be the strategic focus for these efforts?

*Answer.* Yes. Ghana's long democratic tradition, robust media, religious tolerance, and strong civil society make it a leader in West Africa and a model for the continent. Supporting anti-corruption efforts, promoting respect for human rights and strengthening the rule of law are important to achieving all of our security and economic goals in Ghana. With democratic backsliding in the region, strategically supporting Ghana's leadership and example of robust democracy and governance is ever more important and, if I am confirmed, will remain the focus of assistance programming efforts.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power? If confirmed, how would you respond to Ghana doing something like this?

*Answer.* Every country has the right to make constitutional changes as long as they are made through a consultative and broad process that includes all stakeholders, including civil society and opposition parties. However, constitutional changes designed to favor incumbents or extend terms erode democratic principles. If confirmed, I will advocate for regular, democratic transitions of power, which yield more accountability, stronger institutions, and less corruption.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

*Answer.* Promoting democracy and human rights has long served as the basis of American foreign policy. Election observation can promote public participation, encourage transparency and public confidence in the electoral process, and mitigate the potential for electoral violence. Both U.S. Mission observers and independent observation missions help deter fraud at polling stations and facilitate the collection of critical information on conditions. To ensure real democratic gains, it is important that our elections work not focus solely on Election Day, but also address institutional or conduct problems in the lead up to elections.

*Question.* Would you support a U.S. funded, independent international election observation mission for Ghana's next general election?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would carefully consider how U.S. support to observation efforts can contribute to free and fair elections, and transparent electoral processes in Ghana.

*Question.* Ghana made a modest improvement from previous years in Transparency International's 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index. How can the United States best support Ghana in its fight to curb corruption in government and the private sector?

*Answer.* Changing the culture of corruption in Ghana is essential for attracting more foreign investment, promoting sustainable, inclusive economic growth, and eliminate Ghana's dependence on foreign assistance. The United States can best support Ghana in its fight to curb corruption in government and the private sector by encouraging the Ghanaian Government to reinforce existing anti-corruption institutions like the Office of the Special Prosecutor, promote transparency, and enforce anti-corruption laws. If confirmed, I will utilize all available tools and programs, including visa restrictions, to support Ghanaian efforts to combat corruption.

*Question.* How can the United States best use the tools it has to hold Ghanaian officials accountable for corrupt behavior? If confirmed, what would be your approach in using those tools?

**Answer.** Driven by a combination of corrupt interest and political expediency, Ghana's adherence to contractual commitments has been inadequate and is concerning for U.S. and other foreign companies. If confirmed, I utilize all available tools and programs, including visa restrictions, to support Ghanaian efforts to combat corruption. I will work to strengthen Ghana's accountability institutions, including the Office of the Special Prosecutor.

**Question.** How can the United States best support Ghana in curbing the corrupt behavior of those companies and government officials of malign foreign actors like China that feed on corrupt governments and business environments?

**Answer.** Improving anti-corruption institutions, laws and regulations and their implementation is critical to improving Ghana's business environment, achieving Ghana's development goals and curbing the corrupt behavior of malign actors. If confirmed, I will push back on corrupt or coercive practices that damage our interests and those of our Ghanaian partners, including impingement on state sovereignty, economic coercion, and the abusive use of new security technologies.

**Question.** How is the United States working with Ghana's Government to curb efforts by malign foreign actors seeking to use their country as a hub for propagating disinformation campaigns in the U.S. and other countries? As Ambassador, how will you prioritize this issue with the Ghanaian Government?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will prioritize this issue with the Ghanaian Government by supporting a central part of this effort: exposing malign foreign actors' tactics so that partner and allied governments, civil society organizations, academia, the press, and the international public can conduct further analysis of their own and thereby increase collective resilience to disinformation and propaganda.

**Question.** How should the United States build on its existing defense and security cooperation with Ghana? Where are the opportunities and the risks?

**Answer.** The United States should build on its existing defense and security cooperation to help Ghana and its neighbors counter violent extremism, combat transnational crime and strengthen the rule of law. These efforts are most effect when our security and law enforcement cooperation, inclusive economic growth and the rule of law (including anti-corruption) efforts are integrated. Ghana's military is known for its professionalism and is critical to our ability to counter global threats in the sub-region. Fortifying this cooperation poses significant opportunities and few risks.

**Question.** The instability in the Sahel is now bleeding over into the Littoral states in the Gulf of Guinea. Because of this concern, these coastal countries, led by Ghana, have established the Accra Initiative to build capacity and support a more integrated approach to intelligence gathering and crisis response. Does the U.S. plan to support the Initiative with technical and material assistance. Is it considering bilateral assistance to Ghana to establish the Secretariat?

**Answer.** The United States has provided bilateral assistance to Ghana to support the Accra Initiative since September 2020 through Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). Those efforts help prevent further spread of violence in West Africa. If confirmed, I will engage relevant stakeholders to explore ways the United States can support Ghana and the Accra Initiative address this threat.

**Question.** Would Ghana be a strong candidate for a bilateral free trade agreement with the United States? If not, why not? If so, why?

**Answer.** Yes. Bilateral trade exceeded \$1.5 billion in 2020 and with the U.S. recording a trade surplus of \$112 million.

In addition, Ghana hosts the secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which will modernize and streamline the continent's overall trade and economic systems and create a trading block of 1.3 billion people, creating opportunities for greater commercial ties between the United States and all of Africa.

**Question.** What is your view on the role of the U.S. Prosper Africa initiative in driving increased trade and investment between the U.S. and Ghana? Do you believe the U.S. should focus more of its efforts vis-a-vis Prosper Africa toward large African U.S. economic partners like Ghana?

**Answer.** The U.S. Prosper Africa Initiative drives increased trade and investment between the United States and Ghana by bringing together services and resources from across the U.S. Government to empower businesses with market insights, deal support, and solutions to strengthen business climates. Prosper Africa will advance opportunities to build new markets for American products, drive billions of dollars

of investment in Africa, and support thousands of new jobs for both African and American workers.

*China and the Indo-Pacific*

*Question.* China is keen to secure the affections of Africa's next generation of leaders. The Chinese Government claimed in 2019 that Ghana had the highest number of African students studying in China. How do you view such educational exchanges and opportunities playing in projecting "soft power"?

*Answer.* African countries are our partners in pursuing our shared interests—from security, global health, climate change, democracy, and economic growth. African publics continue to prefer the United States to the PRC, and democratic values to authoritarianism. If confirmed, I will capitalize on this soft power—engaging with youth, promoting exchanges and study in the United States, and promoting American business.

*Question.* Do you agree or disagree that an increased proportion of Ghanaians attending U.S. colleges and universities would more closely tie the current and future relationship of the country to the U.S.?

*Answer.* I agree that an increased proportion of Ghanaians attending U.S. colleges and universities would more closely tie the current and future relationship of the country to the United States.

*Question.* If you agree, what can and should the U.S. do to boost opportunities for Ghanaians to study in the U.S.?

*Answer.* With a population of 1.3 billion people whose median age is 19 years old, African youth are one of the continent's most important resources. Expanding existing links and promoting new partnerships at the university level will strengthen Ghana's educational institutions as instruments of national development—enhancing regional prosperity, security, and stability. Such cooperation also promotes the U.S. value of academic freedom, which is under increasing threat across the world as global competitors expand their own educational programs targeting the continent's scholars and students. If confirmed, I commit to promoting this important American export and to strengthening academic ties between the U.S and Ghana.

*Question.* China is one of, if not Ghana's biggest, trading partner and foreign investment source. While the United States enjoys long-standing and consistently strong relations with Ghana, the country is a leading African buyer of U.S. goods, and there is typically a large U.S. trade surplus with Ghana. Despite this, the U.S. trade and investment relationship lags in comparison to the country's bilateral trade and investment relationship with China. What should the United States prioritize to improve its bilateral trade and investment relationship generally with Ghana, and in what ways can the U.S. improve American businesses interest and competitiveness to drive greater U.S. investment in Ghana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the Embassy team and I will meet the challenge the PRC presents by ensuring that American companies can compete on an even playing field, providing a meaningful alternative to the PRC's economic approach, and promoting entrepreneurship, and fair practices. I will be a vigorous advocate for American companies and innovation and will ensure U.S. public and private investments continue to support pandemic recovery efforts and Ghana's journey to self-reliance. If confirmed, I will continue to help Ghana create an enabling environment for inclusive private sector-led growth by facilitating regional trade, improving access to credit, improving agricultural production and market access, enhancing domestic resource mobilization, and improving health and education outcomes.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Ghana and counter the malign influence of China?

*Answer.* The United States should partner with likeminded countries to counter negative actions and influence of the PRC by calling out and confronting nondemocratic behavior and insisting that all economic actors on the continent adhere to the highest standards of transparency, anti-corruption, debt sustainability, environmental protection, and respect human rights, including labor rights. In addition, Ghana recently expressed an interest in establishing a partnership with NATO. If confirmed, I will encourage Ghana and our NATO allies to advance this partnership, which provides security benefits for NATO and Ghana.

*State Department Management and Oversight*

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Ghana?

*Answer.* My understanding is that morale throughout the Mission is strong, motivated by staff's commitment to the important mission of bolstering regional security and countering violent extremism, promoting inclusive economic growth and improving health outcomes. However, staff, particularly Locally Employed (LE) Staff whose families have not been vaccinated, remain very concerned about the risks associated with Ghana's very low vaccination rates and concerned about a full return to in-office work. COVID-19-related travel restrictions limiting opportunities for rest and recuperation and even regional change of scene also have a negative effect on morale.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Ghana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Ghanaian Government to increase vaccination levels of the Ghanaian public. This will both help us achieve our broader public health goals and allow us to increase in person diplomacy since "diplomacy is a contact sport." I will work to fill vacancies in a timely manner, recruiting diverse staff and ensuring they enjoy opportunities to do fulfilling work and provide policy input. I will also work hard to ensure that Locally Employed Staff salaries (currently negatively affected by rising inflation) remain competitive.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Ghana?

*Answer.* In general, the best way to create a unified mission is to communicate broadly about what our goals are and successes and lessons learned as we work toward them. That is even more important with COVID-19-induced teleworking inhibiting in person meetings where brainstorming and spontaneous exchanges of information are more free flowing. If confirmed, I will also rely heavily on "thematic" working groups, such as the Law Enforcement Working Group and the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group. These working groups will include law enforcement and security agencies as well as USAID, DoD, and the Embassy Deal Teams, to create synergies and ensure all elements of U.S. national power are used to advance U.S. interests in Ghana and the region.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I am direct and decisive. I welcome collaboration and demand information sharing and respect for others. I am fast and not particularly linear. I believe diplomacy is personal and that my contacts need to believe that I am a credible interlocutor, honest, forthright, and, where possible, helpful.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* It is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure leading Embassy Lilongwe?

*Answer.* I came to have a stronger belief that our development assistance programs are more effective when they are integrated. For example, production enhancements have little effect if they are not accompanied by improved market access (i.e., it does not help me to produce more tomatoes if I cannot get them to market) and assistance aimed to improve the health and education outcomes of girls and young women pays huge dividends in achieving all our other development goals. I am pleased that Ghana's Integrated Country Development Strategy integrates the Mission's security, inclusive economic growth and rule of law programs.

When Malawi was slow to implement much needed reform of the agriculture sector despite looming famine, I learned that "we cannot want it (reform, good programs, etc.) more than they do;" policy change and development and other programs will be more effective when there is strong local/indigenous demand for them.

I learned very positive lessons about how good, bold ideas can come from unexpected agencies/personnel. For example, our \$90 million project to keep girls in school and break the cycle of HIV transmission from older men to younger girls to boys arose from Peace Corps at an Embassy Adolescent Girls and Young Women Task Force meeting.

*Question.* How will your management style and approach differ from Embassy Lilongwe?

*Answer.* With Ghana serving as host to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Secretariat, Chair of ECOWAS, and member of the U.N. Security Council, if confirmed, I will focus more attention on regional and international issues than I did in Lilongwe.

I will continue to rely on interagency working groups for policy development and operational coordination. Embassy Accra's Country Team is larger and more senior than Lilongwe's. I hope that agency and section heads will have more experience establishing and maintaining accountability measures; I will nonetheless remain attentive to these issues.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* I have served twice as Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) and know that there is no more important relationship in the Mission. If confirmed, my DCM will be my alter ego. Through regular meetings, scheduled and ad hoc, I will ensure that we are in sync and that the DCM has full input into policy formulation and decision making. Where possible we will divide responsibilities, ensuring that important conclusions or insights from meetings are always shared.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ask the DCM to chair the Emergency Action Committee, Law Enforcement Working Group, and other Interagency Working Groups as required, participating myself when requested/required. I will ensure that the entire Mission understands that the DCM enjoys my full faith and confidence and speaks for me, but that my door is always open if there are issues they do not feel comfortable raising with him/her.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking. Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* I believe it is important to provide employees with timely, accurate, constructive feedback on their performance to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeed in their roles.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in to improve performance and reward high achievers.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in Ghana. In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* I agree that it is essential for diplomats to get outside of the Embassy to meet with host country officials, thought leaders and the public as well as diplomatic counterparts. This is an essential part of representing the United States and ensuring proper "branding" of our programs, initiatives, and companies. This is even more challenging with COVID-induced telework requirements, but in my experience, U.S. diplomats get outside of the embassy walls enough to fully accomplish their mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will utilize all available public diplomacy tools for in-person, virtual and media engagement. I will encourage in-country travel and representation outside of the capital. I would be remiss if I did not note the importance of local staff in shaping and articulating our mission and programs and their important role as interface between American diplomats and local communities.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Ghana?

*Answer.* Ghana enjoys a vibrant and free media, with over 350 radio stations, more than 120 television operators on air, and approximately 250 newspaper and

magazine publications, plus active and growing internet use and social media presence. Freedom of speech and expression, freedom of assembly and other fundamental freedoms are enshrined in Ghana's constitution. Although there are some reports of violence and threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecution against journalists, they are generally free to be critical of the Government without fear of reprisal. Ghanaians generally have a positive impression of the United States.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* U.S. diplomats face limited public diplomacy challenges in Ghana. Public Diplomacy exchange programs, like the Mandela Washington Fellowship and Fulbright exchanges are enormously popular and help to create a robust alumni network across the country in various areas of interest.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Post has latitude to tailor our public messaging to local issues and concerns. If confirmed, I will ensure that our public diplomacy posture continues to play a key role in promoting our many shared values and America's generous financial assistance and support across the range of issues.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Ghana was identified as Tier 2 due to lack of adequate resourcing for law enforcement as well as a lack of prosecutions of traffickers. How will you work with Ghana authorities to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* Ghana has maintained a Tier 2 ranking in the Trafficking in Persons Report since in 2018, indicating significant efforts to combat trafficking. Trafficking within the country is more prevalent than transnational trafficking, and the majority of victims are children subjected to forced labor. Children can fall prey to economic hardships in Ghana, and some are subjected to forced child labor within Ghana in the fishing, cocoa, artisanal gold mining, and agriculture sectors as well as in domestic service, street hawking, begging, potting, and quarrying. Ghanaian girls, and to a lesser extent boys, are also subjected to sex trafficking within Ghana, including in the Central, Volta, and Greater Accra regions.

If confirmed, I will encourage the Government to increase its resources to better train and equip the police force to investigate trafficking cases. I will also encourage the Government to provide appropriate shelters for trafficking victims. I will encourage assistance be provided to organizations working on the front lines to combat human trafficking.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Ghana is described as having religious freedom enshrined in the constitution but does lack general understanding of respective religions in civil society. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor the religious freedom situation in Ghana. Religious freedom and interfaith communication are among Ghana's greatest strengths. Muslim and Christian leaders emphasize the importance of religious freedom and tolerance and report communication and coordination among themselves as well as with those from smaller minority faiths on a wide array of matters. If confirmed, I commit to work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious freedom, addressing any religious freedom concerns, and further strengthen tolerance and respect among and for religious communities in Ghana.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Ghana was identified as having serious human rights concerns, including arbitrary or unlawful killings by the Government, cruel treatment or punishment by the Government, corruption, the worst forms of child labor, and more. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* The Ghanaian Government generally respects human rights. Continuing problems include reports of arbitrary or unlawful killings by the Government or its agents; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrest or detention; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; violence and threats of violence, or unjustified arrests or prosecutions, against journalists; serious acts of corruption; violence against women; and existence of the worst forms of child labor. Although the Ghanaian Government has taken steps to prosecute and punish officials who commit human rights violations or abuses, whether in the security forces or

elsewhere in the Government, impunity remains a problem. If confirmed, I will encourage the Ghanaian Government to address impunity and hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations and abuses.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* Ghana's Constitution provides for freedom of speech and expression and freedom of assembly for all Ghanaians, not just to certain groups. These freedoms are foundational to our two democracies and must be vigorously defended. If confirmed, I will direct the Embassy team to work closely with our like-minded partners and allies in civil society to ensure these rights are respected for all Ghanaians; support PEPFAR's anti-stigma and anti-discrimination support to members of the LGBTQI+ community and people living with HIV; and stand up against injustice toward women and girls, LGBTQI+ individuals, members of religious minority groups, and people of all races and ethnicities.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. VIRGINIA E. PALMER BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* Gaddafi was deposed in Libya in October 2011. Tens of thousands of Malians who had been working in Libya for a better living returned home. Many of these ethnic Tuaregs (TWAHH-regs) had even served in Gaddafi's military and returned to Mali with guns and artillery. Shortly thereafter, in January 2012, Tuareg rebels destabilized Mali, which paved the way for violent extremist groups to gain a foothold. Since then, the march of violent extremism has continued southward, destabilizing Burkina Faso and now threatening Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Benin. What effect, if any, did Libya's destabilization have on security in sub-Saharan Africa? Also, given this worrying trend, how can we strengthen our partnership with Ghana to counter violent extremism and terrorism in the region?

*Answer.* Smuggled arms looted from Gaddafi's armories have impacted security in sub-Saharan Africa. The region's porous borders and the vast ungoverned regions of the Sahel have always complicated monitoring the movement of people and goods, including armaments from Libya, that have constituted the economy of the Sahel for hundreds of years.

Ghana is well-respected for its proactive involvement and positive leadership in security issues throughout West Africa. Ghana is also internationally recognized for its commitment to advancing peace on the continent, and around the world, through participation in U.N. and AU peacekeeping missions. Ghana ranks among the top dozen countries worldwide for its contributions to peacekeeping operations with missions in South Sudan, Lebanon, and Mali. If confirmed, I will support Ghana's regional leadership role and will strengthen our partnership with Ghana to counter violent extremism by continuing integrated U.S. programs on inclusive economic development, rule of law strengthening, and security and law enforcement cooperation.

*Question.* Many of Africa's biggest challenges—trade, migration, violent extremism—are transnational in nature. However, embassies are understandably focused on bilateral relations. Do you think a regional focus on Western Africa might be effective and what might you do as ambassador to develop a more regional view?

*Answer.* Yes. A too narrow focus on bilateral issues allows our adversaries to exploit seams in policy and along national boundaries. For example, if customs and border security are improved and anti-corruption measures enforced on one side of a border but not another, terrorists and criminals will still be able to take advantage of weak borders to move materiel and personnel. If confirmed, I will work to support the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership and the Accra Initiative, a Ghanaian-led effort to strengthen the capabilities of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo to combat violent extremism. These efforts will require close coordination with my fellow Ambassadors in the region, AFRICOM, the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. agencies in Washington, and Congress. It is also important that these regional efforts integrate security sector support (maritime and border security, military, and law enforcement cooperation) and programs to strengthen the rule of law and combat corruption, improve cyber security, and spur inclusive economic growth.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HOWARD A. VAN VRANKEN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*Question.* Despite Botswana's solid democratic reputation, some observers have suggested that press freedom has declined in recent years, pointing to the draconian media regulations, self-censorship by journalists, and the disturbing use of Cellebrite technology to unlock a journalist's phone to access their sources.

- Do you agree that Botswana has experienced a decline in freedom of the press? What will you do, if confirmed, to pressure the Government of Botswana to roll back its restrictions on press freedom?

*Answer.* Botswana's constitution and laws provide for freedom of expression. Media contacts reported 10 years of self-censorship and dwindling advertising revenues under former President Khama. Upon taking office in 2018, President Masisi initially demonstrated a welcoming approach to the media and press freedom. However, this has largely stalled and the promised Freedom of Information bill has not yet materialized. State-owned media generally feature uncritical reporting on the Government and are sometimes susceptible to political interference. Opposition political parties claim that state media coverage heavily favors the ruling party.

If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Embassy work to support media professionalization through exchanges, trainings, and other initiatives, such as assisting the Office of the Presidency to set up a Presidential Press Office. Helping the Government of Botswana create a press office which is proactive, responsive, and a source for useful and credible information for the press and the public directly supports our Mission Goal 1: Botswana has institutions, policies, and practices which respond to the needs and improve equitably the lives of its inhabitants by addressing the need to strengthen institutions to promote accountable, transparent, and democratic governance.

*Question.* If confirmed as Ambassador to Botswana, you would also represent the United States at the Southern African Development Community. Southern Africa faces myriad challenges to the stability of the sub-region, including the insurgency in Mozambique.

- Do you believe that SADC is an effective organization to promote security, democracy, and prosperity in Southern Africa? Would deeper engagement with SADC advance U.S. interests?

*Answer.* SADC's goals of promoting regional cooperation and integration, economic growth, socio-economic development, and durable peace and security among its member states have never been more important. SADC has achieved notable successes promoting regional peace and security and economic development for the betterment of the SADC region's most important resource—its people. SADC's enduring support helped Lesotho negotiate vital government reforms and undertake a peaceful transition of political power, and in Mozambique the organization's deployment of a Standby Force is helping combat the ISIS-linked terrorist threat. SADC continues to promote regional peace and security as demonstrated by its positive role in helping Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo resolve a longstanding border disagreement. And through its Southern African Power Pool, SADC is mobilizing resources to address energy shortages that threaten regional development and economic integration.

If confirmed, I will seek to deepen our engagement with SADC, including by advocating for the organization to play a proactive role in promoting good governance, respect for human rights, and democratic values, and in holding its members accountable when they fall short. By insisting that all its members respect human rights and the rule of law, SADC can send a powerful message that it intends to be a force for positive change for all citizens across southern Africa.

*Question.* What are the major barriers to improving conditions and protections for women, sexual minorities, and indigenous people in Botswana? What will you do to promote equality for groups that face discrimination if confirmed?

*Answer.* Botswana generally has a good human rights record and laws have been enacted to protect vulnerable populations. However, some problems remain. I am concerned about societal problems that threaten respect for human rights including high rates of gender-based violence; discrimination against women and children, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons; and trafficking in persons.

There are also growing concerns among Botswana's public that COVID-19 related movement restrictions and the Government's stated need to take on extra-legislative responsibilities as a response could impinge on some of their human rights, such as the freedom of peaceful assembly. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely



with the Government of Botswana and civil society organizations to address these concerns and promote equality for all. If confirmed, I will encourage them to focus their attention on the most pressing human rights concerns in Botswana and will look for synergistic opportunities to cooperate with these groups to advocate for reform, accountability, and respect for human rights.

*Democracy & Human Rights*

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* While serving in Iraq in 2008-2009, I worked directly with local government leaders and NGOs to build democratic processes and to strengthen civil society organizations in support of representative and responsive local government. Working through implementing partners, we facilitated training for local leaders, established a free and independent radio station, and identified local youth leaders to participate in national training programs. Our goal, in part, was to decentralize decision-making and implementation authority from the central and provincial governments to empower and hold accountable leaders at the local government level for activities which directly impacted their constituents.

During my second tour in Iraq in 2011-2012, I spearheaded our efforts to resettle exiled Iranian nationals from Iraq to third countries. Those individuals, who were wanted by the Iranian Government, were under direct threat because of their perceived political affiliation. Together with others in the U.S. Government and UNHCR, we worked to safeguard the individuals' human rights and to promote the protection of refugees and the rule of law. In part as a result of my work, dozens of individuals were relocated legally to the safety of third countries.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Botswana? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Botswana has a long track record as one of Africa's enduring democracies. The people of Botswana are justifiably proud of this democratic track record. However, there remain issues to address. Concerns detailed in the 2020 Human Rights Report include undue restrictions on freedom of expression, the press, and the internet, including the existence of criminal slander and libel laws; interference with freedom of association; acts of corruption; and the existence of the worst forms of child labor, including the commercial sexual exploitation of children and forced labor.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Botswana? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to partner with governmental and non-governmental organizations in Botswana, where we are involved in political party strengthening and a number of democracy building activities, including youth outreach, promoting women's participation in the political process, supporting the development of women candidates for public office, and advocacy for independent parliamentary debates.

Botswana's Parliament has only seven women members; three were elected in 2019, and the remainder appointed to specially elected seats by President Masisi. Gender based violence (GBV) also remains a major problem. Government figures from 2018 indicate that 37 percent of women in Botswana experience some form of GBV during their lives. This trend was exacerbated by lengthy COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020. The Government embarked on an anti-GBV campaign in late 2020, which included public awareness, dedicated GBV courts, and new operating procedures for police handling GBV cases and victims. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Government of Botswana and civil society to combat this serious social scourge.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* The U.S. Embassy has focused on improving the participation of women in politics and political life through public awareness campaigns, bilateral engagement with the political parties and government leadership, and a \$250,000 African

Regional Democracy Fund grant to provide political training to women interest in politics. We also supported women and youth through a series of COVID-19 relief grants offering youth training and entrepreneurial skills development through mask making clinics, and through a grant to a women's GBV clinic to create an automated 24-hour help hotline via WhatsApp.

USAID's Democracy and Governance programming strengthens the capacity of governmental institutions, civil society groups, and regional organizations to promote democratic practices. This work is accomplished by better linking political parties to their constituents and develop platforms based on citizen needs; fostering land rights for indigenous populations; and promoting gender-equality and human rights. USAID is also assisting workers and communities impacted by mining to understand and assert their rights. If confirmed, I will continue to support this important work through USAID and other U.S. Mission programs and initiatives.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Botswana? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* The promotion of respect for human rights is a central pillar in our relations with Botswana. If confirmed, I will continue and strengthen the relationships built by the U.S. Government and our partners with Botswana, U.S., and international civil society members working in this space. I will also engage with labor unions and workers. I will continue to advance opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate with these organizations for the betterment of Botswana, and ensure that we coordinate our efforts with diplomatic and international missions.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to continue to strengthen the relationships our U.S. Mission has built with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. I will strive to support the efforts of these figures and parties to develop a more inclusive political environment throughout Botswana. If confirmed, I will advocate for the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly for all political actors, even those who do not agree with the Government. If confirmed, I will advocate through public statements, targeted small grants and other programming, and direct engagement with a diverse spectrum of Botswana leaders and community members for a political environment that is inclusive of women, youth, minorities, and Botswana who might otherwise be marginalized.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Botswana on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Botswana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with media practitioners, like-minded missions, civil society, government, and international partners to underscore the importance of an independent, professional, and open media to a free and democratic society. If confirmed, I will seek resources to continue support to both Botswana's private and state-run media, including professional exchanges, targeted training programs, and seminars to educate journalists and media stakeholders about their rights. Botswana journalists have consistently participated in U.S. Government-sponsored professional exchange programs on investigative reporting, safeguarding freedom of expression, and the media's role in strengthening democratic institutions, and I will continue to prioritize these exchanges and training opportunities.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and malign propaganda by foreign state and non-state actors. If confirmed, I also commit to working with like-minded partners in Botswana to counter disinformation and malign propaganda campaigns.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Botswana on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* The United States has a long and strong tradition of supporting the rights of workers to exercise freedom of association, including to form and join independent trade unions. If confirmed, I will commit to engage with unions, relevant government offices, and the private sector to support labor rights. If confirmed, I will mobilize U.S. Government policies, programs and trade agreements to empower workers in all sectors to organize, successfully bargain with their employers, and improve working conditions.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Botswana, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Protecting human rights and democracy is a priority for the U.S. Mission in Botswana. If confirmed, I will strive to defend the human rights and dignity of all persons in Botswana, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Botswana?

*Answer.* Botswana is a generally tolerant country, and there are no recent reports of attacks against the LGBTQI+ community by authorities. However, there were reported societal incidents of violence, societal harassment, and discrimination. Lingering societal problems can threaten respect for human rights, including the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, and increase vulnerabilities faced by these populations. Botswana's legal statutes are mixed on the issue. The High Court struck down penal code section 164 criminalizing consensual same-sex activity in 2019; the Botswana Court of Appeal has set a date for the appeal on October 12, 2021. If confirmed, I will strive to defend the human rights and dignity of all persons in Botswana, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Botswana?

*Answer.* Protecting human rights and democracy is a priority for our mission in Botswana. The U.S. Mission has strong ties with LGBTQI+ civil society groups and relies on the 2019 landmark legal case to deepen social acceptance of LGBTQI+ persons in Botswana. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts with the goal that Botswana can become a model for other nations in Africa and show that decriminalization is possible.

#### *Congressional Consultations*

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Botswana?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit, in coordination with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs, to respond promptly to all appropriate requests for briefings and for information by this committee.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HOWARD A. VAN VRANKEN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Botswana is one of four Sub-Saharan African countries identified as "free" in Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2021 report. The State Department characterizes Botswana as "an excellent democratic partner." Underlying a democratic system that has produced democratic elections, strong tolerance of the political opposition, and effective governance practices, is one that also often undermines democratic pluralism—one that ensures the ruling party remains firmly in power.

- What is your assessment of the resilience of Botswana's democracy?

*Answer.* Botswana has a long track record as one of Africa's most successful and enduring democracies. Botswana is a constitutional, multiparty, republican democracy. Its constitution provides for the indirect election of a president and the popular election of a National Assembly. If confirmed, I will promote democratic values and seek to strengthen democratic institutions.

*Question.* Are there any areas where you, as U.S. Ambassador if confirmed, will engage Botswana on issues related to freedom and democracy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to work closely in partnership with government and non-governmental organizations in Botswana on U.S. Government initia-

tives. These include political party strengthening and a number of democracy building activities, including youth outreach, promoting women's participation in the political process, supporting the development of women candidates for public office, and advocacy for independent parliamentary debates.

*Question.* In Botswana's 2019 parliamentary elections, the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) received 406,561 votes (52.65 percent of total votes). What role does Botswana's first-past-the-post electoral system play in limiting power sharing with a growing proportion of votes by the political opposition in the country? What reforms does Botswana's electoral system need to ensure greater equity among the country's main political parties and actors?

*Answer.* Botswana's Parliamentary system of elections is like those used in many countries across the world. However, critics in countries where first-past-the-post voting is applied, including in Botswana, argue that this system is unfair to smaller political parties and groups that are underrepresented in the political process, such as women and ethnic minorities. Opposition parties argue that this system gives the ruling party a voting majority in parliament which enables it to implement its own policy objectives even if they do not have popular support. Botswana plans a constitutional reform process in the near future. If confirmed, I would work with all stakeholders on ways to advocate this process encompasses a broad set of issues, including the electoral system.

Following the 2019 elections, international observer missions made several recommendations for improvement of electoral processes, including related to funding of political parties, representation of women and youth in political parties, standardization of polling station procedures, improving registration and voter education procedures, among other legal and procedures reforms. Enacting such reforms will ensure that elections in Botswana produce results that enjoy broad support, including through representation of opposition and equity among political parties. If confirmed, I will seek to engage the Government and political parties on these issues in advance of the next elections.

*Question.* What is your view on a democratic system like Botswana that has never undergone a partisan transition of power and has seen an unbroken parliamentary majority by the same ruling party and control over the executive since independence?

*Answer.* Botswana's electoral system provides opportunities for changes in political power. In recent elections, opposition parties have made inroads in increasing parliamentary representation, particularly in 2014. However, factors such as opposition party cohesiveness, political financing, and incumbency have all helped the Botswana Democratic Party maintain its majority. If confirmed, I would continue our work with all stakeholders in ensuring that Botswana's political system remains fair and transparent.

If confirmed, I will promote democratic values and seek to strengthen democratic institutions, including through electoral processes that have credibility and integrity in representing the will of the people of Botswana.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should support robust democracy and governance assistance programs in comparatively stronger African democracies like Botswana? If so, what should be the strategic focus for these efforts?

*Answer.* Botswana has been a strong proponent of democracy and respect for human rights within Africa. If confirmed, I will earnestly work to continue U.S. Embassy programming that strengthens the capacity of governmental institutions, civil society groups, and regional organizations to promote democratic practices.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power? If confirmed, how would you respond to Botswana doing something like this?

*Answer.* Botswana's strong democratic tradition includes term-limits that are respected by presidents, the political parties, and the electorate. I expect this respect for constitutional limits will continue. If confirmed, I will promote democratic values and seek to strengthen democratic institutions.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions? Would you support such a mission for Botswana's next general election?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government supports efforts to ensure transparency in elections in all nations. Botswana's elections are regularly observed by external teams from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union. Bot-

swana welcomes and supports these missions and would likely be amenable to additional electoral observation if the conditions warrant such a mission.

*Question.* In the area of conservation, Botswana is a critical partner. The Okavango River Delta in northwest Botswana is one of the world's largest inland river deltas, and serves as a critical source of biodiversity and home to Africa's largest remaining elephant population. However in Botswana, as in other countries across the continent, wildlife trafficking and human animal conflict are persistent challenges that have become more acute during the COVID pandemic.

- As U.S. Ambassador to Botswana, if confirmed, how will you engage with our Botswanan partners on issues related to conservation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work earnestly to continue the U.S. Government engagement with the Government of Botswana and civil society to protect the country's valuable natural resources, including its wildlife and endangered ecosystems, such as the Okavango Delta, inscribed on UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites (WHS) in 2014.

*Question.* How will you as U.S. Ambassador engage the Government of Botswana to ensure the country's elephant population is ethically controlled and the Government follows adequate measures to ensure long-term conservation of their native elephant population?

*Answer.* Sustainable management of Botswana's natural resources, including the Okavango Delta and the country's wildlife, is not only a critical conservation goal, but also vital for Botswana's long-term economic health. Tourism, primarily ecotourism, accounted for 10 percent of Botswana's GDP and 10 percent of its total employment pre-pandemic.

If confirmed, I will encourage community-based natural resource management efforts that can make an important contribution to conservation and growth of the tourism sector, as well as to rural development and poverty eradication. If confirmed, I will work with U.S. agencies to promote best practices on wildlife conservation and management, including for Botswana's elephant population.

*Question.* What more should the Government of Botswana do to curb poaching and wildlife trafficking? How can the United States build on existing efforts to support Botswana in its fight against both poaching and trafficking of wildlife? What more can the United States do to help enforce existing national and international anti-wildlife trafficking laws in Botswana?

*Answer.* Botswana is committed to wildlife protection, and we appreciate the Government of Botswana's ongoing efforts on this issue. If confirmed, I pledge to continue supporting important wildlife trafficking assistance to Botswana, including training and building capacity in law enforcement personnel, both in country and regionally.

Trends across the continent indicate better organized, more lethal, and sophisticated poaching and wildlife trafficking criminal organizations. Botswana considers these organizations a national security threat. If I am confirmed, I will commit to working with my government counterparts to deter and dismantle these criminal organizations in Botswana.

*Question.* What additional tools can the U.S. draw on to provide support to Botswana in both preserving biodiversity and improving livelihoods for the Botswanan people

*Answer.* Botswana has unique biodiversity and remains highly vulnerable to climate change, especially with regard to access to water for drinking, irrigation, and climate change's effects on complex biospheres such as the Okavango Delta. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with our partners including government, commercial, and civil society groups in support of the conservation goals of the DELTA Act.

*Question.* What opportunities exist for the United States to build on its defense cooperation with Botswana?

*Answer.* There are opportunities to strengthen our already robust defense partnerships through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) and the National Guard State Partnership Program. There are opportunities for PEPFAR and the Department of Defense HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP) to implement HIV prevention programs to combat HIV/AIDS within the defense forces. Botswana would also welcome participation in additional regional military exercises.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Botswana was identified as Tier 2 due to a "lack of formal procedures to identify and refer victims to care and devoted substantially less funding for victim care than in the previous reporting pe-

riod.” How will you work with the Government or appropriate entities to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. The Government of Botswana does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making efforts to do so. Botswana remained a Tier 2 country in the 2021 TIP Report and has publicly reiterated its commitment to reaching Tier 1. In the 2021 reporting period, the Government of Botswana referred all identified victims to NGOs, funded and implemented the anti-trafficking national action plan, and provided additional services to victims who participated in trials against their traffickers. However, the Government did not convict any traffickers and identified significantly fewer victims than in the 2020 reporting period.

If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Botswana to create and institutionalize procedures to identify trafficking victims and train stakeholders on such procedures, increase funding for NGOs to which the Government refers trafficking victims for shelter and services, and significantly increase efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers through continued engagement with the Government, civil society, and international partners.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Botswana was identified as tolerant of religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to continue to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor religious freedom in Botswana. As noted, Botswana provides for freedom of thought and religion, with certain exceptions, protects against governmental discrimination, and has a high degree of religious tolerance and robust interfaith relations. If confirmed, I commit to work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious freedom, addressing any religious freedom concerns, and further strengthening tolerance and respect among and for religious communities in Botswana.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Botswana was identified as having serious human rights concerns, including infringement or suppression of freedom of expression, press, the internet, association, as well as corruption and child labor.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. Botswana generally has a good human rights record. However, some problems remain. These include occasional allegations of excessive use of force and abuse by security personnel, police corruption, and shortcomings in the judicial process, including lengthy delays and failure to inform defendants of their pretrial rights.

I am concerned about societal problems that threaten respect for human rights including high rates of gender-based violence; discrimination against women and children, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons; and trafficking in persons.

There are also growing concerns among Botswana’s public that COVID-19 related movement restrictions and the Government’s stated need to take on extra-legislative responsibility as a response could impinge on some of their human rights, such as their freedom of peaceful assembly. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts as I engage the Government of Botswana to address concerns detailed in the 2020 Human Rights Report.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy maintains excellent relationships with all of Botswana’s major civil society organizations. These organizations rely on us to act as a voice of conscience both in the public sphere and in our engagement with the Government. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with Botswana’s community of civil society organizations and will encourage them to focus their attention on the most pressing human rights concerns in Botswana and will look for synergistic opportunities to cooperate with these groups to advocate for reform, accountability, and respect for human rights.

*Question.* Government resettlement schemes, policies that undermine aboriginal minorities’ cultural practices and identities, and economic disenfranchisement are all areas where the Government has increasingly marginalized the aboriginal San and Basarwa people. In what ways should the United States work with the Govern-

ment of Botswana to improve the rights and economic survival of these aboriginal people?

Answer. The U.S. Government continues to follow the situation of the San in Botswana, including the legal dispute between some San communities and the Botswana Government over their families' rights to reside within Botswana's Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). The Botswana Government has agreed to abide by all relevant court rulings regarding the San rights to live within the CKGR, but it has interpreted these rulings narrowly. If confirmed, I will continue to support the ongoing dialogue between the Botswana Government and San representatives regarding community welfare and living conditions.

*Question.* In March this year, Botswana became the 46th African country to sign on to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI cooperation agreement will undoubtedly boost relations between the two countries and focus on infrastructure construction and other projects traditionally supporting the BRI. How will you ensure the United States interests and relationship with Botswana is not undermined by these deepening ties with China?

Answer. The Government of Botswana sees China as an important partner and investor, but there has been unhappiness within Botswana about PRC business practices, after problems with several high-profile PRC construction projects. If confirmed, I will work to build upon our decades-long investment in African human capital (health and education) in order to strengthen our ties with Botswana, including through initiatives like the Power Africa Mega Solar program.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee Majority Report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Botswana and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The United States and our European partners share an interest in supporting Botswana's efforts for financial transparency, respect for human rights, respect for freedom of expression, and efforts to counter corruption. We are concerned about the PRC's influence on these areas in Botswana. If confirmed, I would continue to work with European nations and the Government of Botswana to strengthen Botswana's resilience to malign external influence. If confirmed, I will work with European and other likeminded partners to speak up against China's malign actions and attempts to undermine the international rules-based system, including through advancing U.S. economic interests, countering China's aggressive and coercive actions, sustaining our military engagement, and engaging on U.S. positions in the U.N. system.

*Question.* According to Reporters sans frontiers (RSF), press freedom declined significantly under President Ian Khama. While violations of press freedom have declined under President Masisi, there remain significant obstacles to freedom of the press in Botswana, including a legal framework that has no law on access to information and draconian laws such as the 2008 Media Practitioners Act. As U.S. Ambassador to Botswana, if confirmed, how will you engage the Botswanan Government on issues of freedom of information and freedom of the press?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Embassy work to support media professionalization through exchanges, trainings, and other initiatives, such as assisting the Office of the Presidency to set up a Presidential Press Office. Helping the Government of Botswana create a press office which is proactive, responsive, and a source for useful and credible information for the press and the public directly supports our Mission Goal 1: Botswana has institutions, policies, and practices which respond to the needs and improve equitably the lives of its inhabitants by addressing the need to strengthen institutions to promote accountable, transparent, and democratic governance.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Botswana?

Answer. COVID-19 has exacted a heavy toll on U.S. Mission Botswana, as many members of our community have lost loved ones. While there is currently a downward trend in cases across the region, Botswana's COVID-19 case count remains the highest in the Southern African region.

COVID-19 exacerbated some of Botswana's infrastructural weaknesses like telecommunications, healthcare, and food availability. The Mission has adapted to this new environment, with staff building stronger ties with each other as they rely on one another more than they did prior to the pandemic. The U.S. Mission continues to prioritize Embassy morale through tools such as regular town halls, which provide a platform for staff to connect with leadership and for speakers to discuss resilience and coping mechanisms.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Botswana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the safety and security of the official community will be of primary importance. I will seek to support employees and their families to create an inclusive and welcoming culture where individuals are safe and can achieve professional and personal goals. As I expect one of my sons (who is 15 years old) and my wife, Rebecca, will accompany me (and my other children will spend significant time with me in Botswana), I will focus on schooling and educational needs for children and work with U.S. and Botswana officials to expand U.S.-accredited education where possible.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Botswana?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead regular discussions with all agencies to establish and review goals and develop strategies and tactics to achieve common objectives. If confirmed, I will engage all employees and stakeholders to conceive and articulate clearly what we will do, and how we will do it. If confirmed, I will create a culture of inclusion in which all employees' contributions are valued.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I aspire to create a leadership culture in which all are encouraged to contribute, create, and grow. My ideal is a workplace in which people achieve shared objectives while respecting and valuing everyone's contributions. This requires from leadership and employees a recognition of individuals strengths and areas of development, and a respect for shared values, inclusion, and our institutions.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* There is no acceptable place for 'berating' subordinates, either in public or in private.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure as the director of NEA-SCA/EX?

*Answer.* While Executive Director of NEA-SCA/EX, I learned quickly the limits of my own ability to achieve goals without delegating responsibility and authority when appropriate. My experience leading that organization affirmed to me that subordinates need space to learn and grow, and that results which fall short of full success represent valuable opportunities to adjust styles and inculcate a culture of continual learning and improvement. I refined the ability to delegate and build a spirit of inclusion during my time as Executive Director.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I expect to collaborate closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission to conceive goals, then implement and oversee tactics and activities to achieve those goals. If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Chief of Mission to articulate and maintain high ethical standards and create a culture of inclusion and respect. If confirmed, I will lean on the Deputy Chief of Mission's deep area expertise and seek her counsel before developing or implementing policy. I believe Deputy Chiefs of Mission are most effective, productive, and valued when they are permitted to work with independence, while understanding that the Chief of Mission is ultimately responsible in all ways for the work of the Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ask the Deputy Chief of Mission to lead our internal effort to address the COVID pandemic. I will also ask her to lead recruitment efforts for Foreign Service and other agencies' diplomatic personnel. If confirmed, I will collaborate with her closely on policy implementation, engagement with the Government of Botswana, and outreach to key groups-particularly youth-through traditional and social media.



In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in Botswana.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

Answer. The most effective U.S. diplomats are those who actively engage broadly with people throughout all parts of society in the country to which they are assigned.

The safety and well-being of our U.S. Mission staff is paramount. Thus, during COVID-19, especially during the recent third wave, we have limited our external engagement and official travel to mission critical. However, during normal times our U.S. Mission community is actively involved in external engagement with our government, civil society, and media partners and members of the international community throughout the country. In the meantime, we have been actively involved in external engagement on virtual platforms and in small group settings to maximize safety.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

Answer. If confirmed, and as health and safety conditions permit, I will encourage U.S. diplomats to engage actively, broadly and in-person with local populations. Until then, we will maintain active engagement through virtual media. If confirmed, I intend to regularly visit people in each district of Botswana and use those visits to facilitate contacts for other U.S. diplomats.

COVID-19 limited physical interactions and poor telecommunications infrastructure made virtual interactions difficult. However, nearly all Mission personnel have been vaccinated and the number of vaccinated Botswana is also increasing. This should improve our ability to access more people locally as in-person interactions will remain the preferred form of engagement in Botswana.

Once the COVID-19 situation improves we intend to fully re-engage with all our stakeholders throughout the country in-person. I will prioritize our Embassy's travel and site visits to our partners and beneficiaries in the field, on priority issues including our HIV/AIDS response and wildlife trafficking, to improve our collective understanding of the myriad issues at stake, underscore U.S. leadership on these issues, and to monitor U.S. Government funds.

Once we achieve a healthy threshold of vaccinated people, we plan to return to hosting more representational events as they have historically been well received, especially our Fourth of July celebrations. A resumption in issuing tourist and business visas will also increase our interaction as it will raise interest in the United States.

*Question.* In recent years, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an intergovernmental standards-setting body on anti-money laundering matters (AML), of which the United States is a member, identified Botswana as strategically deficient on AML. How is the United States supporting AML compliance efforts in Botswana and what steps will you take as ambassador to ensure the country continues to make improvements in this area?

Answer. The United States supports Botswana's efforts to strengthen its compliance with international AML standards, including through U.S. Department of Treasury technical assistance. If confirmed, I will work diligently to ensure the U.S. Embassy continues to support Botswana's efforts to bolster its anti-money laundering capacity.

*Question.* Do you think the Department should require chiefs of mission have experience in the region to which they are nominated?

**Answer.** The Department of State looks for officers who exemplify the six Core Values (accountability, character, community, diversity, loyalty, service) and the Department's Leadership and Management Principles (model integrity, plan strategically, be decisive and take responsibility, communicate, learn and innovate constantly, be self-aware, collaborate, value and develop people, manage conflict, and foster resilience) when selecting Chiefs of Mission. Candidates for COM positions must possess: outstanding interpersonal skills; deep regional and functional professional experience; demonstrated effectiveness in leading people, policies, and programs; proven skills in public diplomacy, navigating the interagency process, leading and motivating teams; talent for advocating U.S. foreign policy interests, including promoting democracy and good governance, rule of law, and economic interests; and the ability to operate at the senior U.S. national security policy level. The Department also seeks COM candidates who have championed diversity and will continue to foster diverse and inclusive teams and hold people accountable for performance and conduct. COM nominees are able to apply these values and principles in any geographic region to advance U.S. interests.

**Question.** With little experience in the sub-Saharan Africa, how are you approaching this assignment?

**Answer.** Mission Botswana has a strong team which I am looking forward to meeting and leading. I am confident that our respective experiences will complement each other.

I have engaged in an accelerated program to learn as much as possible as quickly as possible about the region through the Foreign Service Institute and consultations with regional experts. If confirmed, I will broaden that engagement to include regional experts throughout and outside the U.S. Government.

**Question.** Do you consider your lack of experience in the region a handicap in starting your position as COM?

**Answer.** I come to this assignment with a long history of success in leading people and managing programs and resources to achieve goals. Those experiences are directly applicable to this challenging assignment. I also approach this assignment cognizant that the region is richly complex, and I will need to seek advice, counsel, and recommendations from a range of experts from throughout and outside the U.S. Government in order to succeed.

The State Department prides itself in developing adaptable generalists who bring the breadth of their experience to every assignment. There are naturally strong arguments for having regional experts, but I am confident that I can bring new approaches to bear based on my experience at other posts. My work in the Department's Executive Secretariat also gave me a unique perspective on how Africa fits into our overall foreign policy, experience which I believe make me a strong advocate for the needs of Mission Botswana.

**Question.** If confirmed, would you consider your lack of experience in Africa in identifying a deputy chief of mission?

**Answer.** The Department of State provides a list of suitable Deputy Chief of Mission candidates for a Chief of Mission to select when those positions become open. If confirmed, I will select a DCM who compliments my skills, experience, and knowledge to ensure the U.S. Mission in Botswana is best placed to advance U.S. interests.

**Question.** Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Botswana? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

**Answer.** The strong U.S.-Botswana bilateral relationship facilitates a positive public diplomacy environment. The Botswana public is generally receptive to U.S. Government programs and messaging on our policy priorities. The challenges that do exist include capacity issues like an organization's ability to maintain and implement grants on behalf of the U.S. Government; the lack of a flourishing civil society which limits our ability to offer diverse programming; and the poorly developed press corps. However, journalists are eager to gain additional training and experiences through USG media exchange programs. COVID-19 has severely impacted the Mission's ability to conduct in person exchanges and outreach, and poor internet connectivity and availability make virtual programming challenging.

**Question.** How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

**Answer.** The Embassy's Public Affairs Office does a good job balancing these occasionally differing objectives. The Mission's strategic planning working group meets

monthly to discuss important policy objectives and to decide how to best deliver messaging to the public. Due to our strong bilateral relationship, the Botswana public is largely receptive to our messaging. As a Mission, we focus most of our messaging on our priority policy goals and objectives including our health partnerships under PEPFAR, women's empowerment, democracy and governance, environmental issues, regional security, and strengthening the economy. However, we also deliver messaging on Washington's policy priorities. The Botswana public is also receptive to these messages. Most public messaging is delivered via our influential social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter, but also via traditional media including radio, television, and newspaper interviews, which is dominated by state media.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HOWARD A. VAN VRANKEN BY SENATOR MIKE ROUNDS

*Question.* Botswana's HIV prevalence rate is improving but remains the fourth highest in the world, with 19.9 percent of adults HIV-positive in 2020. What is your assessment of the importance and effectiveness of U.S. support to combatting HIV/AIDS and other public health emergencies in Botswana, including the COVID pandemic?

*Answer.* U.S. support through PEPFAR has played and will need to continue to play an important role in supporting Botswana's HIV/AIDS response. While Botswana is a high HIV-burdened country, it has been making significant progress toward controlling its HIV epidemic and that control must be sustained. The health systems and capacities that have been strengthened for the HIV/AIDS response have also been instrumental in helping to respond to other health threats, including COVID-19. Botswana funds approximately 60 percent of its national response to HIV/AIDS and PEPFAR has strategically filled service delivery gaps and provided technical support to scale up and strengthen services.

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., via Video-conference, Hon. Brian Schatz presiding.

Present: Senators Schatz [presiding], Cardin, Murphy, Booker, Van Hollen, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN SCHATZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII**

Senator SCHATZ. Good morning. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here to consider four important nominees—Ambassador Laura Holgate to be the U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the U.N. and the U.S. Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency; Caryn McClelland to be the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam; David Young to be U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi; and Claire Pierangelo to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros.

Congratulations to the four of you on your nominations. Our thanks for your willingness to serve and to the members of your families because this is a family sacrifice as well.

I understand that our distinguished former colleague Senator Nunn is here to introduce Ambassador Holgate this morning. So we will turn to him first before any opening statements.

Senator Nunn?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. SAM NUNN, FORMER U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA**

Senator NUNN. Thank you very much, Chairman Schatz. Can you hear me okay? I am not—

Senator SCHATZ. We can hear you fine.

Senator NUNN. Great. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, Senator Cardin, and others on the Foreign Relations Committee.

I am honored to present Laura Holgate to this committee, and I strongly recommend that she be confirmed as our Nation's Ambassador to the Vienna Office of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Chairman, our Nation is fortunate to have a nominee with the experience, the knowledge, and the diplomatic skills that Laura would bring to this important role if confirmed by the Senate.

Laura has served more than 30 years in critical national security positions, both inside and outside government. She has broad experience. She has skilled leadership. Laura has sound judgment, and she has an international reputation as a very capable diplomat and persuasive advocate of U.S. priorities.

She also brings a background and spirit of nonpartisanship. I know that firsthand, Mr. Chairman, because I have worked closely with her, and she has worked so closely with Senators and staff over the years.

So, Mr. Chairman and Senator Hagerty, I have known Laura for almost all of her professional career. She was part of the Ash Carter Harvard University team that worked closely with my partner Senator Dick Lugar and with me to persuade Congress to create what became known as the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program.

Laura later led this program at the Pentagon and was part of the team that achieved one of the most significant global security steps of our era—Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine getting rid of all of their nuclear weapons and joining the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. So Laura has been at the forefront of policy innovation as well as implementation to reduce nuclear, biological, and chemical threats for really her entire career.

When the Nuclear Threat Initiative was created in the year 2001 by Ted Turner and by me, I knew Laura was one of the most capable people that we could ever find. So I persuaded her to become one of the first employees of NTI. Laura's strong relationships with colleagues in the U.S. departments and agencies on Capitol Hill and really around the world helped her work with others to improve nuclear security and keep weapons and weapons-usable material, most important, out of the hands of terrorists globally.

At NTI, Laura led a number of international threat reduction projects that helped make the world safer, and I am just going to mention a couple. In 2001, she directed NTI's important role in the removal of two bombs' worth of highly enriched uranium from a poorly secured facility in Serbia. This project, led by the U.S. Government with cooperation from Serbia, Russia, and the IAEA, laid the foundation for the U.S. Government's program known as the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

Most recently, she helped produce our NTI's Nuclear Security Index, which is recognized globally, I believe, as the premier open source resource and tool for tracking and improving the security of some of the deadliest materials in the world.

Importantly, Mr. Chairman and Senator Hagerty, Laura has continued her lifelong commitment to broadening the number of talented women in the nuclear security field, enhancing our national and our global security. Laura knows that giving women a fair shake strengthens our national security and also strengthens our Nation.

Laura served from 2009 to 2016 at the National Security Council, where she exhibited strong leadership in coordinating U.S. Government efforts to reduce weapon of mass destruction threats and prevent catastrophic terrorism. In particular, she led preparations for the four nuclear security summits under President Obama,

which made significant progress in securing nuclear materials globally.

We do not get much encouraging news, but Mr. Chairman, over the last 20 or so years under both parties, both Presidents, Republicans and Democrats, we have moved from 50 nations with nuclear material known as highly enriched uranium to 23 nations. Still a lot of challenges, but Laura has played a huge role in all of that.

In conclusion, Chairman Schatz and Senator Hagerty and members of the committee, I am confident that Laura is fully prepared to serve in this critical role. I strongly support her nomination by President Biden, and I urge the committee's support. And of course, I urge strongly her confirmation by the full Senate.

So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Senator Nunn, and thank you for your public service and leadership over many, many years.

We will now turn to my opening remarks, followed by Senator Hagerty.

Ambassador Holgate previously served as the U.S. Representative to the IAEA and Vienna Office of the U.N. in 2016. She also served as Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction, Terrorism, and Threat Reduction on the NSC, where she led the preparation of four nuclear security summits. The IAEA is facing a number of challenges to one of its core missions, ensuring that states comply with their nonproliferation treaty commitments to maintain only peaceful nuclear programs.

Iran is currently blocking IAEA access to many of its nuclear facilities, and North Korea moves ahead with its nuclear capabilities. Ambassador Holgate brings a wealth of experience to this important role, and we look forward to hearing about how she plans to engage the IAEA on nonproliferation matters and the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology to solve today's challenges, including climate change.

Pleased to see Caryn McClelland, a career Foreign Service officer, nominated as our next Ambassador to Brunei. In her distinguished career at State, she has served in senior-level positions in the Indo-Pacific and Europe as well as on oceans and international environmental issues and commercial and business affairs, all of which position her well for this assignment.

In particular, her background working energy issues, as we seek to work with Brunei to transition its economy to a zero-carbon future, is invaluable. I look forward to hearing her thoughts on that issue today.

I am also interested in her views on Brunei's approach to trafficking in persons and LGBTQ issues under Sharia law, issues this committee continues to monitor closely.

Next, we have David Young. David Young is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. He currently serves as the charge d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Lusaka, Zambia, and previously served as the charge d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa, and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria. His extensive experience in Southern Africa will serve him well if confirmed as our next Ambassador to Malawi.

At a time when many African countries are experiencing democratic backsliding, Malawi stands out as having achieved a democratic transition, thanks to the vigilance of its citizens and the independence of its institutions. Still, Malawi faces serious challenges, including widespread poverty, corruption, and the threat of climate change and natural disasters, such as Cyclone Idai in 2019.

And despite meeting its goals to control HIV/AIDS, Malawi still has one of the world's 10 highest HIV prevalence rates. I look forward to hearing how, with sufficient engagement and assistance, the United States can help Malawi turn its recent democratic success into long-term stability and prosperity.

Lastly, Claire Pierangelo is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. She currently serves as Principal Officer at the Consulate General in Lagos, Nigeria. Madagascar is facing difficult circumstances, and our Embassy urgently needs an experienced diplomat like Claire Pierangelo. High-stakes competition between political elites has dangerously destabilized Madagascar, with alleged coup and assassination plots pushing the country to the brink of a political crisis.

Even more alarming is Madagascar's vulnerability to climate change. Southern Madagascar is on the edge of a deadly famine, one of the first to be caused by climate change rather than man-made conflict, according to the U.N.

The Union of the Comoros, where Ms. Pierangelo would also represent the United States, if confirmed, faces governance challenges such as corruption and authoritarianism. It is becoming vulnerable to climate change, which is spurring irregular migration and affecting access to food and to water. I hope to hear how the United States can help these two countries to confront these challenges.

So while the four of you have a number of challenges ahead, I am confident that your knowledge and experience will serve you well as you take them upon confirmation.

I now turn to the ranking member, Senator Hagerty, for his opening comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. It is an honor to be with both of you. Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank the nominees for being here today. As you said, it is a great commitment, and it is a family commitment, and I appreciate and congratulate all of you for your nomination.

I would like to start with the nominee for Representative of the United States to the International Energy Agency. This position has a unique responsibility in advancing the security of the United States by promoting the safe, secure, and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

I would like to share just a little bit of my own background from this perspective. Not long after my arrival in Tokyo as the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, North Korea tested a thermonuclear weapon, highlighting for me the continued challenges and threats that we face from nuclear proliferation around the world.

The United States and our allies need to work very closely together on this, and I look forward to hearing from the nominee



about how best to prevent states from diverting their civil nuclear energy programs to military purposes as we approach the 21st century.

Next, I would like to turn to the nomination to be the Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. The United States and Brunei work closely together on a bilateral and regional agenda to tackle some of the most pressing issues, particularly in light of Brunei's role in ASEAN. I look forward to hearing from Caryn on ways to advance the U.S.-Brunei relationship. I have had the opportunity to work with Caryn in the past. I look forward to hearing from her today.

I would also like to turn to the nominee to be Ambassador to Malawi. The United States continues to partner with Malawi in order to advance accountable democratic governance, to foster private sector growth, and to advance health, education, energy, and environmental sectors in Malawi. I am interested in hearing from the nominee on these subjects when we get to them.

Last, I would like to focus on the nominee to be the Ambassador to Madagascar. And as Madagascar continues to play—transition toward a free democracy, the United States will play a critical role as one of the largest providers of assistance to Madagascar. I look forward to hearing from our nominee about ways to bolster the partnership between the United States and Madagascar.

Mr. Chairman, I yield my time back to you. Thank you.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Senator Hagerty.

All of our nominees will be provided an opportunity to give their testimony. We asked them to be as brief as possible. We are about to enter into a series of five votes to keep the Government open. So that if we can do this expeditiously, we will not have to hand the gavel back and forth.

So we will start our testimony from our nominees. We ask you to summarize your statement in 5 minutes or even less. All of your full statements will be included in the record without objection, and we will proceed in the order that you appear on the hearing notice, beginning with Ambassador Holgate.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE OF VIRGINIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC EN-  
ERGY AGENCY, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, AND TO  
BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
TO THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH  
THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR**

Ambassador HOLGATE. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today to serve—as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and other international organizations in Vienna.

I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for their confidence that they have placed in me, and I am especially grateful to Senator Nunn for his mentorship over the years and for his generous remarks this morning.

This is a critical moment for the United States' interests in the IAEA and other U.N. offices in Vienna. Iran, nuclear energy, space,

cyber crime, climate change, the opioid epidemic—none of these challenges can be adequately met by the United States acting alone. We helped create the U.N. system to align the interests and combine the strengths of multiple nations to address global challenges, and I firmly believe that these institutions are more necessary today than ever.

My experience inside and outside the United States Government has prepared me to play this vital role in Vienna. If I am confirmed in this position, I pledge to strengthen and broaden the partnerships with other member states and with the Vienna-based U.N. agencies and further develop the coalitions that we need to achieve U.S. priorities.

Key among these goals is to work to make sure the IAEA has the mandate and the capacity to address evolving challenges and the greater demands being placed upon it. The IAEA must have the technical, human, and financial resources it needs to implement global safeguards, including in critical areas such as Iran and to be prepared to return to North Korea should a monitoring agreement be reached there.

The IAEA's Directorates of Nuclear Energy, Safety and Security, and Safeguards must work better together to guide and monitor the safe and secure expansion of next-generation nuclear energy in a way that helps address climate change without increasing nuclear risk.

If confirmed, I will press international organizations in Vienna to continue to make progress on management reforms, transparency, and accountability. I will encourage intensified efforts towards achieving greater gender and regional diversity and greater representation of U.S. citizens, especially at senior and policymaking levels. And I will revitalize the International Gender Champions chapter, which I helped found during my previous appointment.

The achievement of these and other U.S. priorities will face the growing influence of Russia and China in multilateral organizations, and I believe the U.S. must be even more present, active, and visible at these fora. And if confirmed, I will strengthen the essential relationships with traditional diplomatic partners and work hard to build new connections with countries who are eager to see U.S. leadership on the issues they care about.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to return to the post I held so briefly and optimistic about the opportunities to re-engage the diplomatic and U.N. community, many of whom I know well. I am grateful to this committee for its attention and to my family, friends, and colleagues observing these proceedings online for their love, support, and inspiration as I pursue a return to public service.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Holgate follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and members of the committee: I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (U.N.), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other International Organizations in Vienna. I am grateful to President Biden and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

This is a critical moment for the United States' interests in the IAEA and the other U.N. offices in Vienna. Establishing confidence that Iran's nuclear activities are solely peaceful and remain so, strengthening the global nuclear architecture that promotes security of nuclear materials and facilities, supporting the safe and secure expansion of nuclear energy and other peaceful nuclear technologies, promoting effective efforts to combat transnational crime and corruption, and supporting innovative peaceful applications of space science demand active, focused leadership and engagement by the United States to promote our national interests and advance our contributions towards shared global priorities. Indeed, none of these challenges can be adequately met by the United States acting alone—we helped create the U.N. system to align the interests and combine the strengths of multiple nations to address global challenges, and I firmly believe that these institutions are more necessary today than ever.

My experience inside and outside the United States Government has prepared me to play this vital role in Vienna. I have focused on reducing nuclear, biological, and chemical threats since 1989, when I wrote my MIT masters thesis on chemical weapons destruction. From the Pentagon to the Energy Department to the White House, and—briefly—in Vienna, I have spent over 15 years designing, leading, and coordinating federal programs to reduce and eliminate nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In my 12 years at the nongovernment Nuclear Threat Initiative, I have developed and piloted creative solutions to nuclear challenges, many of which have been adopted by the United States and the IAEA.

Mr. Chairman, it was my distinct honor to have been supported by this committee and confirmed by the Senate in 2016 to the position for which I am now again being considered, and I served for six months in that role, leading UNVIE's talented team of Foreign Service Officers, locally engaged staff, and civil servants from multiple U.S. agencies.

If I am confirmed in this position, I pledge to strengthen and broaden the partnerships with other member states and with the Vienna-based U.N. agencies, and further develop the coalitions that we need to achieve U.S. priorities. Key among these goals is to work to make sure the IAEA has the mandate and the capacity to address evolving challenges and the greater demands being placed on it. The IAEA must have the technical, human, and financial resources it needs to implement global safeguards, including in critical areas such as Iran, and to be prepared to return to North Korea, should a monitoring agreement be reached there. The IAEA's Directorates of Nuclear Energy, Safety and Security, and Safeguards must work better together to guide and monitor the safe and secure expansion of next-generation nuclear energy in a way that helps address climate change without increasing nuclear risks. The IAEA's Directorates of Technical Cooperation and Nuclear Sciences and Applications must strengthen initiatives to safely and securely provide the benefits of nuclear technology to all, including innovations to speed the diagnosis of pandemic health threats.

If confirmed, I will press international organizations in Vienna to continue to make progress in management reforms, transparency, and accountability. I will encourage intensified efforts toward achieving greater gender and regional diversity, especially at the senior and policy-making levels, and revitalize the International Gender Champions chapter, which I helped found during my previous appointment.

The achievement of these and other U.S. priorities will face the growing influence of Russia and China in multilateral organizations. I believe the U.S. must be even more present, active, and visible in these fora and if confirmed, I will strengthen the essential relationships with traditional diplomatic partners and work hard to build new connections with countries who are eager to see U.S. leadership on issues they care about.

Mr. Chairman, I am eager to return to the post I held so briefly, and optimistic about the opportunities to reengage the diplomatic and U.N. community, many of whom I know well. I am grateful to this committee for its attention, and to my family, friends, and colleagues observing these proceedings on-line for their love, support, and inspiration as I pursue a return to public service.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.  
Ms. McClelland?

**STATEMENT OF CARYN R. MCCLELLAND OF CALIFORNIA, A  
CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE,  
CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AM-  
BASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Thank you very much.

Chairman Schatz, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to be here today before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee to advance U.S. interests in Brunei.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues whose support and guidance has been critical throughout my career. Most importantly, I want to recognize my daughter, Marlowe, who has shared this adventure with me for the last 13 years, and my parents, Robert and Catherine. Without their constant love, support, and encouragement, I would not be here today.

The U.S.-Brunei relationship has flourished over the years as we continuously work together to promote a more stable, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. We have enjoyed more than 170 years of close cooperation since our countries signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation in 1850. The United States was also among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Brunei after it became fully independent from the United Kingdom in 1984.

Our partnership with Brunei and our support for ASEAN centrality remain a cornerstone of our Indo-Pacific policy. The United States works closely with Brunei, especially during its role as the ASEAN chair in 2021. Brunei's time leading ASEAN coincided with the two most acute challenges to face ASEAN since its inception, the coup d'etat in Burma and COVID-19.

Brunei has been a steady and constructive partner on both issues. Our shared commitment to addressing some of the region's most pressing challenges will continue to yield cooperation, including on pandemic response, confronting the climate crisis, and resolving the conflict brought on by the coup and violence in Burma.

The robust security, economic, and people-to-people ties between our two countries are at the core of our relationship with Brunei. Our defense relationship is described in our Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation, and our military-to-military ties have become a cornerstone of the U.S.-Brunei bilateral relationship.

Prior to the pandemic, Brunei conveyed a strong desire to increase participation in military exercise and engagements with the United States, particularly with respect to enhancing maritime domain awareness. While many in-person defense exchanges have either been postponed or canceled due to the COVID-19 restrictions, Brunei remains committed to our defense partnership, as witnessed by its recent purchase of U.S.-origin defense equipment and its continued participation in our bilateral maritime exercises.

We have a shared interest in maintaining peace and stability, unimpeded lawful commerce, and respect for international law, including freedoms of navigation and overflight and other lawful ac-

tivities in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to strengthen our partnership in these areas with the Bruneian Government and work with Brunei to uphold the rules-based international order that has underpinned the region's security and prosperity.

We have also fostered a positive economic relationship with Brunei and enjoy a robust trade in goods such as aircraft, machinery, technology, iron, steel, and others. U.S. goods and services trade with Brunei totaled an estimated \$262 million in 2020.

We have frequently worked with Brunei and other regional economies to lower barriers to trade and investment across the Indo-Pacific region, leveling the playing field for U.S. companies and supporting job growth at home. If confirmed, I hope to further expand our bilateral trade relationship and advance an economic agenda that promotes shared prosperity, leverages economic potential, and builds inclusive and resilient economies, especially as the entire region works toward pandemic recovery.

If there is one thing the past year and a half has taught us, it is the true value of personal relationships. Our cultural, educational, and people-to-people ties with Brunei are critically important to advance both mutual understanding between our nations and our bilateral relationship. In a country with limited exposure to the United States, engaging the next generation of Bruneian leaders and change-makers is vital.

Prior to the pandemic, approximately 50 Bruneians participated annually in U.S.-sponsored exchange programs, including the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, the International Visitor Leaders Program, and Fulbright Program, and other professional and academic exchanges. The U.S. Embassy in Brunei also maintains a robust network of more than 300 alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs and works regularly with Bruneian civil society to collaborate on addressing issues of mutual concern, such as empowering women, promoting entrepreneurship, and protecting the environment, among other issues. If confirmed, I intend to leverage these exchange programs and other initiatives to broaden our people-to-people ties in the future.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear here today, and I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McClelland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARYN R. MCCLELLAND

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to be here before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for placing their confidence in me to serve the United States in Brunei. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee to advance U.S. interests in Brunei.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues, whose support and guidance has been critical throughout my career. Most importantly, I want to recognize my daughter Marlowe, who has shared this adventure with me for the last 13 years, and my parents Robert and Catherine. Without their constant love, support, and encouragement, I would not be here today.

The U.S.-Brunei relationship has flourished over the years as we continuously work together to promote a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. We have enjoyed more than 170 years of close cooperation since our countries signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation in 1850. The

United States was also among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Brunei after it became fully independent from the United Kingdom in 1984.

Our partnership with Brunei and our support for ASEAN centrality remain a cornerstone of our Indo-Pacific policy. The United States works closely with Brunei, especially during its role as the ASEAN Chair in 2021. Brunei's time leading ASEAN coincided with the two most acute challenges to face ASEAN since its inception—the coup d'état in Burma and COVID-19. Brunei has been steady and constructive partner on both issues. Our shared commitment to addressing some of the region's most pressing challenges will continue to yield cooperation, including on pandemic response, confronting the climate crisis, and resolving the conflict brought on by the coup and violence in Burma.

The robust security, economic, and people-to-people ties between our two countries are at the core of our relationship with Brunei. Our defense relationship is described in our Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation, and our military-to-military ties have become a cornerstone of the U.S.-Brunei bilateral relationship. Prior to the pandemic, Brunei conveyed a strong desire to increase participation in military exercises and engagements with the United States, particularly with respect to enhancing maritime domain awareness. While many in-person defense exchanges have either been postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, Brunei remains committed to our defense partnership as witnessed by its recent purchase of U.S.-origin defense equipment and its continued participation in our bilateral maritime exercises. We have a shared interest in maintaining peace and stability, unimpeded lawful commerce, and respect for international law, including freedoms of navigation and overflight and other lawful activities in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to strengthen our partnership in these areas with the Bruneian Government and work with Brunei to uphold the rules-based international order that has underpinned the region's security and prosperity.

We have also fostered a positive economic relationship with Brunei and enjoy a robust trade in goods such as aircraft, machinery, technology, iron, and steel, among others. U.S. goods and services trade with Brunei totaled an estimated \$262 million in 2020. We frequently work with Brunei and other regional economies to lower barriers to trade and investment across the Indo-Pacific region, leveling the playing field for U.S. companies and supporting job growth at home. If confirmed, I hope to further expand our bilateral trade relationship and advance an economic agenda that promotes shared prosperity, leverages economic potential, and builds inclusive and resilient economies—especially as the entire region works toward pandemic recovery.

If there is one thing the past year and a half has taught us, it is the true value of personal relationships. Our cultural, educational, and people-to-people ties with Brunei are critically important to advancing both mutual understanding between our nations and our bilateral relationship. In a country with limited exposure to the United States, engaging the next generation of Bruneian leaders and changemakers is vital. Prior to the pandemic, approximately 50 Bruneians participated annually in U.S. Embassy-sponsored exchange programs, including the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), the Fulbright Program and other professional and academic exchanges. The U.S. Embassy in Brunei also maintains a robust network of more than 300 alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs and regularly works with Bruneian civil society to collaborate on addressing issues of mutual concern, such as empowering women, promoting entrepreneurship, and protecting the environment, among other issues. If confirmed, I intend to leverage these exchange programs and other initiatives to broaden our people-to-people ties in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear here today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much, Ms. McClelland.  
Mr. Young?

**STATEMENT OF DAVID JOHN YOUNG OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

Mr. YOUNG. Chairman Schatz, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear

before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi.

I appreciate the confidence the President and my colleagues at the Department of State have shown in me through this nomination, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress and staff to advance U.S. interests in Malawi.

As I appear before you today, I wish to acknowledge the steadfast support I have received throughout my career from my wonderful life partner, my wife, Diane Weisz Young; and our children, Paul and Sarah; as well as my brothers, Keith and Terry; and in-laws Howard, Ann, and Gregg Weisz. The inspiration and love I have received from my family have inspired my public service across 32 years working for the Department of State.

The United States has a wide range of overlapping interests in Malawi, from strengthening democracy and promoting respect for human rights to support for market economics and inclusive growth, from investments in health and education to support for the country's peacekeeping efforts across the African continent. Our assistance programs mirror these interests, and our governance programming bolsters the country's democracy and helps our Malawian partners promote respect for human rights, combat corruption, and promote better performance by government agencies. Our bilateral trade and investment engagements hold promise to help lift Malawians out of poverty and to help American companies interested in investment.

Malawi today stands at a high point in its international profile and regional leadership. Its independent judiciary overturned the flawed 2019 presidential election, and the victory of President Lazarus Chakwera in 2020 marked only the second election re-run on the continent and the first to unseat an incumbent. The peaceful transition of power that followed was a testament to Malawians' commitment to democratic ideals.

A primary responsibility of any Ambassador is the protection of American citizens and American interests. In Malawi, that now includes joining the global fight to combat the spread of COVID-19. And for decades, we have supported Malawi's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. In so doing, we have saved millions of lives, and we have become the partner of choice for health programming. I was pleased to see the recent arrival in Lilongwe of more than 300,000 U.S.-provided Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine doses.

Malawi's heavy dependence on agriculture offers opportunities for U.S. Government and private sector engagement. American expertise can invest and advance efforts towards crop diversification, generate greater revenue, and fight poverty through improved yields.

Having worked on African issues for the past decade, and with more than 5 years' service in Southern Africa, I am also cognizant of the worker exploitation occurring in this sector. If confirmed, I will work with Malawian, American, and international partners to combat human trafficking and other human rights violations.

The United States has enjoyed decades of close collaboration with the Malawian military, and their defense force's apolitical posture following last year's—the 2019 election had a huge impact on the

transition to democracy. Malawian soldiers contribute to peacekeeping operations in some of the world's most dangerous places, and if confirmed, I hope to find new ways for Malawi to further enshrine itself as a net exporter of security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be honored to answer any questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Young follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID J. YOUNG

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi. I appreciate the confidence the President and my colleagues at the Department of State have shown in me through this nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and other members of Congress and staff to advance U.S. interests in Malawi.

As I appear before you today, I wish to acknowledge the steadfast support I have received throughout my career from my wonderful life partner, my wife Diane Weisz Young, and our children Paul and Sarah, as well as my brothers Keith and Terry, and in-laws Howard, Ann, and Gregg Weisz. The inspiration and love I have received from my family have inspired my public service across 32 years working for the Department of State.

The United States has a wide range of overlapping interests in Malawi—from strengthening democracy and promoting respect for human rights to support for market economics and inclusive growth, from investments in health and education to support for the country's peacekeeping efforts across the African continent. Our assistance programs mirror these interests. Our governance programming bolsters the country's democracy and helps our Malawian partners promote respect for human rights, combat corruption, and promote better performance by government agencies. Our bilateral trade and investment engagements hold promise to help lift Malawians out of poverty and to help American companies interested in investment. The U.S. encourages Malawi to move along a sustainable development trajectory that curves toward expanding trade as a means to increase prosperity. Our investments in Malawi's human capital help to build a healthy, educated, and self-reliant population.

Malawi today stands at a high point in its international profile and regional leadership. Its independent judiciary overturned the flawed 2019 presidential election, and the victory of President Lazarus Chakwera in 2020 marked only the second election re-run on the continent and the first to unseat an incumbent. The peaceful transition of power that followed was a testament to Malawians' commitment to democratic ideals. President Chakwera assumed leadership of the 16-member Southern African Development Community in August and in this role is helping contribute to pro-market, good governance reforms in Malawi and across the region. If confirmed, I will work to expand our partnership with President Chakwera's Government to advance these mutual interests.

The primary responsibility of any ambassador is the protection of American citizens and American interests. In Malawi, that now includes joining the global fight to contain the spread of COVID-19. For decades we have supported Malawi's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. In doing so we have saved millions of lives, and we have become the partner of choice for health programming. I was pleased to see the recent arrival in Lilongwe of more than 300,000 U.S.-provided Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine doses. If confirmed, I will serve as a faithful steward of these investments to ensure and expand the impact of our citizens' unmatched generosity.

Malawi's heavy dependence on agriculture offers opportunities for U.S. Government and private sector engagement. American expertise can advance efforts towards crop diversification, generate greater revenue, and fight poverty through improved yields. Having worked on African issues for the past decade, and with more than five years' service in southern Africa, I am also cognizant of the worker exploitation occurring in the sector. Malawi must do more to combat human trafficking, including protecting vulnerable workers and prosecuting those responsible for forced labor. If confirmed, I will work with Malawian, American, and international partners to support these efforts.

The United States has enjoyed decades of close collaboration with the Malawian military. The Malawian Defense Force's apolitical posture following the annulment of the 2019 elections and the subsequent transfer of power speaks to the strength



of its independence and its unshakeable commitment to democracy. Malawian soldiers contribute to peacekeeping operations in some of the world's most dangerous places. Like others, I mourn the death of a Malawian peacekeeper killed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in May this year. If confirmed, I hope to find new ways for Malawi to further enshrine itself as a net exporter of security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be honored to respond to any questions.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Young.  
Ms. Pierangelo?

**STATEMENT OF CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NONMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNION OF THE COMOROS**

Ms. PIERANGELO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros.

Please let me thank my family and my friends who have supported me throughout my career. My parents, the late Dr. Anthony and Mrs. Rose Cobino Pierangelo. My beloved sons, Luca and Nicholas, who have been my intrepid travel companions and my most avid supporters. And my brothers and their families and my friends, who have always made sure that we had a welcoming home to come home to.

Mr. Chairman, I have served across four continents. I have led teams working on economic reform, public health crises, violent extremism, radicalism, terrorism, and the challenges posed by the lack of democratic institutions and the rule of law. As a San Diego native, I was an avid student of the challenges of wildlife conservation through the work of the San Diego Zoo Global Wildlife Alliance, and I have carried that passion with me throughout my career.

If confirmed to be concurrently Ambassador to Madagascar and Ambassador to the Union of the Comoros, I will safeguard U.S. interests, and I will strengthen our relationship with the peoples and governments in these nations. We enjoy positive relationships with Madagascar and Comoros as we partner with them to address their many domestic, regional, and global challenges.

We have an opportunity in the next few years to support the Malagasy and Comorian people in their upcoming presidential elections in order to reinforce democratic principles, to advocate for full and open political participation, and to press for the protection of human rights. Strong democratic institutions and stability are the precursors to resilient and sustainable development.

If confirmed, my team and I would support the independent democratic aspirations in Madagascar and Comoros and would seek to counter malign influences and disinformation.

These two nations sit at the maritime crossroads between the Indian Ocean, Africa, and the Atlantic, and they deserve our in-

creased strategic attention. The sea lanes linking these regions are an important geostrategic maritime transit route. The region's largest deep-water port is situated at the northern tip of Madagascar. Oil and gas reserves in the area, including potential large reserves off of the coast of Madagascar, have attracted interest and investment from countries who do not always prioritize these nations' long-term security interests.

Stability in the region is also threatened by climate change, creating serious humanitarian, economic, and environmental crises. An extended drought in Southern Madagascar has thrown 1.4 million people into food insecurity and has caused internal migration that threatens unique ecosystems. COVID-19 has brought significant health and economic challenges, and there is an urgent need for additional vaccine doses.

Of course, if confirmed, encouraging U.S. trade, protecting U.S. investment, and promoting greater economic self-sufficiency would be top priorities. We have robust development assistance programs and collaborate closely with other international partners.

If confirmed, I can commit to advancing these efforts, as well as combatting threats to Madagascar's biodiversity. I would look forward to working with the Peace Corps to resume its historically vibrant programs in Madagascar and in Comoros.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today. If confirmed, I would serve proudly as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros. I welcome advice from you and your staff on United States' interests in this region.

And one of the highlights of my Foreign Service career has always been facilitating the visits of Members of Congress in the countries where I served, and I would hope to host you and/or your staff in the future.

And I welcome any questions. Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Pierangelo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CLAIRE PIERANGELO

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and to the Union of the Comoros.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank my family and friends who have supported me throughout my career: My parents, the late Dr. Anthony and Mrs. Rose Pierangelo, who lived their lives helping others and who would have been thrilled to be here today. My beloved sons Luca and Nicholas Pierangelo, who have been my intrepid travel companions and my most avid supporters. My brothers and their families and my friends who always made sure we had a welcoming home upon our return.

Mr. Chairman, I have served across four continents, from Cold War Europe to a newly independent Haiti to a Southeast Asia in transition and now in a challenged West Africa. These were often tough, sometimes dangerous environments. I have led teams working on economic reform, public health crises, violent extremism and terrorism, and the challenges posed by lack of democratic institutions and rule of law. I have worked closely with our Department of Defense colleagues on disaster management, maritime security and as an assistant professor at the National War College. As a San Diego native, I was an avid student of the challenges of wildlife conservation through the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and I have carried that passion throughout my career.

If confirmed to be concurrently Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and Ambassador to the Union of the Comoros, I will safeguard U.S. interests and

strengthen our relationships with the peoples and governments in these nations. We enjoy positive relationships with Madagascar and Comoros as we partner with them to address their many domestic, regional and global challenges.

With the upcoming presidential elections in Madagascar in 2023, and in Comoros in 2024, we have an opportunity to partner with the Malagasy and Comorian people to reinforce democratic principles, to advocate for full and open political participation, and to press for the protection of human rights. Fair and transparent electoral processes would strengthen democracy and support stability, a precursor to fostering resilient and sustainable development. If confirmed, my team would support the independent democratic aspirations in Madagascar and Comoros and would seek to counter malign influence and disinformation.

These two nations sit at the maritime crossroads of the Indian Ocean, Africa and the Atlantic and deserve our increased strategic attention. The sea lanes linking Madagascar, Comoros and East Africa are an important geostrategic transit route for tankers and other maritime traffic. The region's largest deep-water port is situated at the northern tip of Madagascar. Oil and gas reserves in the area, including potential large reserves off western Madagascar itself, are attracting interest and investment from countries who do not always prioritize these nations' long-term security.

Stability in the region is also threatened by climate change, creating serious humanitarian, economic, and environmental crises. Southern Madagascar has suffered an extended drought, throwing more than 1.4 million people into food insecurity and causing internal migration that threatens unique ecosystems. COVID-19 has brought significant health and economic challenges to Madagascar and Comoros and there is an urgent need for additional vaccine doses to protect their populations and combat this threat to the global community.

If confirmed, encouraging U.S. trade, protecting U.S. investment, and promoting greater economic self-sufficiency would be top priorities. The U.S. Mission to Madagascar, largely through USAID, has robust development assistance programs, and collaborates closely with other international partners. Our efforts are focused on providing basic healthcare, primary education, and emergency food aid in the south; combatting wildlife trafficking and corruption; and promoting good governance, and economic development. If confirmed, I commit to advancing these efforts, as well as combatting threats to Madagascar's biodiversity, including illegal fishing, deforestation, and unsustainable harvesting of its unique flora and fauna. I would look forward to working with the Peace Corps to resume its historically vibrant programs in Madagascar and Comoros.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. If confirmed, I would serve proudly as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and the Union of the Comoros. I welcome advice from you and your staff on the United States' interests in Madagascar and Comoros. One of the highlights of my Foreign Service Career has been facilitating the visits of members of Congress to the countries where I served and I hope to host you or your staff in the future. I welcome any questions.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you to all of our testifiers.

Before I start my own questions, I have some general questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch. I would like to ask each of you to provide a simple yes or no answer to the following questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff, when invited?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Do you commit to keeping the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation when policies are being developed, and not just providing notification after the fact?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Yes.

Ms. MCCLELLAND. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Yes.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

My first question is for Ambassador Holgate. Ambassador, one of the most difficult issues that the IAEA has to manage is verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear program. The Director General of the IAEA said in a recent report that Iran is stonewalling its investigation into past activities and jeopardizing important monitoring work. Can you talk about how the United States can best support the IAEA's effort to monitor Iran?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I agree that this is a critical requirement and important mission of the U.S. team, both here in Washington and in Vienna. And I know that the team has been working very closely with Director General Grossi to be sure he has everything he needs to do that in the way of political as well as financial and technical support.

I think it is critical, too, for—if I were to be confirmed, for the U.S. Ambassador in Vienna to lead coordination with the other diplomatic community there in Vienna and to provide support and information as requested by the agency to help them do their work. This is obviously a whole-of-government effort that is led here in Washington. I have not been fully briefed on the details of the U.S. policies and decision-making there, but I know what it is like to be the Vienna face of those policies, and if confirmed, I am fully ready to play that role.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

The IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative has helped more than 150 countries harness nuclear science to address real world challenges. We have seen radiotracers help track marine plastics, radiolabeled molecules help to improve vaccines against infectious diseases, and climate is another area where there is a lot of potential not just in terms of nuclear energy. Can you talk about how the IAEA can help countries to use nuclear science and technology to combat the climate crisis?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Mr. Chairman, I think that is a really important and fascinating topic. When I was in Vienna before, that was my very first visit offsite was to the U.N.'s—the IAEA laboratory in Seibersdorf outside Vienna, where they are undertaking this research, and the U.S. has been at the forefront of raising funds to update that laboratory. The new so-called renewals lab is now operating and has significantly increased its capability to train member states' representatives in some of the technologies that you

have described, whether sterile insect technique or isotopic tracing or the full range of application of nuclear science.

I am proud that the U.S. Government has been supportive of this effort through the Peaceful Uses Initiative and through its voluntary contributions to the technical cooperation budget. And if confirmed, I would continue to advocate for such contributions and to make sure that those who receive the contributions understand that they come from the United States and that they represent support by the United States of their development ambition.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Chairman Schatz.

And I would like to come back to the first question that you brought up with Ms. Holgate pertaining to Iran and their malign behavior. The Biden administration is seeking to rejoin the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. It is an agreement that did not receive the advice and consent of the United States Senate. It is an agreement that I feel is deeply flawed.

Since 2018, the IAEA, which is the world's nuclear watchdog, has continued to investigate new evidence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran. In 2019 and in 2020, the IAEA found evidence of undeclared uranium particles in three sites in Iran, which could indicate potential covert Iranian nuclear activities.

So far, Iran has stalled the IAEA's investigation, including their access to nuclear science. Iran has removed and covered up evidence, and Iran has provided so-called explanations that the nuclear watchdog deems not technically credible.

Under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Iran is required to declare to IAEA inspectors its use of nuclear material, its sites where it uses such material, and sites where it carries out sensitive nuclear activities. And I want to be clear here, Iran's obligations to the IAEA are completely separate from the nuclear deal, and they endure regardless of what happens with the Iran nuclear deal status.

So, Ambassador Holgate, I would like to come back and just be clear. Do you agree that Iran is actively frustrating, even stonewalling, the IAEA's ongoing investigation of undeclared Iranian nuclear activities?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Ranking Member Hagerty, I do understand that that is the case.

Senator HAGERTY. I am glad you agree. Do you believe that Iran is in compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty?

Ambassador HOLGATE. I think the issues that are going on with both current and historical activities create grave concerns about Iran's commitment to safeguards and to peaceful uses, and that is why the United States has been supporting Director General Grossi's efforts to return Iran to a compliance state with its safeguards requirements.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I certainly think what you are saying is that they are not in compliance. They certainly cannot be in compliance if they are not willing to answer IAEA questions on undeclared nuclear activities. Would you agree with that?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Sir, I have not been briefed on the intelligence details of the current concerns about Iran. So I would hesitate to draw a strong conclusion on that.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, let us move on. The IAEA's Director General has issued several reports on Iran that make it clear that that IAEA has serious outstanding concerns regarding possible undeclared nuclear material and the activities that are taking place in Iran today. Due to Iran's lack of cooperation, the fact that Iran is limiting verification and access by international nuclear inspectors, the IAEA's Director General has reported that the agency is having a difficult time ensuring that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful.

And in a recent development, the IAEA said last Sunday that Iran has failed to honor the terms of a deal struck 2 weeks ago to let international nuclear inspectors into Iran to access and repair equipment for monitoring nuclear materials and activities. Again, activities that likely are being diverted to military purposes.

Iran and the IAEA have made this recent deal as Iran faced the prospect of a formal censure by the IAEA Board of Governors for its obstructionism. So, Ambassador Holgate, if you are confirmed, do you commit to advocating for the United States to use its voice and vote on the 35-nation IAEA Board of Governors in order to hold Iran accountable for its ongoing noncompliance with its nuclear obligations and to censure Iran for repeatedly frustrating the international watchdog's ongoing investigation of Iran's undeclared nuclear activities?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Senator Hagerty, I can certainly say that, if confirmed, I will use the U.S. voice and vote in the Board of Governors to promote a full return of Iran to IAEA safeguards compliance and to make sure the Director General has the tools he needs to do that.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, I appreciate that. I think it is incumbent upon the United States to hold egregious proliferators like Iran accountable. The position that you will be going into will provide that opportunity, and I certainly hope and expect that you will use every bit of United States influence to make certain that we hold actors like Iran and their malign behavior to full account.

Thank you, and I yield my time back, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

And to all four of our nominees, thank you for your careers of public service. We very much appreciate your willingness to continue to serve our country. You all are certainly very well experienced and qualified for the positions that you have been nominated to.

Ms. Holgate, I am going to continue with the IAEA for one moment, if I might? In July, I did have an opportunity to be in Vienna, and I did meet with the Director General Grossi. And I must tell you, I am impressed by his leadership at the IAEA. But I want to come at this from a little bit different position.

He made an interesting observation, and I want to get your view on this. That the IAEA itself, you talk about having the capacity to deal with, for example, the JCPOA, and he pointed out that the

IAEA was constructed based upon member countries being friendly or cooperative to how the IAEA would operate, that they would be willing partners.

Well, obviously, Iran is not a willing partner. So my question to you, and this follows up a little bit on Senator Hagerty's point. Do we need to look at some changes at the IAEA, recognizing that Iran is not an honest broker here, that they will never be an honest broker, and that we need to have the authorities within IAEA that would not necessarily be needed in a country that is more cooperative?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Thank you, Senator Cardin. That is a very interesting question and one that I have not yet discussed with the State Department colleagues that I would be working with, if confirmed.

The IAEA is nested within the broader U.N. system, and the responsibilities for actions, mandatory actions are sited with the U.N. Security Council. The IAEA Board of Governors has the opportunity to refer issues to the Security Council when they are not available to be addressed within the mandate of the agency.

I think there are interesting opportunities with the upcoming Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference to consider whether the underlying treaty that governs these issues can be strengthened and accountability tools can be added or improved. And I would look forward to participating in any conversations around those topics, if I am confirmed in this role.

Senator CARDIN. Would you commit to this committee that when you are confirmed, that you will come back to us with your evaluation as to the capacity of the IAEA to be able to enforce agreements in regards to Iran so that we have an honest—it can be done in an open or closed session, but that you would share with us your belief as to how effective the IAEA can be under its arrangement under United Nations in monitoring the activities of Iran?

Ambassador HOLGATE. Senator, if I am confirmed, I would be happy to make that commitment to you and the committee.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Ms. Pierangelo, I want to talk a little bit about Madagascar and also Comoros. Both countries have significant corruption problems. President Biden has indicated that corruption is a core national concern of the United States, a national security interest concern of the United States.

We are asking those missions that are in countries that have significant challenges on corruption to build up their internal capacity within the mission to deal with corruption. So do we have your commitment that this will be a high priority, if you are confirmed, to be able to have the capacity within your mission to understand the challenges in the countries and to be able to provide technical help and assistance for anti-corruption measures?

Ms. PIERANGELO. Senator Cardin, I would look forward to that, if confirmed. You know, fundamentally accountable institutions sustained by a commitment to the rule of law, transparency are essential to creating a climate whether you are talking about political stability or economic stability. We need to have that as a precursor.

So our mission I know is working very diligently on this issues, and sir, we would welcome any additional resources. And I cer-

tainly would commit that once I am on the ground, if confirmed, I will do my own personal assessment with my team to assess what we need and how we would deploy it.

So, thank you, sir. That would be very welcome.

Senator CARDIN. And I will just end on this. There is legislation that our committee has already acted on that would require our missions to rate how well countries are doing in regards to fighting corruption based upon a tier rating system similar to what we use in trafficking in humans. I would ask that you help us and support us in getting that type of legislation to the finish line.

I recognize you will not have a direct role to play in this. Believe me, I understand that. But if we had that in place, then it makes it easier in your bilateral relationship to point out that this is a policy requirement that requires attention in every country that the United States have missions.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back my time.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Senator Cardin. Do we have Senator Van Hollen online?

[No response.]

Senator SCHATZ. Senator Booker?

[No response.]

Senator SCHATZ. Any other members of the Foreign Relations Committee wishing to ask the nominees any questions?

[No response.]

Senator SCHATZ. Ranking Member Hagerty, anything else?

Senator HAGERTY. I would just applaud your chairmanship today, Senator Schatz. I appreciate all the candidates being with us.

I am going to submit a number of additional questions through the QFR process, and I want to congratulate you on a very well-conducted hearing.

Thank you.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you very much. Pleasure to work with you, and thanks to the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as well as my staff and everybody for being willing to serve, and especially their families.

If there are no more questions for our witnesses, the record will remain open until the close of business on Friday, October 1 for questions. I would urge the nominees, if you get questions for the record, to answer them fully and expeditiously so that we can consider your nominations at a business meeting and get you marked up and get you confirmed as quickly as possible.

With the thanks of the committee for your willingness to serve, this hearing is adjourned.

Ambassador HOLGATE. Thank you very much.

Ms. PIERANGELO. Thank you, sir, and to all the members of the committee, thank you for your time.

[Whereupon, at 10:46 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]



### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Serious concerns have been raised about the ability of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to verify and monitor Iran's comprehensive safeguard agreement. Iran continues to stonewall the IAEA's investigation into undeclared nuclear materials and activities that were uncovered in 2018 and is refusing to allow the IAEA to access critical monitoring equipment. The Joint Statement between Iran and IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi issued on September 12th, 2021 was wholly inadequate in addressing these issues.

- How is Iran's stonewalling of the IAEA, which it has suffered no penalty for, impacting the credibility of the agency?

*Answer.* I believe the IAEA is highly credible in the implementation of its verification "watchdog" mission and it is in the U.S. interest that it remain so. For that reason, if confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions.

*Question.* What impact is Iran's refusal to cooperate with the IAEA having on the global non-proliferation regime?

*Answer.* IAEA safeguards are implemented for the purpose of providing assurances regarding the peaceful use of nuclear energy and are an essential element of maintaining the credibility and effectiveness of the global nonproliferation regime. Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. Iran's failure to provide substantive or technically credible responses to the IAEA's questions related to possible undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran is cause for serious concern because of both what it suggests for Iran's intentions and its implications for the global non-proliferation regime. Thus, it is vital that Iran provide such responses to the IAEA, and if confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors without delay.

*Question.* Iran is currently denying IAEA requests for access to nuclear sites and is resisting providing the IAEA with a complete nuclear declaration. Do you think other states will follow Iran's example?

*Answer.* Article III of the Non-Proliferation Treaty requires all non-nuclear weapons states to accept IAEA safeguards in order to ensure that nuclear material is not diverted for non-peaceful uses. If confirmed, I will continue the United States' long-standing support for the IAEA and its mandate to ensure that all countries, including Iran, adhere to their safeguards obligations.

*Question.* Why was a resolution criticizing Iran's unwillingness to cooperate with the IAEA withdrawn before the last IAEA Board of Governors meeting?

*Answer.* As I was outside of government at the time of the last IAEA Board of Governors meeting, I am not in a position to comment on any internal deliberations among Board members regarding potential actions related to the IAEA's ongoing attempts to engage Iran on unresolved questions related to its safeguards agreement. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* In your opinion what impact are Iran's limitations on the IAEA having on the agency's ability to monitor and verify Iran's nuclear program?

*Answer.* I share the concerns reported by IAEA Director General in September that Iran's decision to stop implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, including the Additional Protocol, is seriously undermining the IAEA's verification and monitoring activities. If confirmed, I will work to press Iran to provide the IAEA with full and immediate cooperation as it seeks to both monitor and verify Iran's JCPOA nuclear commitments as well as resolve ongoing questions related to Iran's safeguards agreement.

*Question.* The IAEA monitors Iranian compliance with the July 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) provisions. Some the provisions of the nuclear

agreement require addition IAEA access beyond those of Iran's comprehensive safeguards agreement. Tehran has stopped complying with many of these provisions while at the same time vastly expanding its nuclear program.

- Do you believe the United States should rejoin the JCPOA if Iran refuses to allow a full IAEA investigation into the undeclared nuclear materials and activities it uncovered in 2018?

Answer. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon, and that the JCPOA is still the best diplomatic option for addressing the threats posed by Iran's nuclear activities. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions.

*Question.* Is the current gap in IAEA monitoring of Iranian centrifuge activities increasingly the level of uncertainty around how many and what types of centrifuges Iran has produced and assembled this year?

Answer. The IAEA Director General reported in September that lack of access to the IAEA's monitoring equipment is seriously compromising the IAEA's ability to maintain continuity of knowledge over Iran's nuclear-related activities. If confirmed, I will work to press Iran to provide the IAEA with full and immediate cooperation as it seeks to both monitor and verify Iran's JCPOA nuclear commitments as well as resolve ongoing questions related to Iran's safeguards agreement.

*Question.* Do you agree that Iran over the last 12 months has made significant technical progress in key nuclear areas? If so will this progress require alterations to the JCPOA in order to sustain the original objective of a 12 month breakout time?

Answer. Iran's continued efforts to advance its nuclear program, and in particular its uranium enrichment capabilities, are a cause for serious concern. Although I defer to the intelligence community on questions related to the impact of Iran's nuclear advances on its fissile material breakout timeline, the Biden administration has been clear that such advances make it more difficult to restore the nonproliferation benefits originally achieved by the JCPOA. If confirmed, I will work with Special Envoy Malley and his team to ensure the strongest possible IAEA verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear program.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Iranian officials have recently sexually harassed and intimidated female IAEA inspectors. What should we do if this behavior continues?

Answer. I am very concerned about reports that IAEA inspectors are experiencing inappropriate treatment at the hands of Iranian security personnel. Such behavior and any attempt to intimidate IAEA inspectors is unacceptable and, if confirmed, I will work in close coordination with other members of the IAEA Board of Governors to ensure that the Board takes appropriate action in the event that the Director General reports additional incidents. The IAEA Director General and the Secretariat will have the United States' full support on these matters.

*Question.* On 9/26/2021, the IAEA said Iran had failed to honor the terms of a deal struck two weeks ago letting IAEA inspectors in to service monitoring equipment in the country. Iran and the IAEA had made this recent deal as Iran faced the prospect of a formal censure by the IAEA Board of Governors.

- Given Iran's failure to abide by this agreement, should the U.S. use its voice and vote to pursue a formal censure by the Board of Governors?
- Why or why not?

Answer. The Biden administration has been clear that Iran must follow through on the commitments it made in the September 12 Joint Statement with the IAEA, including by providing the IAEA with needed access to service its monitoring equipment and inviting the Director General to Tehran for discussions related to unresolved safeguards issues. If confirmed, I will work in close coordination with Special Envoy Malley as well as the IAEA Board of Governors to insist that Iran provides full and immediate cooperation with the IAEA as it seeks to verify both Iran's safeguards agreement as well as its JCPOA nuclear-related activities.

*Question.* The IAEA said in a September report, “Since 23 February 2021, the Agency’s verification and monitoring of activities have been seriously undermined as a result of Iran’s decision to stop the implementation of its nuclear related commitments.” Given this statement, how much confidence can we have in present Iranian negotiations and statements?

*Answer.* I share the concerns reported by IAEA Director General in September that Iran’s decision to stop implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, including the Additional Protocol, is seriously undermining the IAEA’s verification and monitoring activities. If confirmed, I will work to press Iran to provide the IAEA with full and immediate cooperation as it seeks to both monitor and verify Iran’s JCPOA nuclear commitments as well as resolve ongoing questions related to Iran’s safeguards agreement.

*Question.* Will you commit to supporting a thorough IAEA investigation in Iran to ascertain the nature and status of its nuclear program, including necessary requests for access to military sites, personnel, and documentation, to ensure the end of Tehran’s nuclear weapons program and activities?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA’s ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material, including all requests for information and access deemed necessary by the Director General and the Secretariat. As the IAEA Board of Governors has made clear, Iran must provide full cooperation with the IAEA without further delay.

*Question.* What would you do to encourage the IAEA to investigate Iran’s potentially ongoing nuclear weaponization work, which the nuclear archive indicates Tehran hid and dispersed at research institutes, universities, and military sites after 2003?

*Answer.* Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA’s verification and monitoring activities in Iran, including the IAEA’s ongoing efforts to investigate questions related to undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran.

*Question.* Considering Iran’s failure to address the IAEA’s questions on undeclared nuclear materials and activities, do you believe Iran is in compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty?

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about Iran’s compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in light of the IAEA’s ongoing safeguards investigations and Iran’s failure to provide the IAEA with the cooperation necessary to resolve them. Iran must engage and cooperate fully with the IAEA in a way that leads to credible, concrete progress and toward resolution of these issues. I have full confidence in the IAEA to pursue any indications of undeclared or diverted nuclear material that could contribute to any renewed Iranian pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Do you think the Biden administration should commit to not lifting or waving sanctions on Iran until Iran—among other demands—fully and credibly complies with the IAEA’s requests to resolve the outstanding issues on undeclared nuclear materials and activities?

*Answer.* I share the views of the Biden administration and the IAEA Board of Governors that Iran must provide full cooperation with the IAEA without further delay. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA’s ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and will work closely with our partners and allies as well as the IAEA to ensure that Iran provides the IAEA with the necessary cooperation.

*Question.* Is it possible for the IAEA Board of Governors to truly hold Iran accountable, if the Board’s main recourse is snapping back all U.N. sanctions on Iran and ending JCPOA—a deal that the Biden administration has said it hopes to revive?

*Answer.* The IAEA Board of Governors has the ability to hold Iran accountable to its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA and its NPT-related safeguards obligations, including through authorities it has under the IAEA Statute with respect to safeguards compliance and its actions in support of the JCPOA participants. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the IAEA makes full use of its authorities as it works to monitor Iran’s implementation of its JCPOA nuclear-related commitments and continues its investigation of questions related to undeclared nuclear material in Iran.

*Question.* Doesn't the desire to revive the JCPOA actually create a dynamic that discourages IAEA Member States from taking Iran's safeguards violations to the U.N. Security Council?

*Answer.* Iran's legal obligations under its safeguards agreement with the IAEA are separate from its JCPOA nuclear-related commitments. Iran is obligated under its NPT-required safeguards agreement to declare to the IAEA nuclear material and nuclear activities in Iran. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's ongoing investigation in Iran into indications of possible undeclared nuclear material and, along with the rest of the international community, expect full Iranian cooperation with inspectors-without delay-as the IAEA works toward conclusions.

*Question.* What would you do to end Iran's use of extortion—escalating to take threatening and dangerous actions, then demanding concessions from the U.S. to solve and problem it created?

*Answer.* Iran's nuclear escalations have implications for both its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA and its legal obligations under its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that our response to Iran's actions with respect to its nuclear program is informed by timely and detailed reporting from the IAEA.

*Question.* What is your position on the use of the snapback mechanism at the U.N.? Does the U.S. have the authority to call for its use?

*Answer.* The snapback mechanism was designed to provide leverage to help ensure Iran performed its commitments under the JCPOA. The Trump administration invoked snapback in a way that was never contemplated by the deal, namely after unilaterally exiting it. Virtually none of our allies or partners recognized this invocation of snapback. The Biden administration believes that the United States will be in a stronger position to counter the full range of threats posed by Iran, including its nuclear program, by working in close concert with our allies and partners. On specific questions related to the legal authority available to the United States in connection with the snapback mechanism under U.N. Security Council resolution 2231, I would defer to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations as well as the Department's Office of the Legal Adviser.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* Iran has made a number of breaches of its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) after President Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the agreement in 2018 and re-imposed sanctions. In your view, is a diplomatic resolution or the use of military force the most effective and lasting way to prevent a nuclear armed Iran?

*Answer.* The administration believes that diplomatic efforts to achieve a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA are the best path forward at this time to prevent Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* On Sept. 15th, the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia announced AUKUS—a trilateral security agreement that will supply Australia with nuclear propelled submarines. As the U.S. Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), will you encourage Australia to adopt the Additional Protocol to its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and/or take other steps that require strong nonproliferation standards for other non-nuclear weapon countries who may seek a nuclear propulsion program of their own?

*Answer.* Australia was the first country to bring into force an Additional Protocol to its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, doing so in December 1997. As President Biden said in announcing this partnership: "Our governments will now launch an 18-month consultation period to determine every element of this program . . . We'll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency." As announced, over the 18-month consultation period, the shared objective of maintaining the strength of the non-proliferation regime and Australia's exemplary non-proliferation credentials will be central to the three countries' discussions. If confirmed, I will work to reinforce this effort.

*Question.* I am concerned about press reports that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is moving quickly to master the early stages of the nuclear fuel cycle with coopera-

tion from China and outside IAEA safeguards. If confirmed, what specific steps will you take to encourage Saudi Arabia to rescind its Small Quantities Protocol and adopt the Additional Protocol?

*Answer.* Saudi Arabia is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a strong security partner of the United States. Under the NPT, it is obligated not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept IAEA safeguards to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material to weapons purposes. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that Saudi Arabia continues to abide by these important nonproliferation obligations and encourage Saudi Arabia to take further steps, including rescinding its Small Quantities Protocol and bringing into force an Additional Protocol.

*Question.* Given Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's statement in 2018 that "if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible," what concerns, if any, do you have that a maturing Saudi Arabia nuclear program would remain exclusively peaceful?

*Answer.* Saudi Arabia is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a strong security partner of the United States. Under the NPT, it is obligated not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept IAEA safeguards to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material to weapons purposes. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that Saudi Arabia continues to abide by these important nonproliferation obligations and encourage Saudi Arabia to take further steps, including rescinding its Small Quantities Protocol and bringing into force an Additional Protocol.

*Question.* As the Senior Director on the National Security Council in the Obama administration, you served as the "Sherpa" or organizer for the Nuclear Summit process that saw roughly fifty countries eliminate and secure fissile material from their civilian stocks. Given the difficulty to reach consensus in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cutoff treaty, would you support an ad hoc convening of countries, modeled on the Nuclear Security Summit process, to lead countries to make commitments that secure and reduce highly enriched uranium and plutonium, and perhaps weapons, from their non-civilian stocks?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue efforts to cooperate with countries aimed at securing and eliminating excess weapon-usable nuclear material, including by encouraging additional subscribers and actions under IAEA Information Circular (INFCIRC) 912 "Joint Statement on Minimizing and Eliminating the Use of Highly Enriched Uranium in Civilian Applications" and related INFCIRCS, such as INFCIRC/908 "Joint Statement on Mitigating Insider Threats" and INFCIRC/909 "Joint Statement on Transport Security of Nuclear Materials," that resulted from the Nuclear Security Summit process. I will also support the IAEA's convening additional International Conferences on Nuclear Security and Review Conferences of the Amended Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, which create opportunities for countries to make pledges regarding their voluntary application of IAEA nuclear security guidelines to non-civilian nuclear materials. Similarly, national reporting under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 offers a platform for national statements regarding non-civilian nuclear materials. If confirmed, I would encourage states to follow the lead of the United States in reporting on their measures for securing and reducing non-civilian nuclear materials.

*Question.* If confirmed, in what ways will you work to educate Members of Congress and the American public about the technical advances of the International Monitoring Stations (IMS) and the International Data Centre since the U.S. Senate last considered a resolution of ratification of CTBT in 1999? Based on your experience, what degree of confidence does the United States have that it can detect a low-yield nuclear explosion and how would unlocking the on-site inspection provision of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), through entry into force, assist with verification?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with Congress to highlight the significant technological advances in both the U.S. National Technical Means (NTM) as well as the capabilities of the International Monitoring System (IMS) that the CTBT establishes. The IMS is now nearly 90 percent complete, composed of more than 300 facilities, employing four separate technologies, that provide data and analytical products to the CTBT signatory States. While no remote monitoring system has the capability to detect nuclear explosions with extremely low yield, once in force the treaty's on-site inspection capability will allow the deployment of inspectors using a broad array of close-in techniques and equipment to look for evidence of a nuclear explosion.

*Question.* If North Korea has observed a moratorium on nuclear test explosions since 2017 but it remains one of the eight Annex II countries who have yet to ratify

the CTBT required for the treaty to enter into force. Should North Korea's adoption of the CTBT be priority in future U.S. negotiations with North Korea on its nuclear program, and if not, why not?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration believes that a global, legally binding ban on nuclear explosive testing is in the national security interest of the United States. Entry into force of the CTBT will enhance our efforts to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. The administration will take all appropriate opportunities to encourage ratification by the remaining Annex 2 states, including North Korea.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* Since 2007, it has nearly always been the position of the United States that Iran is not a member in good standing within the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Even pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran would not have returned to being a member in good standing until the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reached a "Broader Conclusion" (BC) verifying the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. In April 2019, then-nominee to be Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed in writing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "given Iran's past noncompliance with both its safeguards agreement and its NPT obligations, its failure to fully address IAEA questions related to past activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device, and the emergence of new questions surrounding Iran's motives for retaining and concealing documents, equipment, and personnel related to its past nuclear weapons program, Iran's standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as 'good.'"

- Do you agree with Mr. Eberhardt's assessment? If not, why not?

Answer. The United States has, including in the 2021 Compliance Report, indicated concern with regard to Iran's compliance with Article III of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Given Iran's past non-compliance with its obligations under the NPT and Iran's NPT-required safeguards agreement and its present failure to fully address the IAEA's current questions related to implementation of that safeguards agreement, Iran's standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as "good."

*Question.* Do you consider Iran's past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and if confirmed, I will help implement U.S. policy to support the IAEA's work to monitor and assess Iran's compliance with its NPT-required safeguards agreement. Iran must cooperate fully with the IAEA to address the serious, outstanding issues related to potential undeclared nuclear material in Iran. As a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT, Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons. Under the JCPOA, Iran reaffirmed this commitment, and if confirmed, I will work to prevent Iran from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran's past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Iran's long history of denial and concealment regarding its past nuclear weapons program is of serious concern. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran. I am committed to preventing Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran should be entitled to the use of civilian nuclear technology even if they are not a member in good standing of the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligations under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be specifically entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. If confirmed, I will fully support the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran.

*Question.* In 2015, you testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. When asked about the issue of Iran's possible military dimensions, you responded: "the JCPOA is focused on the future rather than the past." In 2017, you wrote, "The unusually intrusive verification measures contained in the JCPOA are a specific response to Iran's decades of deception regarding its nuclear activities,"

- Given we do not have a comprehensive accounting of Iran's PMD program, and taking into consideration Iran's decades of deception to the IAEA on its nuclear program, how is it possible to have an accurate appraisal of Iran's activities as they evolve, when the international community lacks a baseline for verification efforts?

Answer. The IAEA has reported significant concerns regarding potential undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and we have full confidence in the Agency to pursue its critical verification and monitoring responsibilities there. It is essential that Iran fully comply with its legally binding obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA to resolve these important matters without further delay. If confirmed, I will support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran.

*Question.* Despite the Board of Governor's December 2015 Final Assessment, which closed the chapter on PMDs in order to move forward with implementation of the JCPOA, the issue of Iran's possible military dimension remains outstanding.

- If confirmed, do you plan to reopen the PMD file? If not, why not?

Answer. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that the IAEA can provide the strongest possible assurance that all nuclear materials in Iran remain in peaceful uses, and that Iran is not undertaking any undeclared nuclear activities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

*Question.* Under the new AUKUS partnership, the United States and United Kingdom will help Australia construct and operate nuclear-propelled submarines. This initiative presents an opportunity to set a strong precedent for establishing a system of IAEA safeguards on naval nuclear reactors under the jurisdiction of non-nuclear weapon states party to the NPT. Such a system should balance the need to protect sensitive military technology and facilities with the need to ensure against the diversion and misuse of nuclear materials used in naval propulsion.

- Would the supply of fabricated naval nuclear fuel by the United States or United Kingdom pose less of a proliferation risk than the development by Australia of indigenous enrichment and fuel fabrication capabilities designed to produce its own naval nuclear fuel?

*Answer.* As President Biden said in announcing the AUKUS partnership: “Our governments will now launch an 18-month consultation period to determine every element of this program . . . We’ll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.” As announced, over the 18-month consultation period, the shared objective of maintaining the strength of the non-proliferation regime and Australia’s exemplary non-proliferation credentials will be central to the discussions. If confirmed, I will support the United States’ longstanding policy of seeking to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies around the world because of the proliferation risks those technologies pose.

*Question.* Would the reapplication of IAEA safeguards on spent fuel once discharged from naval nuclear reactors help address proliferation risks?

*Answer.* As President Biden said in announcing the AUKUS partnership: “We’ll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.” As the three partners have committed to engage with the IAEA throughout the coming months, and if confirmed, I will be fully committed to setting a high standard for international verification and implementing all obligations to the IAEA under our respective safeguards agreements.

*Question.* Do you believe the use of seals and other black-box safeguards equipment and techniques would help the IAEA maintain “continuity of knowledge” over the naval nuclear fuel cycle while protecting classified or sensitive military information and facilities?

*Answer.* As President Biden said in announcing this partnership: “We’ll all undertake this effort in a way that reflects the longstanding leadership in global nonproliferation and rigorous verification standards, in partnership and consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.” As the three partners have committed to engage with the IAEA throughout the coming months, and if confirmed, I will be fully committed to setting a high standard for international verification and implementing all obligations to the IAEA under our respective safeguards agreements.

*Question.* A longstanding objective of United States nonproliferation policy has been to make universal the adoption of the Additional Protocol (AP) and to establish it as a condition of international nuclear supply. There has been considerable progress on this front, and currently 137 states and Euratom have in force an AP with the IAEA.

Nevertheless, there remain major holdouts who have evinced little interest in bringing into force an AP with the IAEA. Brazil and Argentina possess significant nuclear infrastructures and enrich uranium indigenously, while Egypt and Saudi Arabia are looking to expand their own nuclear programs. Moreover, Russia and China are engaging in nuclear commerce with countries that do not have APs in force.

- What enticements and sticks can we use to encourage these holdouts to bring into force APs with the IAEA?

*Answer.* Achieving universal adherence to the Additional Protocol (AP) is a high priority for the United States. Zimbabwe recently brought the number of APs in force to 138. The United States raises this objective at all levels, including the Secretary of State, in diplomatic engagement on nonproliferation. In particular, the United States raises it in bilateral engagement with countries that have not yet



brought an AP into force, including those mentioned here. If confirmed, I will continue to stress that implementation of the AP would build confidence and facilitate cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear technology, and I will support the Department of Energy's active program to help states implement comprehensive safeguards agreements and APs. This assistance helps states that have limited technical capacity and helps dispel concerns and misconceptions about the AP.

*Question.* A longstanding objective of United States nonproliferation policy has been to make universal the adoption of the Additional Protocol (AP) and to establish it as a condition of international nuclear supply. There has been considerable progress on this front, and currently 137 states and Euratom have in force an AP with the IAEA.

Nevertheless, there remain major holdouts who have evinced little interest in bringing into force an AP with the IAEA. Brazil and Argentina possess significant nuclear infrastructures and enrich uranium indigenously, while Egypt and Saudi Arabia are looking to expand their own nuclear programs. Moreover, Russia and China are engaging in nuclear commerce with countries that do not have APs in force.

- How can we make progress on establishing the Additional Protocol as a condition of international nuclear supply?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to establishing the Additional Protocol (AP) as a condition of nuclear supply and plays a leading global role in stressing the AP as an instrument that facilitates increased peaceful nuclear cooperation. If confirmed, I will continue to work with nuclear suppliers to highlight the importance of the AP as a condition of nuclear supply both bilaterally and multilaterally, including in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. LAURA S.H. HOLGATE BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* In 2015, the Iran nuclear deal artificially closed the IAEA's investigation into the "possible military dimensions" of Iran's nuclear program in 2015. But in 2018, the importance of re-opening this investigation became clear and obvious after Israel's revelation to the world that Iran possessed a massive secret archive on its efforts related to making nuclear weapons. If confirmed, will you commit to supporting an in-depth IAEA investigation in Iran to ascertain the nature and status of its nuclear program, including any necessary requests for access to military sites, to nuclear scientists and other personnel, and to documentation, in order to ensure the end of Iran's nuclear weapons program and Iran's activities related to nuclear weapons capability? Please begin your response with a yes or no.

*Answer.* President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that the IAEA can provide the strongest possible assurance that all nuclear material in Iran remains in peaceful uses, and that Iran is not undertaking any undeclared nuclear activities.

*Question.* Many United Nations agencies that deal with international drug trafficking and other international crimes are headquartered in Vienna, including the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Narcotics Control Board, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the U.N. Transnational Organized Crime Convention Conference of States Parties, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Illegal narcotics, particularly fentanyl and related substances, are taking a dramatic toll on American youth. Much of this can be attributed to China, including fentanyl precursors and expertise to manufacture these substances. When you previously held this position, how did you leverage these organizations to fight this scourge of fentanyl and related substances, including holding China and other nations accountable for their actions in fueling it? If confirmed, how would you use policy, budget, and personnel decisions by these agencies to address the fentanyl crisis and opioid overdose epidemic? Do you commit, if confirmed, to using every possible measure at these organizations to combat the fentanyl production and smuggling that is affecting every state, and to keeping me and other committee members informed of your efforts?

*Answer.* The United States supports initiatives implemented by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its associated bodies that provide member states with guidance, resources, and tools to address the challenge of synthetic drugs and reduce global trafficking in synthetics and precursor chemicals. During my previous

tenure, the United States led a successful global effort to place two of the main precursor chemicals used to produce fentanyl under international control and urge countries to take innovative national action against fentanyl and its precursors. If confirmed, I will further cooperate with the Vienna-based organizations and other member states to enhance member state capacity and collective action to counter the threat these substances pose, as well as engage with Congress to keep them informed.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO CARYN R. MCCELLAND BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* If confirmed, one issue that you will immediately confront is China's inroads into Brunei and China's malign influence throughout Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Brunei sits on the South China Sea, much of which China falsely claims. Although Brunei has not been involved in the frequent incidents that some other South China Sea claimants have, it is an active participant in negotiations between ASEAN and China over these issues and over a possible Code of Conduct for parties in the region, especially as this year's chair of ASEAN. How would you characterize Brunei's approach to the disputes in the South China Sea? If confirmed as Ambassador, would you encourage Brunei to play a more active role in diplomacy in the South China Sea? Do you believe Brunei is willing to play such a role?

*Answer.* Like other South China Sea littoral states, Brunei's maritime claims overlap with the PRC's expansive and unlawful maritime claims. Both the United States and Brunei have a clear national interest in the peaceful resolution of disputes, unimpeded lawful commerce, and compliance with international law, including freedoms of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea. Brunei has been an active participant in ASEAN activities related to the South China Sea, including the ongoing negotiations of an ASEAN-China Code of Conduct. If confirmed, I will support Brunei's efforts to advocate for its rights and those of other Southeast Asian claimants in the South China Sea.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID JOHN YOUNG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Corruption continues to be a major challenge for Malawi, with recent administrations facing high-profile corruption scandals and with low-level corruption being a daily reality for regular Malawians. What anti-corruption activities is the United States currently supporting in Malawi? Are they adequate in your view? If confirmed, in what areas will you advocate the U.S. focus its anti-corruption investments?

*Answer.* U.S. Mission programs, including a recently launched program with the Malawian Police Service, work to combat Malawi's endemic corruption. Training programs through the Public Affairs Section and other offices highlight the corrosive effect of corruption on Malawi's investment climate. USAID provides technical assistance to the Malawian Government, including embedded advisors who work hand in hand to combat corruption and pursue asset recovery. USAID works with local governments to put in place more accountable and transparent use of government resources. If confirmed, I plan to seek further avenues to combat corruption and improve governance at all levels.

*Question.* Like many countries in Africa, Malawi is facing a massive youth bulge. According to some estimates, more than half the population under the age of 18. Are there adequate educational and employment opportunities for Malawi's youth population? What U.S. assistance programs are focused on addressing any gaps in such opportunities? If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that U.S. assistance programs adequately address the potential destabilizing economic and political impacts the youth bulge can have in the face of inadequate economic opportunities?

*Answer.* Malawi faces major challenges in educating its youth, and illiteracy is widespread. USAID funds a wide variety of education programs benefitting students at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. USAID has helped every primary schoolchild in Malawi have access to a schoolbook for the first time in the country's history. We partner with U.S. universities to expand digital online learning for all Malawi's public universities, particularly focusing on women students and those from marginalized communities. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that U.S. assist-

ance programs address the challenges of the youth bulge, so that young people have path to improved educational and employment opportunities.

*Question.* What areas of U.S. assistance have been particularly impactful in Malawi with regards to economic diversification and growth? If confirmed, what areas will you recommend for increased U.S. investment?

*Answer.* Malawi completed a \$350 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact in 2018 that improved the enabling environment for economic growth through increased capacity to build, operate, and regulate the power sector. USAID is working through a variety of programs to diversify the economy away from subsistence agriculture to more valuable cash crops. USAID works to aggressively engage and strengthen the private sector to create greater economic opportunities, including in aquaculture, fisheries and ecotourism. If confirmed, I will advocate strongly for the introduction and expansion of projects like these that seek to diversify and grow Malawi's economy and raise Malawians out of poverty.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* While in Zambia as Chargé d'Affaires, I led our Mission's efforts to support a free and fair election in August 2021. This involved major coordination across 20 months, and we played important roles behind the scenes to push back against ruling party harassment, press for a result that reflects the will of the people, and help independent media stay in business. I have played roles in helping obtain prisoner releases of LGBTQI+ individuals in Zambia on two occasions, and while in Hanoi, I helped secure the release of two dozen Vietnamese prisoners who had been detained on political and religious grounds. During my tenure in Abuja, I helped intervene to prevent the arrest of the speaker of the national assembly in Nigeria.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Malawi? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Over the past year, the Chakwera administration has made significant gains restoring Malawi's democratic trajectory and implementing good governance reforms. However, endemic corruption, lack of local capacity, and insufficient funds impede the implementation of President Chakwera's anti-corruption agenda. Pre-existing patronage networks now seek to stall ongoing reform efforts, and declining development assistance from the United Kingdom and likeminded missions has imperiled the efforts of independent accountability institutions. Fortunately, the United States remains Malawi's partner of choice on these issues, and if confirmed, I will advocate strongly for further efforts towards democratic reforms and institutionalization.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Malawi? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I hope to press the ruling government to appoint and confirm heads of watchdog agencies including the Financial Intelligence Agency and the Office of the Auditor General. I also hope to expand our efforts to professionalize the institutions that uphold Malawi's democracy, including the Electoral Commission, media outlets, and democracy activists. I have seen firsthand the significant impact of trainings from U.S.-based institutions like the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Solidarity Center, and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), and if confirmed I plan to advocate for these organizations' continued engagement in Malawi.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to identify and support reputable Malawian and international partners who share our commitment to helping Malawi build an inclusive, responsive, and resilient democracy. As I have done in my other leadership roles, I plan to ensure our Mission has strict accountability measures in place for the disbursement, monitoring, and evaluation of bilateral assistance. I will seek to ensure that all staff are held to the highest possible standards and equipped with the most up to date training and tools. I will also prioritize assistance that bolsters

Malawi's ability to push back against the corrosive forces of corruption and the malign influence of strategic competitors, including the People's Republic of China.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Malawi? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* Yes. Nongovernmental and civil society organizations play a critical role in upholding democracy, especially in developing countries. During my decade of work on African issues I have worked closely with NGO counterparts to solicit information, raise awareness, and advance U.S. objectives. We do our best work when we hear from all actors on the ground, so I plan to maintain my open-door policy for Malawian activists and encourage my colleagues at Embassy Lilongwe to do the same. If confirmed, I also hope to find ways to use the wealth of American and international expertise to build capacity for heroes of democracy in Malawi.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* Yes. Inclusivity—both for frequently marginalized groups and opposition parties—is a cornerstone of my personal leadership style and Department policy more broadly. The United States has a vested interest in the promotion of inclusive, resilient democracy in Malawi and across the continent. If confirmed, I will work closely with our State Department, interagency, international, and Malawian partners to advance these efforts. In Malawi, this will mean further U.S. support to key institutions like the Electoral Commission and Malawi's historically independent judiciary. It will also mean advocating for American and international support for the civil society groups and watchdog institutions that uphold government accountability.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with Malawi on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Malawi?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy teams actively engage with Malawi on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Malawi, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Malawi?

*Answer.* Members of the LGBTQI+ community in Malawi face many of the same pressures felt by their counterparts throughout southern Africa. Societal pressure, stigma, and discrimination create a climate of fear for many members of these communities, and many LGBTQI+ individuals justifiably believe that they cannot freely express their sexual preferences, gender identity, or true selves. There continue to be laws that criminalize consensual same-sex sexual activity as "unnatural offenses," even though they are not actively enforced. An ongoing lack of access to justice means that members of this community are unable to adequately seek justice when they become victims of discrimination or persecution.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Malawi?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to meet regularly with members of the LGBTQI+ community in Malawi and learn from them how the U.S. Mission can best be helpful in the local context they face. As I have learned from my work in Zambia and Nigeria, it is critically important to be in touch with LGBTQI+ leaders in a

country to know how to be helpful and not to do harm. If confirmed, I will make inclusive programming a core tenet of the Mission's internal and external ethos, and I will work with interagency, international, and Malawian partners to support LGBTQI+ champions and expand U.S. funded programming that supports members of the community.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Malawi?

Answer. Yes.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID JOHN YOUNG BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In November 2020, I published Senate Foreign Relations Committee Majority Report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Malawi and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The U.S. Mission in Lilongwe works closely with likeminded European partners, to support Malawi's democracy through investments in the electoral commission, judiciary, civil society, and accountability institutions. If confirmed, I will work with likeminded partners to counter malign influence, promote free market and democratic values, and support the rule of law and anti-corruption efforts. Further efforts to combat corruption will improve the investment climate and advance our goals of fiscal transparency. If confirmed, I will work closely with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation to support U.S. private sector opportunities in Malawi and to ensure Malawi has active U.S. alternatives to Beijing-based creditors.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

Answer. Actions by a President in power to change the laws to allow him or her to remain in office extralegally pose an inherent threat to any democracy's health. A healthy democracy abides both by the will of its people and the underlying legal foundations upon which it rests. This requires the active participation of all citizens to safeguard democracy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you respond to Malawi doing something like this?

Answer. Any effort that might seek to upend the existing democratic order would undermine the legitimacy of Malawi's democracy. If confirmed, in such a scenario I would work with colleagues in Washington and local and international partners to defend democracy and push back against extralegal efforts to thwart the will of the people.

*Question.* What lessons will you draw from your experience as Chargé d'affaires in Zambia in your role as U.S. Ambassador to Malawi, if confirmed?

Answer. The recent democratic Presidential election in Zambia shows that U.S. Government programming, combined with activist U.S. private and public diplomacy, can help support and safeguard democratic values. These efforts played an important role in the Zambian political transition and the election of President Hakainde Hichilema. Zambia, like Malawi, has a comprehensive program to combat HIV/AIDS through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and there are many similarities between the programs in the two countries. The two U.S. Missions in Zambia and Malawi also work to expand two-way trade and investment and strengthening the private sector in both countries is a key goal.

*Question.* Do you agree that democracy and governance programming is an essential element of an assistance portfolio? Why?

Answer. Yes. The United States has a vested interest in advancing democracy around the world. As President Biden said in his address before the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, democracy remains the best tool we have

to unleash our full human potential. Democracies value and protect the intellectual, social, and economic contributions of their citizens. Democracies are also inherently more stable and responsive to the demands and expectation of their polities. Investments in democracy programming ensure the longevity and impact of our assistance programs across all sectors.

*Question.* What opportunities as U.S. Ambassador to Malawi do you envision for yourself, if confirmed, in supporting democratic processes and the development of resilient democratic institutions in Malawi?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will press the ruling government to appoint and confirm heads of watchdog agencies including the Financial Intelligence Agency and the Office of the Auditor General. I will also expand our efforts to professionalize the institutions that uphold Malawi's democracy, including the Electoral Commission, media outlets, and democracy activists. I have seen firsthand the significant impact of trainings from U.S.-based institutions like the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Solidarity Center, and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). If confirmed, I will advocate for these organizations' continued engagement in Malawi.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

*Answer.* Election observer missions play a critical role in our efforts to support democracy, especially in developing countries. Independent observers provide critical quantitative and qualitative insight about the functioning of electoral processes. This data allows the United States and our international partners to determine whether an election is free and fair, and whether electoral results in a country accurately reflect the will of its people. By supporting these efforts, we communicate the centrality of democracy promotion and support in our foreign policy.

*Question.* Would you support such a mission for Malawi's next general election?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working closely with the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy (OGAC) at the U.S. Department of State to ensure that the U.S. country team in Malawi's efforts to combat HIV/AIDS are efficient, effective, aligned and complementary to the work of OGAC?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Will you work to ensure that each of the agencies operating under Chief of Mission authority—notably USAID and CDC—meaningfully contribute to, but also adhere to, PEPFAR's Country Operating Plan (COP) process?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Will you also ensure that each of the agencies operating under Chief of Mission authority in Malawi uphold their commitments to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that all future funding for the Secondary Education Expansion for Development (SEED) program will be derived from funds appropriated for basic and secondary education, rather than for PEPFAR?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Malawi?

*Answer.* The isolation, hardship, and fear caused by COVID-19 have had a particularly adverse effect on our overseas Missions, including in Malawi. The current lull in local infection rates, seasonal rotation of staff, and the lifting of government-imposed lockdowns have improved morale. Nevertheless, remote work in a developing country is a distinctly difficult and isolating experience for American and Malawian staff alike.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Malawi?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to make staff morale a central focus of my tenure. American diplomats and our interagency colleagues in the field make incredible sacrifices to advance our nation's objectives. If confirmed, I will begin by building trust with all levels of the Embassy's staff and soliciting local ideas for how we overcome our shared challenges and more effectively accomplish our mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Malawi?

*Answer.* Throughout my career I have upheld a "One Team" approach that values the contributions, voice, and role of every individual. Effective and responsive management is critical in this effort. American and Malawian managers should be

equipped with the most effective tools and held to the highest standards. The follow-on effects of COVID-19 have accelerated isolation at our overseas missions, and if confirmed, I hope to make interagency relationships a central focus of my tenure.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I believe strongly in a One Mission, One Team approach, and in my leadership roles over the past decade in Missions in Africa, I have sought to put this principle in practice. I have worked to set up cross-cutting interagency teams to advance our shared interagency Mission goals, including working groups that have advanced our democratic and electoral goals in Nigeria and Zambia, and our Northeast Working Group in Nigeria. I believe strongly in 360 communication, empowering and listening to all team members, and working closely with Locally Employed Staff, who provide the continuity and ongoing capacity of our Missions' work.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* Having served in leadership roles at multiple Missions in Africa, including three times as a deputy chief of mission, I am deeply committed to empowering and supporting the deputy chief of mission to help improve the work of the Mission. The relationship between the chief of mission and deputy chief of mission is critical to the success and morale of a Mission. If confirmed, I will build a relationship based on honesty, accountability, and collegiality, and I will equip my deputy to act decisively on the wide array of policy, security, and management issues we face.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will sit down immediately with my deputy chief of mission and jointly work with him or her to develop a collaborative plan for how we lead the Mission together. In general, I would seek to have the deputy chief of mission serve as the "chief of operations" of the Mission, ensuring that the Mission implements and executes the goals of our work together as a Mission team. I hope to work with the deputy chief of mission to identify issue areas where the deputy would take lead in policy development, public outreach, and performance management. This could focus on a variety of agency programs, but I believe it important that the two of us jointly assess the particular areas once we are on the ground working together.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* In the countries where I have served, I have come to appreciate the importance of in-person relationships. I prioritize such these engagements, and I have been committed throughout my career to wide ranging work in this area. I recognize that diplomats around the world face many challenges to their safety and security, and we must mitigate the risks as we do our jobs outside the embassy walls. Security and health concerns have restricted diplomats' ability to safely move around outside the embassy walls in some countries. I applaud the contributions of the members of Diplomatic Security, the United States Marine Corps, and others who keep us safe overseas.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the safety of American and locally engaged personnel under my purview will be my top priority. I will lead by example in accessing local populations, and I will encourage my colleagues to expand our in-person access across all of Malawi. That said, we will of course remain cognizant of the particular logistical and security challenges our Mission faces in Malawi. Prioritizing staff

training and the procurement of safe and reliable housing and transportation equipment will advance these efforts.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Malawi? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* Malawians are eager to learn more about and engage with the United States. Malawi's low internet penetration rate requires a reliance on radio broadcasting and in-person travel. Embassy events receive significant attendance and local coverage. Public diplomacy staff have strong professional relationships with members of public and privately owned media outlets. The advance of high-speed cellular service through Malawi will broaden our reach, especially with Malawi's outsized youth population.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Effectively conveying our public diplomacy messages requires fluency in both U.S. policy and best practices on the ground. Achieving both takes intentional work at all levels of the Mission. In my previous leadership roles, I have prioritized forging relations with my Washington-based colleagues, and I have encouraged my staff members to do the same. I have also advocated within the Department for the unique role played by Mission staff members, who have unmatched contextual knowledge of what strategies are most effective. These relationships pay dividends as we work to shape and deliver effective messages.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Malawi was identified as Tier 2 due to inadequate government efforts to address sex trafficking, reporting, or identifying victims or traffickers by the Government, and more. How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize our work to combat human trafficking as one of my top policy emphases. I will immediately and frequently communicate the importance of combatting human trafficking through private and public diplomacy. I have worked extensively on human trafficking issues in each leadership position I have held over the past decade, and I have found that offering solutions is a necessary companion to identifying problems. The U.S. Government and U.S.-based institutions offer a wealth of expertise, and if confirmed, I hope to connect Malawian partners with experts who can offer support on how to prevent trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and protect victims.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Malawi was identified as having community tension regarding religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Malawi boasts a long history of interreligious tolerance, though within communities there are societal pressures to adopt locally dominant religious practices. If confirmed, I plan to draw upon my experience in previous assignments to advance religious freedom. I served as Director of the Office of International Religious Freedom and deeply value the shared advocacy that Missions and Washington colleagues do on behalf of religious freedom. In Nigeria, we developed programs of Christian-Muslim dialogue and peacebuilding to address widespread farmer-herder violence in the Middle Belt of the country. The support and expertise of Department principals, including the Ambassador-at-Large, are crucial to these efforts.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Malawi was identified as having significant human rights abuses including harsh and life-threatening prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest or detention; significant acts of corruption; lack of investigation and accountability for violence against women; and criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* In my prior positions, I have found that offering solutions and support is the most effective approach to advancing our objectives. Malawi faces serious human rights challenges, many of which derive from a lack of local capacity to uphold laws and the enshrined rights of individuals. To address these concerns, if confirmed, I will work to identify the key institutions that warrant our support. The U.S. Mission in Lilongwe has preexisting programming with some of these, including the Malawian Police Service, and if confirmed I hope to expand these programs. Malawi also needs significant legal reform to protect the rights of all citizens, including women and persons in same-sex relationships.



*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead the U.S. Mission team in continuing to strengthen close relationships with civil society organizations and to maintain an open-door policy for our Malawian partners. These individuals frequently have unparalleled access, relationships, and information, and they can play a key role in advancing human rights and a wide range of our objectives.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DAVID JOHN YOUNG BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* Malawi is among the poorest countries in the world, and our bilateral relationship is heavily focused on development issues. The challenges women and girls face are particularly crucial to address. On September 28, I introduced legislation, along with a group of senators that includes Senators Rubio and Portman from this committee, to formalize the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) initiative. W-GDP—which was established in February 2019 as a groundbreaking, whole-of-government approach to advancing women's economic empowerment—reached 12 million women worldwide during its first year and seeks to reach 50 million women by 2025. This legislation would advance women's economic empowerment by removing educational and skills barriers to female participation in the workforce; promoting women's entrepreneurship and increasing female access to capital and markets; and reforming laws and practices that prevent women's full and free participation in the global economy. What key economic challenges do Malawian women and girls face? Drawing on examples from your past service, how would you seek to work with Malawians to promote women's economic empowerment?

*Answer.* Women and girls in Malawi face economic challenges, societal discrimination, and limited access to capital, education, and professional opportunities. Insufficient child and health care mean many women and girls carry disproportionate familial duties. As I have done in other assignments in Zambia, Nigeria, and South Africa, if confirmed I will work to use U.S. Mission resources through USAID and through Public Affairs Section training programs to empower women, expand skills training, create mentorship networks, and provide small grants to start-up businesses run by women. If confirmed, I will also work with development partners to expand programs that support female students, entrepreneurs, activists, and civil society leaders.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* People in southern Madagascar are experiencing famine-like conditions. What is your assessment of how effective the Malagasy Government has been at organizing a response? Are there actions the U.S. Mission could take to help improve the response? What are the potential second-order impacts of famine on the country as a whole, and what steps would you take, if confirmed, to mitigate them?

*Answer.* This is not only a difficult challenge, but an existential one as well. The Malagasy Government has limited capacity to address the drought-induced food insecurity facing southern Madagascar. In addition to providing significant financial support, the U.S. Mission has encouraged other donor countries to support this humanitarian crisis and continues to work closely with NGOs and U.N. agencies such as the World Food Program to address the immediate need and develop plans to assist the population adapt to drought conditions. The most significant impact is internal migration, which threatens unique ecosystems.

I would work with the U.N., NGOs, other donor countries, and U.S. agencies like USAID to determine what more we can and should be doing. I would also work with the Malagasy Government to assess their efforts on assisting displaced persons and concurrently protecting endangered environmental resources.

*Question.* Madagascar was slow to join the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access initiative, (COVAX), and President Andry Rajoelina spent the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic touting an herbal remedy for the disease. He also criticized vaccines. If confirmed, what steps will you take to encourage the Government to take a science based approach to containing and mitigating the COVID-19 pan-

demic, and take steps to plan for the effective procurement and distribution of vaccines once they are available?

*Answer.* The situation has improved recently. Madagascar received a U.S. Government donation of 302,400 doses of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine in late July and there has been strong public acceptance of it. I will proactively seek opportunities to encourage the Government of Madagascar to promote vaccines and utilize the mission's excellent connections within the health community and our public diplomacy tools to support this message. I will commit Mission resources to help the Government of Madagascar address the challenge of an underdeveloped health system and poor transportation infrastructure, which inhibit large-scale, rapid distribution of vaccines, particularly to rural areas far from the capital Antananarivo.

*Question.* Competition between political elites in Madagascar has had violent and destabilizing consequences in the last twelve years, including a coup in 2009. This year, President Rajoelina claimed that security forces foiled a coup plot against him. What is your assessment of the level of political stability in Madagascar—is another coup likely? If confirmed, what steps will you take to reduce tensions between political elites?

*Answer.* Although the Government of Madagascar claimed there was a coup attempt this summer, the Rajoelina administration appears relatively stable and we assess that a successful coup is not likely in the near term. I commit to building relationships with all political parties in Madagascar and engaging with the diplomatic community to facilitate discussion among the political elites.

*Question.* Presently, the United States has limited diplomatic engagement with Comoros, and provides little in the way of foreign assistance. Would an expansion of ties be in the interest of the United States? What are potential areas of cooperation? If confirmed, would you increase engagement with the Comorian Government?

*Answer.* There are excellent opportunities to expand our diplomatic engagement with Comoros to the benefit of U.S. interest, particularly in the arena of maritime security due to its location on the Mozambique Channel, which is a major trafficking artery. Assistance in expanding capacity in maritime security, establishing transparent and accountable institutions, and in basic health and education would be immediate priorities in expanding our bilateral relationship.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Early in my career I served in Haiti in the post-“Baby Doc” era where we worked to support its fledgling democracy. Later in my career, in both Vietnam and Indonesia, the issues of democracy and human rights were at the top of our agenda. Whether advocating for human rights for our local staff or for the population at large, this is something I take very seriously and has been a priority in every post that I have served. I realize these issues are front and center in Madagascar and Comoros, so my team and I would have a lot to work to do, if I were confirmed. I commit to prioritizing these issues in both countries.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Madagascar and Comoros? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* As Senator Cardin has noted, corruption is a significant issue in Madagascar and Comoros. Both countries also face challenges in the electoral process, with disinformation from malign actors in Madagascar, and opposition party boycotts in Comoros. If confirmed, I will use upcoming elections in Madagascar in 2023 and in Comoros in 2024 to support both countries in strengthening their democratic institutions to ensure the elections ultimately reflect the will of their citizens.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Madagascar and Comoros? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* My first step would be to assess the current challenges to democracy in Madagascar and Comoros and develop an action plan to address these challenges. I expect that action plan would include outreach to opposition parties and civil society as well as programs to encourage greater transparency in government.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* I would review the current allocation of government assistance, gather input from my team and civil society partners, and assess how to prioritize these limited resources. I would look to find a balance between humanitarian assistance on one hand and programs to build the Government of Madagascar's capacity and establish good governance practices on the other.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Madagascar and Comoros? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* Yes, I would make it a priority to meet with civil society members in Madagascar and Comoros to understand their challenges and to most effectively utilize USG programs that support their work. I will staunchly defend the rights of civil society and take appropriate actions to ensure their ability to operate freely in Madagascar and Comoros.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties in both countries. With elections coming up in 2023 and 2024, I would work with my team to create a plan to establish relationships with opposition parties, including diaspora groups. I also commit to advocate for diverse participation in the political process.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with Madagascar and Comoros on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Madagascar and Comoros?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to actively engage with the media and staunchly defend freedom of the press. I also commit to regularly meeting with the independent, local press in both Madagascar and Comoros.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to engage with a variety of government and non-government counterparts to counter disinformation, whether disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy teams actively engage with Madagascar and Comoros on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to actively engage with the Governments of Madagascar and Comoros to support the rights of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Madagascar and Comoros, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to use my position to defend the human rights of all Malagasy and Comorian people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Madagascar and Comoros?

*Answer.* In Madagascar, no law prohibits same-sex sexual conduct for those aged 21 and older. . Nonetheless, members of the LGBTQI community report they face social stigma and discrimination, particularly within their own families. In Comoros, same-sex sexual activity is illegal, although authorities do not actively enforce the law. Due to societal pressure, LGBTQI persons generally do not reveal their sexual orientation.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. I commit to regularly meeting with LGBTQI organizations and advocating for their rights in Madagascar and Comoros.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Madagascar and Comoros?

Answer. Yes, I would welcome the opportunity to fully brief members of Congress and/or their staff each time I am in Washington for consultations.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Given the administration's redefined Prosper Africa policy, how will you prioritize U.S. investment into Madagascar, and ensure there is a level playing field given the pervasive levels of corruption that exist in Madagascar's institutions and its judiciary? Further, will you focus on the settling of the standing investment disputes with US companies, including Symbion Power?

Answer. Corruption in Madagascar is a significant obstacle for U.S. business, and I recognize that accountable institutions, sustained by a commitment to the rule of law and transparency, are essential to creating a business climate conducive to foreign investment. I commit to working with the Government of Madagascar to reinforce the need for accountable institutions and provide U.S. expertise in developing transparent government. I also commit to support U.S. companies to settle investment disputes.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power? If confirmed, how would you respond to Madagascar or Comoros doing something like this?

Answer. Constitutional changes should be made through a consultative process that includes civil society, opposition parties and all other stakeholders. Constitutional changes designed to favor incumbents or extend terms against the will of the people erode democratic principles and undermine stability. If confirmed, I will advocate for regular, democratic transitions of power, which yield more accountability, stronger institutions, and less corruption.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Madagascar and Comoros, and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The United States should partner with likeminded countries to counter negative actions and influence of the PRC. We need to call out and confront non-democratic behavior and insist that all economic actors on the continent adhere to the highest standards of transparency, anti-corruption, debt sustainability, environmental protection, and respect for human rights, including labor rights.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions? Would you support such a mission for Madagascar's next national election?

Answer. Promoting democracy and human rights has long been a core task of American foreign policy. Election observation can promote public participation, encourage transparency and public confidence in the electoral process, and mitigate the potential for electoral violence. Both U.S. Mission observers and independent observation missions help deter fraud at polling stations and facilitate the collection of critical information about the conduct of the elections. To ensure real democratic gains, it is important that our elections work not focus solely on Election Day, but also address problems in the lead up to elections that inhibit the ability of all parties to compete on an equal basis.

*Question.* Many U.S. Missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Madagascar?

*Answer.* I am impressed with the resiliency of the team in Madagascar in general but in particular during the difficult last 18 months under COVID-19. Morale remains good at post thanks to the efforts of the former Ambassador and the current Deputy Chief of Mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Madagascar?

*Answer.* At every one of my posts, taking care of our teams has been my top priority. First, I would assess where things stand today with both the American and local staff in both Madagascar and Comoros through direct communication and interaction. And then together, we would see what changes, if any, were necessary. The bottom line is always communication and interaction. Even at the height of terrorism in Indonesia and direct attacks in my consular district when I was principal officer in Surabaya, my team and I were united and mutually supportive. That is always my number one goal.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Madagascar?

*Answer.* I successfully faced this challenge in my last three overseas leadership positions in large and complex, multi-post missions—Indonesia, Vietnam and Nigeria. Creating a true “One Team, One Mission” approach takes a unified strategic approach, time, effort and honesty. The results are always worth the work. I would aim to do the same at Mission Madagascar.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for Chiefs of Mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* Whether I was supervising a section of 10 or a Mission of 900, my approach has always been to be as communicative and transparent as possible and to welcome and incorporate the great contributions of my team. I solicit input first and then carefully listen to my staff before making decisions. However, ultimately, I must take responsibility for our decisions and back up my team. I am also fully aware of when I must make the difficult decisions.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No. Any action that does not convey respect or professionalism is not only unacceptable, it is simply counterproductive. This goes not only for supervisors but also for other staff, including our local staff.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* The COM-DCM relationship is extremely important because it sets the tone for the Mission. If confirmed, I would create a close partnership with the incumbent, relying on him for both policy and personnel guidance and the critical “truth-to-power” reality checks. The DCM is the eyes and ears of the Mission and I intend listen.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* As a former DCM and two-time principal officer, I know what a critical role the DCM should play in both bilateral policy issues and internal Mission management. The DCM should not be chained to their desk but should be representing the Mission outwardly as well. Just as the DCM should lead and mentor our mid-level and more junior staff, they must have the opportunity to lead at the Mission level to prepare themselves for more senior positions.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking. Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* This is a topic dear to my heart. As Director of the Office of Performance Evaluation in the then-Bureau of Human Resources, I led the team responsible for major reform of the EER, promotion and awards. I personally introduced the changes with outreach to more than 10,000 foreign service employees over two years. Those reforms were just a first step to creating a more responsive system such as the new Meritorious Service Increase award process and I am happy to say that these efforts are ongoing. Key to all these efforts is the push for supervisors

to be honest, fair, and responsive in their evaluations. The Department continues to prioritize this effort, as do I personally.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that is very important. I have not only supported such efforts but have championed them and tried to educate my colleagues on this issue. It is critical not only to the assessment of the rated employee but to the development of supervisors and future Department leaders.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and local citizens. In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our Embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* If you ask my team my overriding motto, they would tell you in unison "If you are sitting behind your desk, you are not doing your job." At every post that I have worked in or led, this has been true. Our best work is done when we are engaged with our host country and its nationals. That is often a challenge, especially in large Missions, where we must respond to the demands of Washington and the interagency 24/7. I believe that the Chief of Mission must set the expectation, provide the resources, and if need be, pick up the slack in order for our staff to get out of the office, interact with the people and support U.S. interests.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* In most cases, it is simply a matter of time and resources. If confirmed, I, along with my DCM, will make sure our team have enough of both.

*Question.* Do you think the Department should require Chiefs of Mission have experience in the region to which they are nominated?

*Answer.* In my experience, the overriding qualification for any COM must be proven leadership and management experience. That is not something that can be learned on the job. Secondly, experience in strategic policy making that can be applied to any post or situation should be considered. If one can combine those two skills with regional experience, that would be ideal. However regional experience on its own should not be considered sufficient, in my opinion.

*Question.* With little experience in the sub-Saharan Africa, how are you approaching this assignment?

*Answer.* I have served across four continents and led Missions in three postings. That includes senior leadership in arguably our most important partner in Africa, Nigeria, where I run a multi-agency post of 400 American and local staff plus 200 security contractors. Lagos is larger than 80 percent of our sub-Saharan Africa posts, including Madagascar, and is important to our overall Africa policy. If confirmed, I will bring my years of experience in Africa and elsewhere to this challenging assignment.

*Question.* Do you consider your lack of experience in the region a handicap in starting your position as COM?

*Answer.* I bring extensive strategic leadership and more specifically, experience in the complex, sometimes dangerous, and always challenging Nigerian environment to the table. In Vietnam, I led a team of more than 900 staff in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, both as Deputy Chief of Mission and as Chargé d'Affaires for more than one year. In Surabaya, I led a team of 120 in two posts (including Bali) through terrorist attacks, pandemics, and natural disasters.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you consider your lack of experience in identifying a Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* Yes, that would be one of many factors I would consider. I have extensive experience in recruiting, hiring, mentoring and supporting my senior staff. Many of my former staff and mentees are now in leadership positions of their own including multiple Deputy Chiefs of Mission and Deputy Assistant Secretaries. I also have an extensive network and knowledge of our next level of leaders through my time in the Human Resources Bureau and as assistant professor and Acting Deputy Commandant at the National War College.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Madagascar? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* Mission Madagascar's public diplomacy program is small but robust. As in many countries, there is always more demand for engagement, training, and exchange programs but the Mission is actively engaged. If confirmed, I will move back to more in-person programs, but virtual programs will continue to be an important tool. Challenges are more physical than philosophical at this point, with poor infrastructure, transportation challenges and distances posing some obstacles to travel and programming.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country Mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Post has latitude to tailor public messaging to local issues and concerns. If confirmed, I will ensure that our public diplomacy posture continues to play a key role in promoting our many shared values and America's generous financial assistance and support across the range of issues.

*Question.* As Ambassador, what would be your approach to dividing your time and attention between Madagascar and Comoros?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make this one of my first on-the ground assessments. COVID-19 restrictions hampered the Mission's outreach to Comoros, but two teams have travelled since May, and the current Chargé d'Affaires will be visiting the first week of October. I look forward to her and the DCM's thoughts on the best way forward.

*Question.* How frequently would you plan to travel to Comoros to meet in-person with partners?

*Answer.* It would be my goal to visit as often as is feasible. Just as important is making sure that our team at all levels travel regularly, not just the Chief of Mission.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Madagascar remained on Tier 2 due to lack of accountability of complicit government officials, as well as failure to end facilitating child sex trafficking, among several other key areas of potential improvement. How will you work with the Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* I commit to work with the Government of Madagascar to make improvements in preventing trafficking in persons. I would continue to support our efforts to increase transparency of government institutions and to alleviate poverty, which together address the roots of this issue.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Madagascar was identified as having religious freedom issues within civil society. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor the religious freedom situation in Madagascar. I commit to working with civil society and the Malagasy Government to ensure all citizens enjoy freedom of religious thought and expression as provided in the country's constitution. My understanding is that there are several, discrete challenges for specific religious groups in Madagascar and that the country overall is accepting of religious diversity. If confirmed, I will work with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious tolerance and to address religious freedom concerns in Madagascar.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Madagascar was identified as having a litany of human rights abuses, including impunity for security forces and within government ranks. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will assess the situation and develop an action plan to reduce the instances of extrajudicial killings, which would likely include improving training for Malagasy security forces.

*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make it a priority to meet with civil society members in Madagascar and Comoros to understand their challenges and to most effectively utilize USG programs that support their work. I will staunchly defend the rights of civil society and take appropriate actions to ensure their ability to operate freely in Madagascar and Comoros.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* Madagascar is one of the most interesting places in the world, with unique flora and fauna and a very distinct culture and population, but it also remains a very poor country. Trade—and the jobs that it sustains—are key to self-sustaining development. Good jobs solve so many social challenges. In what manner and in what sectors might you seek to increase U.S. trade with and investment in Madagascar? What role do you see for potentially greater trade and investment engagement in Madagascar via U.S. programs like Prosper Africa and Power Africa?

*Answer.* Commercial engagement is one of the top Mission goals and as an economic officer, I have always put that at the forefront of my professional efforts. I was pleased to learn that the Mission team has put a strong focus on increasing its outreach, including to U.S. businesses. If confirmed, I would work hard to ensure fair treatment by local officials and others to counter weak rule of law and corruption. Sustainable development would be our goal. In Nigeria, my team and I have worked with Prosper Africa and Power Africa programs and I would welcome seeing how we can bring that expertise and opportunity to Madagascar.

*Question.* The Comoros Islands sit in a strategic location in the Indian Ocean, particularly with respect to combatting piracy and the threat it poses to international sea commerce. What are your views on the programmatic focus and impact of America's International Military Educational Training (IMET) program in Comoros, especially on military professionalization and counter-piracy initiatives in the Indian Ocean?

*Answer.* The objective of the U.S. IMET training program is to professionalize the Comorian military, especially its maritime forces. This is particularly important due to the country's strategic location in the Mozambique channel, a major piracy artery. The Mission's Department of Defense staff are working hard within the constraints of their finite resources to build cooperative security partnerships with Comoros and with like-minded allies in the region. Our current bilateral partnership with Comoros on maritime security issues is strong, and developing their capacity is a long-term project. If confirmed, I would welcome working with our Department of Defense colleagues on the ground, as I have done in Indonesia, Vietnam, and Nigeria.

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2021 (a.m.)**

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:17 a.m., in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Kaine, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Young, Cruz, and Hagerty.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here to consider the nominations for three important positions: Ms. Mallory Stewart to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control Verification and Compliance, Ms. Lisa Carty to be the U.S. Representative on the U.N. Economic and Social Council and an alternative representative to the U.N. General Assembly, and Mr. Steve Bondy to be the Ambassador to Bahrain.

Congratulations on your nominations. We appreciate your willingness and also those of your families to serve. Your families are, certainly, part of the sacrifice on behalf of the nation, so we appreciate them as well.

Ms. Stewart, the AVC Bureau is critical in the State Department and to our national security, leading U.S. diplomatic efforts to confront our adversaries about their most dangerous weapons.

I am pleased to see you bring a wealth of experience to this important role, including from your current service on the National Security Council as the Senior Director for Arms Control and Non-proliferation and your years in the State Department as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the AVC Bureau working on these issues.

If confirmed, you will have to address a series of challenges from the very start, including a weakened AVC Bureau, the result of years of neglect under the previous administration, at the exact moment that we are entering a more dangerous world.

The head of our nuclear forces, Navy Admiral Charles Richard, recently called China's explosive growth and modernization of its nuclear and conventional forces breathtaking.

Russia continues to modernize its shorter-range nonstrategic weapons and has shown a willingness to use chemical weapons against its own citizens.

Iran is moving closer to having enough material for a nuclear weapon. I am concerned that the Bureau is unprepared for this more dangerous world and that it lacks the resources and staff it needs to effectively negotiate with our strategic rivals.

I trust that, if confirmed, you will use your knowledge and skills to prioritize strengthening AVC, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how to address the challenges ahead.

Ms. Carty, congratulations on your nomination. It is reassuring that President Biden has nominated you, a consummate professional with decades of experience working with the United Nations and the Department of State to this role to help address the economic, humanitarian, and social challenges facing the globe.

Under President Trump, the United States, largely, abdicated a leadership role at the United Nations. From attempting to pull out of the World Health Organization in the middle of a global pandemic to undermining international protections for women, girls, and LGBTI individuals, to defunding or cutting funding to key agencies, we sent the signal that the United States would no longer lead, I should say, ceding space and influence to China and Russia.

If confirmed, you will join a new team committed to repair what has been undermined, including support for human rights, democracy, and addressing the metastasizing humanitarian crisis around the world, including the most recent one in Afghanistan after the rapid collapse of the Ghani Government and Taliban takeover.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how critical the agency's initiatives like those promoting the equal rights of women and girls can continue in Afghanistan. And, if confirmed, I trust that you will draw on your decades of relevant experience to effectively engage within and work to strengthen the U.N. system.

Mr. Bondy, welcome to the committee. I am pleased to see such an experienced diplomat and Livingston, New Jersey, native nominated for a critical Gulf post.

I am not surprised that someone from the Garden State has merited a dozen State Department awards, a Service Commendation award from the Department of Defense, and a Presidential Rank Award, and speaks five languages.

I would also like to note that I am not the only one to praise your service. Retired General Votel, former commander of CENTCOM who served with you, has noted that you are, quote, "extraordinarily well qualified for this position," and called you, quote, "an effective collaborator who is deeply respected across the military and within the interagency."

I also have a statement from Ambassador Hugo Llorens praising your service and record and, without objection, I move to enter those statements into the record.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of this hearing transcript.]

The CHAIRMAN. U.S.-Bahrain ties are long-standing. As the host of the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and the Navy's Fifth Fleet, Bahrain is an essential U.S. partner in our shared efforts to maintain stability and security in the Arabian Gulf.

As the region continues to face instability of threats, most concerning from Iran, it is critical that we have a skilled diplomat in place to strengthen and maintain our partnership.

Bahrain has also led the change for more regional diplomacy as an original signatory to the Abraham Accords, and I have full confidence you will work to further their political, economic, and cultural normalization with Israel.

Your extensive experience in the Middle East, including time spent as the Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs in Bahrain and more recently as the Deputy Chief of Mission and charge d'affaires in Abu Dhabi, will certainly serve you well and the country well in navigating our Embassy in Manama.

I look forward to each of your testimonies. And with that, let me turn to the ranking member for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. Welcome to our nominees.

On the nomination of Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control Verification and Compliance, I want to make clear that a sole-purpose nuclear declaratory policy or any perceived weakening of the U.S. nuclear deterrent will be a betrayal of our allies and will embolden China and Russia. It will also cause allies to lose confidence in the Biden administration's commitment to NATO's Article 5 commitments and to Asia security.

The position you have been nominated to is incredibly important to not only the United States but also our allies and, for that matter, our enemies.

For decades, U.S. administrations have embraced the long-standing policy of strategic ambiguity regarding the use of nuclear weapons. While administrations have thought about changing to a no-first-use policy, they realized international security was more important than ideology.

Indeed, the Obama administration itself studied this closely and rejected such a policy change twice. Earlier this year, our British allies also rejected this change.

The Biden administration says it wants to strengthen U.S. alliances. U.S. allies have told me and have told us that they strongly object to a change to a no-first-use or sole-purpose, which is nothing more than a no-first-use in disguise policy. This administration should listen to them.

On the nomination of Ambassador to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the United States remains the largest donor to the United Nations.

In recent years, the Chinese Communist Party has used its minimal donations to leverage a large-scale malign influence campaign affecting, in particular, the NGO committee in order to block NGOs critical of China, and they support NGOs that are actually run by the Chinese Communist Party. More must be done to stop this harmful practice.

The Biden administration has also decided to run for a seat on the Human Rights Council. The Council is known for its anti-Israel

bias and troubling countries, including the worst human rights offenders on the planet like China, Cuba, Russia, and Venezuela.

I strongly oppose any attempt by the United States to rejoin this sham group until reforms have been achieved.

On the nomination of Ambassador to Bahrain, United States and the Kingdom of Bahrain have enjoyed a close relationship since the 1940s.

Home to the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet and the International Maritime Security Construct, Bahrain is a lynchpin for regional stability and serves as a critical front against Iran's regional aggression.

I remain concerned that Iran continues its efforts to destabilize Bahrain and arm the terrorist groups that operate there.

On the human rights front, Bahrain has come a long way since the Arab Spring. While there is more work to be done, certainly, the Kingdom has made strides in effective policing, advancing human rights, and curbing trafficking in persons. It is vital that we continue this important work.

Finally, I applaud Bahrain's growing relationship with Israel with its signing of the Abraham Accords. These agreements finally offer a path forward for peace in a troubled region, and the recent visit of the Israeli foreign minister and Embassy opening were encouraging steps.

Should you be confirmed, it is critical that you work to encourage Bahrain and Israel to deepen their diplomatic, economic, and security relationship. This is a priority effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

All right. We will turn to our nominees. We ask you to summarize your statements in about five minutes or so so we can have an opportunity for robust questions.

Your full statements will be included in the record, without objection, and we will start with Ms. Stewart and work our way down the aisle.

**STATEMENT OF MALLORY A. STEWART OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE [VERIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE]**

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today.

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to be President Biden's nominee for the role of Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance at the Department of State.

I want to thank the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me and for the opportunity, if confirmed, to help advance and protect American national security.

I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends who have supported me throughout this process, and I would especially like to thank my parents, my husband, and our three children. I could not have achieved anything without their encouragement, their guidance, their patience, and their endless love and support.

The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance Bureau, AVC, is at the forefront of some of the most challenging and pressing na-

tional security priorities. I know firsthand just how important, complex, and challenging AVC's work is because, if confirmed, this would be a return to the Bureau in which I proudly served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary.

I also had the privilege of working on the AVC portfolio prior to that during my time in the State Department's Legal Adviser's Office, and I continue to work many of these issues in my current role at the National Security Council.

I joined the State Department's Legal Adviser's Office in 2002. I was inspired to leave my law firm job in part by the events of 9/11 amidst the swirl of international outreach, coordination, and concern.

Throughout my time working on arms control and treaty issues, I have personally witnessed the value of international cooperation, engagement, and dialogue, even and sometimes especially with nontraditional partners and potential competitors.

In order to most effectively achieve the Bureau's mission, AVC must continue its work to reestablish U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions and reengage with allies and partners.

The Biden-Harris administration recognizes that the challenges we face are not ours alone and cannot be solved by any one nation. That is why it has placed a great deal of importance on engagement and has begun the work to revitalize and strengthen our alliances in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific to better deter and defend against growing threats.

But engagement with allies is only one piece of the diplomacy puzzle. We must also engage with our main competitors, like Russia and China, and attempt to keep an open dialogue.

It is important to be able to engage on security even at times of bilateral tension and disagreement. That is why this administration is engaged in a strategic stability dialogue with Russia and why we seek to engage in meaningful dialogue on nuclear and other strategic stability threats with China.

From an administrative perspective, I am specifically interested in expanding AVC's capacity to work on the challenges posed by these countries' increasingly aggressive behaviors.

If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to lead this important Bureau, together with the many dedicated professional public servants that uphold the Bureau's national security mission every day.

AVC's work to address the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons, deter the use of all weapons of mass destruction, and contend with emerging technology security challenges in a rapidly evolving security environment is critical to American security.

If confirmed, I would hope to partner with the Hill and with other departments and agencies to make sure the Bureau has the necessary support and resources to fulfill its important mission.

Working together, we need to make sure AVC has the best tools and analytical capabilities available now and in the future to provide robust verification of arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament agreements and commitments, as well as rigorous assessments of compliance with those agreements and commitments, including in order to provide Congress with a complete and accurate

accounting of the arms control landscape through the Annual Compliance Report.

I was personally involved with the Compliance Report when I was a DAS in AVC, and I think it is critically important and it needs to be thorough, clear, and credible. If confirmed, I will make its timely delivery to Congress a priority.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of this committee, you have my commitment that, if confirmed, I will work in close coordination with you and deeply respect your role in the formation of foreign policy.

There are a great number of challenges we face, but we face them together and we must resolve them together.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Stewart follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MALLORY A. STEWART

Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of this committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is my distinct honor and pleasure to be President Biden's nominee for the role of Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) at the Department of State. I want to thank the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me and for the opportunity, if confirmed, to help advance and protect America's national security.

I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends who have supported me throughout this process. And I would especially like to thank my parents, my husband, and our three children. I could not have achieved anything without their encouragement, their guidance, their patience, and their endless love and support.

The Arms Control, Verification and Compliance Bureau (AVC) is at the forefront of some of the most challenging and pressing national security priorities. I know firsthand just how important, complex, and challenging AVC's work is because, if confirmed, this would be a return to the Bureau in which I proudly served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary during the Obama administration. I also had the privilege of working on the AVC portfolio prior to that during my time in the State Department's Legal Adviser's Office, and I continue to work many of these issues in my current role at the National Security Council.

I joined the State Department's Legal Adviser's Office in 2002. I was inspired to leave my law firm job in part by the events of 9/11, amidst the swirl of international outreach, coordination, and concern. Throughout my time working on arms control and treaty issues, I have personally witnessed the value of international cooperation, engagement, and dialogue, even—and sometimes especially with—non-traditional partners and potential competitors.

In order to most effectively achieve the bureau's mission, AVC must continue its work to re-establish U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions and re-engage with allies and partners. The Biden-Harris administration recognizes that the challenges we face are not ours alone and cannot be solved by any one nation. That is why it has placed a great deal of importance on engagement and has begun the work to revitalize and strengthen our alliances in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific to better deter and defend against growing threats.

But engagement with allies is only one piece of the diplomacy puzzle. We must also engage with our main competitors, like Russia and China, and attempt to keep an open dialogue. It is important to be able to engage on security even at times of bilateral tension and disagreement. That is why this administration is engaged in a strategic stability dialogue with Russia, and why we seek to engage in meaningful dialogue on nuclear and other strategic stability threats with China. From an administrative perspective, I am specifically interested in expanding AVC's capacity to work on the challenges posed by these countries' increasingly aggressive behaviors.

If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to lead this important Bureau together with the many dedicated professional public servants that uphold the bureau's national security mission every day. AVC's work to address the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons, deter the use of all weapons of mass destruction, and contend with emerging technology security challenges and a rapidly evolving security environment is critical to American security. If confirmed, I would hope to

partner with the Hill and with other Departments and Agencies to make sure the Bureau has the necessary support and resources to fulfill its important mission.

Working together, we need to make sure AVC has the best tools and analytical capabilities available, now and in the future, to provide robust verification of arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament agreements and commitments, as well as rigorous assessments of compliance with those agreements and commitments, including in order to provide Congress with a complete and accurate accounting of the arms control landscape through the annual Compliance Report. I was personally involved with the Compliance Report when I was a DAS in AVC. I think it is a critically important product that needs to be thorough, clear, and credible. If confirmed, I will make its timely delivery to Congress a priority.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of this committee. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, I will work in close coordination with you and respect your role in the formation of foreign policy. There are a great number of challenges we face—but we face them together, and we must resolve them together.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Forty-seven seconds to spare. That is pretty good.

Mr. Bondy?

**STATEMENT OF STEVEN C. BONDY OF NEW JERSEY, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN**

Mr. BONDY. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for your warm welcome and thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

I am extremely grateful to the President, a fellow Fightin' Blue Hen of the University of Delaware, and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have shown in me with this nomination.

It is the thrill of a lifetime to be in this position and, if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee and the Congress on the important foreign policy interests of the United States in Bahrain.

I would like to start by recognizing and thanking my wife, Meghan, who has been a steadfast supporter and source of inspiration through thick and thin, including the two years I served in war zones.

Our daughter, Rachel, is here today and our son, Drew, is tuning in from Brooklyn. Rachel and Drew traveled the world with us and enrich our lives with their love and global perspective. My parents, George and Enid Bondy, are also watching today's proceedings from Daytona Beach. I owe them all more than I can say.

Mr. Chairman, I am excited at the prospect, if confirmed, of returning to a country where my family and I spent three wonderful years. Bahrain was a key part of the recent Operation Allies Refuge, facilitating and supporting over 7,000 Americans and others transiting the country on their way to the United States. Bahrain once again demonstrated it is not just a partner or an ally, it is a real friend.

The foundation of that friendship begins with our shared national security interests. The United States Navy has had an enduring presence in Bahrain since the 1940s and it has been home

to the U.S. Navy Central Command and Fifth Fleet since the Gulf War.

Bahrain is a safe, secure, and welcoming home to the 8,500 U.S. military members and their families who are in country.

The United States works collaboratively with the Bahraini Government to address threats to the internal security of the Kingdom and the region, particularly from Iran.

This joint security work helps keep safe American citizens, investments, and interests in the country, and if confirmed, I will have no higher priority than protecting the safety and security of Americans in Bahrain.

Mr. Chairman, a year ago, Bahrain and Israel signed the Abraham Accords agreement, shepherded by the United States. This bold act represents a change in the strategic orientation of the Kingdom, and it opened the door to Bahrain and Israel developing their relationship across a wide spectrum of shared interests.

If confirmed, I will devote my energy and creativity to expanding and strengthening this relationship. The President and the Secretary have been clear that human rights are at the center of our foreign policy.

If confirmed, a primary focus of our bilateral engagement will be to advance respect for human rights and political participation, particularly as the 2022 parliamentary elections approach.

We will continue to have open and honest exchanges with Bahrain on these important matters, recognizing both where more progress needs to be made as well as where and when Bahrain has made meaningful progress.

Mr. Chairman, I was fortunate to be serving in Bahrain when our bilateral free trade agreement entered into force in 2006. That agreement established a solid basis for our commercial relations, and American companies can play an important role as the Bahraini economy emerges from the COVID pandemic. If confirmed, I will advocate on behalf of American companies pursuing opportunities in Bahrain.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Bahrain have a friendship that goes back almost 120 years when intrepid Americans established the American Mission Hospital and related school in Manama.

It will be my distinct honor, if confirmed, to build upon this legacy as the United States Ambassador to Bahrain.

I welcome any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bondy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT FOR STEVEN C. BONDY

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

I am extremely grateful to the President—a fellow Fightin' Blue Hen of the University of Delaware—and to Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have shown in me with this nomination. It is the thrill of a lifetime to be in this position, and if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee and the Congress on the important foreign policy interests of the United States in Bahrain.

I would like to start by recognizing and thanking my wife Meghan, who has been a steadfast supporter and source of inspiration through thick and thin, including the two years I served in war zones. Our daughter Rachel is here today, and our son Drew is tuning in from Brooklyn. Rachel and Drew traveled the world with us and



enrich our lives with their love and global perspective. My parents George and Enid Bondy are also watching today's proceedings from Daytona Beach. I owe them all more than I can say.

Mr. Chairman, I am excited at the prospect, if confirmed, of returning to a country where my family and I spent three wonderful years. Bahrain was a key part of the recent Operation Allies Refuge, facilitating and supporting over 7,000 Americans and others transiting the country on their way to the United States. Bahrain once again demonstrated it is not just a partner or an ally, it is a real friend.

The foundation of that friendship begins with our shared national security interests. The United States Navy has had an enduring presence in Bahrain since the 1940s, and it has been home to the U.S. Navy Central Command and Fifth Fleet since the Gulf War. Bahrain is a safe, secure, and welcoming home to the 8,500 U.S. military personnel in country and their families.

The United States works collaboratively with the Bahraini Government to address threats to the internal security of the Kingdom, particularly from Iran. This joint security work helps keep safe American citizens, investments, and interests in the country. If confirmed, I will have no higher priority than protecting the safety and security of Americans in Bahrain.

Mr. Chairman, a year ago Bahrain and Israel signed the Abraham Accords agreement, shepherded by the United States. This bold act represents a change in the strategic orientation of the Kingdom, and it opened the door to Bahrain and Israel developing their relationship across a wide spectrum of shared interests. If confirmed, I will devote my energy and creativity to expanding and strengthening this relationship.

The President and the Secretary have been clear that human rights are at the center of our foreign policy. If confirmed, a primary focus of our bilateral engagement will be to advance respect for human rights and political participation, particularly as the 2022 parliamentary elections approach. We will continue to have open and honest exchanges with Bahrain on these important matters, recognizing both where more progress needs to be made, and where and when Bahrain has made meaningful progress.

Mr. Chairman, I was fortunate to be serving in Bahrain when our bilateral Free Trade Agreement entered into force in 2006. That agreement established a solid basis for our commercial relations, and American companies can play an important role as the Bahraini economy emerges from the Covid pandemic. If confirmed, I will advocate on behalf of American companies pursuing opportunities in Bahrain.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Bahrain have a friendship that goes back almost 120 years, when intrepid Americans established the American Mission Hospital and related school in Manama. It will be my distinct honor, if confirmed, to build upon this legacy as the United States Ambassador to Bahrain. I welcome any questions you may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Carty?

**STATEMENT OF LISA A. CARTY OF MARYLAND, NOMINATED TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, AND TO BE AN ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

Ms. CARTY. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, it is truly an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to become the U.S. Representative to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

I am grateful to the President, to Secretary Blinken, and to Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield for their confidence in me. If con-

firmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work closely with all of you on the committee.

I would like to begin by expressing my deep appreciation to my family, to my husband, Bill Burns, an exceptionally dedicated public servant who has inspired and supported me since we first met as Junior Foreign Service officers nearly 40 years ago, and to our daughters, Lizzy and Sarah, who from infancy through college shared our Foreign Service journey and the many moves that that entailed.

I wish that my parents and my in-laws, each models of exemplary service, could see this moment. My father was a proud graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and a Korean War veteran, my mother, a public school special education teacher.

My father-in-law served in the U.S. Army for 34 years with my mother-in-law, his full partner in all the sacrifices that required. Their example and the love and support of my family are a very large part of why I am here today.

I approach this new challenge with considerable humility, with an abiding commitment to public service, with faith in the power of clear-eyed diplomacy in the pursuit of American interests and human rights, and with a well-grounded sense of both the possibilities and the limitations of the United Nations, and with few illusions about the complicated world around us.

It is a world in which the U.N. has a crucial role, especially in tackling the humanitarian, development, human rights, and social issues to which I have devoted nearly four decades as a career diplomat and then as an official of the United Nations.

It is a world in which the COVID pandemic and a changing climate have worsened problems of poverty, instability, and health insecurity, especially for women and girls, and where the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council can play a key role in mounting a global response consistent with U.S. interests.

It is a world in which authoritarian rivals like China and Russia and others seek advantage in the U.N. system and where active and energetic American diplomacy is required to counter them.

And it is a world in which the capabilities of the United Nations matter enormously, but also require relentless U.S. insistence on transparency, accountability, and reform as well as unwavering resistance to anti-Israel bias.

My professional background provides a unique combination of skills to help the United States take on these challenges. I spent 25 years as a Foreign Service officer working extensively on humanitarian, health, gender, and development issues, with field experience in Asia, Russia, and the Middle East.

I served as a Pearson Congressional Fellow working for Senator Nancy Kassebaum on the Africa Subcommittee, I worked for USAID on health programs in Russia, and served as the State Department's regional refugee coordinator based in Amman, Jordan.

I have decades of experience in multilateral diplomacy and a strong sense of how to navigate the U.N. system shaped by 10 years of work in U.N. entities, first, with the joint United Nations program on HIV/AIDS working hand in hand with PEPFAR, and most recently with the U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs where, through the combined efforts of U.S.

Government counterparts and courageous and committed U.N. colleagues, we helped alleviate suffering in some of the world's worst crises.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working hard to put that background to good use in support of American interests. I will work hard to ensure that U.N. efforts across the responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council are effective, well run, and consistent with U.S. goals.

I will work hard with allies and partners to mobilize coalitions and achieve practical outcomes and I will work hard with all of you to ensure the closest possible collaboration with Congress.

Thank you very much again, Mr. Chairman, for your consideration. This is truly the honor of a lifetime, and if confirmed, I will devote the full measure of my skill and experience to serve the best interests of the American people. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Carty follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LISA A. CARTY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is truly an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to become the U.S. Representative to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. I am grateful to the President, Secretary Blinken and Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I will do my best to live up to their trust and to work closely with all of you on this committee.

I would like to begin by expressing my deep appreciation to my family—to my husband, Bill, an exceptionally talented public servant, and accomplished diplomat, and to our daughters, Lizzy and Sarah, who from infancy through college, shared our Foreign Service journey and the many moves that entailed. Serving overseas, particularly at challenging posts, asks a lot of family members, and I will be forever grateful that they so readily embraced the demands of Foreign Service life. I wish that my parents, and my in-laws—each models of exemplary service—could see this moment. My father was a proud graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and a veteran of the Korean War, my mother, a public-school special education teacher, my father-in-law served in the U.S. Army for 34 years with my mother-in-law his full partner in all the sacrifices that entailed. Their example, and the love and support of my family, are a very large part of why I am here today.

I approach this new challenge with considerable humility; with an abiding commitment to public service; with faith in the power of clear-eyed diplomacy in the pursuit of American interests and human rights; with a well-grounded sense of both the possibilities and limitations of the United Nations; and with few illusions about the complicated world around us.

It is a world in which the U.N. has a crucial role, especially in tackling the humanitarian, development, human rights, and social issues to which I have devoted nearly four decades as a career diplomat and then as an official of the United Nations. It is a world in which a changing climate and the COVID pandemic have worsened problems of poverty, economic development, instability, and health insecurity, especially among women and girls, and where the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council can play a key role in boosting a global response and recovery consistent with U.S. interests. It is a world in which authoritarian rivals like China, Russia, and others seek advantage in the U.N. system, demanding active and energetic American diplomacy to counter them. And it is a world in which the capabilities of the United Nations matter enormously—but also require relentless U.S. insistence on transparency, accountability and reform, as well as unwavering resistance to anti-Israel bias.

My professional background provides a unique combination of skills to help the United States take on these challenges. I spent a quarter-century as a Foreign Service Officer, working extensively on humanitarian, health, gender and development issues, with field experience in Asia, Russia and the Middle East. I served as a Pearson Congressional Fellow working for Senator Nancy Kassebaum on the Africa Sub-committee and with Congressman Tony Hall on the Select Committee on Hunger. I worked for USAID on health programs in Russia; and served as the Regional Refugee Coordinator for the State Department, based in Amman, Jordan. I have decades of experience in multilateral diplomacy, and a strong sense of how to navi-

gate the U.N. system shaped by ten years of work in U.N. entities—first with the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS where I served as the principal U.N. focal point for the PEPFAR program and most recently with the U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, where I worked with U.S. Government counterparts and courageous and committed U.N. colleagues to help alleviate suffering in some of the world's worst crises.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working hard to put that background to good use in support of American interests at the United Nations. I will work hard to ensure that U.N. efforts across the responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies are effective, well-run, and consistent with U.S. goals. I will work hard with allies and partners at the U.N. to mobilize coalitions and achieve practical outcomes. And I will work hard with all of you to ensure the closest possible cooperation with Congress.

Thank you very much again, Mr. Chairman, for your consideration. This is the honor of a lifetime, and if confirmed, I will devote the full measure of my skill and experience to serve the best interests of the American people. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all very much. We will go through a series of five-minute rounds. But before we do that, I have a series of questions on behalf of the committee as a whole that I would like to ask each nominee.

They speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you.

I would ask each of you to provide just a simple yes or no answer to the following questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Mr. BONDY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. If you can give me a verbal response, please.

Ms. STEWART. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I cannot hear you. Sorry. Your microphone is not on.

Do you commit to keep the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Ms. STEWART. Yes.

Mr. BONDY. Yes.

Ms. CARTY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Ms. STEWART. Yes.

Mr. BONDY. Yes.

Ms. CARTY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ms. STEWART. Yes.

Mr. BONDY. Yes.

Ms. CARTY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. All of the witnesses—I mean, the nominees have answered yes to those questions. I will—the chair will reserve his time and I will turn to the ranking member.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Stewart, I want to start, first of all, on the very important role you have on—that you are seeking here with the Bureau. And

as I said to you in my opening statement that the Biden administration wants to strengthen U.S. allies, and we all do, the alliances that we have and the agreements we have.

The U.S. allies, however, have told us that they strongly object to a change to a no-first-use or sole-purpose policy for reasons I have previously stated.

Are you aware of their objections?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Senator, for the question. I share your concern about allies and partners understanding U.S. deterrence.

Senator RISCH. That was not the question. The question was are you aware that they have strenuous objections to what the administration is proposing?

Ms. STEWART. I have seen some traffic and assessments of engagements, and there has been numerous engagements with allies and partners.

Senator RISCH. You are aware that our partners and our allies have strenuous objection to what is being considered here. Is that a fair statement or not?

Ms. STEWART. I think I am not sure if I understand the term "strenuous objection." I think they are concerned about what we are—

Senator RISCH. Will you go so far as to say they have an objection?

Ms. STEWART [continuing]. I do not even know if it is an objection. But, perhaps, the point is that I think through our engagement we hope to explain and understand and really hear from them further as to their—

Senator RISCH. You are telling me, as you sit here today, you do not understand that our allies have strong objections to what the administration is considering? Is that what you are telling me?

Ms. STEWART. I would definitely agree that there are certain concerns about what is possibly in the consideration process. But I think the effort that we are undergoing to engage with them is to really understand what those concerns are and to, hopefully, address those concerns through part of the engagement process.

Senator RISCH. You will not go to where I need you to be and that is to get a good clear understanding. If we, on the committee, on Republican side of the committee, have an understanding that our allies have strong, strong objections to what you are considering, how is it that you cannot concede that?

I understand you are saying they have concerns. Would you agree with me that they are stronger than concerns?

Ms. STEWART. I guess—and I definitely appreciate what you are trying to sort of get at here. My concern to completely satisfy your question is that we are still very much in the process.

We do not know the result of the Nuclear Posture Review that the Department of Defense is leading, and so it is very hard to say that allies and partners can have objections to a process that has not sort of played out and we have not had a chance to engage more fulsomely with them as to where the direction is going, and there is a lot of considerations in the process.

If they object, it seems like they are prematurely objecting to something that we have not established.

Senator RISCH. You have already said if they object. You do not know that they are objecting. Is that correct?

Ms. STEWART. I think the concern is what would they be objecting to at this point, without the actual report.

Senator RISCH. I am not going to get you there, so I am not going to pursue that any further. But let us—let me say I am disappointed in your answers.

We are acutely aware of objections. Strong objections have been raised by our allies. If you are not, you need to get on board before I am going to be able to vote for your confirmation.

You were in the same Bureau in the Obama administration. You are aware that twice they considered adopting a no-first-use or sole-purpose policy. You are aware that you, are you not? Once early on in their administration and then again during the time you were there between 2015 and 2017. Is that correct?

Ms. STEWART. Yeah.

Senator RISCH. Would you tell this committee why the Obama administration decided not to adopt the no-first-use or sole-purpose policy?

Ms. STEWART. My understanding is that they had a lot of effort to engage and understand partners' perceptions. And I am sorry that you take issue with my statement. I think the concern is that we really need to allow the process to play out and we need to understand the best advice from the Department of Defense leading this process and how that can be implemented through policy, that we work with partners and allies to explain and understand.

But to your question—sorry—the approach in the Obama administration to get to fundamental purpose of deterrence, was really to accommodate many of the challenges we faced with our deterrence efforts and to understand integrated deterrence issues within the report, and to address some of the existential threats that we faced at that time.

Senator RISCH. But you agree with me they specifically rejected adopting a no-first-use or sole-purpose policy? Do you agree with that?

Ms. STEWART. I was not part of the NPR process during that time.

Senator RISCH. Did not they or did not they?

Ms. STEWART. They did not have sole-purpose or no-first-use in the Obama—

Senator RISCH. And they specifically rejected it after considering it and studying it. Is that correct?

Ms. STEWART [continuing]. I assume that they looked at it closely, but I was not part of that process yet.

Senator RISCH. And I agree with you, we need to let the thing play out. But if we are going to let the—if we are going to let the process play out, we need to have at least a clear understanding of what our allies are telling us and it looks to me like you got a long ways to go to get there.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to each of our nominees today. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you.

I would like to begin, excuse me, with you, Ms. Carty, and as the representative to the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council, I wanted to assess your feeling about the Commission on the status of women, which is the only global body dedicated to the promotion of women and girls empowerment and equality and aids to mainstream women's equality in U.N. activities.

[Clears throat.]

Senator SHAHEEN. Excuse me.

As you look at the role that you can play within ECOSOC and with the Commission, how do you think efforts to improve women's empowerment could be bolstered by the work of the Commission and do you see specific changes that you can be engaged in that will help with that?

Ms. CARTY. Senator Shaheen, thank you so much for that question. I have spent a fair part of my career working on issues related to women and girls and gender, and it is an issue that is very near and dear to my heart.

I see multiple opportunities, Senator, across the U.N. system where I could help through a position in ECOSOC advance U.S. goals regarding the well being of women and girls if I was confirmed for this position.

I think CSW offers particular opportunities. I think the important thing is to be very strategic and forward thinking in how we engage there and to make sure that we approach each CSW session with a very clear sense of what we want to try to achieve and we work very deliberately with CSW and other missions in New York, other governments, to try to make sure of one mind about the objectives we will pursue during those sessions.

Senator SHAHEEN. Can you give me an example of a priority that you would have as you are looking at a first place to focus?

Ms. CARTY. One issue, Senator, I feel is terribly important is the issue of education for women and girls. It is something, unfortunately, where there have been huge and significant setbacks in the context of the COVID epidemic.

We know that there are tens of thousands, millions, of girls out of school at this point who may never get back into school, and I think that would be a really important area, actually, across the U.N. system for specific focus, because we know that without that kind of access to education that it really imperils a young girl's future.

I would encourage CSW to look at that set of issues.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. And we know that empowering women and girls also adds to the stability in communities and countries, the potential opportunities and prosperity and economic opportunities in countries as well.

Ms. Stewart, I was really pleased to see the Biden administration extend the New START treaty, something that I worked on 10 years ago when it was before this body.

But as we think about how we continue to engage with the Russians, where do you think we should be thinking and how can we build on that to cover tactical weapons, emerging nuclear technologies, other efforts that we really need to address?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Senator.

I share your concerns with respect to the Russian challenges that we are facing right now. Russia's new nuclear weapons and its diversification in dual-use delivery platforms represent a threat to strategic stability.

The strategic stability dialogue is an interagency process to seek risk reduction and greater understanding of the policies and actions of the two nations.

In the plenary led by Deputy Secretary Sherman, we have agreed to two working groups for experts. First, in principles and objectives for the future of arms control, and second, the capabilities and actions with strategic effect.

We have made clear that we want to address all of Russia's nuclear weapons, including nonstrategic nuclear weapons and novel delivery systems.

Our driving principles in this process will be increasing U.S. and allied security, ensuring effective verification and faithful compliance for legally binding measures, and avoiding future miscalculation or misunderstanding.

We are only at the beginning of our conversations, and so I agree with you we need to be careful to understand the full range of challenges and misunderstanding potentials that we face.

No determinations about specific approaches have been made. But the strategic stability dialogue is a very good first step to try to engage and understand where we have overlapping concerns and where we can make progress towards stabilizing our relationship.

If confirmed, I hope to consult closely with this Congress to address this process further and to truly understand how we can best evaluate and consider this threat.

Senator SHAHEEN. And so are you optimistic? You said you think it is a good first step. Are you optimistic that we may be able to make some progress?

Ms. STEWART. I am cautiously optimistic that, in certain arenas, there is some progress we can make that we can understand where our collective advantage for both the U.S. and Russia and, hopefully, the global community can be satisfied by taking important actions to address destabilizing behavior and to lead to the best norms of responsible behavior.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I understand the next colleague who is available is Senator Van Hollen virtually.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all the witnesses for your service. Congratulations on your nominations.

Ms. Carty, a question regarding the Sustainable Development Goals at the United Nations. We have gotten a recent report indicating that since the onset of COVID-19 we have seen an increase in extreme poverty, declines in educational achievement, increased violence against women and girls, and other trends that threaten to reverse some of the positive development gains that we have made in recent decades.

The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations has the main responsibility for integrating—addressing these issues across different U.N. agencies.



What goals you think we need to be most focused on when it comes to regaining lost ground? Where have we lost the most ground and what role can you play and the United States play in trying to catch up?

Ms. CARTY. Senator, thank you very much for that question and for flagging what really is an ancillary impact of the COVID epidemic that we all need to keep very much within our lines of sight.

The truth is the U.S. has driven so much of that global development progress over many decades and it is now all at risk. I do think, Senator, the SDGs present a very important roadmap for how to bring the global community together in a common effort to ensure that we are trying to regain ground on all those issues that you just mentioned, whether it is food insecurity, increasing rates of poverty, or you mentioned with Senator Shaheen children out of school.

The list is quite long, and many of the SDGs directly address those risk areas, Senator. There are ones focused on health, on education, on economic well being, on the climate. I think we actually have to be very strategic, look where the needs are right now most acute, and then try to prioritize action around those SDGs first.

But I would just be clear, Senator, in saying I know Secretary Blinken has embraced the SDGs as a roadmap for development, and I think one of the real values that they bring is they do provide a path, a common path, and set benchmarks for progress.

If confirmed for the position, Senator, I would very much look forward to focusing on the SDGs as a key component of my work. Thank you.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you. Maybe you can follow up with respect to which areas you think are in most need of focused attention right now.

Mr. Chairman, can you still hear me?

The CHAIRMAN. I can, Senator.

Senator Van Hollen: I think—so I do not know if—Ms. Carty, just a follow-up question for you. According to a July report by the International Service for Human Rights, China has repeatedly used its seat on ECOSOC to block applications from NGOs working on human rights issues, and not only blocking NGOs working in China but China has, essentially, acted as a shield for other authoritarian regimes.

Are you familiar with this situation and what would you do about it, if confirmed?

Ms. CARTY. Senator, thanks very much. I am not familiar with that specific report. But I am, certainly, familiar with the broad issue at stake here. And just I would say to start that we have to be very clear we can leave no space for China to try to undermine the fundamental values and principles of the U.N. system.

We have seen this play out very specifically in the NGO committee, which is the committee that accredits NGOs for U.N. representation.

I have worked at many points over my career, Senator, with non-governmental organizations and I fully understand the importance of the perspective they can bring to the table. They must be there, but it must be legitimate credible NGOs that are there.

If confirmed for this position, I would work across the NGO committee to ensure that entities that should be at the table are, particularly those that China might seek to deny a place to, perhaps NGOs working on human rights or press freedoms or other broad democracy and governance issues, and I would ensure that those that do not belong at the table do not have a place.

Thanks, Senator.

Senator Van Hollen: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank all of you. I have some questions to submit for the record, but congratulations to all.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations to all the witnesses.

Mr. Bondy, I think I will spend my five minutes with you. You have significant experience in a really important region of the world and I want to ask you about a couple of issues dealing with the U.S.-Bahrain relationship.

First, Bahrain has been a good partner in the United States in our evacuation of Afghans. They have been very helpful in being the home of our Fifth Fleet.

Bahrain has also had some serious concerns about human rights issues, mass arrests in 2011, and it is a country where the leadership is kind of a minority Sunni population that is in leadership, but about 70 percent of the population is Shi'a.

Talk about what you could do, should you be confirmed, to promote more attention to human rights in Bahrain.

Mr. BONDY. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

Indeed, as you say, there has been traditionally a fair bit of friction and tension within the Kingdom of Bahrain between the various communities. If we were to rewind 10 years ago, as you said, when there was quite a bit of strife in the country, we would have to say that the trend lines since then have been exceedingly positive.

Indeed, the Government of Bahrain has used a new legislative mechanism called the alternative sentencing law to release over 3,500 convicts who were in prison and they have now been able to depart the prison and find other ways to sort of get on with their lives.

Additionally, Senator, there is a new juvenile justice law which elevates the age from 15 to 18 of who can be tried as a majority age individual and that has resulted, in fact, in some people between the ages of 15 and 18 really serving kind of very shortened sentences in juvenile detention centers rather than as full-blown prisoners.

But, Senator, you absolutely have hit the nail on the head. Promoting human rights is absolutely an essential tenet of the administration's foreign policy, and if confirmed, I will seek to use several fora that we already have established either through the strategic dialogue or in regular quarterly meetings between the Embassy and an inter-ministerial grouping in Manama to continue to promote the values and the interests that we have with regard to human rights.

Senator KAINE. Mr. Bondy, thank you for that.

Switching to another topic, in the last couple days something positive happened. Foreign Minister Lapid of Israel visited Bahrain to open the Israeli Embassy there. Very, very positive.

I was a supporter of the Abraham Accords when they were announced for a couple of reasons. I feel like the normalization of relations between nations in the region and Israel was actually a public expression of what was already sort of going on sub rosa, and rather than have it be sub rosa why not put it on the table that we are now going to work together on issues of common cause?

A normalized diplomatic relationship is not a Good Housekeeping seal of approval but it is just a way of having channels of dialogue and communication and normal relations, which are beneficial.

But the other reason I strongly support the Abraham Accords is I have been just so discouraged about the absence of progress toward a two-state solution in Israel. I visited Israel for the first time in 1998. I went to the West Bank as well.

And, frankly, in the 23 years since then the situation has moved farther away from the peace between an Israel and Palestine living side by side that we contemplated when we recognized the State of Israel at its foundation during the Truman presidency.

I view the Abraham Accords as giving nations in the region kind of skin in the game. Their populations want them to do things to promote a successful resolution and a Palestinian nation that lives peacefully side by side with Israel.

You were the charge at the UAE. The UAE was one of the other nations that normalized relations with Israel in this way. What do you see as prospects of building upon the Abraham Accords to break the stalemate that has existed for so long and find a path forward to the peace that we have longed for for decades?

Mr. BONDY. Thank you, Senator, for that very important question and for your comments on the situation.

Indeed, the Abraham Accords are—they represent a strategic change for the region and, in fact, in my career I also served in Jordan when Jordan made peace with Israel. I view strengthening and expanding the relationship of two very good friends and allies, Bahrain and Israel, as a very important book end to my own career with the Foreign Service.

But I believe there is great potential for those two friends to build their relationship all the way across the spectrum, and I will devote my energy and creativity, if confirmed, to helping them to do exactly that, Senator.

Senator KAINE. Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Senator CARDIN. [Presiding.] Thank you, Senator Kaine.

I understand we have next by WebEx Senator Young.

[No response.]

Senator CARDIN. Senator Young, are you there?

[No response.]

Senator CARDIN. I will pursue my questioning and then we will come back to Senator Young if he is available.

First off, let me thank all of our nominees for their public service and they are willing to continue in public service. These are difficult times.

We thank you and your families. Each of the positions that you have been nominated to are extremely important to our national security and to America's interests.

Ms. Carty, I am going to follow up on the Sustainable Development Goals. I was listening to your response to Senator Van Hollen. But I want to concentrate on one that was not mentioned during that exchange and that is Sustainable Goal Number 16.

It is the one that the United States was the initiator of to include it among the SDGs. It is a new one so, therefore, it is going to be more challenging to implement accountability standards.

And it is a little bit more difficult to establish accountability standards for SDG 16 as compared to others that we have established ways of evaluating how well we are doing in meeting the SDG goals.

Will you tell me your strategy on dealing with SDG 16, which deals with good governance, so that I can have your assurances that this will be a very high priority if you are confirmed to this position?

Ms. CARTY. Thank you very much, Senator.

And I think it is so important that the U.S. did insist on adding that as one of the core SDGs because it is fundamental to everything else that needs to happen. It is fundamental to how the U.N. system needs to work.

If confirmed, Senator, I would work very aggressively with other like-minded governments to ensure that we did have the clearest possible benchmarks and indicators, meaningful benchmarks and indicators, practical benchmarks and indicators, to track progress on SDG 16 and also to ensure that where we saw backtracking we had effective means of calling that out.

I think it comports very well, Senator, with broader U.S. development policy and, if confirmed, I look forward to paying sustained attention and working with you and your staff on that.

Senator CARDIN. I appreciate that. We are going to try to help you by establishing a rating system for how well countries are doing on fighting corruption, which is one of the key ingredients—anti-corruption—to have good governance.

We are going to try to help you, but I can assure you I will be sending you information and expecting responses in regards to carrying out President Biden's acknowledgement that corruption is a national security core concern so you have a chance to do something about that with the SDG 16.

And speaking about backtracking on good governance, Mr. Bondy, Senator Kaine already covered this point but I just want to cover it from a little bit different angle, and that is that, yes, Bahrain is an important ally of the United States in so many different areas, including our strategies against Iran as well as the Abraham Accords and moving forward with normalization with relations with Israel.

During Arab Spring, Bahrain was one of the most aggressive countries in dealing with removing the rights of the citizens of their own country and abuses that occurred. We saw some reforms, but it appears now they have backtracked on many of those issues.

I appreciate your comments about some of the issues concerning youthful offenders. But my information shows they are still using

the arrest powers indiscriminately to crack down on any opposition to the Government at all, including peaceful demonstrations.

I just really want to stress the point that with a country that we have a strategic partnership with that is backtracking on their commitments on human rights, we have to be very clear that that is a major concern to us and it affects our ability to strengthen the ties between our two countries.

Mr. BONDY. Senator, I am very grateful for your comments on this important matter. It is difficult for me to comment on whether there is backtracking or forward movement as you know, obviously, I am not serving in the capacity.

However, I can assure you, Senator that raising the broad swath of human rights issues would be something that I would eagerly do if confirmed as ambassador, and we do have several mechanisms where we can raise kind of the broad policy issues as well as specific cases.

And I will say that my understanding is that our Bahraini partners have been very open to having that free and frank dialogue and, if confirmed, I would welcome the role of this committee and the Congress to play in this extremely important set of human rights issues.

Senator CARDIN. And let me mention one other part that our missions play in countries where NGOs or advocates have a challenging time in exercising their rights, their basic human rights, where the U.S. mission becomes a safe place for them to be able to get support for being heard.

Do you commit, if confirmed, that our mission in country will always be a safe haven for those trying to exercise their basic human rights?

Mr. BONDY. Yes, Senator, I do. Those activities go on already where we have a broad swath of outreach to human rights defenders and human rights organizations, and if confirmed, I absolutely want to continue that outreach.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I believe Senator Young is now available vis-a-vis WebEx.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Thank you so much, Mr. Cardin.

Mr. Bondy, very good to see you, sir. Congratulations to you on your nomination and to all the other panelists on your nominations.

Mr. Bondy, Bahrain recently committed to partner with Task Force 59 and will be the first nation to partner with that group. According to NAVCENT, they agreed to collaborate in October on manned/unmanned teaming exercise to evaluate advanced unmanned surface vessels.

Will you commit to support Bahrain's partnership with the Fifth Fleet's recently created unmanned systems task force, Task Force 59, and will you work to promote other Gulf States joining this important initiative?

Mr. BONDY. Senator, I absolutely can support that. I think it is a very important initiative in order to continue to promote freedom of navigation and safe transport in the—on the high seas.

Senator YOUNG. Very good.

Sir, in light of the Abraham Accords and Israel's entry into CENTCOM, will you commit to push as hard as possible to get the Israeli military as integrated as possible in the multilateral activities at CENTCOM and the Fifth Fleet lead out of Bahrain, including maritime security efforts in the Gulf and Red Sea and regional efforts on missile defense and counter drone efforts?

Mr. BONDY. Senator, I believe that moving forward on building the relationship between Israel and Bahrain in a broad spectrum of areas all the way, starting with military and security as you are describing and then moving all the way across to economy, trade, education, technology, and people-to-people ties, is incredibly important.

And certainly, if confirmed, I would like to find a way to use the convening power of the United States in order to involve Israel more closely in planning and discussions related to preserving security in Bahrain and the Gulf region.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

And lastly, sir, will you commit to work with CENTCOM and the Fifth Fleet to get an Israeli naval liaison officer assigned to NAVCENT in Manama?

Mr. BONDY. Senator, I admit that I am unaware of that specific initiative. But, if confirmed, I absolutely would want to consult with the Department of Defense, with NAVCENT, assist in any way that I could play a useful role.

Senator YOUNG. That makes sense, Mr. Bondy. I will look forward to, should you be confirmed, following up with you and your consultation with DOD, and if there is any way I could be of assistance in furtherance of that effort I will be happy to do so.

Ms. Stewart, congratulations to you as well. We continue to see the foundation of strategic arms control crumble away. Years ago, I spent a brief stint of time working on the staff of former Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Dick Lugar. I feel especially responsible to ensure the legacy of arms control is protected and renewed.

To do that, we must have partners and processes that we can trust. At the same time, we want to ensure that we do not erode our defensive capabilities by entering into an agreement that is one sided.

What are the core areas of New START, Ms. Stewart, that need to be updated in order for the U.S. and Russia to have confidence in the agreement?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Senator, for that question. I definitely appreciate your background in this issue and I am very glad to hear that you are concerned about the future in this arena, as I am as well.

Because of the downturn in relations with the Russian Federation, effective arms control is more valuable now than it was in 2010, and it is important to maintain the boundaries on nuclear competition even as we hold the Russian Federation to account for its reckless and aggressive actions.

I think the verifiable limits on Russian intercontinental range nuclear forces allow us to make better informed judgments about the sufficiency of U.S. nuclear forces and help diminish the possibility of a costly and dangerous nuclear arms race.

As you know, New START also provides a forum for ongoing dialogue on strategic stability in nuclear weapons at a time when tensions between our countries are elevated and bilateral relations are increasingly challenged.

As to your specific question, it would be useful in the next steps beyond the New START treaty to address the nonstrategic nuclear weapons of the Russian Federation to understand their limitations, numbers, and parameters in a way that could comprehensively address our concerns with respect to a lack of strategic stability by their increasing presence.

As for the specifics of a next step agreement beyond New START, I think we definitely have to consider, as many administrations have, how to bring in the nonstrategic nuclear weapons and the novel delivery systems, including the unmanned delivery platforms, to address their concerns from a strategic stability vantage.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you. I think my time is about to end. I am curious whether there is any interest in Russia for a revised INF after the Trump administration pulled out on account of the fact that it had essentially become a unilateral agreement.

Unless you have a yes or no answer on that, which I would welcome, maybe we can talk about that later.

Ms. STEWART. Thank you. I look forward to discussing this with you, if confirmed.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. [Presiding.] Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to the nominees.

Ms. Stewart, the post that you would hold, if you are confirmed, is one that is critically important to the national security of the United States. Among other things, the bureau you would be heading is responsible for the annual report mandated by Congress on international adherence to arms control treaties.

This report serves both as a proxy and a litmus test for the seriousness with which presidential administrations approach dangerous proliferation.

During the Trump administration, I repeatedly urged the president to untangle the United States from Cold War style treaties that only constrained us, both because Russia cheated on them and China was not even bound by them.

President Trump rightly extracted us from treaties like the INF and Open Skies. The annual compliance report, which documented Russian and Chinese proliferation, was a crucial part of the case I made and the decisions that President Trump took.

I want to discuss with you how you would approach these issues, if confirmed. Let us start with China. China is engaged right now in a nuclear buildup that likely puts them in violation of their obligations under Article 6 of the NPT. The U.S. has limited leverage to stop this buildup, though.

I have previously introduced legislation that would impose sanctions on parts of the Chinese military sector unless they come into compliance with their already existing NPT Article 6 obligations for good faith negotiations.

Do you agree that China is in violation of its Article 6 obligations?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Senator. I share your concern about China's growing nuclear arsenal, and it does pose a security threat to the United States and our allies.

That said, I intend to, if confirmed, work closely with the lawyers and the experts in the Arms Control Bureau to understand more fully the exact development and capacity enhancement that China is engaging in and to understand how that implicates their Article 6 obligations under the NPT.

Senator CRUZ. Does that mean you do not have an opinion right now about whether China is in violation of their Article 6 obligations?

Ms. STEWART. I think I need to understand better exactly the parameters of their development and what they intend to do. I understand there is future plans and, certainly, rapid expansion in the future, and I need to understand exactly where that is going to be implicated with respect to their nuclear capacities.

Senator CRUZ. All right. Let us turn to Russia.

You have been a noted advocate of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. As you know, the United States Senate has pointedly refused to ratify the CTBT, in part because of Russian behavior.

In its 2021 Compliance Report, the Trump administration rightly called out this behavior. I would like to quote from that report.

Quote, "The United States finds that since declaring its testing moratorium Russia has conducted nuclear weapons experiments that have created nuclear yield and are not consistent with the U.S. zero yield standard."

Do you agree with that assessment?

Ms. STEWART. I agree with the assessment in the Compliance Report, yes.

Senator CRUZ. Do you commit to ensuring, if you are confirmed, that you would continue to document such noncompliance?

Ms. STEWART. Absolutely.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. Let us shift then to Iran.

Since 2007, it has nearly always been the position of the United States that Iran is not a member in good standing within the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the NPT.

We know the Iranian regime kept nuclear weapons blueprints on the shelf even while they were still pretending to comply with the Iran deal.

In April 2019, then nominee to be Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation, Jeffrey Eberhardt, confirmed in writing to this committee that, quote, "Iran's standing as a nonnuclear weapons state party to the NPT cannot be described as good."

Do you agree with Mr. Eberhardt's assessment?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you for the question. I do.

Senator CRUZ. Do you consider Iran's past possession of the nuclear archives seized by Israel, including materials in the archives relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligation under the NPT?

Ms. STEWART. We, certainly, share the concern that this is a serious issue we need to look into. But I think we need more under-



standing and information regarding that background file to assess whether that constitutes a violation of the NPT.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. And final question. I am concerned about the possibility of the Biden administration adopting a, quote, “no-first-use” nuclear policy. China has formally declared a no-first-use policy, but the Chinese Communist Party has proven itself willing to break such promises after we agree to them.

Do you personally support a no-first-use policy for the United States?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you.

With respect to that question I would, certainly, defer to the Department of Defense process that is presently undergoing to understand what exact policy is being included in a statement of no-first-use.

That said, I appreciate that we need to ensure our extended deterrence commitments to our allies and partners remain strong and credible, as the President has stated that we would do in our Interim National Security Strategic guidance.

And it is important to make sure allies and partners understand that whatever steps we take our commitment to their defense is unshakable.

Senator CRUZ. You do not have any personal views on this topic, though?

Ms. STEWART. I have a lot of personal views with respect to the underlying policies being considered in the Nuclear Posture Review. But I am certainly—I am certainly welcoming the—

Senator CRUZ. What are those views? That is the question is what are those views?

Ms. STEWART. I think we have to—we have to really consider how we can take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our deterrence. But we have to do so in a way that ensures our extended deterrence commitments to our allies and partners remain strong and credible.

And I think, regardless of the policy language, the words will be informed by the concerns that the Senator raised earlier. They will be informed by our engagement with the allies and partners to ensure them of our unshakeable commitment.

And so if the policy is no-first-use, if it is sole-purpose, if it is fundamental purpose or if it goes back to the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, it has to be done with a good sense of understanding of our commitments.

And we need to make sure that our commitments to our allies are strong and unshakable, and we need to understand their concerns and address them.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. There are no other members before the committee, as I understand it. I will ask questions myself.

Before I do, I want to wish Senator Cardin a very happy, joyous, and healthy birthday and many more, one of our key members of the committee.

[Singing.]

Senator CARDIN. We now understand that Senator Menendez's Senate career is his second career. His first career is as a singer and a performer. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I am not giving up my day job. I like to eat. But happy birthday. This is what happens when you sing—I sang to Jeanne Shaheen. Now he wants to be sung to. I made that mistake of doing that in public. In any event, happy birthday, Ben.

And I understand—I do not know if he is here anymore, but a former member of the staff, John Ryan, who is at the State Department, shares an illustrious birthday with Senator Cardin. Happy birthday to him as well.

Let me, on a serious note, turn to our nominees.

Ms. Stewart, you may have heard my opening comments and I am wondering, do you believe that the department as it is presently configured, as it is presently staffed, is up to the challenge ahead?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Senator.

I share your concerns that the Bureau of Arms Control has been challenged through the previous administration—losing resources, losing supporting staff—and I agree that bringing on a new generation of experts and enabling the good transfer of institutional knowledge will be a priority as will expanding our ability to confront and contend with an increasingly aggressive China and new and emerging technological challenges.

I agree with you we also need to expand and enhance our work to create a new generation of tools and technologies that will enhance verification and allow us to better monitor compliance.

We need to position ourselves to work closely with the intelligence community and the U.S. interagency to explain the basis for the U.S. Government's compliance concerns to the international community in an effort to shine a light and, hopefully, resolve those concerns.

And finally, we need to work to rebuild an understanding of the importance of arms control measures in coordination with deterrence to achieve a lasting and sustainable strategic stability.

If confirmed, all of these are issues that I hope to work on in close cooperation with you to expand and enhance the capacity of the Bureau to address the numerous challenges that face us.

The CHAIRMAN. We have an extraordinary array of issues that your department would have responsibility for and for which I think we face some major challenges.

Let me ask you specifically, it appears that we have reached a critical juncture in our diplomatic efforts to contain Iran's nuclear program. It continues to stonewall the IAEA's investigation into undeclared nuclear materials and activities that were uncovered in 2018 and is refusing to allow the IAEA to assess critical monitoring equipment.

I do not even understand quite the much ballyhooed agreement that was reached by the IAEA. All they did is they took out the components that were previously being used for monitoring but which they cannot see and put in the new chips to continue to monitor but which they cannot see.

We do not have any eyes on site during this period of time to understand how far they have advanced, and Tehran is pressing for-

ward with their nuclear program with a current breakout time to produce the necessary material for a weapon near where it was before the JCPOA was signed.

What impact is Iran's refusal to cooperate with the IAEA having on compliance with the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and do you think that Iran has really walked away without very much consequence, that other states will follow Iran's lead and refuse to fully cooperate with the IAEA?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you, Senator. I completely share your concerns on this issue. This administration remains committed to ensuring Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon and we continue to believe diplomacy, in coordination with our allies and regional partners, is the best path to achieve that goal.

We, clearly, have a series of fundamental disagreements on a wide range of issues. Iran's lack of cooperation on safeguards in the JCPOA, its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile programs, destabilizing actions throughout the region, and its abhorrent practice of using wrongfully detained U.S. citizens and foreign nationals as political tools are all issues of grave concern.

But with respect to your specific point, if we do not address the numerous challenges that Iran poses, we will risk other countries following Iran's lead and we will risk the diminishment of the IAEA and the NPT itself.

This administration is very focused on understanding what we can do to address all of these challenges while supporting the IAEA.

AVC's sister bureau, the ISN Bureau, is the lead in the T family on this issue. If confirmed, I will work to make sure AVC is ably assisting the department in its efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and to ensure support for the IAEA in all of its efforts.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. I have questions for you on China but I will submit them for the record. I would like a full answer when you receive them.

Let me turn to Mr. Bondy. We, obviously, you, obviously, support the continued partnership with Bahrain to address counterterrorism needs in the region. Is that correct?

Mr. BONDY. Yes, I do.

The CHAIRMAN. And as well as maintaining the close security partnership that we have between the United States and Bahrain?

Mr. BONDY. Yes, I do, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. We applaud that Bahrain and the UAE became countries that normalized relations with Israel. But, if confirmed, what steps can you take as ambassador to preserve the space for a continued dialogue on normalization, how we could help foster Israel's growing ties with Bahrain?

Mr. BONDY. Yes, Senator. Thank you very much for the question.

This is an issue set that, if confirmed, I would want to devote all of my creativity and energy in order to expand the relationship between two of our close friends and allies in the Middle East region.

Indeed, I believe there is quite a bit of progress that can be made. At least at this stage both sides have taken the fundamentally important step to complete and sign and promote the Abra-

ham Accords, and now comes the time where it needs to be operationalized.

As we heard earlier, the Israeli Foreign Minister did visit Bahrain just a few days ago. Bahrain does have an ambassador now in Israel and my understanding is Israel shortly will have an ambassador in Bahrain.

I would, certainly, want to, if confirmed, consult with the Israeli Embassy, the Israeli ambassador. But I do believe, Senator, that there is a great amount of room for joint cooperation be it in the military and security realm, all the way across to people-to-people contact, and I would want to look for opportunities in order to enhance that relationship.

The CHAIRMAN. I have said to several of our nominees going to some of these countries is that it is great that the Abraham Accords were signed. It is great that there is normalizing.

But normalizing has to go a step beyond. If you are allies you are allies. That means you stand up for Israel at institutions like the United Nations. It means you engage within the region to engage other countries within the region.

As you say, it has to become operational. Otherwise, it is just a piece of paper for which there is a recognition of a relationship. But what that relationship is is really, ultimately, embodied by the actions of both countries, bilaterally, in each case. I hope to see that in the case of Bahrain.

I do have questions about our—the human rights, and I will submit those for the record that I would like to see you respond to.

Finally, Ms. Carty, I look at what some people say about ECOSOC and there are some who say that ECOSOC lacks any real authority and that it works—overlaps with the activities of the U.N. General Assembly.

It has been suggested that the Council could play a greater role in global economic and development policy. The U.N. has passed several reforms over the years, including as recently as this year, to strengthen ECOSOC's policy guidance role and to improve collaboration between ECOSOC, its subsidiary councils, and other U.N. entities.

What is your assessment of the most recent ECOSOC reforms? Do you believe that ECOSOC should have a greater policy-setting role?

Ms. CARTY. Senator, thanks for the question.

I think it is still a work in motion, Senator, as best I understand the situation. ECOSOC does play an important role in framing the conversation that then goes on to the General Assembly in creating reports, resolutions, documents. It can set the context for how key issues are discussed, key issues that matter substantially to the United States.

If confirmed for this position, Senator, I would always keep that in mind, how do we work effectively across the ECOSOC body to ensure that their operations are effectively supporting important U.S. goals that are within the purview of the committee.

I am a firm believer, Senator that the U.N. functions best when the U.S. is in a leadership role and is, clearly, at the table and I would hope, if confirmed, to bring that to the ECOSOC discussion.

The CHAIRMAN. One last question for you. I am concerned about China's increasing influence and role in U.N. bodies. ECOSOC consults with more than 5,100 registered nongovernmental organizations to inform its work.

I am deeply concerned that within ECOSOC China has used its seat on the Council's committee on NGOs to block applications from NGOs working on human rights issues.

I know you are not there yet but you have been involved in this field in general. How do you assess China's efforts to use its increased influence at ECOSOC and elsewhere in the U.N. system to undermine civil society and silence the voices of those who champion human rights?

Ms. CARTY. Senator, I think this absolutely is a problem and it needs to be a top priority. We know that there is a broader effort undertaken by China across the U.N. system to try to insert its authoritarian values in place of core U.N. principles.

We cannot allow that to happen. There are particular risks in the ECOSOC space and, in particular, in the NGO committee where I understand China has acted to ensure that NGOs that represent Tibet or the Uighurs are not allowed to participate.

If confirmed for this position, Senator, I share fully with you the view that NGOs and civil society provide an absolute critical perspective. Credible organizations need to be at the table and I would devote the full measure of my energies to ensure that was, in fact, the case.

The CHAIRMAN. We look forward to that. This committee as well as the Senate has spoken with one voice on China and, therefore, whether it be on arms control issues or whether it be about its nefarious activities at the U.N. that I have just described, we look forward to a forceful response.

Senator Hagerty has made it under the wire. He is now recognized.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Senator Menendez. It was my honor to follow you in the Banking Committee meeting just a few minutes ago and thank you for your comments there and your leadership there.

Ms. Stewart, I would like to turn a question to you. The United States has a long history of using nuclear deterrent to prevent not only nuclear aggression but nonnuclear forms of aggression that either threaten us or our allies.

Jim Baker, who served as President George H. W. Bush's Secretary of State, wrote about the use of calculated ambiguity. Using calculated ambiguity in America's policy to deter and prevent Saddam Hussein, I think, had a real effect, looking at the possible use of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction during the 1991 Gulf War.

We use calculated ambiguity to make an enemy think really hard about the possible consequences before they might launch chemical or biological weapons against the United States, knowing that the response could include a full range of options, including nuclear.

In 2020, presidential candidate Biden argued that, and I am going to quote, "The sole purpose of the U.S. nuclear arsenal should be deterring and, if necessary, retaliating against a nuclear attack," the end of his quote.

From my perspective as a businessman, I always think it is a bad option to take tools and options off the table, particularly with dealing in situations where the United States or our allies might be in danger.

I want to ask you, Ms. Stewart, do you support adopting a sole-purpose policy?

Ms. STEWART. Thank you so much for that question. I agree, this is a really difficult area and it is a very complicated analysis that, right now is being led by the Department of Defense to really have a whole-of-government review of our deterrence posture, our Missile Defense Review, our nuclear policy, and our broader national defense guidance. I think this is a hard issue.

With respect to sole-purpose, with respect to no-first-use, with respect to sort of the policy formulations, ultimately, United States declaratory nuclear policy will be a decision for the President, and the particular language chosen for this policy will be fully informed by the perspectives of our allies and partners.

And as I mentioned before, we will engage allies and partners. We will continue—and we have been engaging with them—to assure them that the United States commitment to their defense is unshakable and to explain how our rationale for the declaratory policy is chosen by the President in the best national security interests and how we intend to assure our allies' and partners' security consistent with that policy.

To your specific question, the policy formulations that the Department of Defense right now is coming up with will fully take into account the strategic threat environment we face and will certainly lay out the concerns and the challenges with respect to any option on the table.

I do not want to get ahead of where the department is on this. But I understand that all different formulations of what that policy could be are on the table. The concern I have is when we say sole-purpose, what sort of formulation of that are we discussing? Or if we say no-first-use, what formulation?

There are several different, I guess, semantic conversations we could have about what you are looking at and what you are considering in the NPR process and what the Department of Defense is putting on the table, again, fully informed by their threat assessment.

There are certain sole-purpose formulations that may make more or less sense, depending on what we are trying to address throughout the NPR, and looking at the integrated deterrence considerations.

But I think these will all be very carefully observed and studied and presented to the President.

Senator HAGERTY. I can confidently say this, that anything we do in an environment like we have right now where the threat is escalating, anything that we might do that would limit our options would weaken the United States. It would embolden our adversaries and it will cause our allies to question us.

I encourage you strongly as you look at this policy, as you contemplate the responsibilities that you are facing, that you take every effort to broaden our options and not restrict them in any manner.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. That concludes our hearing.

The record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business on Wednesday, October 6th, 2021. I ask colleagues to ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than tomorrow, on Wednesday.

I would say to the nominees inevitably there will be questions that will be directed to you. I would urge you to answer them fully as well as expeditiously as possible so that your nominations can be considered before the committee at a business hearing.

And with thanks to the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MALLORY A. STEWART BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Photos from commercial satellites have revealed three new fields of intercontinental ballistic missiles. The size and scope of these missile fields indicate China is abandoning its previous nuclear strategy based upon minimal deterrence and instead is moving toward a strategy of assured retaliation against the United States, which is similar to Russia's nuclear strategy. This committee began to address this issue in the bipartisan "Strategic Competition Act," which lays out the need for effective arms control in the face of China's military modernization and expansion. What are your thoughts about when and how the United States should approach China to begin talks on strategic stability or arms control?

*Answer.* I believe the United States must pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal. These efforts will go together with ones designed to bolster deterrence in the region. The administration hopes that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its own security interest and is a mechanism to reduce the risk of military crises and manage the threat of destabilizing arms races. U.S. allies and partners will be key to success here and the administration will work with them to regularly urge the PRC to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control. If confirmed, I commit to consult Congress at an appropriate time on potential measures to be pursued with China.

*Question.* What issues do you believe the United States should focus on?

*Answer.* The best way to address emerging nuclear threats to the United States and our allies and partners is to ensure our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and pursue arms control that enhances U.S., allied, and partner security. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal represents one such threat that the United States must address over the coming years. If confirmed, one of my focus areas will be on how best the State Department can expand the expertise and resources needed to contend with arms control challenges posed by the PRC.

*Question.* Do you believe the AVC Bureau has the resources and staff necessary to effectively negotiate with China?

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my top priorities is ensuring the Bureau has the appropriate resources to pursue the administration's arms control objectives, including potential engagement with the People's Republic of China. I would be grateful for Congressional support in this effort.

*Question.* I supported the extension of the New START Treaty for a full five years. I agreed with the Biden administration that a full extension would allow the United States to retain the benefits of New START while we address the many, many areas of concern we have with Russia. The United States and Russia just completed their second Strategic Stability Dialogue but it is still unclear to me what exactly we are seeking to accomplish in our discussions with Russia. Should the United States and Russia seek to build on New START with a new treaty that imposes deeper reductions in both sides' strategic nuclear forces?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration will use the five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons. It would be premature to speculate about U.S. nuclear force levels and potential limits in future arms control before the Nuclear Posture Review is complete and President Biden sets U.S. nuclear strategy.

*Question.* Should we seek a new type of agreement that incorporates shorter-range nuclear weapons, not currently covered by New START?

*Answer.* The United States will use the time provided by the five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons. Incorporating Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons into arms control is a longstanding and bipartisan U.S. objective.

*Question.* What impact will China's nuclear buildup have on our ability to reach future arms control agreements with Russia?

*Answer.* The United States should pursue arms control measures with Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) that advance the security of the United States, U.S. allies, and partners. The PRC's rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal presages a more dangerous future, with a considerably larger number of sophisticated nuclear delivery systems capable of targeting a multitude of actors in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. This larger nuclear arsenal will buttress a broader PRC military build-up and contribute to arms racing dynamics that will complicate how we approach arms control challenges in the future.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MALLORY A. STEWART BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Duties and Qualifications*

*Question.* What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform the duties of Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance (AVC)?

*Answer.* In 2004, I joined the Office of Treaty Affairs in the Department of State's Legal Adviser's office and focused on the Arms Control and Nonproliferation treaties portfolio. I have been working on these issues ever since, as a lawyer for the AVC Bureau and as a policy maker in the Bureau. I was a principal member of the technical staff and senior manager at Sandia National Laboratories, where I worked on arms control and nonproliferation policy support. Most recently, I have served as Senior Director at the National Security Council for Arms Control, Disarmament, and Nonproliferation. Before I started as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in AVC, I was closely involved with many of the significant issues confronting the Bureau. For example, I was the lead lawyer for the delegations that negotiated our missile defense agreements with Poland and Romania. I also provided legal support for the New START negotiations and effort to develop rules of responsible behavior in emerging technology domains. I was also involved in the negotiations of the 2013 U.S.-Russian Framework for the Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons and the subsequent international architecture erected at the United Nations and in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to implement that Framework. After becoming the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Emerging Security Challenges and Defense Policy in the AVC bureau, I led numerous space security dialogues with partners and allies, and I was able to support Assistant Secretary Frank Rose in the Space Security Dialogue with China. In that role, I also led the Bureau's efforts to produce the Annual Compliance Report, and then was responsible for briefing that report to the Hill, as well as foreign governments interested in its conclusions. During my time at Sandia National Labs, I learned more about the technical side of verification and compliance. I supported numerous projects on behalf of the State Department or the Department of Defense to further our arms control and nonproliferation policies and objectives, and gained a much deeper understanding of the crucial role of the national labs in so many of our deterrence, strategic stability, and arms control and verification capacities. Finally, as a Special Assistant to the President and the Senior Director for Arms Control, Disarmament, and Nonproliferation, I have been leading the interagency policy processes on these issues for over 8 months. This has provided me with a clear view of how the entire nuclear policy arena operates and interacts (both domestically and internationally)



and the challenges, stovepipes, and perspectives that exist. If confirmed, my experience and interagency connections in this field will serve me well in the role of AVC Assistant Secretary.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance?

*Answer.* Given the numerous challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction and emerging technologies, it is important that everyone working to mitigate these challenges continually enhance and expand our personal knowledge and understanding. If confirmed, I will continue my own efforts to understand the scope of both the challenges facing the Bureau and the varying perspectives—both international and domestic—on how to address them. This includes listening to and working with Congress, the interagency, as well as international allies and partners to maximize our collective efforts to improve international security.

#### *Major Challenges and Priorities*

*Question.* In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance?

*Answer.* There are numerous challenges facing AVC as a whole, some of which I outlined in my opening statement. If confirmed, I look forward to tackling all of them with the help of the experts in the Bureau, at State and around the Government. A top priority would be to enable and empower the Bureau to bring in and retain the necessary expertise to effectively address the growing threats to strategic stability, including China, emerging technologies, and attribution and accountability challenges in the face of mis- and disinformation. Impending retirements and staff attrition must also be addressed. The institutional transfer of knowledge from key experts and opportunities for growth and career development would also be a major focus of mine.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you address these challenges?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would make it a priority to enhance bipartisan focus on the Bureau's crucial work on global strategic stability. I would also work to expand AVC's ability to work hand in hand with the U.S. interagency focused on nuclear policy, through more dialogues, detail opportunities, and other exchanges, so that the Bureau's tool set can be used to continue to strengthen national security and reduce risks internationally. In particular, I would want to focus on working with the interagency to better integrate deterrence and arms control policies, so they can be mutually reinforcing. Working together with the Hill, I would make the case that AVC needs the best tools and analytical capabilities available, now and in the future, to provide accurate, credible, and robust verification of arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament agreements and commitments, as well as rigorous assessments of compliance with those agreements and commitments, including in order to provide Congress and our partners and allies with a complete and accurate accounting of the arms control landscape through the annual Compliance Report.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your main priorities?

*Answer.* Longstanding top priorities for the AVC Bureau continue to include reducing the risk of nuclear and conventional war through effective arms control mechanisms such as: risk reduction, transparency, prevention of unintended escalation, negotiation of effectively verifiable international agreements, and bilateral and multilateral diplomacy to prevent miscalculation and misunderstanding. The Bureau has also long sought to limit vertical nuclear proliferation, and to pursue accountability for and deter the use of chemical, biological, and all weapons of mass destruction. Rapid advances in science and technology require that the Bureau continue its work to tackle new challenges: from creating norms of responsible behavior in space, to addressing security challenges underseas and in the Polar regions, to grappling with advancements in cyber capabilities and other emerging technologies that can threaten strategic stability. Finally reinvigorating and reemphasizing the mission of the Bureau, and supporting the international organizations who support attribution and accountability in our arena, needs to be at the forefront of our efforts. Our ability to hold bad actors accountable under the arms control architectures requires unassailable credibility on our part. That means AVC must be at the forefront of fulfilling U.S. commitments to that architecture.

*Question.* The Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance includes a diverse set of portfolios and issues. What criteria would you apply and what processes would you follow to establish priorities and evaluate tradeoffs in time and resources between the various AVC commitments?

Answer. If confirmed, I would strive to align the use of AVC's staff, time, funding, and other resources with priorities identified by the President and Secretary of State and articulated in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and other relevant administration documents, as well as by Congressional mandate. In general, and in conformity with these aforementioned sources of strategic guidance, I would also seek to devote resources to issues based on the magnitude of their potential impact on national security and potential benefit for U.S. efforts to enhance arms control, disarmament, and international security cooperation. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that AVC's Bureau Strategic Plan and Bureau Resource Request reflect full alignment with these criteria for prioritizing the use of resources to fulfill the Bureau's critical national security mission.

*Question.* What resources does AVC have to call upon within its own bureau, and that it has contracted, to verify, and make compliance determinations with respect to other nations' adherence to their NPT obligations, U.S. nuclear cooperative agreements, and the military diversion of civilian nuclear facilities in violations of existing IAEA safeguards agreements?

Answer. It is my understanding that AVC employs 1.25 FTEs engaged in assessing compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which includes compliance with required IAEA safeguards agreements, but does not assess compliance with U.S. nuclear cooperative agreements. There are no contracts supporting verification of compliance with the NPT at present. The U.S. Government conducts its own analysis of Iran's compliance with the NPT and makes its own findings, drawing on the IAEA's reports, and extensive reporting by the U.S. Intelligence Community. The principal analysis for the annual Compliance Report is drafted by AVC and coordinated within the Department of State. This draft analysis and findings are then sent to the interagency and a thorough, government-wide vetting and clearance process takes place. When the interagency review is completed, State finalizes the analysis and findings as part of the annual Compliance Report.

*Question.* How do these resources compare with those AVC has on tap to make determinations regarding possible violations of the Outer Space Treaty, the CTBT, the BWC, and CWC? Please give specific staffing numbers in full-time staffer equivalents and in dollars contracted out for relevant outside analysis.

Answer. I understand that AVC's full-time staff equivalents devoted to verifying compliance with the specified treaties at present are as follows: zero FTEs for the Outer Space Treaty, zero FTEs for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), 3.5 FTEs for the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and 10.5 FTEs for the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Should compliance issues arise related to the Outer Space Treaty, AVC staff who cover Outer Space security issues could be allocated to assess such concerns. As the CTBT is not in force yet, no FTEs are dedicated to assessing compliance with it; however, two FTEs work on issues related to CTBT and work to assess compliance with the LTBT and TTBT, as well as states' adherence to their respective voluntary testing moratoria. There are no contracts supporting verification of compliance with the Outer Space Treaty at present. There are no contracts for monitoring compliance with the CTBT, since it is not in force, but ongoing projects relevant to monitoring compliance with the LTBT, TTBT, and states' adherence to voluntary nuclear explosive testing moratoria amount to \$1,310,324 at present. Currently, there are three projects supporting BWC compliance and strengthening attribution measures for biological weapons investigations totaling \$976,000. AVC also has two current projects related to supporting CWC compliance verification totaling \$350,075 at present.

*Question.* What percentage of verification and compliance analysis does AVC simply delegate to the Intelligence Community and State's Intelligence and Research Bureau?

Answer. As required by statute, the Department of State, led by AVC, prepares compliance analysis as part of the annual Compliance Report, in consultation with the Departments of Defense and Energy and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As also required by statute, the report is submitted with the concurrence of the Director of National Intelligence. Thus, the Intelligence Community, including the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, reviews and concurs with the annual Reports. The AVC Bureau is uniquely positioned to employ a cadre of WMD technical and arms control policy experts who are involved in the rigorous compliance assessment process. Compliance assessments are informed by all-source intelligence products, comprising both finished analysis and raw reporting, relevant to verification of foreign states' compliance with their obligations. For nearly all agreements, AVC convenes Verification and Compliance Analysis Working Groups at which interagency partners, especially those identified by statute as participants in

the annual compliance report process, participate in reviewing activities of concern and making recommendations on a compliance determination for respective Compliance Reports.

*Question.* What are your views on the relationship between the Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in particular, and with Congress in general?

*Answer.* The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Congress have an important role in the formation of foreign policy. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, I will work in close coordination with the committee and Congress.

*Question.* If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and the Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance?

*Answer.* The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Congress have an important role in the formation of foreign policy. My goal, if confirmed, is to work with Congress on resolving a number of challenges that we face as a nation. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, I will work in close coordination with the committee and Congress to achieve our shared objectives.

*Question.* U.S. Strategic Command leader Admiral Richard says China's "breath-taking" nuclear buildup is the final piece of capability to build a military able to coerce and confront the U.S. and our allies to change the world order. Do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not? What are your views on the causes of China's nuclear expansion? What are the implications?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China's (PRC) ongoing rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal presages a more dangerous future, with a considerably larger number of sophisticated nuclear delivery systems able to reach the United States and our allies and partners than in the past. This larger nuclear arsenal will buttress a broader PRC military build-up and its increasingly assertive and threatening behavior to U.S. allies and partners. Precisely because Beijing is the least transparent member of the P5 nuclear weapon states, accurate assessments of its nuclear trajectory and intentions are difficult. China's behavior, in addition to the concerns expressed by Admiral Richard and others, highlights why the United States must pursue arms control to reduce the dangers from the PRC's growing nuclear arsenal.

*Question.* Air Force Secretary Kendall recently referred to a potential Chinese fractional orbit bombardment system (FOBS). What can you share about a possible Chinese FOBS capability? How would such a capability affect the credibility of China's no first use policy?

*Answer.* I defer to the Intelligence Community for a specific assessment. Overall, China's ongoing advances to its nuclear arsenal raise questions regarding its intent and undermine its claims to seek a minimum nuclear deterrent backed by a no-first use policy.

*Question.* Would an operational FOBS violate the Outer Space Treaty?

*Answer.* Consistent with longstanding U.S. policy, an object carrying nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction that completes only a fraction of an orbit is not a violation of Article IV of the Outer Space Treaty. Longstanding U.S. and international views are that while the Outer Space Treaty prohibits the placement of WMD in orbit, it does not prohibit nuclear weapons or other WMD transiting through space for part of their trajectory.

*Question.* We understand the prior administration AVC had found cause to find China in violation of the NPT Article VI. What is your view of Chinese refusal to engage in good faith negotiations as required by the NPT? Are they in compliance with article VI?

*Answer.* The PRC's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament. The State Department's most recent Compliance Report did not find the PRC to be in violation of its obligations under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. If confirmed, I will consult with legal and policy experts at the Department of State on a variety of matters related to the PRC's behavior in the nuclear weapon arena, including its compliance with Article VI.

*Question.* China has resisted numerous attempts to engage in bilateral or multilateral engagement regarding arms control, and has instead embarked on a major expansion and improvement of its nuclear forces. How do we get China to the arms control table?

*Answer.* The administration will pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal. These efforts will be paired with actions to bolster deterrence in the region. The administration is developing and evaluating specific proposals, and, if confirmed, I commit to consulting Congress at an appropriate time on potential measures to be pursued with the PRC and how best the State Department can develop and retain government expertise regarding arms control with the PRC.

*Question.* The New START Treaty excludes Russia's tactical nuclear weapons and so-called "exotic" strategic delivery systems. If Russia fields some of these exotic systems before the expiration of New START, how should the U.S. respond?

*Answer.* The New START Treaty limits Russia's Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle and will limit the Sarmat heavy ICBM at the appropriate point in its development cycle. Whether the two nuclear-powered novel systems announced by President Putin in March 2018 will be operational by New START's scheduled expiration in February 2026 remains to be seen. The United States will use the time provided by the extension of New START to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including novel strategic systems not subject to New START and non-strategic nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Which of Russia's so-called "exotic" systems do you believe are most concerning for U.S. security? Please explain the reasoning behind your answer.

*Answer.* Each of the novel systems poses unique challenges. Based on the unclassified information that is available, the nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed cruise missile appears to be volatile, unreliable, and dangerous, posing a threat to the entire world, including Russia. If confirmed, I will consult with the U.S. Intelligence Community on Russia's "exotic" weapon systems, and I will engage with the Department of Defense on the military implications of these systems.

*Question.* What do you believe the Russian reaction will be, if any, to the recent U.S. declassification of nuclear stockpile numbers?

*Answer.* Declassifying U.S. nuclear stockpile numbers demonstrates the serious U.S. commitment to transparency and confidence-building measures that can enable further progress on reducing nuclear risks. We encourage Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) to do the same and act in a more transparent manner. The declassification of U.S. stockpile numbers has shown U.S. leadership in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Others have welcomed our transparency and joined us in calling on Russia or the PRC to declassify their nuclear stockpile numbers.

*Question.* What is your understanding of Russia's nuclear doctrine and how it views nuclear deterrence?

*Answer.* Russia publicly states it would only use nuclear weapons in two scenarios: in response to the use of weapons of mass destruction against it and/or its allies, or if the existence of the Russian state is threatened. Yet Russia conducts exercises with scenarios simulating limited nuclear first use and maintains an arsenal of 1,000 to 2,000 non-strategic nuclear weapons, which is projected to grow. Russia has developed a wide range of new dual-capable ground-, sea-, and air-based short- and intermediate-range missile systems. Such weapons range U.S. allies and partners in Europe and East Asia—as well as U.S. forces stationed there—and both our deterrence strategy and our approach to arms control must address these threats. If confirmed, I will consult with the U.S. Intelligence Community on Russian nuclear policy, strategy, doctrine, and forces.

*Question.* What are your views on what objectives the U.S. should have for the U.S.-Russia Strategic Stability Dialogues?

*Answer.* President Biden and President Putin agreed in June 2021 to pursue an integrated, robust, and deliberate Strategic Stability Dialogue. Through this dialogue, the Biden administration seeks to lay the groundwork for future arms control and risk reduction measures, while maintaining a consistent and iterative discussion on threats to strategic stability. While the administration seeks a more stable and predictable relationship with Russia through constructive engagement and aims to lessen the potential for miscalculations and misunderstandings, it will also hold Russia accountable when it disregards its international obligations and commitments. I agree with this approach.

*Question.* What is your understanding of Russia's objectives for the U.S.-Russia Strategic Stability Dialogues?

Answer. President Biden and President Putin agreed in June 2021 to pursue an integrated, robust, and deliberate Strategic Stability Dialogue. Through this dialogue, Russia has publicly stated it wants to raise U.S. capabilities and actions that it perceives as undermining strategic stability, such as U.S. missile defenses, U.S. precision-guided weapons, U.S.-NATO capabilities and exercises near Russian borders, and U.S. forward-deployed nuclear weapons in Europe.

*Question.* In a response to Congressional questioning in April 2021, the head of U.S. Strategic Command, Admiral Richard, stated that “Limited U.S. response options are intended to provide a more credible deterrent to limited attack against the U.S., Allies and partners rather than relying primarily on the threat of large-scale nuclear responses. Without this capability, Russia may perceive an advantage at lower levels of conflict that may encourage limited nuclear use.” Do you agree with Admiral Richard’s assessment? Does this capability enhance U.S. leverage in diplomatic engagement with the Russians over their own non-strategic nuclear arsenal?

Answer. I agree that limited U.S. response options are intended to provide a more credible deterrent to limited attack against the United States and our Allies and partners rather than relying primarily on the threat of large-scale nuclear responses. I believe the United States should have modern, credible, and effective nuclear forces that deter adversaries from nuclear use, no matter how limited. The ongoing Nuclear Posture Review process is analyzing how to accomplish this, and Admiral Richard’s expertise and views will factor into that analysis.

*Question.* Russia has violated previous arms control agreements like the INF Treaty and the BWC. It has repeatedly used banned chemical weapons against its own citizens and tolerated their use by its allies like the Assad regime. Since the fear of violating global norms and commitments does not appear to be a major constraint on Russia’s actions, what other strategies can we employ to actually enforce these norms and ensure Russian behavior does not deteriorate further?

Answer. The 2021 Compliance Report and the Condition 10(C) Report detail Russia’s violations of both the BWC and CWC. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the interagency, Allies, and partners to identify options to hold Russia accountable for its use of chemical weapons (CW) and identify measures to bring Russia back into compliance with its treaty obligations. The United States uses the full range of tools in its toolkit to respond to Russia’s CWC and BWC violations. For example, the United States added key Russian Ministry of Defense institutes to the Department of Commerce’s Entity List because the U.S. Government has reasonable cause to believe these facilities are associated with Russian biological weapons program. The United States also led efforts at the OPCW that resulted in the addition of two families of Novichoks to the CWC Annex on Chemicals. Further, the United States imposed sanctions under the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991 (“CBW Act”) on Russia for the use of a Novichok chemical weapon in the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny that included restrictions on exports and purchases of Russian sovereign debt to send a clear signal that Russia’s use of CW has severe consequences.

Most recently, the United States, along with 44 other countries, posed a series of questions to Russia regarding the poisoning of Mr. Navalny under Article IX at the OPCW Executive Council meeting that took place October 5–8, 2021.

The United States will continue to take steps to deter Russia’s use of chemical weapons. This will include engaging Russia bilaterally and multilaterally, as well working with allies and partners at the OPCW Executive Council and Conference of the States Parties and in U.N. fora, including the Security Council, and using public messaging to express our concerns. If confirmed, I will explore further measures to address Russian non-compliance with the CWC. There can be no impunity for the use of chemical weapons.

*Question.* It is our understanding that Russia has withdrawn its offer to freeze its warhead production that was offered under the Trump administration. What is the administration’s strategy to constrain Russian non-strategic nuclear forces? What technology does the United States possess that would allow it to verify a potential Russian declaration? Has the State Department/AVC invested any funds in developing technologies that could assist in the verification of Russian NSNW? If so, what is the status of those programs and how far along in the TRL process is the technology?

Answer. Russia never proposed to freeze nuclear warhead production. It said in October 2020 that it could accept a U.S. proposal to freeze the size of each side’s nuclear arsenal, in conjunction with a one-year extension of New START. An arrangement on these terms was not finalized, in part, because Russia deemed U.S.

efforts to define “warheads” and discuss verification of the freeze as unacceptable extra demands.

The Biden-Harris administration will use the five-year extension of the New START Treaty to pursue with Russia, in consultation with Congress and U.S. allies and partners, arms control that addresses all Russian nuclear weapons, including non-strategic nuclear weapons. Identifying and analyzing appropriate verification technologies, ranging from National Technical Means to on-site inspections, will be an important component of those efforts. If confirmed, this would be a priority for me and an issue on which I would consult with Congress, including ensuring sufficient funding to explore and develop new verification technologies.

*Question.* What do you view as the purpose of Iran’s nuclear program?

*Answer.* The United States has made clear its longstanding concerns with Iran’s nuclear program, in particular Iran’s pre-2004 efforts to develop nuclear weapons. As a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons. Under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran reaffirmed this commitment. If confirmed, I will strongly support the administration’s efforts to ensure that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* In your assessment, do Iran’s nuclear program and ballistic missile program indicate a desire by the Iranian Government to have a nuclear weapons capability?

*Answer.* The United States has assessed that Iran pursued nuclear weapons until late 2003. Iran’s long history of denial and concealment regarding its past nuclear weapons program, its continued escalation of nuclear activities beyond the limits in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and its ballistic missile development and proliferation all remain serious concerns today. Like President Biden, I am committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Given Iranian advances in space-based delivery systems and ballistic missiles, does the Iranian regime remain in compliance with the NPT? Why or why not? Please provide a detailed answer.

*Answer.* The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is solely focused on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and does not address missiles or any other potential delivery platform. Nonetheless, I have serious concerns about Iran’s compliance with the NPT independent of Iran’s ballistic-missile-related activities. If confirmed, I will work with legal and policy experts to monitor and assess Iran’s NPT compliance. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Does the United States conduct its own analysis of Iranian compliance with its safeguards and other NPT commitments or does it rely strictly on the IAEA process? If the former, please describe in detail who makes that determination and what process it entails.

*Answer.* The U.S. Government conducts its own analysis of Iran’s compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and makes its own findings. The IAEA’s reports inform that analysis. After consultations with the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC), the principal analysis for the annual Compliance Report is drafted by the State Department. The Department’s draft analysis and findings are then sent to the interagency and a thorough, government-wide vetting and clearance process takes place. When the interagency review is completed, State finalizes the analysis and findings as part of the annual Compliance Report.

*Question.* Under the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the limitations on Iran’s uranium enrichment expire between 2026 and 2031. If the U.S. rejoins the JCPOA, do you assess that Iran will be legally able to increase its uranium enrichment after 2031?

*Answer.* As reported by the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran is currently pursuing a uranium enrichment program far in excess of the limits under the JCPOA. A mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA would restore important restrictions on the size and scope of Iran’s nuclear activities, and its uranium enrichment-related activities in particular, as well as the strongest verification and monitoring measures ever negotiated. While Iran would be permitted to expand key uranium enrichment activities again in 2031 under the JCPOA, the Biden administration has made clear that a mutual return to compliance with the deal remains the best available option to restrict Iran’s nuclear program and provide a platform to address Iran’s destabilizing conduct moving forward.

*Question.* In 2018, Israel's Mossad released a series of Iranian nuclear files, which included information about at least three uranium enrichment facilities that Iran had hidden from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Do you agree that providing the IAEA access to those sites is essential to ensuring oversight of Iran's nuclear program?

*Answer.* The administration takes Iran's full implementation of its legally binding obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its safeguards agreement with the IAEA very seriously. Iran must provide the IAEA with requested information and access in response to any question or concern related to potential undeclared nuclear materials and activities in Iran. If confirmed, I will strongly support the IAEA's monitoring and verification mandate in Iran.

*Question.* In 2018, Israel's Mossad released a series of Iranian nuclear files, which included information about at least three uranium enrichment facilities that Iran had hidden from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

*Answer.* My understanding is that the Biden administration will not take Iran at its word regarding assertions about its nuclear program. The JCPOA provided the strongest verification and monitoring measures ever negotiated to help ensure Iran's nuclear activities are exclusively peaceful. Resumption of mutual compliance with the deal would ensure the renewed implementation of these important measures, as well as restrictions on the size and scope of Iran's nuclear activities. Like President Biden, I am committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* What are your views on how to define "integrated deterrence"?

*Answer.* I defer to the Department of Defense for a specific definition of integrated deterrence. The administration believes the security challenges faced by the United States and our allies and partners require a reliance on all elements of national power, not just military tools. As such, there is a strong role for diplomacy to play in strengthening the alliances, institutions, agreements, and norms that underwrite international security. If confirmed, I will engage with the Department of Defense and Congress on how arms control can be used to strengthen deterrence.

*Question.* How would unilateral U.S. reductions in the nuclear triad and the nuclear weapons complex enable the United States to negotiate with Russia and China from a position of strength?

*Answer.* Whether unilateral or reciprocal, any potential reductions would need to be carried out in a manner consistent with the objective of ensuring the United States sustains a modern, credible, and effective deterrent so long as nuclear weapons exist. I would never support unilateral reductions that endanger U.S. security or weaken U.S. negotiating leverage.

*Question.* Which emerging technologies most threaten strategic stability, and why? How can we best address these technologies through existing structures?

*Answer.* Emerging technologies offer challenges and opportunities to strategic stability. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Quantum technologies have the potential to provide significant benefits to U.S. national security. AI, for example, could enhance deterrent capabilities and provide tools that improve situational awareness and decision-making capabilities, therefore, avoiding an unintended escalation during a crisis. However, it is important to consider the potential risks from such systems as well. If confirmed, we need to determine whether there are norms of responsible behavior that can be developed around the use of these systems. If confirmed, I look forward to addressing these challenges with Russia and the People's Republic of China.

*Question.* In your view, would allowing Russian or Chinese inspectors to visit U.S. missile defense sites be an acceptable measure to build trust and transparency? If so, should we insist on reciprocal inspection rights? How would such measures comply with the prohibitions of 10 USC § 130h?

*Answer.* No decision has been made on whether to seek agreement with Russia or China on transparency measures related to U.S. missile defense programs, including missile defense site inspections. The United States would condition any agreement on receiving reciprocal rights from the Russian Federation and/or the People's Republic of China (PRC). Also, to the extent any agreement would include inspections at U.S. missile defense sites on the territory of allied or partner nations, the United States has committed to approach each Host Nation, prior to any discussion with Russia, to obtain Host Nation approval and conditions for permitting such inspections, and their conduct, on their sovereign territory. I fully recognize that any agreement with the Russian Federation must comply with the prohibitions of 10 USC § 130h.

*Question.* Does the Biden administration support the development and deployment of INF non-compliant systems such as GLCM to Eastern Europe and Asia?

Answer. The U.S. withdrawal from the INF Treaty due to Russia's material breach and failure to return to compliance resulted in that treaty's termination. As such, there are no longer "INF non-compliant" missiles. The Department of Defense (DoD) continues work on capabilities that would previously have been prohibited under the INF Treaty. I defer to DoD for further program details, but the United States would consult with allies, partners, and Congress prior to any foreign deployments.

*Question.* What is the difference between a "no first use," "sole purpose," or "fundamental purpose" policy?

Answer. Various declaratory policy options will be reviewed as part of the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review. That ongoing analysis and the continuing allied and partner consultations will inform my own view on declaratory policy. It would be premature to define these terms before the NPR process has begun a detailed discussion on the matter. At the same time, I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Congress, and experts regarding U.S. adoption of a "no-first-use" or "sole purpose" policy. Those concerns will inform the review process.

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021].* Among "no first use," "sole purpose," and "fundamental purpose," most commentators assess "no first use" to be more restrictive than the other two. More exacting distinctions will vary depending on how each is defined. The DoD-led Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) is developing and evaluating different declaratory policy options and their implications. The NPR process will seek to clarify exactly what the formulations mean and avoid potential misunderstandings regarding the implications of the various policies. It would be inappropriate to speculate on specific definitions or differences with the NPR work still ongoing.

*Question.* What are your views on the United Kingdom's declaratory policy? Was the UK wrong to maintain its long-standing policy of ambiguity in its latest integrated review?

Answer. The administration supports the UK's efforts to ensure its defense and commend the UK for its openness on its nuclear policy and posture. Such transparency reduces the risks of misunderstanding and promotes stability. We call on Russia and the People's Republic of China to adopt a similar level of transparency about their nuclear policies.

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021].* I agree with the administration's view of UK declaratory policy, and the United States commends the UK for its openness on its nuclear policy and posture. The administration further supports the United Kingdom's efforts to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent. The United States calls on Russia and the People's Republic of China to adopt a similar level of transparency.

*Question.* We understand our allies have messaged strongly to the Biden administration against weakening the U.S. nuclear deterrent through adoption of a No First Use/Sole Purpose policy. The administration has previously ignored allied concerns on NordStream2, Afghanistan, and AUKUS. Given widespread allied concerns over a shift in declaratory policy, how would a major shift in this policy be consistent with the President's pledge to "rebuild," U.S. alliances? What concrete steps are you prepared to take to assure allies that the Biden Admin ensure their security?

Answer. The Biden administration is working to reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships around the world. They are a tremendous source of strength and a unique American advantage. We are working to reaffirm, invest in, and modernize NATO and our alliances with Australia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea—which, along with our other global alliances and partnerships, are America's greatest strategic assist. I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Congress, and experts regarding potential U.S. adoption of a no-first-use or sole purpose declaratory policy. These two options do not reflect a binary choice. They are among various declaratory policy options being reviewed as part of the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review. That ongoing analysis and the continuing allied and partner consultations will inform my own view. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the President is aware of allied and partner views to inform his decisions on U.S. nuclear posture and policies.

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021].* Under the Biden-Harris administration, the United States is working to modernize its military capabilities and ensure the U.S. armed forces are equipped to deter adversaries, defend the U.S. people, interests, and allies, and defeat a variety of threats that emerge. As part of our overarching integrated deterrence, the United States will retain a strategic deterrent that remains



*safe, secure, and effective so that U.S. extended deterrence commitments to its allies remain strong and credible for the purposes of assurance.*

*Question.* We understand the State Department recently surveyed over 30 countries asking for their views on U.S. nuclear policy and any potential shifts in our declaratory policy. In addition to the responses to this outreach, we also understand there is at least one cable from this summer that codifies this feedback from a meeting between administration officials and their counterparts in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany in a cable. Do you commit to providing the committee with the details of allied feedback to the State Department, including the cable referenced previously?

*Answer.* As announced, the administration is implementing a robust engagement plan with allies and partners as part of the ongoing Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). Those consultations are classified diplomatic exchanges and part of a current and ongoing process. I will note that allies and partners have provided a broad range of views that are being fed into the NPR process. If confirmed, I commit to work with Congress, through the Department's Bureau of Legislative affairs, to accommodate the vital oversight needs of this committee.

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021]. Congressional oversight is a recognized and critical authority of Congress and of this committee. Taking into account the possible need for use of secure facilities and secure means of communication for classified information, and the potential for damage to diplomatic relations with our allies if confidential diplomatic communications are unduly disclosed publicly, I commit, if confirmed, to work with the Department to accommodate the oversight needs of this committee, including as to the matters you reference.*

*Question.* In your testimony, you reference varying definitions of "Sole Purpose". How is this not an obfuscation and how would such a nuanced approach be a legitimate diplomatic response to our allies' and partners' grave concerns?

*Answer.* Allies and partners have provided a broad range of views that are informing the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). The administration continues to factor those views into its deliberations, including of various declaratory policies. My point was that as the NPR evaluates various policies, how they affect allied and partner perceptions of the strength and credibility of U.S. extended deterrence commitments needs to both be understood within the U.S. Government and explainable to foreign governments.

*Question.* The Obama administration twice considered changing declaratory policy, and decided against changes both times. Why?

*Answer.* The Obama administration explained in its 2010 Nuclear Posture Review that it did not adopt a sole purpose declaratory policy because "there remains a narrow range of contingencies in which U.S. nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or chemical and biological weapon attack against the United States or its allies and partners."

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021]. I was not part of the 2010 NPR process and have no firsthand knowledge into the decision-making process from 2010. Whether nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or chemical and biological weapon attack against the United States or its allies and partners is among the contingencies being evaluated as part of the ongoing DoD-led Nuclear Posture Review. It would be premature to comment prior to that analysis being completed.*

*Question.* In what ways do you see the United States exercising its global leadership on arms control issues, and if confirmed, what would you do to advance and balance both U.S. interests and arms control efforts?

*Answer.* Some examples of current efforts that demonstrate U.S. leadership on arms control include the Strategic Stability Dialogue with Russia, support for disarmament and nonproliferation progress at the U.N. First Committee and in other multilateral institutions, efforts to modernize the Vienna Document and consider proposals for future conventional arms control architecture that enhances international security, continued efforts to marshal international support for holding countries like Russia and Syria accountable for their use of chemical weapons, and dialogue with our allies and partners to support action in concert toward these ends. We also strive to lead by example by ensuring that U.S. nuclear policy and doctrine are consistent with the President's guidance to find ways to reduce the role that nuclear weapons play in our national security posture while taking into account security conditions and ensuring that our deterrence capabilities, and extended deterrence for our allies, remain safe, secure, strong, and credible. If confirmed, I intend to continue these efforts to protect our national security and ensure that the United

States remains a leader in arms control by pursuing arms control dialogues, risk reduction best practices, and transparency and confidence-building measures that enhance strategic stability and reduce the risks of conflict escalation and miscalculation.

*Question.* The USG has once again released numbers on the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile, and called on other states with nuclear weapons to do the same. Russia and China refused to reciprocate when the Obama administration first tried this. Do you believe they will reciprocate this time?

*Answer.* Declassifying U.S. nuclear stockpile numbers demonstrates the serious U.S. commitment to transparency and confidence building measures that can enable further progress on reducing nuclear risks. While we would encourage Russia and the PRC to be more transparent, the declassification of U.S. stockpile numbers has not harmed U.S. national security and has shown U.S. leadership in nuclear non-proliferation fora. Others have welcomed our transparency and joined us in calling on Russia and the PRC to do the same.

*Question.* Should the State Department present data on its own estimates for China and Russia record of progress toward the achievement of the goals of the NPT?

*Answer.* We assess a variety of information in evaluating progress toward the achievement of the goals of the NPT. I defer to the Intelligence Community on sharing sensitive information publicly. We are concerned about Russian and PRC weapons development and modernization. The Strategic Stability Dialogue with Russia, part of which will discuss next steps in nuclear arms control, is designed to address such concerns. If confirmed, I will consult with legal and policy experts at the Department of State on matters related to the PRC's behavior in the nuclear weapon arena, including its progress toward the achievement of NPT goals.

*Question.* What are your views with respect to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)?

*Answer.* The TPNW risks undermining U.S. deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security and may reinforce divisions that hinder our ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. All NATO Allies remain opposed to the TPNW, as repeatedly stated by the North Atlantic Council, most recently in June of 2021. Any disarmament effort must take into account the international security environment, and legally-binding measures must include effective verification.

*Question.* Should the United States actively dissuade other States from joining the TPNW, or from participating in TPNW-related events and initiatives?

*Answer.* The United States has expressed, and will continue to express, our views on what we believe to be the significant defects of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and discouraged other states from becoming Parties to the TPNW. We have also shared our intentions not to participate in the first meeting of TPNW States Parties in March of 2022 in any capacity as such participation could be seen as giving the treaty unwarranted credibility. We also have encouraged our allies and partners not to participate.

*Question.* Should the United States deny assistance to allies or partners who join the TPNW?

*Answer.* Allies that benefit from extended nuclear deterrence have declined to join the TPNW. The United States continues to share our views on what we believe to be the significant defects of this treaty with our Allies and partners. We also have encouraged Allies and partners to conduct their own independent analysis of the potential impacts of the TPNW on national interests, legal commitments, and policy. It remains to be seen how TPNW states parties will interpret and implement many of the treaty's provisions, how this might impact their security relationships, and how the United States would react to specific situations.

*Question.* Do you believe that membership in the TPNW would preclude a country from being a member of NATO, a nuclear alliance? Would TPNW membership preclude a nation from partaking in NATO or U.S.-led exercises?

*Answer.* The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is incompatible with U.S. extended deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security and may reinforce divisions that hinder the international community's ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. U.S. allies covered by extended nuclear deterrence (which in-

cludes all NATO Allies, plus Australia, Japan, and South Korea) share our view that the TPNW is incompatible with our extended nuclear deterrence arrangements.

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021]. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is incompatible with U.S. extended deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security, and U.S. allies covered by extended nuclear deterrence share this view. While it remains to be seen how TPNW States Parties will interpret and implement the treaty's provisions, the text of the TPNW could have significant negative consequences for States Parties' ability to cooperate with nuclear-weapon States such as the United States, including in the context of a nuclear alliance like NATO. In particular, the TPNW's prohibition on assisting, encouraging, or inducing conduct otherwise prohibited by the treaty, which includes the possession of nuclear weapons, is vague and, depending on how broadly the treaty's obligations are interpreted, could have potentially sweeping implications for a TPNW State Party's ability to participate in NATO, as well as its ability to join in U.S.-led military exercises.*

*Question.* What do you see as your role, if confirmed, in strengthening support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, as compared to the tenets of the TPNW?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN) to strengthen political support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to achieve a positive outcome at the upcoming NPT Review Conference. I would support and contribute to efforts, led by the President's nominee for Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation, Adam Scheinman, to explain the U.S. record on arms control and our demonstrated commitment to the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament in accordance with NPT Article VI. I would continue to oppose the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which ignores the security environment, undercuts deterrence, and does not offer a practical path toward that goal.

*Question.* What are your views on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)?

*Answer.* A global, legally-binding ban on nuclear explosive testing in all environments is in the national security interest of the United States. Entry into force of the CTBT would enhance our efforts to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

*Question.* What do you think the United States' role should be in continuing to work with the CTBT?

*Answer.* I believe it is important for the United States to display leadership and remain fully engaged with the work of the CTBT Preparatory Commission to ensure its capabilities are as robust as possible.

*Question.* Does U.S. annual support to CTBT require any metric or reporting on how the funds are spent? How does the United States ensure the funds are strictly for the IMS not operations of the CTBT or general expenses?

*Answer.* Through exchanges of letters in 2018 and again in 2021, the United States has conveyed all applicable U.S. funding restrictions on the funds it provides to the CTBT Preparatory Commission. In response, the Preparatory Commission's Executive Secretary has acknowledged those restrictions and confirmed that U.S. funds will be used consistent with them.

Expenditures on the International Monitoring System (IMS) and International Data Centre (IDC) comprise more than 80 percent of the CTBT Preparatory Commission's annual budget, while the U.S. assessed contribution provides 22.5 percent of the funds available to the Commission for all its activities.

*Question.* What are your views on the zero yield standard to which the United States adheres, as compared to the interpretation by other CTBT signatories such as Russia and China?

*Answer.* Once in force, the CTBT would ban nuclear explosive tests of any yield. The treaty's negotiating record and public statements by leaders and/or senior officials from every P5 state at the time the treaty was negotiated, signed, and presented for domestic approval make clear that the CTBT is a "zero-yield" treaty. Russian and PRC officials have since stated that their respective countries continue to have the same understanding of the CTBT scope that was discussed when the treaty was negotiated.

*Question.* For the past several years, the Intelligence Community and the Department of State have highlighted U.S. concerns that Russia, and especially China, are conducting nuclear tests that may be inconsistent with this standard. In your view,

should countries that conduct tests producing nuclear yield face repercussions? If so, what actions would you recommend the international community take in response to these alleged activities on the part of China and Russia?

*Answer.* The State Department's most recent Compliance Report outlines the findings and concerns the U.S. Government has regarding Russian and Chinese activities related to nuclear testing. Specifically, the Compliance Report analyzes adherence to each country's unilaterally declared nuclear explosive testing moratorium. Nuclear testing is a threat to international security and highlights the need for an in-force ban that the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and its associated verification mechanisms can help provide. In the meantime, if confirmed, I pledge to work with allies and partners to highlight and confront nuclear testing wherever it occurs.

*Question.* The Obama administration considered supporting ratification of the CTBT through a resolution in the U.N. Security Council and a "political statement expressing the view that a nuclear test would defeat the object and purpose of the CTBT" that would be referenced in the U.N. resolution. Regardless of one's view about the necessity of nuclear testing, do you agree that seeking U.S. ratification of CTBT through customary international law mechanisms or any method outside Senate's advice and consent role is unconstitutional?

*Answer.* As I understand it, the Obama administration never sought to ratify the CTBT other than through the normal constitutional process. There is no mechanism for U.S. ratification of a treaty outside of such a process. The P5 statement in 2016 indicated that a nuclear explosive test would defeat the object and purpose of the CTBT, and a U.N. Security Council resolution then took note of that statement. This did not constitute U.S. ratification of the CTBT. The United States has not ratified the treaty and would require Senate advice and consent or statutory authorization under our domestic law before it could do so.

*Question.* To be clear, do you believe the President can circumvent the Senate's constitutional role regarding the ratification of treaties in any way?

*Answer.* No. Senate advice and consent or statutory authorization would be required in order for the United States to ratify the CTBT. Neither may be achieved without the Senate's approval.

*Question.* Please describe the main challenges you believe the United States faces when it comes to biological threats.

*Answer.* The biological threat landscape is broad, encompassing naturally occurring, accidental, and intentional incidents with potential impacts to humans, animals, agriculture, materiel, and the environment. Pathogenic biological threats do not respect national borders and create unique challenges to fully assessing, preventing, protecting against, responding to, and recovering from biological incidents. If confirmed, I would work to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention so it is an improved resource for the international community to protect against the threat landscape, dissuade and deter BW development, and raise the costs of starting or maintaining a BW program, especially including State or non-state actor biological threats.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of how advancements in biotechnology, including the emergence of synthetic biology, change the biological threat picture and create new challenges in assessing compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention. Is the Biological Weapons Convention fit for purpose in contending with emerging biotechnology that pose dual-use concerns?

*Answer.* The BWC prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, or transfer of biological weapons. It underscores the overarching global norm that the weaponization of disease is repulsive and unacceptable. Even as advancements in biotechnology broaden the spectrum of threats, this ban applies to all biological weapons—regardless of any new technological advances. The BWC also provides a unique international forum where States Parties can come together to share information and agree to take certain actions—like developing relevant national oversight or participating in transparency activities. There is an ongoing administration effort to strengthen the BWC. The BWC Review Conference planned for August 2022 will be a key opportunity. One of the United States' priorities will be to set up a systematic process to inform States Parties about science and technological advances, including synthetic biology, in part to support effective biological risk assessment and management.

*Question.* What is the United States doing to strengthen the BWC? Is the BWC verifiable? If not what are we doing to address U.S. understanding and knowledge of Chinese BW programs?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the need to prevent future outbreaks—whether natural, accidental, or deliberate in origin. To that end, there is more that BWC States Parties can do. If confirmed, I will work to break the two-decade deadlock over strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention and bring the Convention into the 21st century. In particular, I would lead the AVC Bureau's portion of efforts to strengthen the BWC at the upcoming Review Conference and take steps to intensively explore measures to strengthen implementation and promote compliance and transparency.

As noted in the 2021 Compliance Report, the People's Republic of China engaged in dual-use applications, which raises concerns regarding its compliance with Article I of the BWC. In addition, the United States does not have sufficient information to determine whether China eliminated its assessed historical biological weapons (BW) program, as required under Article II of the Convention. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Intelligence Community and interagency partners to improve the United States' understanding of Chinese efforts in this field and to clarify our concerns related to Chinese compliance with the BWC.

*Question.* Please describe your views on China's national strategy of military-civil fusion and the challenges it poses to the United States. How should military-civil fusion inform U.S. cooperation with China on biotechnology and other related sectors?

*Answer.* Through its Military-Civil Fusion (MCF) strategy, the PRC pursues collaboration with foreign research institutions, academia, and private firms to acquire the key technologies needed for the People's Liberation Army's future war fighting capabilities, often without those institutions' knowledge of the intended end-use/user or in contravention of existing export license conditions. As a result, its MCF strategy threatens the trust, transparency, reciprocity, and shared values that underpin international science and technology collaboration. It undercuts fair global business practices and is a direct challenge to the international rules-based order and the end-use assurance mechanisms by which we traditionally safeguard technology from military diversion.

Across all sectors, the U.S. continues to strengthen our investment review process, bolster export controls, secure supply chains, and prioritize cases involving the PRC's intellectual property theft. The administration is encouraging our allies and partners in government and industry to implement similar measures. As the PRC has explicitly highlighted the importance of international collaboration at the university level to drive this strategy, the United States issued Presidential Proclamation 10043 to restrict visas for some Ph.D. and post-doctoral researchers seeking to undertake studies in the United States. The United States should continue to raise awareness within the academic and business communities about the risks of collaborating with PRC-based and state-linked entities to protect intellectual property and prevent the misuse of technology—including biotechnology—to drive PRC military modernization. We should also encourage adoption of appropriate risk mitigation measures that include technology transfer and data protection controls, transparency of beneficial ownership, and ability to screen foreign investments against national security risks.

*Question.* Do you think the United States should cooperate with countries where we have concerns about compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention on biotechnology, pathogen research, and other categories of biological research that could be weaponized or serve a dual-use function?

*Answer.* It is my view that the United States should not cooperate with countries of compliance concern on specific research where we believe there is significant potential that information, technology, or material we provide could be used for nefarious purposes. In this vein, I strongly support oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern. It is important, however, to continue dialogue with those countries to clarify and resolve compliance concerns and to promote strong biosafety and biosecurity practices and governance. Further, if some countries have the only access to certain pathogens, the United States must find a way to ensure that public health experts can continue their necessary collaborative work to be able to protect us from naturally occurring outbreaks, while minimizing our national security risks.

*Question.* Do you commit to prioritizing engagement with industry, academia, the health research community, and other stakeholders outside traditional national security circles on the United States' compliance concerns with respect to the Biologi-

cal Weapons Convention? If so, what three steps will you take to make good on this commitment, should you be confirmed?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit that the AVC Bureau will engage those outside traditional national security circles (e.g., industry, academia, the health research community) and with international counterparts about the United States' compliance concerns with respect to the Biological Weapons Convention. The AVC Bureau plans to engage those outside (and inside) traditional national security circles in the run-up to the BWC Review Conference and during the BWC Review Conference itself through bilateral engagements and briefings, NGO roundtables, and public outreach events.

*Question.* Is there currently a review process within the United States Government for approving or disapproving life sciences or biological research collaboration with other countries that could pose dual-use concerns, including research on pathogens, viruses, and toxins? What role, if any, does the Department of State play in this review process? Within the Department of State, what role does AVC play in this process? If such a process exists, what type of evidentiary information must be included to determine whether such research collaboration is appropriate?

Answer. When researchers apply for federal funds to be used in a collaborative research project, a number of oversight mechanisms or other review processes may be triggered. For example, research projects funded by Federal agencies are subject to a variety of oversight policies implemented by the respective funding agency, including policies regarding Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC) and high-risk experiments involving pathogens of pandemic potential. Where collaborations involve the transfer of U.S.-origin materials, equipment, or intangible technology, such transfers may be subject to license requirements under relevant export laws and regulations. If such collaborations involve individuals from certain countries traveling to the U.S. for research-related purposes, those individuals may be subject to visa vetting procedures. The AVC Bureau would be consulted if the proposed cooperation raised any potential issues related to compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention.

*Question.* What role does the Department of State play in formulating and implementing the following guidance?

- United States Government Policy for Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern, available at <https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/documents/us-policy-durc-032812.pdf>;
- National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity, Proposed Framework for the Oversight of Dual Use Life Sciences Research: Strategies For Minimizing The Potential Misuse Of Research Information (2007), available at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/Proposed-Oversight-Framework-for-Dual-Use-Research.pdf>
- National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity, Recommendations for the Evaluation and Oversight of Proposed Gain-of-Function Research (2016), <https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NSABB-Final-Report-Recommendations-Evaluation-Oversight-Proposed-Gain-of-Function-Research.pdf>
- Report on Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreement and Commitments (Compliance Report)

Answer. The Department of State participates in formulating U.S. Government policy guidance through interagency processes coordinated by the National Security Council, including the U.S. Government Policy for Oversight of Life Science Dual Use Research of Concern (the other two documents are not policies but reports that informed U.S. Government policy deliberations). As such, if confirmed, I would take part in the review of implementation of such U.S. Government policies. The Department of State is not involved in review processes that are established internal to other government agencies, unless that Department or Agency identifies a concern that would affect a Department of State equity, such as treaty compliance. If confirmed, I would strive to improve collaboration and transparency amongst interagency members on these issues.

*Question.* If confirmed, what standard will you use in deciding how much unclassified information is required to make an unclassified finding in the Compliance Report?

Answer. If confirmed, I will apply the same rigorous standard the United States has used since the report's inception to determine how much unclassified information is required to make an unclassified finding in the Compliance Report. It is important to be able to corroborate unclassified findings with supporting information,

so the public and country in question understands what led the United States to make the determination. The Department works closely with the Intelligence Community and interagency to determine what information can be included in the unclassified report. The classified annex provides additional substantiating information for Congress.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit not to conceal or obfuscate evidence of violations of arms control treaties or agreements just because they cannot be entirely proven in the unclassified domain?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I pledge to safeguard classified information in accordance with law, regulation, and policy. At every level of classification, I would seek to substantiate conclusions with material evidence at the appropriate level of classification and would consider advocating for declassification and public release of information where it is in the U.S. national security interest to do so.

*Question.* Do you disagree with any of the findings of the 2021 Compliance Report?

*Answer.* No, I do not disagree with any of the findings in the 2021 Compliance Report.

*Question.* Would you have disclosed the fact of Russia's violation of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 2014, even though this violation could not be conclusively proven in the unclassified domain?

*Answer.* U.S. compliance determinations are made stronger by how much evidence can be publicly shared. Sometimes there are legitimate reasons for limiting publicly available information. In 2014, the United States made public its determination of Russia's INF Treaty violation. That action was justified by years of accumulating and evaluating information, compliance analysis, and diplomacy with Russia.

*Question.* What role should concerns about Russian or Chinese diplomatic blowback play in determining whether to include an unclassified finding in the report?

*Answer.* It is my view that the report should provide as much detail as can be included in the unclassified Compliance Report regarding questions and concerns with countries' compliance with and adherence to arms control agreements and commitments to which they are party. If there is sufficient information to support making an unclassified finding in the Compliance Report, concerns regarding diplomatic blowback from Russia and China should not affect the inclusion of that finding. The AVC Bureau engages in bilateral dialogues with countries identified as having compliance concerns and that includes Russia and China. Including unclassified supporting information to corroborate the report's findings helps facilitate such bilateral dialogue.

*Question.* Do you believe that you, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary of State for the AVC Bureau, would need the approval of State Legal to offer policy assessments regarding any country's possible violation of existing arms control agreements, including, but not limited to the NPT?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I pledge to offer Secretary Blinken, President Biden, and all other senior U.S. Government officials my best possible policy advice, seeking legal advice, including from the Department's Office of the Legal Adviser, as appropriate. Any assessment of a country's compliance with its legal obligations under an international agreement will necessarily entail legal analysis as to the parameters of those obligations, as well as intelligence and other reporting furnishing the best available evidence of states parties' compliance or non-compliance with their binding obligations as the United States understands them.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

*Answer.* I commit to work to accommodate the vital oversight needs of Congress.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staff apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal committee request? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. I commit to work to accommodate the vital oversight needs of the committee.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any AVC employee, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you agree to provide to this committee relevant information within the jurisdictional oversight of the committee when requested by the committee, even in the absence of the formality of a letter from the Chairman?

Answer. I commit to work to accommodate the important oversight needs of the committee in coordination with the Bureau of Legislative Affairs.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MALLORY A. STEWART BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* The number of full time equivalents (FTEs) decreased for the Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance Bureau (AVC) during the Trump administration, which compounded a demographic problem where approximately half of the Bureau is eligible to retire. What is the current number of FTEs in the Bureau? And what additional hiring authorities from Congress would help recapitalize the AVC workforce to aid it in the robust bilateral strategic dialogue with Russia, efforts to engage China on meaningful arms control measures, and the host of other challenges that the Bureau is responsible for addressing?

Answer. If confirmed, rebuilding the workforce of the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC) would be my top management priority. The total number of Washington, DC-based full-time equivalent staff in AVC as of October 2021 is 87, which is 23 percent lower than the total as of January 2017. AVC needs a reinvigorated workforce that can help address the dangers posed by chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, and their delivery systems, as well as the emerging threats of the 21st century. It is my understanding that the Department would appreciate Congressional support to increase its capacity to address these critical issues of national security. If confirmed, I will support the Under Secretary's intention to recruit a diverse cadre of additional arms control experts. I also commit to uphold and fully implement the Department's leadership and management tenets, including support for diversity and inclusion, to strengthen the Bureau.



*Question.* Is the State Department concerned that the addition of two new nuclear weapon capabilities in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, the deployed low-yield W76(2) warhead and the planned sea-launched nuclear cruise missile, risk leading to inadvertent escalation in a conflict with an adversary? Would continuing to field these new roles for U.S. nuclear weapons be consistent with the President's Interim National Security Guidance to "take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in [U.S.] national security strategy?"

*Answer.* The W76-2 and the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile were directed in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review. The ongoing NPR process is reviewing U.S. nuclear weapons capabilities, including the W76-2 and the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile, to assess whether and how they fit into the administration's overarching objectives of reducing the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrence remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.

*Question.* How has the United States recently worked through the Extended Deterrence Dialogues with Japan and South Korea, as well as other bilateral consultations related to the Nuclear Posture Review process, to reaffirm our commitment to our allies' defense irrespective of any possible changes to U.S. nuclear weapons declaratory policy or force structure?

*Answer.* Extended deterrence plays a foundational role in advancing U.S. national security objectives. In the Nuclear Posture Review process, the administration is consulting with U.S. allies and partners, including those in the Indo-Pacific, through a variety of standing deterrence dialogues and ad-hoc consultations. The Administration has conveyed to allies and partners the United States' commitment to ensuring U.S. extended deterrence remains strong and credible.

*Question.* China has reportedly recently constructed over 250 intercontinental ballistic missile silos as part of a plan to possibly expand its strategic forces in addition to plans to construct fast breeder reactors that could expand its stockpile of plutonium for nuclear weapons. At what level has the Department (or the White House) conveyed its concerns about any future effort to fill those newly discovered silos? In order to better understand the intent behind these developments, does the United States intend to invite China to a bilateral strategic dialogue or make it an agenda item of the P5 process?

*Answer.* Many U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Blinken at the ASEAN Regional Forum in August, have noted deep concern with the rapid growth of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) nuclear arsenal. Beijing has clearly and sharply deviated from its decades-old nuclear strategy based on minimum deterrence. In consultation with U.S. allies and partners, the administration will pursue arms control measures to address the PRC's growing nuclear arsenal. The administration is developing and evaluating specific proposals, and, if confirmed, I commit to consulting Congress at an appropriate time on potential measures and how best the State Department can develop and retain government expertise regarding arms control with the PRC.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MALLORY A. STEWART BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* We have multiple open-source reports about China's increased nuclear posture. This clearly indicates that China must be incorporated into strategic arms discussions, and the longer they refuse the harder that conversation will be. I also recognize that China is coming from a different place than the United States and Russia which will require a different approach. If confirmed, how would you seek to contain China's growing nuclear weapons arsenal?

*Answer.* We must pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal. These efforts will be pursued in coordination with actions to bolster deterrence in the region. The Administration will work with allies and partners to regularly urge the PRC to engage meaningfully on arms control. The Administration is developing and evaluating specific proposals, and, if confirmed, I commit to consulting Congress at an appropriate time on potential measures to be pursued with China.

*Question.* The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has publicly confirmed that it found particles of processed uranium at three undeclared facilities in Iran. Are you aware of that?

*Answer.* As reported by the IAEA Director General, the IAEA continues to investigate questions related to four undeclared locations in Iran, including three where the IAEA has detected the presence of nuclear material. Iran's failure to provide the IAEA with the necessary information and cooperation to resolve these questions is deeply troubling. The administration takes Iran's full implementation of its legally binding obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) very seriously. Iran must provide the required cooperation with the IAEA without delay. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation to ensure that the IAEA has our continued full support in urgently resolving safeguards problems with Iran.

*Question.* Commercial satellite imagery analyzed by independent researchers at the Institute for Science and International Security demonstrated that at one facility in Iran, there was a steady progression of containers being removed followed by sanitization work. The IAEA found uranium at that site. Do you agree with that assessment?

*Answer.* In a September report to the IAEA Board, the Director General reiterated his deep concern that the IAEA had found indications that nuclear material had been present at three locations in Iran, that Iran had yet to provide the necessary explanation for the presence of such nuclear material at those locations, and that the current locations of the nuclear material were not known to the IAEA. We have made clear our serious concerns that Iran has failed to respond to the IAEA on these matters. It is essential that Iran fully comply with its legally binding obligations under its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA without further delay, and if confirmed, I will work closely with the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation to ensure that the IAEA has our continued full support in urgently resolving these safeguards problems with Iran.

*Question.* Do you agree that it is an obligation under Article III of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) to declare all nuclear material to the IAEA?

*Answer.* Article III requires each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to accept safeguards on all of its source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities, as set forth in an agreement to be negotiated and concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency. The IAEA's comprehensive safeguards agreement enables NPT non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to implement this obligation and requires those states to declare to the IAEA all nuclear material that is required to be safeguarded under the NPT.

*Question.* Is Iran a party to the NPT with a signed Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA?

*Answer.* Yes. Iran ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970 and remains a State Party to the Treaty. Iran's NPT-required Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA came into force in 1974 and remains in force.

*Question.* Do you agree that Iran is in non-compliance with the NPT?

*Answer.* I have serious concerns about Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and if confirmed, I will help implement U.S. policy to support the IAEA's work to monitor and assess Iran's compliance with its NPT-required safeguards agreement. Iran must cooperate fully with the IAEA to address the serious, outstanding issues related to potential undeclared nuclear material in Iran. As a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT, Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MALLORY A. STEWART BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* Since 2007, it has nearly always been the position of the United States that Iran is not a member in good standing within the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Even pursuant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran would not have returned to being a member in good standing until the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reached a "Broader Conclusion" verifying the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. In April

2019, then-nominee to be Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation Jeffrey L. Eberhardt confirmed in writing to this committee that “given Iran’s past noncompliance with both its safeguards agreement and its NPT obligations, its failure to fully address IAEA questions related to past activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device, and the emergence of new questions surrounding Iran’s motives for retaining and concealing documents, equipment, and personnel related to its past nuclear weapons program, Iran’s standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as ‘good.’”

- Do you agree with Mr. Eberhardt’s assessment?

Answer. Yes. Given Iran’s past non-compliance with its obligations under the NPT and Iran’s NPT-required safeguards agreement and its present failure to fully address the IAEA’s current questions related to implementation of that safeguards agreement, Iran’s standing as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT cannot be described as “good.” The United States has thoroughly detailed the concern with Iran’s compliance with Article III of the NPT, including in the 2021 Compliance Report.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran’s past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)?

Answer. I have serious concerns about Iran’s compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and if confirmed, I will work with legal and policy experts to monitor and assess Iran’s NPT compliance. Iran must cooperate fully with the IAEA to address the serious, outstanding issues related to potential undeclared nuclear material in Iran. As a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT, Iran is obligated not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran’s past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT?

Answer. Iran’s long history of denial and concealment regarding its past nuclear weapons program is of serious concern. The Biden-Harris administration will not take Iran at its word regarding assertions about its nuclear program and fully supports the IAEA as it uses its safeguards authorities to investigate any indication of undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran. Like President Biden, I am committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

*Question.* Do you believe that Iran should be entitled to the use of civilian nuclear technology even if they are not a member in good standing of the NPT?

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligations under Article II of the NPT and its NPT-required safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT?

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Do you consider Iran to be specifically entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT?

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty, including Iran, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. Iran must, however, comply with its international obligations when undertaking nuclear activities, including its obligation under Article II of the NPT not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons.

*Question.* Do you assess that China is in violation of its Article VI obligations?

Answer. China's nuclear weapons build-up risks undermining decades of international progress toward nuclear disarmament. If confirmed, I will consult with legal and policy experts at the Department of State on a variety of matters related to China's behavior in the nuclear weapon arena, including its compliance with Article VI.

*Question.* What leverage does the United States currently possess to dampen China's nuclear buildup?

Answer. U.S. allies and partners in Asia will be key to success in the administration's efforts to bring the People's Republic of China (PRC) into any arms control measures, and the administration will work with them to regularly urge the PRC to engage meaningfully with the United States on arms control. The administration will pursue arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the PRC's growing nuclear arsenal and will make the case to Beijing that arms control is in its security interest. Arms control is not a trap designed to weaken China's defenses, but a mechanism to reduce the risk of military crises and manage the threat of destabilizing arms races, something that is in the interest of all countries.

*Question.* For decades, China claimed that all it needed was a "minimum deterrent," but the CCP seems to be pursuing a capability far beyond that threshold. Why now? And how should the U.S. respond to China's nuclear modernization?

Answer. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) apparent build-up of nuclear capabilities is cause for concern and may signal a departure from its decades-long nuclear strategy based on minimum deterrence. I defer to the Intelligence Community for a specific assessment on the timing of this build-up. In parallel to the PRC's nuclear build-up, its broader geopolitical goals appear to be shifting as well. The PRC's military activities highlight Beijing's increasing comfort with the employment of military forces to achieve its foreign policy objectives. As the administration pursues arms control measures to reduce the dangers from the PRC's growing nuclear arsenal, the administration will simultaneously maintain the capabilities to defend against a range of PRC military threats to the United States and our allies and partners.

*Question.* Turning now to Russia. You have been a noted advocate of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. As you know, the United States Senate has pointedly refused to ratify the CTBT, in part because of Russian behavior. In its 2021 compliance report, the Trump administration rightly called out this behavior. I'd like to quote from that report: "The United States finds that, since declaring its testing moratorium, Russia has conducted nuclear weapons experiments that have created nuclear yield and are not consistent with the U.S. 'zero-yield' standard." Do you agree with that assessment?

Answer. Yes. I agree that since declaring its testing moratorium, Russia has at times conducted nuclear weapons tests or experiments that have created nuclear yield, which is not consistent with the zero-yield standard.

*Question.* Do you commit to ensuring, if you are confirmed, that you would continue to document such non-compliance?

Answer. Yes. I commit that, if confirmed, I will continue to document non-compliance and inconsistencies with arms control obligations and commitments in the annual Compliance Report.

*Question.* I am concerned about the possibility of the Biden administration adopting a misguided "no-first-use" nuclear policy. Russia used to have a no-first-use policy, but formally scrapped it years ago when the Kremlin feared its conventional forces were insufficient. Our principal adversary, China, has formally declared a no first-use policy, but the Chinese Communist Party has proven itself willing to break any promise that suits its ambitions.

- Do you believe China's commitment to not use nuclear weapons first in a conflict?

Answer. I doubt the People's Republic of China's (PRC) commitment to a no-first-use policy. There is ambiguity over the conditions under which Beijing would act outside of its professed no-first-use policy. Some People's Liberation Army (PLA) officers have written publicly of the need to spell out conditions under which China might need to use nuclear weapons first. There has been no indication that national leaders are willing to address such nuances and caveats publicly. However, ongoing PRC advances in its nuclear arsenal, such as an exploration of low-yield warheads, raise questions regarding PRC intent and undermine its claims to maintain a minimum nuclear deterrent backed by a no-first-use policy.

*Question.* Do you personally support a no-first-use policy for the United States?

Answer. No.

*Question.* Do you believe we have transparency into Iran's nuclear program?

Answer. While the IAEA maintains near daily access at key nuclear facilities in Iran under Iran's IAEA Safeguards Agreement, the IAEA has reported that its verification and monitoring activities have been seriously undermined as a result of Iran's decision to stop the implementation of its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, including the Additional Protocol. A return to mutual implementation of the JCPOA would restore the JCPOA's transparency measures, which are the strongest verification and monitoring provisions ever negotiated.

*Question.* Given we do not have a comprehensive accounting of Iran's PMD program, and taking into consideration Iran's decades of deception to the IAEA on its nuclear program, how is it possible to have an accurate appraisal of Iran's activities as they evolve, when the international community lacks a baseline for verification efforts?

Answer. The IAEA has reported significant concerns regarding potential undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and we have full confidence in the Agency to pursue its critical verification and monitoring responsibilities there. It is essential that Iran fully comply with its legally binding obligations under the NPT and its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA to resolve these important matters without further delay. The JCPOA provided the strongest verification and monitoring measures ever negotiated. Resumption of mutual compliance with the deal would ensure the renewed implementation of these measures, as well as its restrictions on the size and scope of Iran's nuclear activities.

*Question.* Despite the Board of Governor's December 2015 Final Assessment, which closed the chapter on PMDs in order to move forward with implementation of the JCPOA, the issue of Iran's possible military dimension remains outstanding. If confirmed, do you plan to reopen the PMD file? If not, why not?

Answer. President Biden has made clear he is committed to ensuring that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will strongly support the Department's efforts, as they relate to my position as AVC Assistant Secretary, to bolster the IAEA's monitoring and verification activities in Iran so that the IAEA can provide the strongest possible assurance that Iran is not undertaking any undeclared nuclear activities. A return to mutual implementation of the JCPOA would restore the JCPOA's transparency measures, which are the strongest verification and monitoring provisions ever negotiated.

*Question.* On April, 1, 2018, Tiangong-1, China's prototype space station, re-entered the earth's atmosphere after an uncontrolled re-entry. On May 11, 2020, the Chinese Long March 5B rocket, re-entered the earth's atmosphere after an uncontrolled re-entry. On May 8, 2021, another Chinese Long March 5B core stage re-entered the earth's atmosphere after making an uncontrolled re-entry. In response to the most recent uncontrolled entry, NASA Administrator, Bill Nelson, said that "It is clear that China is failing to meet responsible standards regarding their space debris."

- Do you agree with the assessment that China is currently violating the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty?

Answer. Along with the United States and over 90 other members of the U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the PRC joined consensus in June 2019 on 21 voluntary, non-legally binding guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. One of these guidelines calls for states to "[t]ake measures to address risks associated with the uncontrolled re-entry of space objects." We urge all nations, including the PRC, to abide by their commitments and implement these guidelines, encouraging transparency and information sharing with other nations. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues within State and at NASA to highlight the long-standing U.S. space policy principle that responsible space actors operate with openness, transparency, and predictability to maintain the benefits of space for all humanity.

*Question.* Do you agree that in the case that space debris causes damage in the United States or in other nations party to the Outer Space Treaty from a Chinese Government launched space vehicle, that China would accept liability for damages under Section VII of the Outer Space Treaty? If not, please list what specific actions the Peoples Republic of China has taken to assure the United States that it would comply with Section VII of the Outer Space Treaty?

**Answer.** In addition to its obligations under the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, the PRC is a party to the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects. The Liability Convention provides that a launching State shall be absolutely liable to pay compensation for damage caused by its space objects on the surface of the Earth or to aircraft in flight and has fault-based liability for damage caused to objects in space. The Liability Convention also provides for procedures for the settlement of claims for damages. These two treaties, along with 1968 Astronaut Rescue and Return Agreement and the 1976 Registration Convention, provide a basic legal framework within which interested States can work to protect their interests. The PRC has also stated in the U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space that “wide adherence to the United Nations treaties contributes to creating a safe, secure and sustainable atmosphere for the development of outer space activities.”

**Question.** Do you agree that China’s continued use of uncontrolled re-entries constitute a national security threat? If not, then why?

**Answer.** As NASA Administrator Nelson noted in May 2021, spacefaring nations must minimize the risks to people and property on Earth of re-entries of space objects and maximize transparency regarding those operations. The PRC has yet to implement responsible standards regarding some of their space debris, which results in uncontrolled re-entries. It is critical that the PRC act responsibly and transparently in space to ensure the safety, stability, security, and long-term sustainability of outer space activities as well as human life.

**Question.** On July 31, 2019[,] at a Brookings Institution event titled “Assessing Space Security: threat and response,” you stated that “the legal framework for both the commercial side and the military engagements and the evolution of the players in space has to catch up and it hasn’t caught up.” Please elaborate on your statement.

- Please list all aspects of the legal framework for “military engagements” that need to be updated and how would you, in your potential role at the Department of State, update them?

**Answer.** As the Biden-Harris administration’s Space Priorities Framework notes, “[as] space activities evolve, the norms, rules, and principles that guide outer space activities also must evolve.” In this regard, I believe that it is essential for the United States to continue to lead in strengthening global governance of space activities to uphold and strengthen a rules-based international order for space.

The principles of 1967 Outer Space Treaty remain the indispensable foundation for these efforts. In this regard, I fully support the Biden-Harris administration’s focus on developing legally non-binding approaches to reduce threats to space systems through the further development and implementation of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors. There are advantages to focusing on voluntary, legally non-binding norms of responsible behavior, such as the ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances or technologies, allowing new and novel uses of space to be explored rather than restricted, and to allow civil and commercial operators to have more of a voice in their development.

**Question.** Please list all aspects of the legal framework for “commercial side” need to be updated and how would you, in your potential role at the Department of State, update them?

**Answer.** It is essential for the United States Government to work closely and collaboratively with U.S. commercial industry and allies to promote the implementation of existing measures and lead in the development of new measures that contribute to the safety, stability, security, and long-term sustainability of space activities. The United States also must demonstrate how the full range of its governmental and private sector space activities can be conducted in a responsible, peaceful, and sustainable manner.

**Question.** Will updating the legal frameworks for military or commercial engagements require updating or amending the Outer Space Treaty, if so how, if not, why not? Please describe any risks or potential disadvantages to updating or amending the Outer Space Treaty?

**Answer.** As the Biden-Harris administration’s Space Priorities Framework notes, “[as] space activities evolve, the norms, rules, and principles that guide outer space activities also must evolve.” In this regard, I believe that it is essential for the United States to continue to lead in strengthening global governance of space activities to uphold and strengthen a rules-based international order for space.

The principles of 1967 Outer Space Treaty remain the indispensable foundation for these efforts. In addition to the Outer Space Treaty, I fully support the Biden-

Harris administration's focus on developing legally non-binding approaches to reduce threats to space systems through the further development and implementation of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors. There are advantages to focusing on voluntary, legally non-binding norms of responsible behavior, such as the ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances or technologies, allowing new and novel uses of space to be explored rather than restricted, and to allow civil and commercial operators to have more of a voice in their development.

*Question.* Please describe how updating "legal frameworks" would impact the commercialization of space and why?

*Answer.* U.S. commercial space activities are on the cutting edge of space technology, space applications, and space-enabled services. As a result, I believe that the existing international legal framework provides a solid foundation upon which commercial space activities and interests of the U.S. private sectors can thrive. Based upon this framework, domestic U.S. law and regulations must provide clarity and certainty for the authorization and continuing supervision of non-governmental space activities, including for novel activities such as on-orbit servicing and orbital debris removal.

*Question.* On January 11, 2007, China launched a ballistic missile from Xichang Space Launch Center that aimed at a nonoperative Chinese weather satellite, the Fengyun 1C, completely destroying the satellite. The destruction of the satellite created more than 3,000 pieces of space debris, the largest ever tracked, and much of it is expected to remain in orbit for decades.

- Please describe how China's actions, as described above, violate the Article IV and Article IX of the Outer Space Treaty? If not then, why not?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the administration of President George W. Bush did not make a determination of Chinese compliance with the Outer Space treaty following China's 2007 ASAT test. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on enhancing countries' compliance with their Outer Space Treaty commitments.

Following Russia's reckless November 2021 destructive anti-satellite weapon test, Secretary Blinken stated, "We call upon all responsible spacefaring nations to join us in efforts to develop norms of responsible behavior and to refrain from conducting dangerous and irresponsible destructive tests like those carried out by Russia." In addition, Deputy Secretary of Defense Hicks called on all nations to refrain from recklessly conducting destructive anti-satellite testing, which significantly increases the risk to human spaceflight and other satellites, and to foster a safe, sustainable space environment.

China's ASAT test in January 2007 was inconsistent with the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee, which was endorsed by the China National Space Administration.

*Question.* Please describe the threat on space exploration and the commercialization of space from space debris, and further specifically describe the threat from space debris created as a result of Chinese, Russian, and North Korean actions.

*Answer.* Both China's ASAT test in January 2007 and Russia's in November 2021 were inconsistent with the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee, which were endorsed by Roscosmos and the China National Space Administration. Russia's November 2021 test also was inconsistent with the [voluntary, legally non-binding] Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in June 2007, which were endorsed by the U.N. General Assembly in December 2007. As NASA Administrator Nelson noted in May 2021, spacefaring nations must minimize the risks to people and property on Earth of re-entries of space objects and maximize transparency regarding those operations.

*Question.* Do you agree that China's actions threaten the United States' national security? If not, then why?

*Answer.* I am very concerned that the PRC has developed counterspace weapons capabilities intended to target U.S. and allied satellites and that both China and Russia believe that counterspace operations will be integral to potential military campaigns against the U.S. and its allies. If confirmed, I plan to work with the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community to use those tools available to the Department of State to address these threats as part of a whole of government response.

*Question.* On December 13, 2001, President George W. Bush announced the United States' withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which took effect on June 13, 2002.

- Do you agree that the United States should attempt to re-enter the ABM treaty? If so, please describe why?

Answer. The ABM Treaty terminated upon the United States' withdrawal, and thus cannot be rejoined.

*Question.* On December 13, 2001, President George W. Bush announced the United States' withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which took effect on June 13, 2002.

- Please list what potential national security implications rejoining the ABM treaty would have on the United States?

Answer. The ABM Treaty terminated upon the United States' withdrawal, and thus cannot be rejoined. If the United States were still a party to the 1972 ABM Treaty, it would prohibit or constrain the United States from continuing to develop and deploy strategic and theater ballistic missile defense (BMD) systems in terms of, for example, capability, geographic location, numbers, and basing modes.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO STEVEN C. BONDY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Trafficking in Persons*

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Bahrain was identified as Tier 1 but still has room for improvement, especially on adequately identifying trafficking victims as compared to labor law violations.

- How will you work with Bahrain to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. Human trafficking is an issue of serious concern to the U.S. Government. While Bahrain has made strides to reform its labor sponsorship system in recent years, even as many of those reforms were politically sensitive within the country, I agree there is more that needs to be done. Bahrain is a regional leader on labor issues, and Bahrain's engagement with its neighbors on the subject has led to important reforms elsewhere. The annual State Department TIP report documents areas of concern and recommendations for further improvement. If confirmed, I intend to work with Bahraini officials to further improve efforts to address forced labor vulnerabilities inherent in the sponsorship system and safeguard workers against abuses.

*Question.* What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Bahrain has been a regional leader in religious freedom for minority religious groups represented by Bahraini citizens as well as expatriates resident in the country. In that regard, following the signing of the 2020 Abraham Accords, Jewish life is reviving in Bahrain with a historical synagogue now being operational. Bahrain is the only Gulf Arab country that recognizes Ashura, the most significant time of the Shia religious calendar, as an official holiday. However, the International Religious Freedom Report documents continued discrimination against and marginalization of its Shia citizen population. If confirmed, I will urge Bahrain to continue to expand respect for freedom of religion or belief and to promote an inclusive society that upholds religious freedom for the members of all religions and religious sects. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the State Department's Ambassador at Large for Religious Freedom on this issue.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. Human rights are at the forefront of the administration's foreign policy, as they have been for me throughout my career. If confirmed, I intend to lead several established channels for human rights dialogue with Bahrain, including through our annual Strategic Dialogue and other high-level engagements, as well as to engage on specific cases as needed. Our partnership with Bahrain is strongest when based on shared values and frank and honest engagement. I appreciate Congress's focus and engagement on this important topic, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with members to continue to advance human rights in Bahrain.



*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Embassy in Manama continues to engage a wide range of civil society, including activists both inside and outside of Bahrain and those associated with Bahraini citizens imprisoned for exercising their rights. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing this important work and will look for opportunities to build upon it.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps do you plan on taking to further implementation of the Abraham Accords?

*Answer.* The Abraham Accords agreement between Israel and Bahrain represents a change in the strategic orientation of the Kingdom, and it has already made an important contribution to regional security and economic development. While the two countries have already opened embassies in each other's countries, launched direct air connections, and signed a number of MOUs, if confirmed, I would work to strengthen relations between these two important friends and allies across a wide spectrum of areas, from military to economic to trade to education. Building people-to-people ties is a particular area of interest that would yield long-term dividends. I would want to consult with the Bahraini Government and the Israeli Embassy in Bahrain to see where they felt the greatest opportunities lie.

*Question.* How would you propose strengthening the Bahraini public's support for normalization between Bahrain and Israel?

*Answer.* It is essential for both U.S. and regional security interests that Israel is further integrated into the region. To further demonstrate for the Bahraini public the benefits of normalization, relations and linkages must grow organically, particularly between the peoples of the two countries. Direct Gulf Air flights servicing travelers between Bahrain and Israel represent a big step in this regard and facilitate ties in a number of areas such as commerce, technology, medicine, education, and tourism. If confirmed, I would support building economic and trade partnerships between the two countries, or in a trilateral forum involving the United States, so that the Bahraini public can see and feel the benefits of normalization.

*Question.* In light of the Abraham Accords and Israel's entry into CENTCOM, if confirmed, will you commit to advocating for Israel's full integration into the multilateral activities that CENTCOM and the Fifth Fleet lead out of Bahrain, including maritime security efforts in the Gulf and Red Sea, and regional efforts on missile defense and counter-drone efforts?

*Answer.* Integrating Israel into Gulf security planning and operations represents one of the most significant potential benefits of the Abraham Accords. If confirmed, I will engage Bahraini and United States military leaders to promote integrating Israel into regional operations, including maritime and other security efforts commanded from Bahrain.

*Question.* In your view, what benefits would this have for regional stability?

*Answer.* Bahrain's leaders have been clear that their relationship with Israel and decision to normalize is in the country's strategic interest. Indeed, the two countries have many common security interests. Further cooperation and interoperability between the two countries can only strengthen their ties and security and improve regional and United States security.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to work with CENTCOM and the Fifth Fleet to get an Israeli naval liaison officer assigned to NAVCENT in Manama? Please provide your assessment of the obstacles and challenges to doing so.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to work with CENTCOM and the Fifth Fleet to get an Israeli naval liaison assigned to NAVCENT in Manama. Enhanced Israeli participation in Gulf security planning and operations will improve regional and United States national security.

*Question.* What role should Bahrain play in efforts to counter Iranian regional aggression?

*Answer.* Bahrain is a steadfast U.S. ally and, as such, has consistently supported U.S. efforts to counter Iran's regional aggression. The threat posed by Iran and its proxies is very real to Bahrain and U.S. interests in Bahrain. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with our Bahraini partners to help bolster their security while supporting a comprehensive approach towards addressing Iran's destabilizing behavior.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps do you plan on taking to build upon, and expand, the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) established in 2019 in response to growing Iranian threats to freedom of navigation in the Gulf?

Answer. Bahrain's hosting of the IMSC to ensure safe transit in the Gulf is an important example of its commitment to maritime security and freedom of navigation at a time when Iran continues to threaten commercial shipping in the Gulf. If confirmed, I will work with CENTCOM, NAVCENT, and the Bahrain Defense Force to ensure that their response to Iran in the region remains robust and forceful and facilitates the smooth flow of transport through open sea lanes.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to support Bahrain's partnership with the Fifth Fleet's Task Force 59?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work with CENTCOM, NAVCENT, and Bahrain Defense Force leaders on Bahrain joining the Fifth Fleet's Task Force 59.

*Question.* How can the US leverage this partnership with Bahrain to encourage other Gulf states to join Task Force 59?

Answer. Task Force 59 is an innovative and unique initiative in the Gulf. If confirmed, I would work with CENTCOM and United States diplomatic missions in the region to encourage other Gulf states to join. Success in its mission would be the best advertisement for others to join.

*Question.* What is your assessment of Iranian efforts to destabilize Bahrain politically and militarily?

Answer. Iran directs, trains, supplies, and funds militia groups across the region to advance its interests, undermine regional stability, and threaten U.S. partners, including Bahrain. Iran has a long history of cultivating, advising, and training armed Shia militant groups in Bahrain. The threat from Iranian-backed militants and other destabilizing actors is real; Bahraini and U.S. authorities have worked closely together to counter it for years and continue to do so on an ongoing basis. If confirmed, I intend to coordinate closely with the Bahraini Government to ensure our joint interests are adequately protected from threats of all kinds. We will continue to use a comprehensive approach using a variety of tools to counter the full range of Iran's destabilizing behavior. Working with Bahrain to promote internal security protects American citizens, investments, and interests in the Kingdom.

*Question.* How can the United States, Bahrain, and potentially other regional partners strengthen cooperation to counter these efforts by Tehran?

Answer. The United States and Bahrain can continue to strengthen cooperation to counter Iran's destabilizing behavior through exercises and increased interoperability. Task Force 59 is a great example of a new initiative to counter evolving threats. Targeted United States training of vetted Bahraini internal security units and enhancing counter-terrorism financing/anti-money laundering activities all contribute to safety and security inside Bahrain. If confirmed, I would work to continue these efforts.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you plan to work to ensure Bahrain's concerns are addressed in a future agreement with Iran?

Answer. The administration continues to consult closely with Bahrain and all of its regional partners on U.S. engagement with Iran. Commitment to Bahrain, a Major Non-NATO Ally, is strong and will remain so. If confirmed, I would work with the Government of Bahrain to keep them apprised of developments in U.S. engagement with Iran to further strengthen our partnership.

*Question.* Where should Iran's malign proxy activity fall in terms of the priorities in the context of negotiations with Tehran?

Answer. The President and the Secretary have been clear that the administration has fundamental problems with Iran's actions across a series of issues, including its support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, its destabilizing actions throughout the region, and its abhorrent practice of using wrongfully detained U.S. citizens and foreign nationals as political tools. An Iran with a nuclear weapon would be likely to act even more provocatively when it comes to these issues, so the Biden-Harris administration has been clear that Iran will not be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will ensure continued support to a comprehensive approach using a variety of tools to counter the full range of Iran's destabilizing behavior, which includes its proxy activity in Bahrain.

*Question.* If nuclear talks between the U.S. and Iran fail to yield results, what steps should the U.S. be prepared to take to address Iran's malign proxy activity which pose a serious threat to partners like Bahrain?

Answer. The U.S. Government will continue to rely on a comprehensive approach using a variety of tools to counter the full range of Iran's destabilizing behavior and stand steadfast with our partners in the region in support of their security. If con-

firmed, I will work closely with Bahraini partners on ways and means to counter malign Iranian activity in the Kingdom.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO STEVEN C. BONDY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* How, if at all, do you expect U.S.-Bahrain relations to change in light of Bahrain's 2020 normalization agreement with Israel?

*Answer.* Bahrain signing the 2020 Abraham Accords agreement with Israel represents a historic opportunity to deepen our relationship with Bahrain, which was already strong, and to assist our two regional friends and allies to broaden and strengthen their bilateral relationship. Bahrain's leaders have been clear that their relationship with Israel and decision to normalize is in their country's strategic interest. If confirmed, I intend to work to deepen not only the U.S.-Bahrain bilateral relationship and the Bahrain-Israel bilateral relationship, but also explore opportunities to promote the Bahrain-Israel-U.S. trilateral relationship.

*Question.* What can the U.S. Embassy in Bahrain do to elevate and enhance Bahrain's relationship with Israel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to devoting my time and energy to operationalizing the Bahrain-Israel Abraham Accords agreement. While a number of MOUs have already been signed, I would work to broaden and strengthen relations between these two important friends and allies across the broad spectrum of topics, from military to economic to trade to education, and particularly on people-to-people ties, which provide benefits for the long term. I would also want to consult with the Bahraini Government and the Israeli Embassy in Bahrain to see where they felt the greatest opportunities lie.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO STEVEN C. BONDY BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER MURPHY

*Question.* Can you please clarify your answer as to the status of human rights in Bahrain and how you will promote human rights if confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* The United States is encouraged by steps the Bahraini Government has taken in recent years to improve its human rights record in the past decade. If confirmed, I will work to promote continued positive momentum. The Biden-Harris administration has been clear that there are continued concerns about the human rights situation in Bahrain, as detailed in the State Department's annual Human Rights Report and discussed often with Bahraini interlocutors. If confirmed, human rights will be a priority for me, and I intend to lead engagement in several established channels for human rights dialogue with Bahrain, including our annual Strategic Dialogue and other high-level engagements. I will engage on specific cases as these arise, including regarding those individuals imprisoned for exercising their rights. I appreciate Congress's focus and engagement on this important topic, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with members to continue to advance human rights in Bahrain.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO LISA A. CARTY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* How can the United States work within ECOSOC to effectively push for consistent and high level U.N. engagement to address the undermining of humanitarian assistance and access? Does ECOSOC have a strong role to play here? How has ECOSOC's Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS) improved the U.N. response to the humanitarian crises and how can it be improved?

*Answer.* The U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) provides a multilateral platform for Member States to discuss ways to meet growing humanitarian needs and improve the humanitarian system to reach the most vulnerable communities. In 2021, the United States' ECOSOC engagement prioritized the coordination and provision of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations impacted by conflict, COVID-19, and natural disasters, as well as the importance of humanitarian access

and the protection and safety of United Nations and humanitarian personnel. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues working within ECOSOC to act ambitiously in addressing the compounded risks of conflict, climate and the COVID-19 pandemic while protecting and advancing principled humanitarian assistance.

The HAS provides an important platform for the international community to strategically engage on the most pressing humanitarian issues. If confirmed, I will seek to further improve the HAS by ensuring that its discussions are focused on the most urgent priorities aligned to U.S. humanitarian concerns, as well as issues related to advancing inclusion, including with respect to sex and gender, innovation and partnership, greater respect for international law, and accountability for those actors who obstruct humanitarian assistance.

#### *ECOSOC Reform*

*Question.* There are some who say ECOSOC lacks any real authority and that its work overlaps with the activities of the U.N. General Assembly. It has been suggested that the Council could play a greater role in global economic and development policy. The U.N. has passed several reforms over the years, including as recently as this year, to strengthen ECOSOC's policy guidance role and to improve collaboration between ECOSOC, its subsidiary councils, and other U.N. entities

- What is your assessment of the most recent ECOSOC reforms? Do you believe that ECOSOC should have a greater policy-setting role?

*Answer.* The reform of ECOSOC is an ongoing process. Sustained efforts by the United States have successfully influenced ECOSOC to implement reforms to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. For example, ECOSOC's ongoing revitalization work has reduced the number of days of ECOSOC activities by eliminating and/or shortening duplicative and lengthy segments and meetings, restructured the ECOSOC calendar into more streamlined groups, and required subsidiary bodies to assess whether they need annual negotiated outcomes. There has also been progress aligning the agendas of the General Assembly, ECOSOC, and ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies to eliminate duplicative segments. If confirmed, I will continue to urge ECOSOC to eliminate duplicative sessions, segments, and activities to allow ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies to focus on core tasks.

*Question.* How, if at all, will these ECOSOC reforms contribute to U.N. efforts to more effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and related humanitarian crises?

*Answer.* ECOSOC plays a pivotal role in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, economic recovery, and humanitarian crises. If confirmed, I will work with ECOSOC and likeminded partners to press to make ECOSOC more relevant, effective, and accountable to its Member States. ECOSOC reforms will allow the organization to better rationalize and prioritize its work to successfully address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and make progress towards achieving the 2030 agenda.

*Question.* China's Role in ECOSOC, Targeting NGOs: I am concerned about China's increasing influence and role in U.N. bodies. ECOSOC consults with more than 5,100 registered non-governmental organizations to inform its work. I am deeply concerned that within ECOSOC, China has used its seat on the Council's committee on NGOs to block applications from NGOs working on human rights issues.

- How do you assess China's efforts to use its increased influence at ECOSOC and elsewhere in the U.N. system to undermine civil society and silence the voices of those who champion human rights? Are we doing enough to push back against this?

*Answer.* There is no doubt that China is seeking to advance its interests across the U.N. system. Countering malign Chinese action requires vigilant and energetic U.S. engagement. Chinese influence in ECOSOC has been a particular issue. Preserving space for credible NGO voices, on human rights or other key issues, must be a top priority. The United States has serious concerns about any ECOSOC NGO committee member insisting NGOs align with particular political positions as a condition for the committee to grant U.N. consultative status. The United States has had success, including at ECOSOC, coordinating with allies and partners to push back against PRC attempts to undermine core U.N. principles. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to continue to object to the PRC's practice of demanding NGOs use so-called "correct U.N. terminology" in their applications, websites, and documents when referring to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, or Tibet, which has the effect of censoring organizations' online presence, unduly restricting freedom of expression of their members, and stifling dissenting voices. If confirmed, I will work diligently to counter unhelpful Chinese actions, in particular with NGO committee members, and to ensure representation of credible civil society groups.

*Question.* The rapid collapse of the Ghani Government and Taliban takeover exacerbated a large-scale humanitarian and forced migration crisis. Fragile financial conditions and the Taliban's sidelining of women and girls are among the broader challenges facing the country. I am concerned about the hundreds of U.N. Afghan staff, many women and ethnic minorities, whose lives are at great risk right now. The U.N. has reported dozens of incidences of looting of U.N. offices, threats and beatings of U.N. staff throughout the country. What more can be done to assist U.N. Afghan staff who are in great peril right now?

*Answer.* The United States, along with our partners, continues to engage diplomatically to press the Taliban to allow safe, unfettered access for all humanitarian actors, including female aid workers. We also strongly support the efforts of the U.N. security system, including the U.N. Department of Safety and Security, to advise U.N. personnel and NGO aid providers in the field on security risks and security measures. If confirmed, I will continue to press for the safety of all humanitarian workers and U.N. personnel and their unfettered access to deliver needed services to the Afghan people.

*Question.* What role should the Humanitarian Affairs Segment of ECOSOC play in bringing together actors from the U.N., private sector, and populations in need to meet the dire humanitarian needs within Afghanistan, particularly in light of the complex-and evolving-sanctions regime in place against the Taliban?

*Answer.* The ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS) has furthered efforts by the United States and our partners to ensure that humanitarian aid in Afghanistan adheres to humanitarian principles, reaches those most in need, is robustly funded, and leverages partnerships, including with the private sector, to maximize innovation and effectiveness in humanitarian response. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the United States and our partners continue to support the HAS's important and growing role in bringing together stakeholders to address humanitarian needs and ensure unfettered access by and safety of U.N. and humanitarian partners.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO LISA A. CARTY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Are you familiar with S. 2297, the International Pandemic Preparedness and COVID-19 response Act?

*Answer.* I have read the legislation you reference and agree that sustained attention to the question of World Health Organization (WHO) reform is an urgent priority. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's active engagement in the WHO's Member State Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness for and Response to Health Emergencies (WGPR). Through this mechanism, the United States is advancing its interests and demonstrating its commitment to strengthening and reforming the WHO to ensure it can deliver on its vital global mission to advance health, health security, and the prevention of and response to future biological catastrophes.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to advancing the core principles of this Act through ECOSOC, including by elevating the importance of SDG #3 targets 3C and 3D?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States is already working to advance multi-pronged efforts that are consistent with the core principles of the draft International Pandemic Preparedness and COVID-19 Response Act.

The Biden-Harris administration is fully committed to supporting equity in global health emergencies in ways that are consistent with the Act and Targets 3C and 3D of the Sustainable Development Goals. This means ensuring that developing countries have access to vaccines, oxygen, and therapeutics, and investing in capacity building to equip developing and developed countries with tools for early warning and risk reduction as pandemic and other health threats emerge. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to advance these priorities, which were also reflected in the President's Global COVID-19 Summit on September 22.

*Sustainable Development Goal #5*

*Question.* Through its various bodies, specialized agencies, programs, funds, resolutions, and summits, the United Nations seeks to advance the status of women internationally, including through Sustainable Development Goal #5, relating to gender equality. Often times, this has included advocacy for "the reproductive health rights of women."

- In your view, does the term “reproductive health” include access to abortion?

Answer. My understanding is that the United States has a long history of joining consensus on the use of the term “reproductive health” in global multilateral forums as part of its commitment to gender equality and the empowerment and protection of women and girls. Since the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) defined the term in its Programme of Action as adopted by 187 governments, references to reproductive health have been included in scores of U.N. resolutions and included in the Sustainable Development Goals. The ICPD defined reproductive health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes.” The ICPD Declaration definition does not include a direct reference to abortion. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to promote women’s physical, mental and social well-being and their comprehensive inclusion in all appropriate U.N. agencies, programs, funds, and resolutions.

*Question.* Is a woman’s access to abortion a “right” protected under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, an indicator of gender equality under SDG #5, or a target under SDG #3.7 (ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services)?

Answer. My understanding is that the term ‘abortion’ is not in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The SDG 5.6 indicators are: “proportion of women aged 15-19 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care” and “number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education.” Target 3.7 is “By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.” If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to promote women’s physical, mental and social well-being.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to fully complying with current laws prohibiting the use of U.S. foreign assistance to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, to support involuntary sterilizations, or to lobby for or against the legalization of abortion overseas?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to upholding the law, including all laws related to our foreign assistance.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you also commit to ensuring full compliance with the U.N.’s “zero tolerance” policy with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse, whether such acts are committed by U.N. personnel themselves or partners implementing U.N. humanitarian and development assistance programs?

Answer. The United States will absolutely not tolerate sexual misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), in any of its forms and at any level across the multilateral system. Such acts are a scourge that undermines the very foundation of foreign assistance. The United States has been a leader, including through pushing through a landmark U.N. Security Council resolution in 2016 and urging the U.N. system at the highest levels and throughout the organization to adopt detailed and robust policies to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), including to ensure that the U.N. takes a survivor-centered response to any such allegation, strengthens and improves its reporting and response mechanisms, and holds all perpetrators accountable. If confirmed, I will support the administration’s push to fully enforce Secretary-General Guterres’s “zero tolerance” policy, including through the Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate for the United Nations.

#### *Sustainable Development Goal #16*

*Question.* While the Sustainable Development Goals failed to prioritize democracy and good governance as the foundation upon which all stable, healthy, and prosperous societies are built, SDG #16 may serve as a building block for future negotiations. Targets relating to the rule of law, government transparency and accountability, and combatting corruption are particularly relevant in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- If confirmed, how will you advance the principles of democracy and good governance as foundational to advancement to each of the SDGs?

Answer. The United States has consistently stressed that the fundamental values articulated in SDG 16 must form the basis for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda as a whole, and it has noted the importance of the cross-cutting and foundational values that drive progress on sustainable development, including transparency, good governance and the rule of law, and promoting equality and human rights. It is critically important for the United States to push for the recognition of the Agenda's underlying values across the U.N. system. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these values feature prominently in U.N. resolutions and other negotiated documents and work closely with U.N. organizations to ensure that their policies and practices reflect those values.

*Energy Security and Climate Action*

*Question.* Expanding access to reliable and affordable energy will be key to the advancement of nearly all of the SDGs, particularly for SDG #1 (to end poverty in all its forms everywhere). Yet, many of the proposals coming out of the Biden administration appear to be prioritizing green energy options that are impractical and out of reach for the poorest of the poor and may exacerbate, rather than eliminate, energy poverty.

Moreover, there are serious concerns about the potential for China to manipulate commitments under the SDGs and the upcoming U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP26), such that the Chinese Government and its state-owned enterprises profit through the sale of “green” technologies to low carbon emitters in the developing world in order to meet U.N.-imposed policies and requirements while failing to take meaningful action to reduce its own consumption.

- If confirmed, how will you balance SDGs #7 (clean energy) and #13 (climate action) against each of the other SDGs?

Answer. It should be possible to advance progress on energy security and climate action without compromising progress across other SDGs. Renewables—specifically wind and solar—are the cheapest form of new electricity in most of the world today. The cost for many key clean energy technologies has continued to decline, additionally, they can be deployed cost-effectively at varying scales, making them increasingly essential to expanding energy access. Importantly, developing countries and major emitters, such as India, recognize these complementarities and have incorporated massive renewables deployment in their economic development agendas. It will be important as climate negotiations continue to ensure that China is not seeking unfair advantage or exploiting international agreements for its own gain. If confirmed, I would work to guard against unfair Chinese actions and develop complementarities across the energy, climate and other SDGs.

*Question.* How will you ensure that low carbon emitters in the developing world are not penalized by energy development and consumption policies and requirements imposed by the U.N.?

Answer. The Paris Agreement does not impose any “energy development and consumption policies or requirements” on emerging economies, and instead allows all parties to set nationally determined climate goals that reflect their unique national circumstances. The United States understands that every country, from high carbon emitters to low carbon emitters, faces a unique set of climate and energy-related challenges. As such, each country will follow a different path to successfully transition to a clean energy future. If confirmed, I would work to aim to encourage and support those transitions through both bilateral and multilateral engagements.

*Question.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) Government is actively trying to reshape international institutions to advance its malign development model, including the United Nations.

- If confirmed, how will you work with our democratic allies and partners to build resiliency to attempts by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to undermine the integrity of multilateral institutions and longstanding, widely held democratic values, including with regard to the important work of ECOSOC to advance the Sustainable Development Goals?

Answer. There is no doubt that China is seeking to advance its interests across the U.N. system. Countering malign Chinese action requires vigilant and energetic U.S. engagement. If confirmed, I would make this a top priority. The United States has had success coordinating with allies to push back against PRC attempts to undermine core U.N. principles, including at ECOSOC. The committee's report, *The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation* on China, provides an important roadmap to help pursue this goal. The United States shares many priorities with countries around the world, including developing countries, yet too often in multilateral fora, and particularly at ECOSOC, votes do not

align. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the Department to strengthen current alliances and partnerships as well as improve outreach to a broader group of countries based on shared priorities, both in New York and through bilateral channels.

*Question.* Will you commit to monitoring such attempts and taking appropriate actions?

*Answer.* The United States is best able to address these attempts when we are engaged and leading at the U.N., the General Assembly, and its subsidiary bodies including ECOSOC. If confirmed, I will use our re-engagement with the U.N. system to reassert U.S. leadership and work with our partners and allies to push back against the PRC's attempts to reshape the U.N. and international rules, standards, and values. If confirmed, I will seek to improve the U.N.'s effectiveness, transparency, and impartiality, support qualified and independent candidates for key positions, and ensure that we advance our priorities on issues ranging from human rights to emerging technologies to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

*Question.* China has focused intensely on securing leadership roles in various U.N. agencies, particularly those overseeing technical standards that will shape the future. In many cases, these leaders have overtly advanced CCP goals, instead of acting independently to advance the global good. It is clear the United States has had mixed success with elections for heads of International Organizations in the past, and is taking more robust and coordinated steps to advocate for qualified and independent candidates in U.N. bodies.

- If confirmed, will you prioritize robust strategies to secure the election of qualified and independent candidates to lead ECOSOC?

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my highest priorities will be the appointment and election of qualified, independent candidates to leadership positions in the U.N. system. I would hope to draw on my extensive experience in the U.N. system to help advance this goal. Such personnel are critical to ensuring the U.N. operates effectively and in line with its foundational principles and values, and they bring strong technical and policy skills that enhance the performance and outcomes within the U.N. system, which, in turn, bolster our efforts on U.N. reform and good governance. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs has established a new office focused in part on managing, supporting, and coordinating elections and appointments for qualified U.S. and likeminded candidates for leadership roles in the U.N. system. That office works closely with our multilateral missions, including in New York and Geneva, to ensure the United States identifies and advocates on behalf of interested candidates for key positions across U.N. organizations and agencies.

*Question.* My report last year on U.S.-Europe cooperation on China notes that China abuses its seat on the U.N.'s NGO committee to block legitimate NGOs who would be critical of China's horrible human rights record, particularly against the Uyghurs and Tibetans.

- If confirmed, how would you ensure that China does not block legitimate NGOs from joining the committee?

*Answer.* PRC efforts to block legitimate NGOs from participating in the U.N. prevent the valuable contributions of civil society and other important non-state stakeholders. The United States has serious concerns about any ECOSOC NGO committee member insisting NGOs align with particular political positions as a condition for the committee to grant U.N. consultative status. The United States has had success, including at ECOSOC, coordinating with allies to push back against PRC attempts to undermine core U.N. principles. We will work with our allies and partners to continue to object to the PRC's practice of demanding NGOs use so-called "correct U.N. terminology" in their applications, websites, and documents when referring to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, or Tibet, which has the effect of censoring organizations' online presence, unduly restricting freedom of expression of their members, and stifling dissenting voices. If confirmed, I will work with NGO committee members and allies to continue to push back against these efforts and ensure the committee's work is open, transparent, and accessible to civil society around the globe.

---



RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO LISA A. CARTY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*SDG*

*Question.* As Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral Development, my subcommittee has responsibility for reviewing the budget and operations of the State Department and USAID. SDG 16, in my view is the key to achieving all the other sustainable development goals, as it seeks to develop “peaceful and inclusive societies . . . provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

- Should you be confirmed, how do you plan on ensuring that SDG16 will remain central to the UN’s approach to implementing the SDGs and keep adversaries from advancing an alternative view on democracy and human rights?

*Answer.* The United States has consistently stressed that the fundamental values articulated in SDG 16 must form the basis for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda as a whole, and it has noted the importance of the cross-cutting and foundational values that drive progress on sustainable development, including transparency, good governance and the rule of law, and promoting equality and human rights. It is critically important for the United States to push for the recognition of the Agenda’s underlying values across the U.N. system. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that these values feature prominently in U.N. resolutions and other negotiated documents and work closely with U.N. organizations to ensure that their policies and practices reflect those values.

*Question.* Unfortunately, the President’s budget omitted specific support for the U.N. Joint SDG Fund. In your capacity, will you recommend that the U.S. become a lead donor that will attract additional investment from like-minded countries, multiplying the Fund’s impact? How do you plan on engaging partners to encourage them to prioritize the Joint SDG Fund?

*Answer.* A key aspect of the 2030 Agenda was the recognition that countries are primarily responsible for their own achievement of the SDGs, using funding from all sources, including domestic resource mobilization, domestic and international public finance, private sector investment, and civil society. Initiatives like the Joint SDG Fund, which seeks to leverage contributions to catalyze larger financial flows, are an important U.N. contribution to that funding. If confirmed, I will carefully consider how U.S. assistance can best support U.S. policy goals and whether the U.S. should contribute to the Joint SDG Fund.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO LISA A. CARTY BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The biggest issue that I, and many others have with the U.N. is that it allows any nation to participate as an equal member no matter what the nation’s current practices are.

ECOSOC is responsible for many committees’ councils and commissions including the Commission on the Status of Women. If ECOSOC is to be taken as a serious organization that promotes human dignity, then it can’t allow nations to make a mockery of basic principles at home while purporting to investigate similar abuses elsewhere.

- If confirmed, would you oppose the Taliban from occupying the Afghanistan seat on the Commission on the Status of Women?

*Answer.* Per longstanding practice, the United States will only support countries with a commitment to the full equality of women in law and practice for election to the Commission on the Status of Women. If confirmed, I will continue this practice.

*Question.* If confirmed, can you commit to opposing the Taliban from serving on any council or committee that is under ECOSOC?

*Answer.* As a general practice, U.N. subsidiary bodies such as those under ECOSOC defer questions on credentialing to the U.N. General Assembly and its Credentials committee. I understand the administration is working closely with like-minded governments and others in the international community to hold the Taliban to account for the statements and commitments it has made to responsible governance, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Taliban’s actions will matter more than its words. If confirmed, I will closely coordinate with

colleagues across the U.S. Government and U.N. system to support the administration's objectives to hold the Taliban to account.

*Question.* Across a variety of international organizations, China is attempting to place its candidates as leaders or manipulate international standards and avoid shining the spotlight on its country's authoritarian practices. Within ECOSOC, China has reportedly used its seat on the Council's committee on NGOs to block applications from NGOs working on human rights issues. What is your assessment of China's efforts to increase its influence in U.N. bodies, particularly ECOSOC?

*Answer.* There is no doubt that China is seeking to advance its interests across the U.N. system. Countering malign Chinese action requires vigilant and energetic U.S. engagement. Chinese influence in ECOSOC has been a particular issue. The United States has serious concerns about any ECOSOC NGO committee member insisting NGOs align with particular political positions as a condition for the committee to grant U.N. consultative status. The United States has had success, including at ECOSOC, coordinating with allies and partners to push back against PRC attempts to undermine core U.N. principles. The United States works with our allies to object to the PRC's practice of demanding NGOs use so-called "correct U.N. terminology" in their applications, websites, and documents when referring to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, or Tibet, which has the effect of censoring organizations' online presence, unduly restricting freedom of expression of their members, and stifling dissenting voices. If confirmed, I will work diligently to counter unhelpful Chinese actions, in particular with NGO committee members and allies, to continue to push back against these efforts and ensure the committee's work is open, transparent, and accessible to civil society around the globe.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to highlight China's manipulative practices and counter its efforts to control ECOSOC and related committees?

*Answer.* The United States is best able to address these attempts when we are engaged and leading at the U.N., including the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies including ECOSOC. If confirmed, I will work with our partners and allies and strengthen partnerships to push back against the PRC's attempts to reshape the U.N. system and undermine the international rules-based order upon which it is based. If confirmed, I will also take targeted actions to oppose harmful PRC efforts that include its attempts to exploit the U.N. system and other international organizations to promote its "One Belt, One Road" Initiative as a way to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals or its efforts to introduce PRC ideology into negotiated U.N. products.

---

1525

**Communications Received Supporting the Nomination of  
Steven C. Bondy to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of  
Bahrain**

LETTER SUBMITTED BY AMB. HUGO LLORENS (RET.)  
IN SUPPORT OF STEVEN C. BONDY

The Office of Ambassador Hugo Llorens (ret.)

October 4, 2021

Dear Senator Menendez:

Steve Bondy is excited about his Senate Confirmation hearing this coming Thursday, October 7. As a long-time mentor, but also a friend, I have heard some say Steve may not be as sensitive about inter-agency cohesion. I wanted to convey that nothing could be further from the truth.

Steve worked for me as a member of my leadership team at the time I led the U.S. Embassy in Kabul in the period 2016-17. Steve was my Assistant Chief of Mission. In that position he served as the Chief Operating Office of the largest Embassy in history with a staff 8,500 representing 22 U.S. government agencies. Steve and I worked together on a daily basis, seven days a week and 12 or more hours per day. We managed some of the most challenging diplomatic and security issues on America's national security portfolio.

As the Assistant Chief of Mission, Steve's responsibilities were immense and the range of issues he managed were expansive, from oversight of security of thousands of Embassy staff in a war zone, to strengthening the physical plant of our perimeter and building, to combatting opium and heroin drug trafficking. Steve directly led the largest U.S. law enforcement team deployed overseas, including huge FBI and DEA contingents. In all of these roles Steve was a superb leader and manager. In all my dealings with him, I found him to be extraordinarily inclusive, collaborative, and supportive, engaging the range of section and agency heads under him to ensure they were closely synchronized and carrying out their operations in support of US national interests.

In my 36-year State Department career, with 20 years of senior leadership experience as a two-time Ambassador, two-

time DCM, and two-time Principal Officer, I have never worked with an officer who was as closely aligned with our military counterparts as Steve. He had a close, cooperative relationship with the commander of the Resolute Support Mission, General Mick Nicholson, and all of his senior staff officers. Through his experience working at JSOC for three years, Steve was intimately familiar with Special Operations and collaborated with the senior special operations officer in country, then-Major General Scott Howell, who Steve knew well from JSOC days. Steve also maintained extremely close and collaborative ties with the general officer responsible for intelligence and his team. Throughout, all of our military officer counterparts had the utmost respect for Steve. They respected his total dedication, his competence, and his talents as a team player.

Steve is an honorable and patriotic American. He is more than ready to be an outstanding US Ambassador to Bahrain. I have full confidence that he will develop a unified, cohesive Country Team and collaborate closely with the three-star commander of US Navy Central Command. We can rest assured that with Steve as a leader, our national security and foreign policy are in the very best hands.

Sincerely,

  
Ambassador Hugo Llorens (ret.)

1527

LETTER SUBMITTED BY GEN. JOSEPH L. VOTEL, USA (RET.), PRESIDENT AND CEO, BUSINESS EXECUTIVES FOR NATIONAL SECURITY, IN SUPPORT OF STEVEN C. BONDY

**Business Executives  
for National Security**

General Joseph L. Votel, USA (Ret.)  
President and CEO

Applying best business practices to address the nation's most pressing security challenges

October 4, 2021

Senator Robert Menendez  
Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
Hart Senate Office Building  
SH-528  
Washington, DC 20510

Mr. Chairman,

I am retired General Joe Votel, former JSOC, SOCOM and CENTCOM Commander, and I am writing to offer my very strongest endorsement for confirmation of Mr. Steve Bondy as our Ambassador to Bahrain.

I have known Steve since 2013 when I selected him from a group of senior Diplomatic Corps officers to be my Policy Advisor at the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). As such, he was my principal advisor on interagency communication, coordination and collaboration. In a word – he was excellent and I implicitly trusted his counsel on a variety of sensitive and high risk activities that we conducted pursuant to our assigned missions. When I departed JSOC in 2014 and moved to US Special Operations Command (SOCOM), and then subsequently to US Central Command (CENTCOM), I continued to interact regularly with Steve, who was then serving in key positions in Embassies across the Middle East. Again, he was a trusted voice whose input I personally sought and valued. As a Charge d'Affaires, his Country Teams were excellent and always well-coordinated. Steve always demonstrated, in abundance, the skills and attributes required for senior government leadership overseas and especially within the interagency. He is a skilled communicator and an effective collaborator who is deeply respected across the military and within the interagency.

I am confident that the Committee will find him an extraordinarily well qualified nominee for this position and one who will represent our President and our Nation with distinction, integrity and honor.

Very respectfully,



General Joseph L. Votel, USA (Ret.)  
President & CEO



## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2021 (p.m.)

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:32 p.m., in Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Jeanne Shaheen presiding.

Present: Senators Shaheen [presiding], Menendez, Cardin, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Van Hollen, Johnson, Romney, and Young.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

Senator SHAHEEN. Good afternoon, everyone. We are looking for Senator Markey, but we are going to go ahead and begin before he gets here. He is going to do introduction of Vicki Kennedy today.

At this point, the hearing of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs will come to order and I would like to recognize the ranking member, Ron Johnson, who is also here.

We are here today to consider nominations for four important positions representing the United States in several partner countries in Europe: Mr. Jeffrey Hovenier to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo, Mr. Michael Murphy to be Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Julissa Reynoso Pantaleon—I am sorry for massacring your last name—to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra, and Mrs. Victoria Reggie Kennedy to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria.

Let me begin by congratulating each of you on your nomination and thank you for agreeing to take on the commitments of being an Ambassador of the United States, should you be confirmed.

Let me also welcome your relatives who are here. I always think of hearings for ambassadorial candidates as kind of like a wedding. Everybody is happy when they are here.

I wanted to take a moment also today to celebrate the diversity of our nominees appointed by this administration.

I have participated in a number of nomination hearings this year, and I have been struck by the diversity of the appointments which reflects the diversity of our country. Of the 21 nominees who have been confirmed by the Senate, 52 percent are women, over half of the State Department nominees are people of color, and one in three nominees is either an immigrant or a child of immigrants. You all are in very good company.

The nominees today are not only well qualified, but you offer a unique perspective that will serve to strengthen our ability to advance U.S. policy interests overseas.

I have been heartened to hear the stories of nominees who were born outside of the United States or whose parents immigrated to America in hopes of providing a bright future for their children.

Your experiences not only enrich America, they also advance America's interests overseas as a living testament to America's values in action. Thank you all for agreeing to stand as candidates for these positions.

I think we will go ahead and begin opening statements and take a break if Senator Markey is able to come here so he can do the introduction.

I also want to recognize former Senator Chris Dodd, who is hiding in the audience. Thank you very much, Senator Dodd, for being here. It is nice to see you, although I almost did not recognize you. But it is great to have you here.

I want to also point out that we are in the middle of votes, and so at some point Senator Johnson and I will take our leave to go vote and we will hand the gavel to each other during that time.

Again, thank you for agreeing to be considered for these posts.

For more than two decades, Kosovo has demonstrated the importance of the NATO Alliance. The U.S. and Kosovo's strong transatlantic and regional security cooperation is supported by the NATO-led Kosovo force, which has maintained peace and security in the country for more than 20 years.

In the coming years, Kosovo must work with Serbia to reach a final comprehensive agreement to normalize relations. This is paramount to a more stable region.

Unfortunately, corruption remains a problem in Kosovo and, as a committed ally, the U.S. should push Kosovo to address the underlying causes of corruption. Mr. Hovenier's distinguished career in the Foreign Service has prepared him for the geopolitics of the Balkans, I am sure.

He currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Ankara, Turkey, and has previously served in Berlin, Lima, Athens, and Vienna, to name a few places. I am sure that your deep diplomatic experience will serve you well in Kosovo.

I am going to do introductions for the other nominees and then we will ask you to give your opening statement.

Next, we have Michael Murphy, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with a distinguished history with the department. He has been nominated to be the U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Like Kosovo, Bosnia has come a long way since the breakup of the Soviet Union. The Dayton Agreement continues to provide the framework for governance in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and I was glad to see earlier this year the appointment of a new High Representative to oversee civil aspects of the agreement.

If confirmed, I hope that a priority of yours will be addressing unemployment, particularly among the young people in the country. While down compared to recent years, the youth unemployment rate in Bosnia is at an abysmal 34 percent.



Bosnia and Herzegovina must continue to work with the U.S. and the international community to provide economic opportunities for its young people and prevent creeping malign foreign influence from taking advantage of the economic situation.

Julissa Reynoso Pantaleon, we welcome you back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. You previously served as Ambassador to Uruguay and we welcome your nomination to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra.

Ambassador Reynoso, you have undoubtedly followed Spain's generous efforts in supporting the evacuation of vulnerable and at-risk Afghans through the use of two military bases.

Spain is a long-standing strong ally of the United States, and we hope your role will strengthen these bilateral ties. As a NATO ally, we are, of course, grateful for all of Spain's security contributions.

But we continue to urge the country to increase its defense spending to support NATO's collective efforts in addressing shared challenges. Although the war in Afghanistan has now ended, NATO must divert its attention to confront new pressing challenges, and we welcome Spain's partnership to help NATO rise to this challenge.

Ms. Reynoso, I, additionally, hope that your current role as First Lady Jill Biden's chief of staff and previous role as co-chair of the White House Gender Policy Council will help you ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment remains a concern across U.S. foreign policy.

I am now going to turn it over to Senator Markey to introduce Victoria Kennedy, and then I will ask Senator Johnson if he will give his opening statement.

Senator Markey?

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

And it is my pleasure to introduce my friend, Victoria Reggie Kennedy, as the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Austria. I would like to welcome her son, Curran, who is here with us today.

I also understand that Vicki's daughter, Caroline, and her husband, Alex, as well as Vicki's mother, Doris, are all watching on television today, and we know Vicki's late father, Judge Edwin Reggie, would be so proud of her.

Vicki is a public servant at heart, which is how she has fused her intellect with her desire to serve. She is an advocate for art education, has a track record of working on initiatives that empower women and girls to promote a more inclusive society.

While her roots are in Louisiana, where she was born, raised, and educated, Vicki has become a very valuable member of our community in Massachusetts. She is a member of the board of directors of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and serves on the board of the New England Council.

Her legal and business experience make her perfectly poised to represent the United States in Austria, one of the top 10 fastest growing U.S. trade partners and foreign direct investors as of 2019.

From 2015 to 2020, direct foreign investment in the United States has grown by more than 40 percent, sustaining an estimated 34,000 jobs in our communities.

The modern U.S.-Austria relationship forged in the aftermath of World War Two is built on a commitment to our shared values of democracy, rule of law, and the protection of human rights.

These are values that Vicki Kennedy understands and promotes as the president of the board and co-founder of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute, a nonpartisan nonprofit organization headquartered in Boston that educates the public about the unique role of the United States Senate in our system of government, established in honor of her late husband and our former colleague, Ted.

The Kennedy Institute has won both domestic and international awards for its innovative and interactive design and approach to encouraging participatory democracy, invigorating civil discourse, and inspiring the next generation of citizens and leaders to engage in the civic life of their communities.

Vicki's commitment to public service, good governance, and civic engagement will serve her well as she represents the United States and Austria at a time when our cooperation with the European Union is vital as we grapple with the mutual challenges of the pandemic, rising authoritarianism and nationalism, and the climate crisis.

Vienna is also home to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, both of which are key to President Biden's commitment to reinvigorate U.S. global leadership with a focus on diplomacy and rebuilding alliances.

Vicki's political skill will make her an important asset to the President's commitment to build back a better foreign policy after a period of tumults unique in our history.

And if I may quote my longtime delegation partner and Vicki's beloved husband, Ted, this is what he said: "Together, we have known success and seen setbacks, victory and defeat. But we have never lost our belief that we are called to a better country in a newer world."

Vicki has spent her life working for a better country. I have no doubt that Vicki will bring all of her skills to support this administration. Congratulations on your nomination. I look forward to more years of your dedicated service to our great nation, and I recommend with no conditions that this committee give her a unanimous vote of support to take on this very important position.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much, Senator Markey.

I will now turn to Senator Johnson for his opening statement before asking each of our nominees to give their statements.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RON JOHNSON,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN**

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Madam Chair. In the interests of time, I will just ask that my prepared opening statement be entered in the record and, really, just wanted to welcome the nominees and their families.

Thank you for your past service. All of you, nominees and family members, I think you all realize, particularly those who have already served in similar capacities, this is a commitment. This is an act of service and sacrifice on the part of the entire family, and we truly appreciate it.

I do want to say thank you to those that took the time to meet with me. I am always struck, not only just today but in previous meetings with the ambassador nominees, how they generally express what an honor it is to represent the United States to the chosen country.

It is just true. I think we all recognize what a unique nation America is, and in discussions, whether it is with Kosovo or Bosnia and Herzegovina, these are nations that are struggling with democracy, and the advantage of representing the United States, as we discussed, is that they generally recognize America as wanting to be helpful. We are not there seeking some advantage. We are not there trying to control things. We just want what is best for the people of those countries. And so that makes it a pretty unique experience being U.S. ambassador to any nation.

And I think my only other comment—we had these in our meetings as well—is we do rely on ambassadors and members of the embassies to communicate with members here so that we can be helpful.

I think we need to be mindful as members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that what we say can have an impact passing resolutions, but we need the ambassadors and members of the embassy to let us know how we can be helpful.

In my previous life, I managed sales individuals, and I would always impress upon them, yes, it is your responsibility to represent the company to the customer.

It is your responsibility to represent America to your country but it is also important that you represent your country that you are ambassador to back to us. We need to have the expertise that you are going to develop as our ambassadors to these nations.

Again, I sincerely thank you for your past service. Thank you for your willingness to serve and I look forward to your testimony.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much, Senator Johnson.

We will now ask each of our nominees to give their opening statements. We are going to ask that you summarize your testimony in five minutes but your full statements will be included for the record, without objection.

And we will begin with you, Mr. Hovenier.

**STATEMENT OF MR. JEFFREY M. HOVENIER OF WASHINGTON,  
A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE,  
CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AM-  
BASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF  
KOSOVO**

Mr. HOVENIER. Madam Chair, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo.

I am humbled by the trust and confidence the President and Secretary of State have placed in me, and I hope to earn your trust as well. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this committee and the Congress to advance the United States interests and priorities in and with Kosovo.

Thank you for this opportunity to recognize my wife, Laura Hovenier, who is here with me today and to thank her for her love, counsel, support, and patience. She and our four children—Helen Sabin, Peter Hovenier, Megan Atkin, and Julia Hovenier—have made significant sacrifices in this rewarding but challenging life we have shared as a Foreign Service family.

If confirmed, I would be particularly honored to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Kosovo, a country that emerged from the horrors of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the ethnic cleansing of the Milosevic regime.

The United States played an essential role, together with our European partners, to protect the people of Kosovo and support them in their effort to establish a multi-ethnic democratic country.

I had the good fortune to participate in these efforts in various capacities, including as a member of the U.N. team led by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari that developed the “Ahtisaari plan” and paved the way for Kosovo’s independence.

The people of Kosovo have never forgotten America’s role and steadfast support over the last 22 years, and as a result, Kosovo is one of the most pro-American countries in the world and a close partner. Following democratic elections in February, a new government has taken office with a decisive mandate, and the U.S.-Kosovo relationship remains positive and productive.

I want to particularly acknowledge the early and generous response of the people in the Government of Kosovo in hosting evacuees from Afghanistan. The Government of Kosovo agreed to temporarily host up to 2,000 at-risk Afghans, many of whom served the U.S. Government and NATO at great personal risk.

But receiving refuge when in need is something that many Kosovoans intimately remember.

If confirmed, I intend to lead a whole-of-government effort to advance the following priorities.

Continuing U.S. support for a sovereign democratic Kosovo, as this remains essential to regional stability and key to our long-standing strategic goal of a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace.

Supporting the EU-facilitated dialogue to normalize Kosovo-Serbia relations, which, to quote President Biden, “should be centered on mutual recognition.”

Normalization is essential to regional stability and security, and will pave the way for both countries’ integration into Euro-Atlantic and European institutions. If confirmed, I will encourage Kosovo authorities to engage constructively, flexibly, and with urgency.

Continuing to help Kosovo rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic—when Kosovo requested our help, the United States delivered. In September, the United States donated over 500,000 life-saving Pfizer vaccine doses to Kosovo. This shipment was the largest single COVID-19 vaccine donation to Kosovo by any country or organization.

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Government of Kosovo, Kosovo citizens, and its independent justice institutions as they work to strengthen the rule of law, improve governance, and combat corruption.

I will also work to advance human rights for all citizens of Kosovo, particularly emphasizing ethnic and religious minorities.

In 1999, our commitment to human rights led us to intervene with our NATO allies in Kosovo, saving innocent lives. We remain committed to this.

I will work with our partners in Kosovo to foster economic growth and an improved enabling environment to help address Kosovo's high unemployment rate and assist Kosovo in securing a sustainable and green energy future to attract investment, create jobs, curb migration, and reduce environmental damage.

Finally, if confirmed, I will support the Kosovo Security Forces' continued, gradual, and transparent development to a multi-ethnic NATO interoperable territorial defense force.

By building on Kosovo's first international deployment together with U.S. forces and its first hosting of Defender Europe 21 exercises, we can help Kosovo transition from consumer to provider of security.

Thirteen years ago, the people of Kosovo claimed their right to determine their own future and status as a sovereign and independent state. In those 13 short years they have achieved something remarkable, a capable and successful democracy with an economy that supports prosperity for all Kosovians.

If confirmed, it would be the honor of my career to lead the women and men of the U.S. Mission to work with the Government and people of Kosovo and our international partners on these priorities.

Thank you for your attention. I would be pleased to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hovenier follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEFFREY M. HOVENIER

Madam Chair, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo. I'm humbled by the trust and confidence the President and Secretary of State have placed in me, and I hope to earn your trust as well. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this committee and the Congress to advance the United States' interests and priorities in and with Kosovo.

Thank you for this opportunity to recognize my wife, Laura Hovenier, and to thank her for her love, counsel, support, and patience. She and our four children—Helen Sabin, Peter Hovenier, Megan Atkin, and Julia Hovenier—have made significant sacrifices in this rewarding but challenging life we have shared as a Foreign Service family.

If confirmed, I would be particularly honored to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Kosovo—a country that emerged from the horrors of the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and the ethnic cleansing of the Milosevic regime. The United States played an essential role, together with our European partners, to protect the people of Kosovo and support them in their effort to establish a multi-ethnic, democratic country. I had the good fortune to participate in these efforts in various capacities, including as a member of the U.N. Team led by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari that developed the "Ahtisaari Plan" and paved the way for Kosovo's independence.

The people of Kosovo have never forgotten America's role and steadfast support over the last twenty-two years. As a result, Kosovo is one of the most pro-American countries in the world and a close partner. Following democratic elections in Feb-

ruary, a new government has taken office with a decisive mandate, and the U.S.-Kosovo relationship remains positive and productive.

I want to particularly acknowledge the early and generous response of the people and Government of Kosovo in hosting evacuees from Afghanistan. The Government of Kosovo agreed to temporarily host up to 2,000 at-risk Afghans, many of whom served the U.S. Government and NATO at great personal risk.

Receiving refuge when in need is something that many Kosovans intimately remember.

If confirmed, I intend to lead a whole-of-government effort to advance the following priorities:

Continuing U.S. support for a sovereign, democratic Kosovo, as this remains essential to stability in the region and key to our long-standing strategic goal of a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace.

Supporting the EU-facilitated dialogue to normalize Kosovo-Serbia relations, which, to quote President Biden, “should be centered on mutual recognition.” Normalization is essential to regional stability and security and will pave the way for both countries’ integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions. If confirmed, I will encourage Kosovo to engage constructively, flexibly, and with urgency.

Continuing to help Kosovo rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic. When Kosovo requested our help, the United States delivered. In September, the United States donated over 500,000 lifesaving Pfizer vaccine doses to Kosovo. This shipment was the largest single COVID-19 vaccine donation to Kosovo by any country or organization.

If confirmed, I will continue to support the Government of Kosovo, Kosovo’s citizens, and its independent justice institutions as they work to strengthen the rule of law, improve governance, and combat corruption.

I will also work to advance human rights for all citizens of Kosovo, including ethnic and religious minorities. In 1999, our commitment to human rights led us to intervene with our NATO Allies in Kosovo, saving innocent lives, and we remain committed to this.

I will work with our partners in Kosovo to foster economic growth and an improved enabling environment to help address Kosovo’s high unemployment rate and assist Kosovo in securing a sustainable and green energy future to attract investment, create jobs, curb migration, and reduce environmental damage.

Finally, if confirmed, I will support the Kosovo Security Force’s continued gradual and transparent development to a multi-ethnic, NATO-interoperable, territorial defense force. By building on Kosovo’s first international deployment together with U.S. forces, and its first hosting of Defender Europe 21 exercises, we can help transition Kosovo from consumer to provider of security.

Thirteen years ago, the people of Kosovo claimed their right to determine their own future and status as a sovereign and independent state. In those 13 short years, they achieved something remarkable—a capable and successful democracy with an economy that supports prosperity for all Kosovans. If confirmed, it would be the honor of my career to lead the women and men of the U.S. Mission to work with the Government and people of Kosovo and our international partners on these priorities.

Thank you for your attention. I would be pleased to take your questions.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Hovenier.

Mr. Murphy?

[No response.]

Senator SHAHEEN. You need to turn on your microphone.

**STATEMENT OF MR. MICHAEL J. MURPHY OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Mr. MURPHY. I just realized that.

Chair Shaheen, Ranking Member Johnson, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today as President Biden’s nominee as U.S. ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I am honored by the confidence and trust the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me and, if confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this committee and others in Congress to advance the United States interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I want to recognize my wife, Kimberly, who devoted 30 years to public service, starting in the Senate and followed by a career in the Foreign Service. Without her love, patience, and support, I would not be sitting here today.

I also want to thank my parents, John and Barbara Murphy, who died in 2019 and 2018, respectively, but who I am confident are watching over me now. They instilled in me the values that have guided my career: a strong work ethic, a devotion to public service, and a commitment to integrity.

If confirmed, I look forward to returning to Sarajevo, where I served from 2006 to 2009. I found the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcoming and friendly, and I am eager to engage with them again.

There has been a strong bipartisan consensus throughout my career that a Europe whole, prosperous, and at peace is in our national interests. The United States' engagement in and support for Bosnia and Herzegovina are critical to accomplishing that goal, and our leadership there is essential.

If confirmed, I will make it a priority to support implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, subsequent state-level reforms, and most importantly, Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Twenty-six years of peace is a great achievement but we cannot take it for granted. We must steadfastly support an independent, democratic, and multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. We must support the Office of the High Representative and implementation of its 5+2 agenda.

If confirmed, I will also support the following. First, I will support Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. I will work with our allies and partners to facilitate the reforms necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move towards EU membership and a deeper partnership with NATO.

Euro-Atlantic integration is the surest path to the democratic, prosperous, and secure future that all of Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens seek and deserve.

Second, I will support rule of law reforms, especially anti-corruption activities. Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina damages U.S. national security by undermining the functionality and stability necessary for Dayton implementation, by putting at risk Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic integration, and by exposing Bosnia and Herzegovina to malign external influences.

Third, I will support reforms to promote economic growth, bolster trade and investment with the United States, and create the prosperity necessary for the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their children to enjoy the opportunities that come from a thriving economy.

Fourth, I will work to counter efforts by local and outside actors, especially Russia and the People's Republic of China, that threaten our interests and undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina's future.

I am grateful for this committee's leadership highlighting the challenges posed by malign actors and providing tools and resources to push back against them.

Fifth, I will support efforts to advance reconciliation among Bosnia and Herzegovina's constituent peoples and others. The 1992–94 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a terrible tragedy. One hundred thousand lives were lost and horrible crimes were committed, including the genocide in Srebrenica.

The guilt for Srebrenica and other crimes rests with those who committed them, not with entire ethnic groups. The duty of today's leaders is to hold perpetrators accountable, acknowledge and honor the victims, and promote reconciliation.

It is also to focus their energies on building a common democratic and prosperous future for all in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, if confirmed, I will focus on the safety and security of U.S. citizens as well as the security and well being of the United States mission in Sarajevo, its branch offices in Banja Luka and Mostar, and the employees of all three.

This includes hiring, recruiting, developing a diverse group of American and local staff, and ensuring our diplomatic platforms are sufficiently robust to advance our interests.

Madam Chair, I thank this committee and other members of Congress for your interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I appreciate your time, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Murphy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. MURPHY

Madam Chair, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am honored by the confidence and trust the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this Committee and others in Congress to advance the United States' interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I want to recognize my wife, Kimberly, who devoted 30 years to public service, starting in the Senate and followed by a career in the Foreign Service. Without her love, patience, and support, I would not be sitting here today. I also want to thank my parents, John and Barbara Murphy, who died in 2019 and 2018 respectively, but who I am confident are watching over me now. They instilled in me the values that have guided my career: a strong work ethic, a devotion to public service, and a commitment to integrity.

If confirmed, I look forward to returning to Sarajevo, where I served from 2006–2009. I found the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcoming and friendly, and I am eager to engage with them again. There has been strong bipartisan consensus throughout my career that a Europe whole, prosperous, and at peace is in our national interest. The United States' engagement in, and support for, Bosnia and Herzegovina are critical to accomplishing this goal, and our leadership there is essential.

If confirmed, I will make it a priority to support implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, subsequent state-level reforms, and most importantly, Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Twenty-six years of peace is a great achievement, but we cannot take it for granted. We must steadfastly support an independent, democratic, and multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. We must support the Office of the High Representative and implementation of its 5+2 agenda.

If confirmed, I will also focus on the following:

First, I will support Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. I will work with our allies and partners to facilitate the reforms necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move towards membership in the European Union and a deeper partnership with NATO. Euro-Atlantic integration is the surest path to the demo-



cratic, prosperous, and secure future that all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens seek and deserve.

Second, I will support rule-of-law reforms, especially anti-corruption activities. Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina damages U.S. national security by undermining the functionality and stability necessary for Dayton implementation, by putting at risk Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic integration, and by exposing Bosnia and Herzegovina to malign external influences.

Third, I will support reforms to promote economic growth, bolster trade and investment with the United States, and create the prosperity necessary for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their children to enjoy the opportunities that come from a thriving economy.

Fourth, I will work to counter efforts by local and outside actors, especially Russia and the People's Republic of China, that threaten our interests and undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina's future. I am grateful for this Committee's leadership highlighting the challenges posed by malign actors and for providing tools and resources to push back against them.

Fifth, I will support efforts to advance reconciliation among Bosnia and Herzegovina's constituent peoples and others. The 1992–1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a terrible tragedy. One hundred thousand lives were lost and horrible crimes were committed, including the genocide in Srebrenica. The guilt for Srebrenica and other crimes rests with those who committed them, not with entire ethnic groups. The duty of today's leaders is to hold perpetrators accountable, acknowledge and honor the victims, and promote reconciliation. It is also to focus their energies on building a common democratic and prosperous future for all in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, if confirmed, I will focus on the safety and security of U.S. citizens as well as the security and well-being of the United States' mission in Sarajevo, its branch offices in Banja Luka and Mostar, and the employees of all three. This includes recruiting, hiring, and developing a diverse group of American and local staff and ensuring our diplomatic platforms are sufficiently robust to advance U.S. interests.

Madam Chair, I thank this committee and other members of Congress for your interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I appreciate your time, and I look forward to your questions.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.  
Ms. Reynoso?

**STATEMENT OF HON. JULISSA REYNOSO PANTALEON OF NEW YORK, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF ANDORRA**

Ambassador REYNOSO. Madam Chair, the ranking member, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and Principality of Andorra.

I am deeply honored to be considered by the Senate for this position and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me.

Let me especially thank Dr. Jill Biden. Dr. Biden is the reason I am here. She is one of the most remarkable people I have ever met, and she and the President honored me by giving me the opportunity to serve this country and this administration.

If confirmed, I look forward to another opportunity to serve this great nation.

I would like to recognize my family, friends, mentors, colleagues who have supported me over the years, many of them who are vir-

tual at this time and in different parts of the world, primarily in New York City.

There are too many to name, but here present with me is my mother, Rosario, and my sister, Jessica, and my son is presently in kindergarten.

[Laughter.]

Ambassador REYNOSO. I will also like to extend my gratitude to my dear colleagues at the White House, especially those from the Office of the First Lady, who I am sure are eating popcorn and watching, and my colleagues at the General Policy Council. I want to especially thank my dear friend and brother, Anthony Bernal.

Finally, I want to thank Secretary Clinton and Cheryl Mills, who, in 2009, gave me the opportunity to first serve at the U.S. Department of State as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and then as U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay.

If confirmed, it would be my privilege to lead the U.S. mission to one of their strongest bilateral partners, where our talented interagency teams in Madrid and Barcelona work tirelessly to expand U.S.-Spanish cooperation in defense, law enforcement, commerce, and trade, science, education, and people-to-people exchanges.

The relationship between the United States and Spain is strong. We share important values including a commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Sound economic policies, investment in people, a desire to protect the planet from the impacts of climate change, a commitment to peacefully resolve disputes between nations, and respect for the multilateral system.

If confirmed, I look forward to continue the productive partnership and transatlantic alliance between our two countries and will work diligently to advance those goals.

Spain is a vital bilateral partner and a NATO ally whose government is already reenergizing transatlantic cooperation with the Biden administration as a host of next year's NATO Summit, the outstanding cooperation we have enjoyed with our Spanish hosts at Naval Station Rota and Moron Airbase, for nearly 70 years the tangible example of our strong partnership including Operation Allies Refuge and Operation Allies Welcome.

In Afghanistan, over 30,000 Spanish military personnel served alongside Americans during the 20-year mission, and over a hundred Spaniards tragically lost their lives.

Beyond our strong defense partnership, Spain enjoys a special relationship with Latin American nations and Latinos in the United States due to linguistic, cultural, and historic affinities.

Spain and Latin American nations have a long and vibrant tradition of exchanges in training and law enforcement, defense, and other sectors.

Spain and the United States share goals in protecting human rights and democracy throughout the hemisphere. The United States and Spain also share a deep economic relationship, trading over \$36.9 billion in goods and services in 2020 alone.

Spain is the tenth largest source of foreign direct investment in the United States, and the United States, in turn, is the largest source of foreign direct investment in Spain.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government of Spanish President Pedro Sanchez, civil society, and the private sector to build upon our already strong bilateral relations and expand the political, commercial, educational, and cultural ties between our two countries.

If confirmed, I also look forward to fostering a relationship with the Principality of Andorra and working together with Andorra's head of government, Xavier Espot Zamora, to further our joint goals to support democracy, human rights, and financial transparency.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work closely with this body, with the members of this committee, to ensure your interests and concerns are addressed and we work together to advance our interests while strengthening our partnership with Spain and Andorra.

Thank you for your time, members, and I am so happy to be here and happy to answer your questions—any questions you may have. Thanks again.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Reynoso follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. JULISSA REYNOSO PANTALEON

Madam Chair, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra.

I am deeply honored to be considered by the Senate for this position and grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me. Let me specially thank Dr. Jill Biden. Dr. Biden is one of the most remarkable people I have ever met, and she and the President honored me by giving me the opportunity to serve this administration. If confirmed, I look forward to another opportunity to serve my country.

I would like to recognize my family, friends, mentors, and colleagues who have supported me over the years. There are too many to name here, but I would like to thank my mother Rosario, my sister Jessica, and my son Lucas. I would also like to extend my gratitude to my colleagues at the White House, especially Anthony Bernal. Finally, I want to thank Secretary Clinton and Cheryl Mills, who in 2009 gave me the opportunity to first serve at the U.S. Department of State as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and then as U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay.

If confirmed, it would be my privilege to lead the U.S. Mission to one of our strongest bilateral partners, where our talented interagency teams in Madrid and Barcelona work tirelessly to expand U.S.-Spanish cooperation in defense, law enforcement, commerce and trade, science, education, and people-to-people exchanges.

The relationship between the United States and Spain is strong. We share important values, including a commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; sound economic policies; investment in people; a desire to protect the planet from the impacts of climate change; a commitment to peacefully resolve disputes between nations; and respect for the multilateral system. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the productive partnership and transatlantic alliance between our two countries and will work diligently to advance these goals.

Spain is a vital bilateral partner and NATO Ally whose government is already reenergizing transatlantic cooperation with the Biden administration as host of the 2022 NATO Summit. The outstanding cooperation we have enjoyed with our Spanish hosts at Naval Station Rota and Moron Air Base for nearly 70 years is a tangible example of our strong partnership, including Operation Allies Refuge and Operation Allies Welcome. In Afghanistan, over 30,000 Spanish military personnel served alongside Americans during the 20-year mission, and over 100 Spaniards lost their lives. Spain deploys roughly 3,000 troops overseas each year in NATO, EU, U.N., and national missions. It is a key partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and maintains a contingent deployed to Iraq.

Beyond our strong defense partnership, Spain enjoys a special relationship with Latin American nations and Latinos in the United States due to linguistic, cultural, and historical affinities. Spain and Latin American nations have a long and vibrant tradition of exchanges and training in law enforcement, defense, and other sectors.

Spain and the United States share goals in protecting human rights and democracy in the hemisphere, most notably in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

The United States and Spain also share a deep economic relationship, trading over \$36.9 billion in goods and services in 2020. Spain is the tenth largest source of foreign direct investment in the United States, creating over 90,000 jobs in the United States. The United States is the largest source of FDI in Spain, supporting more than 178,000 Spanish jobs.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government of Spanish President Pedro Sanchez, civil society, and the private sector to build upon our already strong bilateral relations and expand the political, commercial, educational, and cultural ties between our two countries.

If confirmed, I also look forward to fostering our relationship with the Principality of Andorra and working together with Andorra's Head of Government Xavier Espot Zamora to further our joint goals to support democracy, human rights, and financial transparency.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work closely with this body to ensure your interests and concerns are addressed, and that we work together to advance U.S. interests while strengthening our partnerships with Spain and Andorra.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.  
Mrs. Kennedy?

**STATEMENT OF VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA**

Mrs. KENNEDY. I am having—am I on? Thank you.

Chairwoman Shaheen, Ranking Member Johnson, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria.

I am grateful and humbled by President Biden's confidence in me. I thank Senator Markey for his generous introduction. I am delighted that my son, Curran, is here with me today, and it means the world to me to be joined by my dear friend, Senator Chris Dodd.

My daughter, Caroline, and her husband, Alex, are watching from Germany, and my mother and other family members are viewing from various parts of the country.

I am thinking today in a special way of my late husband, who revered this place, and of my late father, the first diplomat in our family, who was appointed by President Kennedy as Special Envoy to the Middle East in 1961.

One of the countries my father visited as envoy was Lebanon, the land his parents left in 1920 in their early 20s to come to America. Forty-one years later, their youngest son landed in Beirut to find his parents' entire village at the airport to greet him. His grandmother was in that crowd and he met her for the first time as the representative of the President of the United States. What a moving testament to the American dream.

I have five siblings, and all our lives were shaped by that sense of infinite possibility. I grew up in a small town, Crowley, Louisiana. I attended Catholic schools and then Newcomb College, followed by Tulane Law School. I clerked for a federal appellate judge and then began private law practice.

I first traveled to Europe with my brother when we were college students, faithfully following a guidebook entitled "Europe on \$5 to \$10 a Day." That gives you an idea how long ago it was.

But when we arrived in Vienna, we were overjoyed to find a letter from our parents with a little something extra in it and a note that read, "So you can enjoy the music." How glorious it was to attend the opera in Vienna and hear a concert in Salzburg.

From that time on, Austria was special to me. Of course, I could not have imagined then that I would be sitting here today. But I feel my background has prepared me well.

As a lawyer in a global law firm, I have led diverse teams to resolve complex problems, working collaboratively toward a common goal. I am a trustee of the Kennedy Center, where I have chaired the Education Committee for more than a decade.

I am president of the board of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate, which focuses on the vital role of the Senate in our governance, fosters civil dialogue, and seeks to inspire new generations to engage in civic life. And I have been an active member of the business community in New England, serving on the boards of our Regional Business Council as well as the Chamber of Commerce.

U.S.-Austrian relations are strong, based on our mutual interests and shared ideals. We have been friends for a long time, first establishing formal diplomatic ties in 1838, and we have just marked the 74th anniversary of the Marshall Plan with which in partnership with Austria has turned into an investment that is an economic success story that continues to pay dividends for both of our countries.

Our bilateral economic ties are strong and growing. The United States is the second largest market for Austrian exports and bilateral trade is projected to be greater this year than last.

Austria recorded the second fastest rate of growth in foreign direct investment in the United States in 2020 and that direct investment overall has resulted in the creation of tens of thousands of U.S. jobs.

If confirmed, I am eager to strengthen our trade and investment relationship even further. Austria and the United States share many common values and perspectives, including support for human rights and the rule of law.

Austria is a member of the global coalition to defeat ISIS and has contributed peacekeepers and trainers around the world.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance America's interests and values, and strengthen and deepen our already strong relationship with Austria across the full range of political, security, economic, and social issues that bind us together.

Thank you very much. I look forward to answering your questions. It is an honor to appear before you today.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Kennedy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY

I'm honored to appear before you as the nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Austria. I am grateful and humbled by President Biden's confidence in me.

I thank Senator Markey for his generous introduction. My son Curran is with me today. My daughter Caroline and her husband Alex are watching from Germany and my mother and other family members are viewing from various parts of the country. I'm thinking today, in a special way, of my late husband, who revered this place, and of my late father, the first diplomat in our family, appointed by President Kennedy as Special Envoy to the Middle East in 1961.

One of the countries my father visited as Envoy was Lebanon, the land his parents left in 1920, in their early 20s, to come to America. Forty-one years later, their youngest son landed in Beirut to find his parents' entire village at the airport to greet him. His grandmother was in that crowd, and he met her for the first time, as the representative of the President of the United States. What a moving testament to the American dream.

I have five siblings, and all our lives were shaped by that sense of infinite possibility. I grew up in a small town, Crowley, Louisiana. I attended Catholic schools and then Newcomb College, followed by Tulane Law School. I clerked for a federal appellate judge and then began private law practice.

I first traveled to Europe, with my brother, when we were college students, faithfully following a guidebook entitled "Europe on \$5 to \$10 a day." (That gives you an idea of how long ago it was.) But when we arrived in Vienna, we were overjoyed to find a letter from our parents with a little something extra and a note that read: "So you can enjoy the music." How glorious it was to attend the opera in Vienna and hear a concert in Salzburg. From that time on, Austria was special to me. Of course, I couldn't have imagined then that I would be sitting here today.

But I feel my background has prepared me well. As a lawyer in a global law firm, I have led diverse teams to resolve complex problems, working collaboratively toward a common goal. I'm a Trustee of the Kennedy Center, where I've chaired the Education Committee for more than a decade. I'm President of the Board of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate, which focuses on the vital role of the Senate in our governance, fosters civil dialogue and seeks to inspire new generations to engage in civic life. And I've been an active member of the business community in New England, serving on the Boards of our regional business council as well as the chamber of commerce.

U.S.-Austrian relations are strong, based on our mutual interests and shared ideals. We've been friends for a long time, first establishing formal diplomatic ties in 1838. And we've just marked the 74th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, which helped rebuild Europe after World War II. Austria, in partnership with the United States, turned this investment into an economic success story that continues to pay dividends for both countries.

Our bilateral economic ties are strong and growing. The United States is the second largest market for Austrian exports, and bilateral trade is projected to be greater this year than last. Austria recorded the second fastest rate of growth in foreign direct investment in the United States in 2020. Their direct investments overall have resulted in the creation of tens of thousands of U.S. jobs. If confirmed, I am eager to strengthen our trade and investment relationship even further.

The United States and Austria share many common values and perspectives, including a support for human rights and the rule of law. Austria is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and has contributed peacekeepers and trainers around the world. Austria is also a valued partner in the Western Balkans, where it contributes nearly 350 troops to NATO's KFOR mission for peace and stability in Kosovo, and nearly 300 troops to the EU's stabilization mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance America's interests and values and strengthen and deepen our already strong relationship with Austria across the full range of political, security, economic and social issues that bind our nations together.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Before we begin the panel's questioning, I have some questions for each of the nominees that I am going to ask you to respond to either yes or no, and we will go down the line and ask that each of you verbally respond.

First question, do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

Mr. Hovenier?

Mr. HOVENIER. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Murphy?

Mr. MURPHY. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Ms. Reynoso?

Ambassador REYNOSO. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mrs. Kennedy?

Mrs. KENNEDY. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Mr. HOVENIER. Yes.

Mr. MURPHY. Yes.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Yes.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Mr. Hovenier?

Mr. HOVENIER. Yes.

Mr. MURPHY. Yes.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Yes.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. And do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Mr. HOVENIER. Yes.

Mr. MURPHY. Yes.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Yes.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you to all of our nominees for answering yes to all four questions. We will hold you to that, once confirmed.

We are going to rotate questions as we normally do between the chair and ranking member, and then we will go to the other members who have arrived.

Each member is going to have five minutes to question and we may do more than one round, depending upon how many senators show up.

First of all, I am going to begin with you, Mr. Hovenier, as soon as I can find my question.

I think this is, really, both for you and for Mr. Murphy because it speaks to what is happening in the Balkans, and Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina have long aspired for membership to the EU and NATO.

But it is unlikely, I think, based on what I am seeing and what I am hearing from Europeans that membership is unlikely to be granted anytime soon.

The question that I have is how do we keep those countries looking West? What kind of incentives can we provide to them to help them as they aspire to join the EU and look West so that they are not tempted by Russia and China?

I will begin with you, Mr. Hovenier.

Mr. HOVENIER. Thank you for that question.

In some respects, Kosovo is sui generis in the Balkans because since neither Russia nor China have recognized Kosovo as an independent state, while we still keep an eye on things, and if confirmed, this will be a very high priority of mine to keep an eye on efforts by Russia to exercise malign influence or by China in some

ways, there is not the same national affinity as in some other parts of the Balkans towards some of that behavior.

That said, the problem you raised is something that I think concerns all of us. As you are aware, the European Union will have a summit tomorrow, and if press reports can be believed they will reiterate and restate their commitment to enlargement, including the Western Balkans.

I think in the short term our task is to continue to encourage the authorities of Kosovo and, if confirmed, this will be a priority of mine, to continue to do the reforms that are required so that they are ready for membership both in the EU and in NATO.

The European Union has played a constructive role in many ways with regard to Kosovo, both through assistance. But you are right that this incentive of eventual membership has been a very important catalyst for reform and change and, if confirmed, one of my priorities will be to try to build further momentum and to work with our European Union partners to ensure that the prospect is real and that real reform is carried out consistent with their obligations, should they obtain membership either in the EU or in NATO.

And on that one last thing, I would like to add and would be to encourage those EU member states who have not yet recognized Kosovo to think seriously about the implications of that, which would also be part of our diplomacy.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Yes, that would be very helpful.

Mr. Murphy, really, the same question. I was in Bosnia and Herzegovina back in 2010 with then Senator George Voinovich, and one of the things we heard from the Bosnians was how important it would be to have some signal from NATO about the prospects there.

And we came back and argued very strongly that Bosnia should at least get MAP—Membership Action Plan—to help them understand that that aspiration was possible in the future, should they continue with reforms.

What do you think the most important aspects of reform are right now in Bosnia and Herzegovina so that they can continue to aspire to NATO and to the EU?

Mr. MURPHY. Let me start by emphasizing the importance of continued strong U.S. engagement and leadership in the Western Balkans and advising Herzegovina in particular.

I think our presence, our engagement, is critically important to motivating and pressing the domestic parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to do the right thing.

Second, one of the things, if confirmed, that I will hammer home in my engagements publicly and privately is that the reforms associated with Euro-Atlantic integration, while it takes time to meet the EU requirements, have immediate benefits to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina now.

That includes a more open and free democracy, a more open and free economy with greater opportunities for prosperity for all including the children of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a better future for them. I would continue to stress those points, if confirmed.



With regards to NATO particularly, I want to underscore that the United States strongly supports NATO's open door policy and the membership aspirations of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are focused now on the benefits of deepening the partnership that exists between Bosnia and Herzegovina where there is a consensus within Bosnia and Herzegovina to pursue that partnership.

The key challenge there and one I will make a priority, if confirmed, is to encourage the Government to press forward with its reform program and present it to the Alliance because that will serve as a catalyst to getting more allied engagement to support the reforms necessary for Bosnia to move forward.

Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. I am out of time, and I am going to go vote. But I am delighted that we are joined by the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Menendez, and I am going to turn it over to him to—because I know he has some questions.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you, Madam Chair, very much. Congratulations to all of you on your nominations, and I appreciate my colleague's indulgence.

I would have had this panel before a full committee, but in order to get nominees out there we had the able work of Senator Shaheen doing it so because your assignments are incredibly important, which is why I do not always come to subcommittee hearings. But I want to come to this one because there is a couple of nominees here to places that I deeply care about.

Ambassador Reynoso, let me start with you. It is good to see you again. I am concerned. Spain is an important ally. NATO ally, Rota Bay, the—all of the elements of our relationship is very important.

But I am deeply concerned that the Spanish have not been particularly helpful, particularly in the Western Hemisphere. I am sure that they would not like us acting the way they are acting towards us if it was in their sphere of the world.

And so I get deeply concerned that Spain has taken views that are outside of the democracy and human rights provisions that we would want to see of a NATO ally.

I am deeply concerned when I see their actions as it relates to Cuba and their unwillingness to join us in our global declaration.

It seems to me that the Spaniards are more—care more about their hotels and investments than they care about democracy and human rights there. It worries me to see what role the Spaniards are playing in Venezuela as well, which is a cancer in the Western Hemisphere.

And I could go on about other places as well where the Spaniards have not been as forthcoming but, if anything, not only not forthcoming, they seem to be contrary to where we are at in our own hemisphere.

If you are to be confirmed, would you tell me what you would do to try to get our Spanish friends more in line with democracy and human rights in this hemisphere?

Ambassador REYNOSO. Thank you, Senator. It is wonderful to see you again.

And let me start by thanking you for your leadership in this space. Obviously, this is an issue that you care deeply about and so do I.

Given my trajectory in Latin America and the Caribbean, I am quite familiar with the lackluster presence or politics and policy of Spain vis-a-vis some of these countries, primarily Cuba and Venezuela and Nicaragua, I should say as well.

If confirmed, my objective will be to work bilaterally with Spain and, obviously, given their presence and their important role in the European Union vis-a-vis Latin America and the Caribbean, I will urge them to be much more vocal and much more transparent and to hold the same standard in terms of enforcement and accountability with respect to the human rights violations and the lack of liberty and transparency and accountability in places like Cuba and Venezuela that they hold with respect to other countries.

Given their important leverage and their interests in these countries, primarily in Cuba, I think Spain can do a lot more and, frankly, sir, I look forward to working with you closely to make sure we can—you can help me inform those positions and ensure that Spain is doing more than it is doing currently.

The CHAIRMAN. I hope this will be a robust part of your agenda upon confirmation. We have a lot of things with the Spaniards. You know, I used to chair the U.S.-Spain Council for years in developing closer ties politically and economically.

But that does not mean that I am willing to turn a blind eye to their neglect in this hemisphere as it relates to human rights and democracy. That is something I care passionately about.

I have two final questions to Mr. Hovenier. You know, we seem to put a lot of focus on Kosovo, but I am not quite sure that I find Serbia to be a particularly good partner in this process in terms of the efforts that are taking place, and we want both sides to engage.

But how do you view—I know that is not—your assignment is not to go to Serbia. It is to go to Kosovo upon confirmation. But how do you view that reality?

Mr. HOVENIER. Like any other problem—thank you, sir, for the question—like any other problem in the Balkans, the problem is both multifaceted and requires work from both sides.

If I am confirmed, one of my highest priorities would be to seek to advance Kosovo-Serbia normalization. My focus has, of course, been the things I will need to do as the confirmed ambassador of the United States to encourage the authorities of Kosovo to engage constructively and with urgency and creatively in that process.

But I would agree with you that the authorities in Serbia equally require that sort of push and impetus, and I cannot dispute at all your assessment that the Serbian interlocutors have not always performed in that way in this process.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that, because sometimes we say we want both sides to act but sometimes it is clear that one side is not doing their just part, and I often feel the State Department takes this leverage nuanced approach when one side is very clearly not participating.

And finally, Mrs. Kennedy, it is good to see you again.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Good to see you.

The CHAIRMAN. I just want to say I hope that you will take seriously, and I am sure you will but I want to hear it from you, when individuals come with Havana syndrome at—we have had a rash of them in our embassy there and in our various international organizations there where our people are serving, that you will make this a very serious part of your mission.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Senator, thank you so much for your leadership on this issue and thank you very much for that question.

As you know, my information is all public information at this point. I have not been read in specifically. But it is an issue I take very, very seriously.

The health and well being of the staff and family members of the members of the embassy is something I take extremely seriously, and I do pledge to you that I will take extreme care and be sure that everyone who has been affected by this syndrome will get the care—if I am confirmed, will get the care and attention that they need, but more than that, that I will, if I am confirmed, pledge that I will urge that we get to the bottom of what is causing this and really push on that and see what we can do about trying to prevent further incidents of it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I have other questions. I will submit them to the different nominees for the record. I understand Senator Johnson—

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me start with the Mr. Hovenier. Again, enjoyed our meeting this afternoon and our discussion. I think we all recognize, as the chairman had indicated, that both sides share responsibility to make concessions to move forward in the region between Serbia and Kosovo.

It is difficult to move on. There were—as I think you stated in testimony, there were atrocities on both sides. It is hard to just forgive and forget and that means we also discussed within the education systems that they are really not trying to instill a forgive and forget attitude.

I thought it was the right approach when Ambassador Grenell and President Trump engaged and got the parties to agree, focusing on the area of agreement in terms of economic cooperation. I mean, it is the best way to move beyond and put the past behind everyone if you really can show the people of the region what happens if you put your disagreements aside and concentrate on greater opportunity, greater prosperity, for yourselves and your kids and your grandkids.

But, Mr. Hovenier, can you just kind of speak to your basic approach when it comes to representing the U.S. to Kosovo and what we need—you know, what we are going to be looking for from Kosovo to be able to move forward?

Mr. HOVENIER. Thank you for that question.

Yes, as we discussed, first, the Washington commitments were an important step in reducing tensions and played a very important role in moving closer towards the outcome we would like to see, and this administration, of course, validated those.

And if I am confirmed, one of the things I hope to do, working with my colleague from Belgrade, is to see further implementation

of that broad swath of commitments that were achieved in the last administration.

More broadly, what I would like to see from Kosovo authorities, what the United States would like to see from Kosovo authorities, would be to engage actively, creatively, constructively, and with urgency in this EU-facilitated process to work towards a normalization of relations, which we believe should be centered in mutual recognition.

An incident of just the last few weeks with regard to temporary license plates shows what can be done when the leaders come together and they have a real problem that needs to be resolved. They can find common ground and it can be resolved. This model can be applied to a range of different issues that divide the two sides right now.

And as you point out, sir, this is very important. Without a normalization of relations, without mutual recognition, the region will be stymied.

Senator JOHNSON. I always point out—I mean, focus on the areas of agreement. There is plenty of things to disagree on. We are also trying to point out that a negotiation is a give and take. Give and take.

I think so often because we are an honest broker everybody wants the U.S. to get involved, but I always got the feeling they want us to get involved to take their side in things.

And would you agree with me that we do need to be that honest broker and we need to press all sides to not only be willing to take but also to be able to give in those negotiations?

Mr. Hovenier?

Mr. HOVENIER. Yes, sir. I agree with you completely.

Senator JOHNSON. This is for the other three nominees. I think, universally, we are seeing throughout Europe, Eastern Europe, not only what Russia is doing but what China is doing.

They have two totally different approaches. Russia just seems to destabilize just for, I guess, the sheer joy of destabilizing. China is far more focused and, I think, long-term strategic in terms of investment.

And I will just ask all the nominees. We will start with you, Mr. Murphy. What is your viewpoint of what it looks like in Bosnia and Herzegovina right now in terms of both Russia and China's influence?

Mr. MURPHY. Russia has a very different vision of Bosnia and Herzegovina than the United States. As I said earlier, we are for a democratic, prosperous, multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina that takes its place in the Euro-Atlantic family of nations.

Russia is presenting the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a failed state. It is stoking ethno-nationalist tensions. It is facilitating and taking advantage of the seams provided for by corruption, all of which is problematic to the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina and also to our interests, because if we believe in a Europe whole, free, prosperous, and at peace, and that has been a bipartisan national security objective for my entire career, then we need to address that and push back against malign influence.

The Chinese are taking a slightly different approach in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As you pointed out, Senator, they are looking at

economic investments, particularly in critical infrastructure, places like roads, power plants, IT, 5G networks, things of that nature.

And their game is a little bit, as you put it, more long term. Again, they are taking advantage of the seams and opportunities presented by corruption, which is one of the reasons, if confirmed, not only will we have to push back against malign influence from both actors but we have to be vigorous and aggressive in pursuing anti-corruption activities to close those seams to the malign outside actors who are seeking to destabilize the country.

Senator JOHNSON. I would just ask the other two nominees to also answer, but I think Mr. Murphy has kind of laid out what they are doing.

The question I would have for you then is what should be the U.S. response to their activities, Ambassador Reynoso?

Ambassador REYNOSO. With respect to Russia, Senator, obviously, there has been quite a bit of coverage of the allegations of disinformation with respect to the referendum in Spain, in particular.

The United States—I mean, I know the embassy already is engaging with our counterparts to ensure that the Russian tactics of fracking and disinformation are being addressed and that the Spaniards have the capabilities to investigate and prevent this type of practice.

More of that, more cooperation, more between our law enforcement and also our other agencies to ensure that we are working with one of—Spain, one of our key partners to prevent these types of tactics and practices, I think, will be key.

With respect to China, Spain is one of the few countries that has not signed the Belt and Road Initiative MOU and is quite, in my view, cautious with respect to moving forward with China, irrespective of the fact that it is a significant economic player in Spain.

We should continue to press allies, especially NATO allies like Spain, to ensure these engagements are limited and have a values-driven approach to engagement with countries like China.

And I should say both with respect to Russia and China, Spain, within the EU, has been an important partner in pursuing and supporting sanctions against both countries, especially when it comes to human rights violations.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mrs. Kennedy?

Mrs. KENNEDY. Thank you, Senator. We want to be able to negotiate with China from a position of strength and we need a strong—we need strong relationships with our partners like Austria to be able to do that.

And if I am confirmed, I will just continue to—I will continue to press Austria and work with them on that. I think it is a real global approach to it.

With respect to Russia, countering malign influence is a top priority and that is an issue that I would also continue to raise. Austria is in a very interesting and unique position where it is geographically, where it is constitutionally, and where it is historically.

It is a, by constitution, a neutral country but it is firmly entrenched in the EU and in transatlantic relationships, and that is something that we would continue to foster and encourage.

But it also sees itself in a unique position as a place where it looks both East and West. It was the place where President Kennedy met Khrushchev. It is the place where President Carter met Brezhnev, and Austria is very proud of its ability to have those relationships where it can bring countries together in that way.

It is important that we recognize that role of Austria and—but to continue to work and strengthen our transatlantic ties and work with Austria in that way.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I understand, Senator Kaine, you are next by agreement with Senator Van Hollen.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, and, actually, Senator Murphy has also deferred to me and I appreciate—I appreciate that, Madam Chair, and congratulations to the nominees. This is a very strong panel.

Mrs. Kennedy, let me start with you. What a treat to see you in this way, and it is good that you are on this panel together with two other ambassadors serving in European nations in the Balkans where Austria has troops participating in peacekeeping missions. It is a good panel together.

I wanted to follow up on what Senator Menendez asked you about the Havana syndrome reports and the obligation to try to keep people safe.

And just for the record, because Senator Menendez sort of short formed it and I do want the public to be aware of this as well, on the 23rd of September the Washington Post reported that the CIA had removed its Vienna station chief due to concerns that he was not adequately addressing a recent spate of what the CIA characterizes as anomalous health incidents reported by U.S. intelligence and diplomatic personnel.

These incidents are referred to by this committee and others as Havana syndrome. The chairwoman has been very active on this, as we all have. We have had a number of briefings about this over the course of the past few years, mostly classified.

But according to the Post article, dozens of U.S. personnel in Vienna, including diplomats and intelligence officials as well as some of the children of U.S. employees, have reported symptoms, according to the current and former officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter, and the reports are more significant in terms of the number and frequency in Vienna than any city other than Havana.

I know this is going to be a huge concern for you, certainly, for embassy personnel and others who are stationed in Vienna. And so, again, if you would just talk about the priority that you would place upon being responsive to U.S. employees under your supervision, should you be confirmed.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Thank you, Senator. And first, I want to say how much I personally appreciate the involvement of the committee and interest in this issue because I think it is a very significant issue.

If I am confirmed and am going to be in Vienna, I look forward to having the opportunity of addressing this issue and really delving into it in a very serious way.

The health and safety of the personnel, their families, their children, is of paramount importance. Getting prompt attention to these incidents is in—and medical treatment is imperative, but also getting to the bottom of it and also seeing if there are ways to prevent it but pushing, taking it seriously, pushing and working with you all as well.

And if I am confirmed, I look forward to communicating with you regularly about it and as well as with all of the people back here in Washington to see what we can do to get—try to get a resolution of this extremely serious matter.

Senator KAINE. Thank you so much. And I think I might speak in a bipartisan way for the whole committee to say we are not satisfied with the answers we are getting.

We have been getting briefings about this for a number of years, and now we are talking about multiple cities, including cities in United States, including in Virginia, where people have been subject to these kinds of attacks.

And with the most sophisticated intelligence operation in the world, I would have hoped that we might have had a better handle on this by October 2021 than we do. But your commitment to that, that will be heard well by embassy staff in Austria.

Ambassador Reynoso, I would just like to congratulate you. I am just going to be very brief because you sort of answered my questions about the role of Spain and Latin America in response to Senator Menendez's questions.

I am the chairman of the subcommittee overseeing the Western Hemisphere. I was, like Senator Menendez, honorary chair of the U.S.-Spain Council for five years, and I think the opportunities for Spain and the United States to work together on issues in Latin America are enormous.

I am doing everything I can to convince this administration to put a higher priority on Latin America. I think the State Department sometimes operates as if there is an East-West axis in the world and not a North-South access.

Your experience being an ambassador in the Americas and the work that you have done in the Americas, in my view, makes you uniquely well suited to be part of the—to be our ambassador in Spain.

But I hope that I will be successful in getting the administration to give a higher priority to the Americas. But I have reason to believe—I do not need to be hopeful, I am confident—that should you be confirmed, you will make that relationship between the U.S.-Spain on Latin America matters a high priority. Your background suggests that you will and that gives me strong reason to support your nomination.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Thank you.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, and if you would like to just say anything about that, but you have already done a pretty good job.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Those were incredibly kind words, Senator. My trajectory as an immigrant and also as a person who has worked in the Americas, I am completely committed to ensuring

that this country, our country, understands fully how important Latin America and the Caribbean is to our national security and our future.

And if I am confirmed as the ambassador to Spain, I will just continue to work to flourish and empower those connections, sir, and I really look forward to working with you to make sure we do give it the importance it requires.

Thank you.

Senator Kaine. Thank you so much. And with my thanks to my colleague, Senator Murphy, I yield back.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Thank you to all four of you for your willingness and your continued willingness to serve.

Senator Dodd, good to see you back in the Foreign Relations Committee again. Thank you for your service to this committee and to our state.

Ambassador Reynoso, I want to take—continue along the line of questioning begun by my colleague, Senator Kaine. In July, Spain declined to sign a U.S.-led statement on the repression of protests in Cuba, and instead, they decided to lead an EU statement that expressed concerns about the repression of the protests but predictably called for an easing of external restrictions in order to promote reforms in Cuba.

You, obviously, have an enormous amount of experience here. You have seen firsthand the irritant that U.S.-Cuba policy has been both in our relations with countries in the Western Hemisphere but also occasionally with Spain.

And so I might just ask you to talk a little bit more about Spain's policy towards Cuba and how U.S. policy towards Cuba affects our ability to work with Spain in the Western Hemisphere.

I agree with Senator Kaine. This is an opportunity for us to integrate more broadly with Spain on Western Hemisphere policy. I worry, though, that Cuba stands in the way—U.S. policy towards Cuba stands in the way.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Make sure I get this right.

Yes, Senator, as you know, Spain and Cuba have a history together. It was one of the last Spanish colonies in the Western Hemisphere and there are affinities that go beyond the political and economic, so the cultural and national connections as well.

Spain's position, as far as I understand it, is that we share with the—Spain shares with the United States ideals of human rights and liberty as concepts. But in terms of tactics with respect to how they manage their affairs with Cuba, it has been—we have had important differences.

It has been much more tolerant, if you will, of certain actions by the Government and encourages more robust dialogue than we have been willing to engage in.

That said, in July, when there were important protests in Cuba, we and Secretary Blinken led an effort to have countries from—allies from throughout the world sign a statement and Spain refused. Did not do so, and went with the EU statement.



I do think the fact that they helped issue a statement is something. It is important that they did collectively push the EU to issue a statement.

My position is that we can be even more aligned because, optimally, our main objective is to see real reform in Cuba, both for the improvement of economic conditions of the Cuban people but also, obviously, the need for greater human rights.

I think we share those values and those objectives. How we get there is something we have to work on. Given that, I think the rest of the hemisphere, frankly, sir, has so many economic issues and struggles at this time that Cuba may not be as relevant as it was 20, 30 years ago on the ideological front.

I think, in that regard, Spain is an important partner for us because it is one of the most active for foreign governments in the region in terms of assistance and political relations and the like.

I really, if confirmed, hope to work with Spain, make sure that Cuba and the Cuba situation is not a point of conflict with the rest of the region but a point of focus to push forward for greater aligned interests and, again, driven by our collective values.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you. I apologize. I want to get in—thank you for that answer. I look forward to working with you. I want to get in one question to at least one of our nominees to the Balkans.

I have been fortunate enough to work with both Senator Shaheen and Senator Johnson on U.S. policy towards the Balkans. No surprise that inside the Pandora Papers were a number of Balkan officials who had been, potentially, using public funds in order to enrich their own bank accounts.

What is the importance of continuing a pathway to EU integration on our efforts to try to address what is still often far too rampant corruption in the Balkans with respect to Kosovo and Bosnia?

It seems that as the dream of Europe disappears for some so is the pressure relieved on many of our partners there to continue to make anti-corruption reforms.

Mr. HOVENIER. Thank you for that question. I presume I should go first.

What I would say is the pressure is not relieved and it should not be relieved. This is a critical part of our long-term project of seeing these countries integrate into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions but also being the sorts of partners we want them to be.

And if I am confirmed, an important element of our foreign assistance and our diplomatic engagement will be to partner with the Government of Kosovo and civil society to address corruption.

This is a primary concern of the current Government of Kosovo as well. The prime minister was elected on a record, a campaign, to combat corruption, seeking to enable him but also empowering civil society to hold their government more accountable and to work to ensure greater transparency and good governance.

We also hope that the incentive of integration in European institutions is not dead and we will continue to work as well as the administration with our European partners to keep that hope more alive than some suggest it is. Thank you.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you.

Mr. MURPHY. Senator, thank you for the question. Let me start by saying, if confirmed, rule of law reform and combating corruption would be among my top priorities. It damages the interests of the United States, the interests of the people and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in more ways than one, and Euro-Atlantic integration is one of those, as you have highlighted.

I think that we have to be prepared to continue the programs that we put in place to tackle rule of law, to promote an open economy and create space for civic-minded democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and if confirmed, I will continue to do that.

In addition, if confirmed, I would support using the new sanctions authority that the President has recently enacted dealing with corruption to exact a price for those ethno-nationalist politicians who are not prepared to address the reforms necessary or to behave in a way that is beneficial not just to U.S. interests but, of course, to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator SHAHEEN. I think we have Senator Van Hollen on WebEx.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Madam Chair and—

Senator SHAHEEN. Senator, can I just—I do not think we can control sound at our end. But maybe you could turn the sound down a little bit at your end because it is very loud.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Is that better?

Senator SHAHEEN. Better. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. Sorry. I had wanted to get back in person, but congratulations to all of you.

And to Mr. Hovenier, I just want to associate myself with the comments that Chairman Menendez made with respect to the important U.S. role in seeking to normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia. Obviously, it has been a long road, but we need to keep at that work.

Mrs. Kennedy, it is great to see you again. As you well know, the United States and Austria enjoy a long history of cultural and educational exchange programs.

Every year, about 1,000 Austrians study at universities in the United States and some 2,700 Americans study in Austria through programs developed by Austrian and American educational institutions.

I have a particular recent interest in this because my state of Maryland in 2020 signed an MOU between the U.S. Naval Academy and the Austrian Theresian Military Academy, which covers the exchange of Austrian cadets and U.S. Naval Academy midshipmen.

The first cadets and midshipmen participate in this program beginning this fall, and I am hoping that as our ambassador you will help to cultivate and strengthen this relationship and other exchange programs.

Can you just talk briefly to the significance of those people-to-people exchanges to continuing to maintain strong relations with Austria?

Mrs. KENNEDY. Thank you so much. It is good to see you, Senator.

What a wonderful program that you have described and how important people-to-people exchanges are—I think I will look this way, I think it is a better idea—and how important these people-to-people exchanges are.

Cultural exchanges help our countrymen understand Austria. They help Austrians understand our country, and they are really a vital part of our public diplomacy.

Embassy Vienna is very—has been very devoted to this type of exchange program and I am thrilled about cultural exchanges. I am thrilled about entrepreneurial exchanges and business exchanges.

I think there is no better way than actual hands-on exposure, learning from others, getting the real—that real kind of exposure.

I am excited about it, and if I am confirmed I look forward to having people-to-people exchanges and perhaps even expanding. Thank you very much.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I look forward to working with you on that.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Thank you. And if I am confirmed, Senator, I look forward to meeting some of those cadets. It would be fantastic.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Terrific.

Ambassador Reynoso, as you know, the United States and Spain have cooperated over the years on security issues in Africa. Moron Air Base in Spain is the permanent headquarters of a rotational U.S. expeditionary force with the primary mission of responding to emergency calls for security assistance to U.S. embassies and other U.S. operations in Africa, among other things.

As you know, the French, who have had also a long-standing forces—long-standing forces in Africa have signaled that they intend to draw down their presence in the Sahel.

Does that affect U.S. security interests in the region and how would it affect our operations in Spain, if at all?

Ambassador REYNOSO. Thank you for the question, Senator.

Spain is, as you know, a critical ally and the fact that we have been working with Spain for so many years and that both the bases of Rota and Moron are used for our service people and their families who are located there but other allies also use those bases for operations in other parts of the world, in Africa in particular, says a lot about the strength of our relationship.

Spain is committed and has been committed to working with sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel region to ensure that there is security. I think, frankly, they have been investing significant resources and capabilities to train in sub-Saharan Africa.

Our relationship with Spain is so strong that I believe we can continue using that relationship to increase our collaboration in sub-Saharan Africa and in the Sahel region in particular.

I do not think that the French position at this moment will impact, obviously, our relationship with Spain in continuing the security collaboration, and if confirmed I will work with Spain to make sure that we continue to fortify our security and comprehensive operations and developing our work in sub-Saharan Africa to continue the growth of our security and support for those countries.

I think it is a matter of continuing that support and strengthening those ties and increasing our work with them in sub-Saharan Africa.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

First, let me thank all four of our nominees for their willingness to serve our country and continuing to serve our country. We know that these are extremely challenging times and we thank you for making the sacrifice to serve our country and we also thank your families.

Senator Dodd, it is really good to see you. Brings back the time in 2007 when I was first elected to the Senate and got appointed to this committee. You were one of the senior members and you helped me in my original years in the United States Senate and mentoring me on this committee. It is good to see you in this capacity here in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

And let me start, if I might, with Mrs. Kennedy. It is great to see you.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Good to see you.

Senator CARDIN. I was in Vienna in July. Been to Vienna many times. Austria is a very important country for the United States, a strategic partner, and we have already talked about the fact that it is nonaligned so, therefore, it presents some challenges to us at times in regards to its relationship with Russia.

And, recently, we have seen that Austria has been supportive of the EU in regards to sanctions against Russia. But I think you are going to have a challenge in regards to our relationship of Austria as it relates to trying to show unity in Europe against the aggression of Russia.

I think less so with China because I think there is more unity there. I just bring that to your attention.

But I want to mention a second part that is unique about our mission in Vienna, and that is we have two other very important missions. We had the IAEA and we had the OSCE.

I am the chair of U.S.-Helsinki Commission. We rely a great deal on our mission in Vienna in addition to our OSCE mission for the support in regards to the OSCE.

I guess my comment is, yes, the bilateral, it is extremely important. We need to deal with unity in our quest against aggression of Russia. But we also are going to need cooperation and support between the three missions that we have and, quite frankly, the ambassador to Austria usually is the senior partner in that relationship.

I would just ask you to recognize that all three of these missions are critically important and you can play a role in assisting the other two missions.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Thank you so much, Senator. I appreciate that. It is good to see you and I am very much looking forward to working cooperatively with the Tri-Mission with the other two ambassadors and coordinating with them. That is something that, I think, would be very, very important, and if I am confirmed I look forward to that.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Murphy, I enjoyed our conversation. It is interesting that Bosnia and Kosovo have a lot in common from the point of view they both have challenges of a strong central govern-

ment representing all of the population, the geographical population, with the challenges in the northern part of Kosovo with the Serbian population and, of course, in Bosnia with the impact of Serbia population and the desire for autonomy.

My question to both of you, we have talked about corruption. Both countries have real serious issues with corruption and we are going to work with you very closely on that.

But in Bosnia, we need to work to constitutional reform. In Kosovo, we need to have a government that is respected all of the communities and has the confidence of all the communities and can provide services to all the communities rather than relying on Serbia to provide a lot of the services to the Serbs that are in Kosovo.

What is your strategies to advance the unity of those two countries so they, ultimately, can make full integration into Europe and, hopefully, membership in organizations such as NATO?

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you very much, Senator, and I, too, enjoyed our conversation and I hope to welcome you and other members of the committee in Bosnia and Herzegovina if I am confirmed.

I want to start by just stating up front, because you spoke about unity and territorial integrity, I want to—I think it is really important to state clearly that we are fully committed to sovereignty and territorial integrity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and rhetoric and actions that put that at risk and put at risk Bosnia's Euro-Atlantic integration, something the citizens want and make clear that they want and the politicians claim to support is both counterproductive, self-defeating, and itself quite risky.

Now, having said that, our immediate focus in the short term is on limited constitutional reform designed to increase the stability and functionality of the country, ensure greater equality for all citizens, and enhance democratic standards and meet a key target in Euro-Atlantic integration.

This has to do with the European Court of Human Rights cases that found elements of the constitution discriminatory.

In addition, we are also pressing for reforms in the rule of law area, in the economy, and others that are critical to the stability and functionality of the state and that would open up political space to more civic-minded parties and participation, and inject greater dynamism and energy into the economy, which would generate prosperity for more of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens.

And if confirmed, I intend to support all of those activities and I also very much look forward to working closely with you and other members of the committee on these reforms, but also to discuss longer-term possibilities for additional reforms that are going to be required to advance Bosnia and Herzegovina along the path of Euro-Atlantic integration.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Hovenier?

Mr. HOVENIER. Thank you for that question. May I first beg your indulgence to simply note that my career in government began as an intern at the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe? And so I am delighted to be able to—

Senator CARDIN. You should have put that first on your resume.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HOVENIER. I think you have pointed out exactly what the challenge is. Kosovo is an independent country and the authorities

of Kosovo ought to govern their entire country, and the challenge is, of course, elements of the country that are either not interested in or, at times, the authorities in Kosovo find themselves actively subverted in exercising authority over their entire country. This needs to be done very carefully.

The European Union-facilitated dialogue has made real progress with some of this, and there is a multi-ethnic police nationwide that exercises authority including in the north with customs service, judiciary.

But there is still work to be done, particularly with municipal governments. And if I am confirmed, one of the challenges will be to work with authorities of Kosovo and for my colleagues in Belgrade to work with authorities in Serbia to move this EU-facilitated dialogue forward and further narrow the differences.

We accept that Serbia has desires to support the Serbian community in Kosovo. That is reasonable. But it needs to be done in the constitutional framework and under the legal jurisdiction of Kosovo.

One last thing I would say is another priority of mine would be to encourage the authorities of Kosovo to make abundantly clear that they are a multi-ethnic country and that all citizens, without regard to ethnicity, enjoy the same rights and privileges.

The Ahtisaari plan, the constitution of Kosovo, the Kosovo legal framework, is actually quite good in this regard and there is a number of rights guaranteed in law for ethnic communities.

Implementation has not always been what we would hope. But if I am confirmed, this will also be a big priority to help ensure that the ethnic communities in Kosovo, who have every right to be in their country and to exercise their rights as a citizen, feel safe in doing so.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Senator Cardin. I do not think we have anyone else waiting for a first round of questions.

I do have several more questions that I would like to ask in a second round. Is there anyone else who has—Senator Johnson, Senator Cardin, do you have a second round that you would like to?

[No response.]

Senator SHAHEEN. I want to go back then to the questions about the directed energy attacks, the anomalous health incidents. I think, Mrs. Kennedy, you got a number of questions about that.

What you did not get asked is whether or not you have been briefed by the attacks that have happened in Vienna.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Senator, I have—my information on the attacks is on an unclassified basis.

Senator SHAHEEN. Okay. Can I ask each of the rest of you have you been briefed about anomalous health incidents and what to do if you are attacked or if any members, any employees who are working with you, were to be attacked?

Ms. Reynoso?

Ambassador REYNOSO. I have been briefed, broadly, but I have not been given specific instructions as to what to do in case of an incident.

Senator SHAHEEN. Mr. Murphy?

Mr. MURPHY. I am familiar with the communications that the department has provided to the field over the last several months about incidents and how they will respond to them and what is expected of us. But I have not received a classified briefing on incidents elsewhere in Europe.

Senator SHAHEEN. And have you been told that, if confirmed, you will be briefed?

Mr. MURPHY. If confirmed, I will seek such a briefing.

Senator SHAHEEN. Okay. How about you, Mr. Hovenier?

Mr. HOVENIER. Just as with regard to Mr. Murphy, I am aware of incidents, more broadly, and I am very aware of the guidance that has been provided out to all of our posts from the Department of State of what to do.

And, of course, in my last job as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Ankara, paid very close attention to that guidance as to what we should do if an employee complained or if we felt an incident took place. But I have not been formally briefed at a classified level and, if confirmed, I would absolutely seek such a briefing before heading to post.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I assume both Mrs. Kennedy and Ms. Reynoso have the same response on requesting a briefing.

Mrs. KENNEDY. Absolutely. I will request a briefing. Absolutely.

Ambassador REYNOSO. Yes, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. My final question is for you, Ms. Reynoso, because there has been a lot of discussion in recent months about strategic autonomy on the continent of Europe, usually in the context of national security but not always.

And I know that or at least it appears that different countries in Europe define that term differently. Can you discuss how—your perception of how Spain defines strategic autonomy?

Ambassador REYNOSO. Thank you for the question, Senator.

As you know, Spain is quite active as a member of the European Union and also a NATO member. It is my understanding that, like anything else, these two institutions share a lot of members in common and also have quite a bit of values and goals in common.

That said, with respect to security in particular, NATO is the fundamental and essential institution that we, as the United States, support going—in terms of our broad strategic relationship with Europe.

And, obviously, for my purposes, the platform I will use to engage with Spain, especially in the short term, if confirmed, given its hosting of the NATO Summit next year, any movement in terms of creating other vehicles for security cooperation or security independence from the NATO platform that European members might take on such as Spain, obviously, will be helpful if, ultimately, it will lead to greater expenditure and defense and security support and spending overall in connection with their commitments and targets.

However, my position will be to have NATO and make NATO be and use that platform in my relationship and my work in Spain, if confirmed, as the primary institution of security cooperation and support.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

With that, thank you very much to each of our nominees for your testimony today. I look forward to working with all of you, should you be confirmed.

And for the information of all senators, the record of this hearing will remain open until close of business tomorrow, Wednesday, October 6th.

To my colleagues on the committee, if you have any questions for the record please submit them on time to the nominees. I urge you to answer any questions expeditiously so that your nominations can be considered before the full committee when we hold a business meeting.

With that, this hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:04 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

#### ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

##### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO JEFFREY M. HOVENIER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Kosovo's special police recently began enforcing a regulation requiring Serbian vehicles to remove their license plates when entering Kosovo. Kosovo Serbs began blocking border crossings in response, and Serbian military jets and helicopters began flying near the border. An agreement has been reached to resolve the issue, but tensions remain high. How can the United States help lower the temperature and best support the EU-led normalization efforts? What will you do if confirmed to help advance the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to strongly support the EU-facilitated Dialogue to normalize Kosovo-Serbia relations, including through direct engagement with Kosovo's senior leadership and in collaboration with my counterpart U.S. Chief of Mission in Belgrade. Reaching a comprehensive normalization deal between the parties remains the only way to unlock Kosovo and Serbia's Western-oriented futures. We believe normalization should be centered on mutual recognition. The United States is ready to help the parties in any way possible to reach an agreement that will establish fully normalized relations. We are actively and closely engaged with both sides and the EU to help the process.

*Question.* Traffickers in Kosovo continue to force Kosovo citizens into sex trafficking and forced labor. Members of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities are among the most vulnerable. How will you work with the Government of Kosovo to combat sex trafficking and forced labor, and protect vulnerable communities from these heinous practices?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will actively engage Kosovo authorities and civil society to address human trafficking issues. I will encourage the Government of Kosovo to: vigorously investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including complicit officials, and impose strong sentences; provide adequate and consistent funding for NGO-run shelters; designate specific prosecutors and judges to handle trafficking cases; and provide advanced training to judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement on trafficking investigations and prosecutions to ensure appropriate sentences for traffickers. I will encourage the Government to adopt a new Anti-trafficking National Strategy and Action Plan and will meet with vulnerable communities to hear directly from them.

*Question.* Kosovo recently suspended the development of a gas pipeline partly financed by the Millennium Challenge Corporation. However, Kosovo continues to depend on coal-fired plants for 95 percent of its electricity. How will you encourage Kosovo to make the energy transition to gas and renewable energy sources, and help bolster its energy security?

*Answer.* Energy security is essential for Kosovo's future economic growth and overall stability. If confirmed, I will encourage Kosovo to finalize and implement a comprehensive energy plan that outlines a transition away from coal toward greater energy diversification, including natural gas and renewables, while securing a stable supply of energy. It should be noted that while the Millennium Challenge Corpora-



tion is supportive of the gas pipeline, its assistance was to be focused on demand creation rather than pipeline financing. Although MCC will no longer move forward with gas investments, due to timeline constraints, I will ensure the whole inter-agency encourages Kosovo to achieve decarbonization by 2050.

*Question.* Kosovo remains the only nation in Eastern Europe not allowed visa-free travel to European Union member states. The EU announced in 2018 that Kosovo met all requirements for visa liberalization. However, the EU has not made any progress towards Kosovo's integration. How will you engage the EU in regional formats on visa liberalization, and how will you approach dialogues regarding the possibility of EU accession?

*Answer.* Like other Balkan countries, it is important that Kosovo has a credible, concrete perspective for eventual Euro-Atlantic integration, and that the EU follows through. This is why the United States supports EU visa liberalization for Kosovo citizens. It is disappointing that the EU has not yet established visa-free travel for Kosovo, notwithstanding recognitions by the European Commission and Parliament that Kosovo has met all requirements. I confirmed, I will engage with Washington colleagues and the U.S. Mission to the EU to develop and implement a strategy to advance visa liberalization for Kosovo and to promote EU accession as well as encourage the Government of Kosovo to redouble efforts to meet the criteria for integration.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JEFFREY M. HOVENIER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Kosovo was identified as Tier 2 due to lack of prosecutions, implementing an anti-trafficking framework, and identifying victims.

- How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will actively engage Kosovo authorities and civil society to address human trafficking issues. I will encourage the Government of Kosovo to: vigorously investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including complicit officials, and impose strong sentences; provide adequate and consistent funding for NGO-run shelters; designate specific prosecutors and judges to handle trafficking cases; and provide advanced training to judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement on trafficking investigations and prosecutions to ensure appropriate sentences for convicted traffickers. I will also encourage the Government to adopt a new Anti-trafficking National Strategy and Action Plan.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, religious freedom in Kosovo was identified as generally strained, compounded by the lack of legal framework provided under the Law of Religious Freedom. Despite this law's lofty goal of religious tolerance and freedom, it has prohibited some religious minorities from obtaining legal status and therefore, buying property, open bank accounts, access courts, and more.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador-at-Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Kosovo's constitution commits it to the principles of freedom of worship and religious pluralism. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to advance religious freedom in Kosovo through working with the Ambassador-at-Large, the Government of Kosovo, civil society organizations, and religious communities to enact a revised Law on Religious Freedom. Likewise, I will press the Government to uphold the rule of law and court decisions respecting the protected status of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) with particular focus on the Special Protective Zones around Church heritage sites. I will call on Kosovo authorities to implement court decisions directing the registration of property to the Decani monastery.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Kosovo was identified as having significant human rights issues like undue restrictions on the press, including violence against journalists, significant government corruption, and attacks against minorities.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* If confirmed I will continue to press the Government of Kosovo to address human rights challenges by improving relations between Kosovo's ethnic commu-

nities. I will also press the Government to ensure that authorities thoroughly investigate instances of violence and harassment against journalists and members of minority communities. My priority would be to reduce and prevent actions that harm relations between ethnic groups and contribute to cross-border tensions. Kosovo needs to do more to implement the laws it has in place, and to hold officials to account when they fail to do so.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Embassy to continue actively engaging with Kosovo civil society to address a variety of human rights issues, to identify new civil society partners and amplify civil society voices, and to work in helping to shape Kosovo as a multiethnic and democratic society that reflects and values human rights for all. I will use the tools at our disposal, including U.S. assistance, to bolster the capacity, skills, and reach of civil society organizations.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years due to COVID. Press reports in February indicated that Embassy Pristina sent a cable detailing extremely poor conditions at post, including long hours, an increase in staff mental health issues, and a rise in interpersonal conflicts, all while dealing with the threat of COVID among staff.

- What is your understanding of current morale throughout Mission Kosovo?

*Answer.* Kosovo was hard hit by the pandemic and registered the world's highest per capita death rate in August 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic, as well as movement restrictions and strain on Kosovo's healthcare system, presented new challenges for the Embassy. My understanding is that Embassy morale has improved considerably in recent months, particularly since vaccines were administered, and that on October 6 the Mission established its workforce posture as "least restrictive" under the Department of State's COVID-19 Mitigation Process. If confirmed, I will continually seek ways to promote good morale at post.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Kosovo?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission and senior leadership team to continue promoting an atmosphere that nurtures healthy living and work-life balance and strengthens the community. Additionally, I will foster an environment in which our staff have sufficient resources and training and are empowered to do their jobs. I will encourage them to bring serious issues to the highest level. I will ensure that everyone in the mission understands that my highest priority is the safety and security of the team and their dependents, and I will promote training and professional development and ensure that all staff members are aware of the employee and family support resources that the USG offers to assist employees.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Kosovo?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to establish a strong team with a clear understanding of our goals and objectives, maintain open and transparent communications throughout the mission by sharing information, empower staff to fulfill their missions and potential, and seek ways to support and ensure the safety and community of the mission the community—for both American and local staff.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* My management style is to establish a vision and set clear priorities, ensuring that all team members have the training and resources needed to accomplish their tasks and achieve their goals, and to then delegate to members of the team while establishing mechanisms to ensure accountability.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No. While it is important for a leader to provide clear and candid feedback, that feedback should never take the form of berating a subordinate, either in public or private. I am committed to treating all members of any team I lead, or am a member of, with professionalism and respect.

*Question.* What lessons did you learn from your tenure as DCM in Mission Turkey?

*Answer.* I learned the importance of establishing a whole-of-mission and whole-of-government ethos. It is important that colleagues from other agencies can be con-

fidant that the Chief of Mission and Deputy Chief of Mission share their priorities just as they share Department of State priorities. Likewise, I learned the importance of frequent communication with the team and with Mission dependents, particularly in times of crisis and stress. Finally, while this was not a new lesson, I saw the importance of ensuring that my highest priority as a senior leader of a large Mission must be the safety and welfare of the entire Mission, including dependents; it is critical that this point be explicitly stated by the Chief of Mission and DCM and that it is backed up by actions.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* To be successful, the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) must be the Chief of Mission's final/principal advisor, alter ego, and partner in managing and leading the mission. If confirmed, I fully expect to have that kind of relationship with my DCM in Pristina.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will entrust my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) to manage the day-to-day operations of the Mission, and to be fully engaged on and informed about all aspects of policy and Mission management, should the DCM need to step in to lead. The DCM will also be responsible for the professional development of Mission personnel, and join me in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

*Question.* How should the chief of mission lead a post with many U.S. Government agencies present?

*Answer.* The Chief of Mission should establish a whole-of-government and whole-of-mission ethos and foster a team atmosphere. She/he should understand and provide support to the priorities of each U.S. Government agency present in the Mission and ensure that U.S. Government agency heads participate in Country Team and relevant Mission functional meetings and discussions, with frequent direct engagement with the Chief of Mission and Deputy Chief of Mission. The Chief of Mission should also ensure that each U.S. Government agency provides input in establishing the Mission's strategic goals and objectives and understands its role in advancing them. If confirmed, I will work closely with each U.S. Government agency.

*Question.* In your experience, how important are interagency relationships within a post?

*Answer.* Strong interagency relationships are essential to forging a common understanding of the mission's vision and goals. Collegial and productive relationships and information sharing are especially crucial during times of crisis.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you handle interagency disagreement within Mission Kosovo?

*Answer.* Strong interagency relationships are vitally important to the smooth functioning of a mission. Disagreements with process and policy are normal, and I welcome an open exchange of ideas. I will consider all viewpoints before taking final decisions and work with my team to arrive at common understandings.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe it is critical to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances, as well as to collaborate with them on planning and developing performance metrics for the coming year. This encourages improvement and rewards success while building a stronger team. If confirmed, I will hold accountable those who have performance or conduct issues. This is what I have done throughout my career.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers. I will hold accountable those who have performance or conduct issues.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* In my experience, U.S. diplomats have gotten outside of our Embassy walls sufficiently to accomplish our mission, and if confirmed I will model the importance of getting outside of our Embassy. Access to, and engagement with, local contacts and the public is an important part of our work overseas. Throughout my career, I have participated in public outreach to all parts of society—from students to non-governmental organizations to the media—and will continue to do so.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage Embassy staff to spend time engaging with local populations and developing contacts. I will also lead by example to demonstrate to my team that it is important to engage with our local counterparts and to participate in public outreach to provide information about our goals in the country and to learn from our hosts about local conditions.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Kosovo?

*Answer.* Kosovo has the youngest population in Europe, with approximately half of its two million residents under the age of 25 and 70 percent younger than 35. While the United States remains immensely popular in Kosovo, young people who grew up after the Balkans conflict, while appreciative of American culture, often look to the EU, not the U.S., for higher education and work opportunities. Public Diplomacy efforts in Kosovo target three primary audiences: established influencers and opinion leaders, emerging decision makers, and youth. Kosovo has a vibrant and crowded media sector, although the financial sustainability of outlets often leaves them vulnerable to political and external pressures.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* The United States is immensely popular among Kosovans, and the media environment is vibrant in the Albanian language sector, with a healthy spectrum of differing views and information vital to any democracy. However, minority populations, such as Kosovo Serbs, do not have the same access to an array of Serbian language media due to language barriers, and, as a result, remain vulnerable to Russian disinformation, especially through Serbian-controlled outlets. Along with educational and economic prosperity focused programs, I will continue Public Diplomacy projects that support Kosovo-Serb and other minority communities, with the objective of enabling access to differing views and ideas.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will focus on closely coordinating the efforts of Washington- and Pristina-based public diplomacy teams and support the strategic planning processes, such as the Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan, to ensure programmatic and message coordination between Post and Washington. I will ensure there is a unified approach to highlighting key messages and U.S. policies in Kosovo, and coordinate messages and information initiatives accordingly. The small size of the Kosovan media market and the great public interest in the U.S.-Kosovo relationship enable the mission to take advantage of the local traditional and social media platforms.

*Question.* Do you believe that the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is fulfilling its mandate? Please explain your answer.

- Do you believe that UNMIK's mandate of "promoting security, stability, and respect for human rights" is efficient in the current political-social climate in Kosovo?

*Answer.* The U.N. Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has long since fulfilled its original purpose and is no longer relevant. UNMIK continues to operate with a diminished role since Kosovo declared independence in 2008. We continue to urge the U.N. Security Council to consider better ways to help Kosovo realize its full potential. Russia, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, supports Serbian efforts to maintain UNMIK with its current mandate and staffing.

*Question.* UNMIK has an approved budget of \$44,192,100 for 353 total personnel, including civilians, experts, police, and U.N. volunteers. What are U.S. contributions to UNMIK?

*Answer.* The United States is assessed at 27.89 percent of all Member States assessments, but the Department of State pays 25 percent due to a legislative cap. The U.S. share of that budget, capped at 25 percent, is \$11,048,025.

*Question.* Will you commit to working with Congress, along with the A/S for International Organizations, to effectively measure our contributions against the effectiveness of the UNMIK mandate?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress along with the A/S for International Organizations, to effectively measure our contributions against the effectiveness of the UNMIK mandate.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO JEFFREY M. HOVENIER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* The Helsinki Commission has expressed concern about the plight of Roma in Kosovo, who not only face the same discrimination faced elsewhere in Europe but were targeted as alleged Serbian collaborators.

- As Ambassador, how would you propose to find solutions for improved engagement with the Serbian community throughout Kosovo?

*Answer.* Kosovo's constitution affords Kosovo Serbs and other minorities extensive rights and protections, but Kosovo still has substantial work to do to ensure full implementation of the legal rights afforded to minorities and to ensure Kosovo Serbs feel they have a stake in their country's future. If confirmed, I will engage in active outreach to the Kosovo Serb community, seeking to include Kosovo Government and civil society officials in that outreach. I will also use U.S. assistance programs to focus on increasing constructive inter-ethnic cooperation, empowering all citizens to actively participate in government, ensuring equal access to services, and improving economic opportunities for minority citizens, particularly through youth.

*Question.* In your view, how would you pursue improved relations with other minority leaders, including from the Romani community, and advocate for the security of their communities and their integration in Kosovo society?

*Answer.* The Embassy has a strong record of engaging with minority communities and leaders across Kosovo, and, if confirmed, I will actively continue those efforts. Kosovo's legislative framework ensuring equal rights are afforded to members of minority groups is strong, but implementation is often weak. I will continue to encourage the Government of Kosovo to address human rights challenges within its borders and to uphold the rights of members of minority communities in line with Kosovo's constitution, laws, and international obligations. I will also call for Kosovo justice institutions to serve all citizens fairly, without prejudice, in accordance with the law, and to ensure that every resident has equal access to justice.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JEFFREY M. HOVENIER BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Kosovo has agreed to permit Afghan evacuees who fail to clear initial rounds of screening to be housed at Camp Bondsteel. This is a generous gesture by our ally in the midst of our strategic failure in Afghanistan. If confirmed, how will you work with the Government of Kosovo to ensure that Afghan evacuees do not become a burden or security risk to Kosovo?

*Answer.* Kosovo provided early and generous support by agreeing to host up to 2,000 at-risk Afghans in need of further processing before relocation to the United States. The decision to house Afghan refugees at Camp Bondsteel, at U.S. Government expense, minimizes the burden to Kosovo. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Kosovo Government in implementing the terms of our legal agreement.

*Question.* What will become of Afghan evacuees that do not clear their initial screenings within the one year time frame Kosovo will permit the evacuees?

*Answer.* An interagency team is working on the ground with the goal of clearing all Afghan evacuees at Camp Bondsteel for onward travel to the United States. Two plane loads of individuals and their accompanying family members have already

successfully cleared and departed Kosovo. U.S.-affiliated Afghans who clear screening will be relocated to the United States as they clear. The United States will work with IOM and UNHCR to relocate to safe and willing third countries any individuals who do not clear screening processes before the one-year period elapses.

*Question.* If confirmed, what procedures will you put in place to ensure constant and careful communication with the Government of Kosovo regarding all Afghan evacuees?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's close coordination with the Government of Kosovo, including with the highest levels of the Government of Kosovo, regarding Afghan evacuees in the country under U.S. auspices. The generous arrangements provided by the Government of Kosovo are clear evidence of the pre-existing close communication between Kosovo officials and Embassy staff. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize and enable close coordination between the Embassy and the Government of Kosovo on the political, consular, security, medical, and humanitarian aspects of this endeavor.

*Question.* Last week we saw that NATO had to increase patrols on the Kosovo/Serbian border due a dispute over vehicle registration. While this is just one issue of many it hints at the continued strain between the two neighbors. What is your assessment of Serbian/Kosovo relations?

*Answer.* Serbia/Kosovo relations remain strained and complex. Serbia remains unwilling to acknowledge the reality that Kosovo is an independent state; Kosovo maintains a deep distrust of Serbian motivations and intentions. Both sides have taken actions that have jeopardized the prospects of normalization of relations, which should be centered on mutual recognition. The recent agreement on license plate issues brokered by the EU with strong U.S. support demonstrates that when leaders in the region engage openly and constructively, they can find common ground benefitting all citizens. The United State considers the EU-facilitated Dialogue the best platform to resolve outstanding issues and to normalize relations centered on mutual recognition.

*Question.* Do you see the current dispute escalating into anything further?

*Answer.* Conditions at the border crossings are calm and traffic is flowing both ways smoothly. I understand that NATO KFOR troops' presence at the affected border crossings is temporary and limited to approximately two weeks.

*Question.* How long do you see the NATO mission in Kosovo lasting?

*Answer.* NATO's current presence in Kosovo provides strategic stability in the region and reduces tensions between Kosovo and Serbia. If confirmed, I will, together with senior USG officials, continue our robust support to the EU's efforts to achieve progress in the Dialogue it facilitates between Kosovo and Serbia. We see progress towards a comprehensive, verifiable normalization agreement as a precondition to any NATO departure.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL J. MURPHY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Bosnia was ranked 111th on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2020, a decrease of seven points since 2012. What can the United States and its European allies do to help Bosnia and Herzegovina tackle corruption? How will you advance efforts to tackle corruption as ambassador?

*Answer.* The administration has made clear that by countering corruption and demonstrating the advantages of transparent and accountable governance, we can secure a critical advantage for the United States and other democracies. If confirmed, I will work with our international and local partners to advocate for key anticorruption, election integrity, and rule of law reforms. I will also continue to leverage U.S. assistance programs to increase government transparency, strengthen civil society, support investigative journalism, and promote the effective investigation and prosecution of corruption. Finally, I will recommend use of U.S. sanctions tools, as appropriate, to advance these priorities.

*Question.* Bosnia and Herzegovina will hold general elections in October 2020. The High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Christian Schmidt, recently said that he supports electoral reform in advance of the elections. What reforms do you believe need to be prioritized? Should they be electoral or constitutional? How will you work with the High Representative, and counterparts in the Bosnian Govern-

ment, to enact these reforms? How do you assess these reforms' likelihood of being adopted?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize limited constitutional reform as well as election law and election integrity reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). These reforms are necessary for BiH's integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions and to strengthen BiH's electoral processes. The United States remains steadfast in its support of the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in BiH, and if confirmed, I will closely collaborate with High Representative Schmidt as well as U.S. allies and partners to promote BiH's stability and functionality. The United States welcomes OHR's focus on fulfillment of the 5+2 Agenda, as the agreed upon conditions for OHR closure.

*Question.* The Republika Srpska parliament passed a law in July on the "non-implementation" of the High Representative's decision banning genocide denial. The law would send those who call the Republika Srpska "genocidal" to jail. How can the United States work to increase tolerance in Bosnian society, while also addressing important legacy issues?

Answer. The United States does not condone efforts to deny historical facts with respect to crimes committed in the 1992–1995 conflict, including the genocide in Srebrenica. A fact-based approach with respect to the past is essential to advancing reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If confirmed, I will continue to promote transitional justice and reconciliation efforts and support local actors who work to promote human rights and mutual respect. I will engage with younger generations to ensure a more tolerant, equitable, and prosperous future for BiH.

*Question.* In 2019, the EU identified fourteen priorities for Bosnia and Herzegovina to address relating to democracy, rule of law, fundamental rights, and public administration. Bosnia and Herzegovina established the Commission for Cooperation in NATO to help facilitate its Reform Program for 2021–2022. How do you assess progress made by Bosnia since the 2019 priorities were identified? How will you engage with the Bosnian Government on its Reform Program?

Answer. The United States fully supports Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH) integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. The reforms outlined in the EU's 14 priorities and in BiH's Reform Program with NATO are necessary for BiH to progress towards membership in both institutions. While there has been some progress, there is much work to be done. If confirmed, I will work with BiH's leaders and the United States' international partners to advance the reforms outlined in the EU's 14 priorities and BiH's Reform Program with NATO. Euro-Atlantic integration is the surest path to the democratic, prosperous, and secure future that all of BiH's citizens seek and deserve.

*Question.* The mandates for the EU and NATO missions in the Bosnia will be up for reauthorization at the U.N. Security Council in November. Russia has already expressed displeasure with the appointment of Christian Schmidt as High Representative and could potentially veto the reauthorization. How will you work to ensure these critical missions are reauthorized and what will you do in the event of a Russian veto?

Answer. The United States firmly supports EUFOR's Operation ALTHEA and NATO's presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). EUFOR plays an important role in maintaining security and stability in BiH. NATO's presence is equally vital. Instability in BiH is not in the interest of any part of the international community, including Russia. If confirmed, I will support the continuation of these important missions.

*Question.* Having previously served in Bosnia and Herzegovina, you are quite familiar with the region's political dynamics. Are there any significant changes in the Balkans' political dynamics compared to when you were last posted to Sarajevo? How has Bosnia and Herzegovina's relations with its neighbors, Serbia and Croatia, changed over the past decade?

Answer. The Western Balkans has made significant strides since 2009 when I departed Sarajevo. Croatia joined the EU; Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, and North Macedonia joined NATO; and Greece and North Macedonia reached the historic Prespa Agreement. The U.S. has good relations with Croatia and Serbia. Their commitment to BiH's sovereignty and territorial integrity is essential to the entire region's stability and security. The biggest change since 2009 is that Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) play a more prominent and negative role in BiH and the Balkans. If confirmed, I will work to counter efforts by local and outside

actors, especially Russia and the PRC, that threaten our interests and undermine BiH's future.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL J. MURPHY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, Bosnia was upgraded to Tier 2 due to overall increasing efforts to meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- How will you work with the Bosnian Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has made commendable progress combating trafficking in persons; therefore, BiH was upgraded to Tier 2 in the 2021 TIP Report. Nonetheless, there is more work to be done. If confirmed, I will press for more vigorous investigations, prosecutions, and convictions for this crime. I will urge local officials to increase resources, personnel, and training for law enforcement to investigate these crimes and institute screening procedures to identify trafficking victims within migrant flows. I will encourage BiH officials to standardize victim assistance throughout the country, and I will continue to support assistance for prosecutors and judges so that they focus on the needs of victims and understand the severity of trafficking when seeking and issuing sentences.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, the need for respect of religious freedom was underscored by the U.S. Embassy as well as between religious minorities and government officials. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador-at-Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to promote universal respect for freedom of religion and belief in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and ensure that the embassy and its branch offices recommend, develop, and implement policies to address any religiously-motivated abuses, harassment, and discrimination. Finally, if confirmed, I will continue to promote inter-religious dialogue and protections for religious minorities in BiH as well as encourage the country's religious communities to support reconciliation in BiH.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Bosnia was identified as having significant human rights issues, including a lack of independence of the judiciary, restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, violence against journalists, corruption, and more. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will privately and publicly raise U.S. concerns about violence against journalists, corruption, and other human rights issues. I will work with governmental and non-governmental partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to improve legal protections throughout BiH for free expression and public gatherings. I will continue assistance programs with local, cantonal, entity, and state-level administrative, investigative, and justice officials to improve anti-corruption coordination and promote public accountability and transparency. Finally, if confirmed, I will continue to push for adoption and implementation of legislative reforms to improve judicial independence.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and advocate, privately and publicly, to advance human rights issues of concern in BiH. I will continue to support U.S. assistance programs and public engagement opportunities to increase the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, and work, on human rights issues.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize the well-being of my staff and listen to concerns they may have about the operating environment in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar, and where I have the authority and resources, I will work to put in place measures to address them.



*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission BiH?

Answer. If confirmed, I want Americans and local staff under my leadership to feel heard, respected, and engaged; and I plan to set the tone by my example. I will maintain open and regular communication with the Employee Association, Community Liaison Office, and Locally Employed Staff Committee to discuss issues of concern at mission Sarajevo, including its branch offices in Banja Luka and Mostar. Where I have the authority and resources, I will work to put in place measures to address them.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission BiH?

Answer. If confirmed, I will communicate clearly and regularly to all mission personnel U.S. foreign policy objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). I will empower American Direct hire employees from across the interagency and the mission's exceptional local staff to advance these objectives as well as to build and sustain the management platform required to support this work. If confirmed, I will expect collaboration across the mission, including Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Mostar, and among all U.S. agencies present in BiH. I will expect members of the mission to pro-actively share information with one another.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I encourage clear, direct and open communication with me about policy, management and other issues. I believe strongly in empowering my team to advance foreign policy and management priorities, and I encourage my team to think creatively, pro-actively and "outside the box" to address challenges and resolve problems. I encourage team members to present their perspectives when discussing policy options, but to respect and execute decisions once they are made. I value diversity of perspectives, honesty, and, above all, integrity.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No, I do not believe it is acceptable nor constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private. Mutual respect in the work place is essential for building the cohesive team required to achieve U.S. policy goals.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure as a DAS in EUR?

Answer. My more than three years as Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) have underscored the importance of: 1) clearly defining strategic objectives and priorities; 2) empowering subordinates to accomplish organizational objectives; 3) forging strong, collaborative interagency relationships to develop and implement policy; and 4) devoting time and energy to recruiting, hiring, and developing a diverse staff. In addition, I have learned that integrity is the most important leadership and management value a leader can possess and must safeguard.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. I have great respect for the current Deputy Chief of Mission, Deborah Mennuti, with whom I have worked previously. If I am confirmed, I anticipate and look forward to a positive and productive working relationship with her.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will entrust the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) with day-to-day responsibility for mission operations. I will also expect the DCM to be fully engaged with, and informed on, all aspects of policy, so that the DCM is prepared to step into the role of Charge d'Affaires, when necessary, and ensure continuity of operations.

*Question.* How should the chief of mission lead a post with many U.S. Government agencies present?

Answer. As in Washington, interagency communication and coordination at an overseas mission is critical to effective policy development and implementation. If confirmed, I will work to facilitate unity of purpose and vision as well as operational coordination among all agencies at post. I will build strong relationships with each member of the country team, who I will also expect to work cordially and collaboratively with one another. If confirmed, I will also tackle any difficult issues and challenges that may emerge within country team.

*Question.* In your experience, how important are interagency relationships within a post?

*Answer.* In my experience, strong interagency relationships are essential to effective policy development and implementation. If confirmed, I will expect members of my country team to work cooperatively and collaboratively to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you handle interagency disagreement within Mission BiH?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will expect members of my country team to work cooperatively and collaboratively to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I will make use of internal interagency working groups and other fora to develop policy and ensure effective coordination of its implementation. If confirmed, I will encourage team members to present their perspectives when discussing policy options, but to respect and execute decisions once they are taken. If confirmed, I will also tackle any difficult issues and challenges that may emerge within country team.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking. Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that accurate, constructive feedback on performance is necessary to both encourage improvement and reward officers who excel in the performance of their duties.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will encourage all supervisors to provide clear and direct feedback to subordinates to improve performance and reward high achievers.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens. In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* Each overseas operating environment is unique. In my experience, U.S. diplomats excel at building the relationships necessary to advance U.S. foreign policy. During the more than 18 months in which physical outreach has been limited by the global pandemic, our missions in Europe, including Sarajevo, have used technology and other creative means to build and nurture the relationships crucial to advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I will ensure that the mission in Sarajevo and its branch offices in Banja Luka and Mostar actively engage with a full range of outside contacts to advance U.S. interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to support the continued expansion of U.S. engagement across all populations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Whether meeting with politicians, engaging young people on social media, or hosting civil society leaders, U.S. diplomats are always seeking new tools and avenues to advance U.S. interests. I will support my team in continuing to develop new connections in BiH.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in BiH? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is fertile ground for Public Diplomacy (PD) programs, and these programs are critical to advancing our foreign policy objectives in BiH. Students and professionals alike are eager to participate in our exchange programs, and the Public Diplomacy Section has a grants program that supports democracy, economic reform, and reconciliation. As with many other missions, our public diplomacy work is limited by the finite nature of our staffing and budgets. If confirmed, I will strongly support the work of the PD section and leverage public diplomacy resources to advance U.S. policy in BiH.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. U.S. foreign policy and national security goals are the same, whether in Washington or in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). If confirmed, I will ensure my public diplomacy team coordinates closely with Washington, develops a clear message regarding U.S. policy, and communicates it to all intended audiences in BiH, and that Washington does the same with U.S.-based audiences.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MICHAEL J. MURPHY BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* As you noted in your testimony, U.S. support to Bosnia and Herzegovina is critical to maintaining peace in the Balkans and moving the country towards a better future. How will you work with key members of the international community to push reforms that cement support for individual human rights, and bring Bosnia into compliance with the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights Court regarding Sejdic and Finci vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Answer. The United States welcomes efforts by Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH) leaders to increase the integrity and transparency of BiH's democratic processes and advance BiH on its Euro-Atlantic path. If confirmed, I will work with local political and civic leaders and key European partners, including the European Union, to encourage reforms that address decisions of BiH's Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights. If confirmed, I will also support efforts to ensure BiH's electoral system meets international recommendations for electoral integrity, including those made by the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

*Question.* China and Russia are working to increase their malign influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina daily. As you noted, they aim to keep the country in a state of paralysis to ease their ability to influence local actors. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided another opportunity for China and Russia to play politics with people's lives. In June, President Biden committed 500,000 Pfizer vaccines to Bosnia and Herzegovina based on extremely low availability in-country, and a continued spread of the virus. This commitment is critical in our global fight against COVID-19 in low- and middle-income nations, and reinforces our deep ties with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. When will the administration deliver on this now months-long commitment, and will you continue to advocate for support if the county continues to lag compared to its neighbors in vaccine availability?

Answer. Bosnia and Herzegovina suffers from serious healthcare deficiencies across all levels of healthcare administration, which delayed and inhibited government response to COVID-19. If confirmed, I will work with local actors and international partners to support BiH efforts to combat COVID-19 and move out of the pandemic. If confirmed, I will also remain committed to coordinating within the administration to expedite delivery of any currently planned, or future, vaccine donations to BiH.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL J. MURPHY BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The fragile stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina is threatened by growing Russian and Chinese manipulation in the country. China has over \$2 billion in infrastructure projects in the country, most of it in opaque and likely corrupt deals. Russia is allied with leaders in Republika Srpska that are calling for secession from the country and challenging the legitimacy of the country's institutions. If confirmed, how will you confront Russian and Chinese manipulation and influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Answer. Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) have very different visions than the United States for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The United States believes that our interests, and the interests of BiH, are best served by building a common democratic and prosperous future for all BiH citizens based upon reconciliation, good governance, economic reform, and rule of law. Euro-Atlantic integration is the surest path to this future. If confirmed, I will continue a whole-of-government approach that leverages the full range of U.S. Government capabilities in supporting BiH on this path as well as to counter efforts by local and outside actors, especially Russia and the PRC, that threaten our interests and BiH's future.

*Question.* How can the United States engage more with Republika Srpska and other sub-national states in support of the Dayton Agreement?

*Answer.* The United States remains fully committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both the Republika Srpska and the Federation entities are fundamental elements of the internal political organization of BiH, which is, and must remain, one country. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with local political and civic leaders from across the country on a range of issues to advance full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and support the reforms necessary to build a common democratic and prosperous future for all citizens of BiH.

*Question.* How do you assess Chinese economic influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina? What investment sources can the United States promote in the country as an alternative to China's opaque and onerous terms?

*Answer.* Investment from the People's Republic of China (PRC) in BiH is growing and focuses on critical infrastructure such as telecommunications, energy, and transportation. The PRC's opaque business practices and lending mechanisms exploit corruption in BiH. If confirmed, I will continue to support economic and anti-corruption reforms that advance BiH's Euro-Atlantic integration and promote sustainable, transparent economic growth. If confirmed, I will also work with colleagues across the U.S. Government, the private sector, and the Western Balkans region to advance opportunities for U.S. businesses and investment consistent with the highest transparency, labor, digital, and green standards.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULISSA REYNOSO PANTALEON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Latin American Migration to Spain*

*Question.* Spain received the second largest number of asylum seekers in the European Union in 2020—at nearly 21 percent of the EU's total asylum applications. The top five nationalities included Venezuelan, Colombian, Honduran, Peruvian, and Nicaraguan. This year, conditions in Latin America have become more complex, with poverty and inequality on the rise, transnational criminal groups gaining strength, and dictatorships increasingly cracking down on populations in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Based on previous migration trends and an analysis of conditions in Latin America, it is a safe bet to assume that asylum applications from Latin Americans in Spain will continue to increase. If confirmed, how will you engage with Spain to align our humanitarian objectives in Latin America? How will you work to facilitate improved data sharing with Spain and an exchange of experiences on refugee and migration challenges?

*Answer.* Latin America remains a priority for Spain's foreign policy. The United States and Spain are in broad agreement about promoting democracy, the rule of law, and economic prosperity in Latin America. Spain is one of our key partners in providing development assistance in the region, which supports U.S. Government efforts to tackle root causes of migration. Spain is also strongly committed to addressing the needs of those affected by the Maduro regime-caused humanitarian crisis and is a leader in providing assistance to countries in the region hosting millions of Venezuelans and others who have fled their homelands. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities to coordinate with Spain on these efforts and work to expand existing cooperation.

*Spain and Venezuela*

*Question.* Last month, Spanish authorities arrested the Maduro regime's former intelligence chief, Hugo Carvajal, and I hope that he will soon be extradited to the United States to face charges related to his role in drug trafficking. However, I am concerned that Spain may be playing a risky game when it comes to the political situation in Venezuela, including the Sanchez Government's repeated outreach to senior members of the Maduro regime at the expense of similar contacts with Venezuela's Interim Government. What steps will you take to ensure better alignment between the United States and Spain when it comes to Venezuela, in particular on the key issues of supporting new presidential elections in Venezuela and advancing accountability for the Maduro regime's crimes against humanity?

*Answer.* The United States and Spain are largely aligned in seeking a democratic transition through free and fair elections in Venezuela. Both countries share an interest in ending the crisis caused by the Maduro regime. If confirmed, I will work

with Spain to support the Venezuelan people and hold the Maduro regime accountable.

*Spain, NATO & Afghanistan Evacuations*

*Question.* As a trusted member of NATO, Spain maintains troops in Iraq and stood with the United States and our allies in Afghanistan during the last two decades. In August, Spain evacuated over 2,200 of our Afghan partners and their families following the fall of Kabul. How do you assess Spain's efforts in Afghanistan? Please outline your priorities for our defense cooperation with Spain, including via NATO?

*Answer.* Since the evacuation of our Afghan partners began in August, Spain has been a trusted and indispensable partner in the effort to evacuate at-risk individuals and their families from Afghanistan. Spain is a committed NATO ally and will host the 2022 NATO Summit, in celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Spain's entry into NATO. If confirmed, I would seek to expand existing cooperation on shared objectives with Spain.

*Catalonia*

*Question.* Prime Minister Sanchez pardoned nine pro-independence leaders from Catalonia in June 2021. However, former Catalan President Carles Puigdemont was arrested in Sardinia a few weeks ago on a Spanish Supreme Court warrant. How does the Biden administration view the pro-independence movement in Catalonia? How will you approach these issues, if confirmed?

*Answer.* The United States supports a strong and united Spain.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULISSA REYNOSO PANTALEON BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Trafficking in Persons*

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Spain was identified as Tier 1 but it was noted that investigations, prosecutions, and convictions decreased.

- How will you work with the Spanish Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* During the COVID-19 pandemic, investigations, prosecutions, and convictions decreased worldwide. The isolation created by the pandemic also made it easier in some cases for traffickers to operate. We have a close working relationship with the Spanish on anti-trafficking. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Spanish Government, our international law enforcement colleagues, and civil society partners, to shine a spotlight on these cases, and to push for greater action at all levels to ensure prevention efforts are effective, those who engage in trafficking in persons are brought to justice, and survivors receive the holistic assistance they need.

*Question.* How can Spain be a model for other western European countries that are not Tier 1 but aspire to be?

*Answer.* This year, Rocio Mora Nieto, a Spanish national, was chosen as one of the Department's TIP heroes—thanks to her work, and her mother's work before her, shelters for women victims of trafficking have been established and there has been continued work with the Government to ensure survivors have access to key services. This kind of partnership between government and civil society organizations is a model for other countries. Spain's toll-free assistance number, holistic support services for survivors, and significant sentences that are sufficient to deter traffickers, are also examples for other countries to follow.

*International Religious Freedom*

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Spain was identified as having some issues of religious tolerance within various communities. Notably, there were a large number of religiously motivated hate crimes in 2020.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador-at-Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will incorporate these topics into the mission's broader efforts to promote interfaith tolerance and the safety of religious, racial, and ethnic minority communities in Spain and Andorra. I will encourage the Government at the national, state, regional, and local levels to take steps to improve protection for

religious minority communities, places of worship, and other culturally meaningful sites, incorporating experience and expertise of those communities. I will direct my Country Team to support encounters with and within minority communities that promote tolerance and respect for religious freedom, to include community projects and interfaith coalitions. Finally, I will empower local voices to speak out against hate crimes.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Spain was identified as having no reported incidents of significant human rights abuses during the reporting period.

- Despite this positive news, how will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to continue to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct my entire team to continue working closely with the Spanish Government and civil society to promote fundamental freedoms and protect the rights of women and girls; LGBTQI+ individuals; people with disabilities; ethnic, racial, and religious minorities; and other marginalized communities.

#### *Spain/Venezuela*

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of the extent of money laundering and corruption schemes in Spain involving Venezuelans who are both part of and connected to the Maduro regime.

*Answer.* The United States has shared with our Spanish partners information about a number of individuals and their relatives who reside in Spain and who benefitted from money laundering and corruption schemes in Venezuela, many of them with connections to the Maduro regime. The administration continues to share, in real time, intelligence and evidence about such cases, in the hopes that this information can be used for investment screening and can lead to law enforcement actions, including indictments and property seizures.

*[Additional Information—10/18/2021].* *The United States has shared with our Spanish partners information about a number of individuals and their relatives who reside in Spain and who benefitted from money laundering and corruption schemes in Venezuela, many of them with connections to the Maduro regime. If confirmed, I will prioritize efforts to share intelligence and evidence about such cases and encourage this information be used to support law enforcement actions, including indictments and property seizures. I will advocate for multilateral and bilateral pressure on Maduro, and all manners of accountability, and appropriate sanctions against Venezuelan officials credibly accused of corruption or human rights abuses.*

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021].* *While I am not currently responsible for this issue and not involved in current policy formulation or implementation, nor privy to classified information on the subject, it is my understanding from public reporting that the United States has shared with our Spanish partners information about a number of individuals, Venezuelan and Spanish, and their relatives who reside in Spain, who benefitted from money laundering and corruption schemes in Venezuela. Many of these money laundering and corruption schemes implicate individuals with connections to the Maduro regime. I also understand that there are ongoing efforts to share intelligence and evidence about such cases and if confirmed I will work to encourage this information be used to support law enforcement actions, including indictments and property seizures. I will also advocate with the Government of Spain for multilateral and bilateral pressure on Maduro to allow for free and fair elections, as well as all manners of accountability, and appropriate law enforcement actions and sanctions against Venezuelan officials credibly accused of corruption or human rights abuses.*

*Question.* In your view, does Spain share our objective of advancing a negotiated and peaceful solution to Venezuela's political, economic, and humanitarian crisis?

*Answer.* Yes. Spain shares our overarching goal to support a peaceful democratic transition in Venezuela, through free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections, and to help the Venezuelan people rebuild their lives and their country. If confirmed, I will look for ways to strengthen our coordination with Spain to ensure we are making progress on our shared objectives in Venezuela.

*Question.* On January 23, 2020, then-Minister of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda Jose Luis Abalos met with Maduro official Delcy Rodriguez for ninety minutes at the Barajas Airport in Madrid. Rodriguez has been sanctioned by the United

States and is barred from entering Spanish and European territory per EU sanctions.

- Do you agree that robust enforcement of EU sanctions by Spain is fundamental to achieve a negotiated and peaceful solution to Venezuela's political, economic, and humanitarian crisis?

Answer. I agree that robust enforcement of EU sanctions by Spain, and all EU members, is fundamental to a peaceful solution to the crisis in Venezuela. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Spanish Government to ensure we remain closely aligned on sanctions enforcement and that our actions are consistent with the message those sanctions are intended to send.

*Question.* Do you commit to pushing Spain to enforce those sanctions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will emphasize to Spanish officials, including together with EU representatives in Madrid, the importance of enforcing EU sanctions to promote accountability for those who engage in human rights abuses, corruption, and undermining democracy.

*Question.* In February 2020, the US imposed sanctions on Rosneft Trading SA for their role in facilitating Venezuelan oil exports. If confirmed, what would be your message to Spanish companies, such as Repsol, on their current activities in Venezuela?

Answer. If confirmed, I will highlight that our sanctions policy targets those who provide economic and material support to the Maduro regime. Our goal is a peaceful, stable, and democratic Venezuela through free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections. I will encourage Spanish companies operating in Venezuela to support efforts toward that goal.

*Question.* Please explain how the United States could work more closely with the European Union—and specifically Spain—to increase economic pressure on Maduro.

Answer. The United States should maintain multilateral pressure on the Maduro Government and its enablers, hold regime officials accountable for their illicit activities, implement appropriate sanctions against corrupt officials who undermine democracy or abuse human rights, and provide humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people. Because sanctions policy is within EU competency, I will work with Spain, as a key member state focused on Venezuela, to drive EU sanctions policy to put pressure on the Maduro Government to allow for free and fair elections.

*[Additional Information—10/18/2021].* Nicolas Maduro's repression, corruption, and mismanagement have created one of the worst humanitarian crises in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I will ensure we use every tool available to the United States to hold the Maduro Government accountable. The United States must maintain multilateral and bilateral pressure on the Maduro regime and its enablers, hold regime officials accountable for their illicit activities, implement appropriate sanctions against corrupt officials who undermine democracy or abuse human rights, and provide humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Venezuelan people. The United States and the EU agree that there must be a negotiated solution to the crisis precipitated by Maduro, and there must be free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections in Venezuela.

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021].* While I am not currently responsible for this issue and have not had access to policy formulation or implementation in this regard, it is my view that close, open diplomatic relations with both the European Union and Spain are key to bringing greater economic pressure on the Maduro regime to change its antidemocratic behavior and ongoing human rights abuses. Nicolas Maduro's repression, corruption, and mismanagement have created one of the worst humanitarian crises in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I will ensure we use every tool available to the United States to hold the Maduro Government accountable. In my view, these tools should include pursuit of criminal cases against regime actors where they have violated laws and concerted sanctions by the U.S., EU, and the U.N. against the regime and individuals in the regime. In my view, the United States must maintain concerted and coordinated multilateral and bilateral economic pressure on the Maduro regime and its enablers, including holding regime officials legally accountable for their illicit activities.

*Question.* Please explain your views on the effectiveness of activating Title III of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act. Under what conditions would you advise the President to suspend its activation?

Answer. I understand some provisions of the Helms-Burton Act have long been controversial, both with our international partners, and with some Americans who

seek compensation for the Cuban Government's confiscation of their property. If confirmed, I will support the administration in carefully considering the best ways to support U.S. nationals' claims.

*[Additional Information—10/18/2021]. Americans who seek compensation for the Cuban Government's illegal confiscation of their property should be supported in their efforts to get justice. If confirmed, as U.S. Ambassador to Spain, I would defer to the administration on Cuba policy, but as a principal I believe U.S. citizens should be protected from illegal seizure of property wherever that might be.*

*[Additional Information—10/28/2021]. While I am not currently responsible for the implementation of the Helms-Burton Act nor involved in policy deliberations about it, it is my view that the Act, properly understood and administered, can play a legitimate role in our foreign affairs policies in this area. I also understand the administration is carefully considering the best ways to support U.S. nationals' claims. If confirmed, I know this will be a challenging issue in my work with the Government of Spain and commit to defending the rights of U.S. persons and entities under the Act.*

#### *State Department Management*

*Question.* Mission Spain has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Spain?

*Answer.* While the pandemic has taken a toll on all of us, my understanding is that morale at Mission Spain is generally high. Mission Spain has a very experienced and motivated team of Americans from across the interagency and excellent local staff working at Mission Spain. The entire team showed enormous flexibility during the worst of the pandemic. Mission personnel are now enjoying fairly normal living and working conditions as Spain's infection rates have dropped and Spain's vaccination rate is now among the highest in the world.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Spain?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to continue the good work of our current leadership team, including the development of a plan to maintain some of the workplace flexibilities introduced because of the pandemic. I will reach out to members of the team at all levels, including local staff, contractors, and the family members of all the U.S. Government agencies represented at the Mission to learn about their concerns.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Spain?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Country Team and seek their input to update the Integrated Country Strategy. I will share our mission and vision widely and frequently to the entire team. I will create opportunities for frequent messaging and dialogue through events targeting the entire community, such as Town Halls, awards/promotion ceremonies, community events, and other forms of active outreach.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* My career is rooted in public service, and I have demonstrated an ability to work with colleagues of all backgrounds in a constructive manner. I regularly engage with members of my team and always seek to create a space for open dialogue and diversity of thought. If confirmed, I will work hard to foster an environment of respect as Mission Spain carries out important work on behalf of the American people. I believe in setting high standards and leading by example. Our employees are our most important asset. I am dedicated to professional development and helping employees grow and advance.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* My career in public service includes previously serving as an ambassador. If confirmed, I will ensure everyone on my team is treated professionally, their rights are respected, they are safe and secure, and they have the resources necessary to perform their jobs. My commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. I believe that all members of U.S. Mission Spain are one team working for the good of the U.S.-Spain and U.S.-Andorra relationships and the interests of the United States and the American people.



*Question.* What lessons did you learn from your tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay?

*Answer.* As U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay, I saw firsthand the importance of good communication and close coordination within the U.S. interagency. I learned to invest heavily in building and deepening our relationships both inside and outside the embassy. If confirmed, I will collaborate with my counterparts in the State Department, as well as other government agencies, to ensure Mission Spain successfully advances U.S. policies.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at the Mission and work closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission, as well as at our Consulate General in Barcelona and in our consular agencies around Spain to ensure the smoothest of processes and transitions.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission to advance U.S. priorities in Spain, including: protecting the safety and security of Americans, growing our economic relationship, and advancing shared political priorities. I expect to have a positive working relationship and to work together closely.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Madrid and our Consulate in Barcelona, including the Deputy Chief of Mission. I will consult closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission on a range of issues and value the institutional knowledge provided.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* Yes. In my experience with the Department, U.S. diplomats have done a remarkable job to get outside our embassy walls and advance U.S. objectives to accomplish our Mission by meeting local actors in diverse settings and environments. I will encourage the Embassy team to maximize opportunities to advance our interests with all sectors of the Spanish populace.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* U.S. diplomats in Spain face no restrictions on their movement or interactions with the local population. I will encourage them to take full advantage of this environment to advance our interests with all sectors of the Spanish populace.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Spain? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* Public diplomacy is a vital part of our mission. The Fulbright program in Spain is one of the largest in the world with hundreds of American and Spanish scholars and students benefiting every year. Spain also has over 140 different daily newspapers in circulation, and newswire EFE is one of the biggest media organizations in the world. These outlets are constantly seeking commentary and clarification from the U.S. Embassy. Other international players like Xinhua, Sputnik, and Russia Today also compete for influence in the Spanish media space, making media monitoring and skilled engagement to push back against disinformation even more important. Our digital engagement efforts are key to engaging Spain's current and future opinion leaders.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Unity of message is important in foreign policy, so when it comes to public messaging on policy issues, the Embassy should and does depend on guidance from Main State. However, it is up to the in-country team members to more robustly understand the local audiences and context, build key bilateral and multilateral partnerships, and effectively tailor Washington's messages for the local context. Embassy Madrid's public diplomacy team does that very well, and if I am confirmed, I'll make sure that we keep up that caliber of work.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULISSA REYNOSO PANTALEON BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*U.S. Citizen Detained in Spain*

*Question.* U.S. citizen and Virginia resident Victor John Stemberger has been incarcerated in Spain since July 2019 on drug trafficking charges. Mr. Stemberger and his family maintain that he knew nothing about the drugs and was in fact duped into acting as an unwitting courier for a West African cartel. The family has also noted that Mr. Stemberger suffered a medically-documented brain aneurysm in 2005 that greatly diminished his logic and decision-making abilities, for which a medical expert provided documentation at his trial. On July 30, 2020, a Spanish court found Mr. Stemberger guilty of drug smuggling and sentenced him to seven years in prison. The Spanish Supreme Court denied hearing his appeal on April 9, 2021. Given Mr. Stemberger's age (78) and prior health complications, as well as risks associated with COVID-19 for those over the age of 60, there is even greater urgency in having Mr. Stemberger return to the United States as soon as possible.

- My office has continued to push for his release with both U.S. federal agencies and Spanish authorities. If confirmed, what will you do as Ambassador to press for Mr. Stemberger's expedited and safe return to his family in Virginia?

*Answer.* There is no higher priority than the safety and welfare of U.S. citizens, and I know the U.S. Embassy in Madrid is tracking this case closely. If confirmed, I will urge Spain to consider all options in accordance with Spanish laws for letting Mr. Stemberger serve his sentence in his home in the United States. The embassy will continue providing support to him, his lawyers, and family members in their requests for appeals and release.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JULISSA REYNOSO PANTALEON BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Spain has close historical ties with countries throughout Latin America. Unfortunately, we have seen this relationship abused by the authoritarian regimes in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua. Leaders in these countries have reportedly hidden away some of their ill-gotten gains via the Spanish financial system to avoid U.S. sanctions. We have not seen Spanish leadership within the European Union to resolve these crises as we would have hoped. If confirmed, how would you engage with the Government of Spain to better coordinate in support of democracy, human rights, and transparency in Latin America?

*Answer.* The United States and Spain are in broad agreement about promoting democracy, the rule of law, and economic prosperity in Latin America. Spain actively influences debates in the EU on Latin America and has led international efforts to provide assistance to countries in the region, including by hosting the millions of Venezuelans who have fled the crisis caused by the Maduro regime, as well as Cubans and Nicaraguans who have fled those repressive regimes. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities to expand our coordination with Spain on these efforts.

*Question.* From your perspective, what is preventing greater U.S.-Spanish coordination on Latin American policies? Given both of our country's deep strategic interests in the region, what steps could be taken to jointly take actions to hold despotic leaders in Latin America accountable through sanctions, travel restrictions, or other actions?

*Answer.* Spanish officials assert that their policy objectives are the same as those of the United States, but they believe the best path to achieve economic and democratic reforms is through engagement and dialogue. Economic and commercial con-

cerns are an important element of Spanish relations with the region. The U.S.-Spain bilateral relationship is an important building block for increasing cooperation on Latin America, and if confirmed, I will seek to expand our coordination with Spain on these efforts.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Austria has so far remained committed to EU sanctions against Russia for its illegal annexation of Crimea. However, Austria has close economic and energy ties with Russia. How do you assess the Austrian Government's continued commitment to these sanctions? How will you engage the Government to ensure its continued commitment?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would continue to emphasize to the Austrian Government the importance of maintaining U.S.-EU unity on sanctions, emphasizing that any reduction of sanctions must be contingent on Russian actions—beginning with the withdrawal of its forces from eastern Ukraine, combined with the implementation of Russia's commitments under the Minsk agreements, and, finally, return of control of the Crimean peninsula to Ukraine.

*Question.* Chancellor Kurz recently hosted leaders from the Western Balkans, expressing that the EU would only be complete once all Western Balkan countries have joined the bloc. How will you work with Austrian partners to highlight the benefits of EU enlargement, including its potential to combat Chinese influence in Europe?

*Answer.* Austria supports U.S. goals for a stable, secure, and prosperous Western Balkans. Austria also supports the transformation of the Western Balkans into a zone of stability through the EU accession process. Steps toward accession advance our mutual interest in protecting democracy, stability, and the rule of law, while promoting prosperity and integration of the Western Balkans in transatlantic institutions. These steps and relationships would allow the aspirants to deal with the PRC from a position of strength.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, Austria was identified as Tier 1 but has room for improvement regarding convictions of more traffickers and remedying gaps in the referral process for potential victims.

- How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* Austria continues to take trafficking in persons issues seriously and has been a steadfast partner in coordinating on the issue with the United States. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Austrian authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Austrian Government. I will urge the Austrian Government to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report. Specifically, I will encourage the Government of Austria to increase efforts to identify victims among vulnerable groups, ensure all victims have access to services, and increase efforts to identify victims of labor trafficking.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Austria was identified as having community issues regarding religious freedom. The U.S. Embassy during the reporting period did good work on the ground to support programs to combat Anti-Semitism and promote religious dialogue.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador-at-Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Austria takes religious freedom seriously and respects the rights and freedoms of its population. Austria's constitution provides for freedom of religion; other laws and policies contribute to the generally free practice of religion in Austria. There are, unfortunately, increasing reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice, including an increase in anti-Semitic incidents in 2020. If confirmed, I look forward to working together with the Ambassador-at-Large, as well as the Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and

Combat Anti-Semitism, to bolster respect for the freedom of religion or belief and the rights of members of religious minority groups.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, significant human rights issues in Austria were identified as violence or threats of violence motivated by anti-Semitism.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* The Austrian Government is dedicated to fighting anti-Semitism and has been quick to condemn words and acts of anti-Semitism. The Government announced a strategy to combat anti-Semitism in January 2021. There was an increase in anti-Semitic incidents in 2020, including violence targeting Austria's Jewish community and online hate and incitement. If confirmed, I will publicly and privately reiterate to the Government the importance of this issue and identify areas where the United States can cooperate with the Government and with Austria's Jewish community to combat anti-Semitism, working in coordination with U.S. Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations to help us assess human rights issues, develop programs, and advocate for stronger policies and reforms. The U.S. Embassy in Vienna enjoys strong and longstanding relationships with civil society on human rights and democracy issues. Civil society has played an important role in promoting accountability of elected leaders, driving meaningful reform, supporting the rights of members of minority groups and access to justice for vulnerable communities, and strengthening independent media.?

*Question.* Mission Austria has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Austria?

*Answer.* Austria has enforced three strict national lockdowns. The American and local employees at Embassy Vienna have dealt with significant challenges posed by COVID-19. I am grateful for their service, despite the difficulties. If confirmed, I will prioritize meeting with and supporting Embassy employees, including the Deputy Chief of Mission, to understand the impact of the pandemic on the mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Austria?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure that we create an atmosphere in which our staff knows that they can bring serious issues to us and know that they are being heard at the highest level. I will do personal outreach to the staff when I arrive at Post and will ensure that everyone in the Mission understands that my highest priority is the safety and security of the team. If confirmed, I will promote training and professional development, and ensure that all staff members are aware of the employee and family support resources that the Department offers to assist employees.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Austria?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to establish a strong team with a clear understanding of our goals and objectives, maintain open and transparent communications throughout the Mission by sharing information, and seek ways to support and ensure the safety and community of the Mission the community—both American and local staff. I will treat the team with respect and professionalism and give them the tools they need to do their jobs. I believe that all members of U.S. Embassy Vienna are one team working for the good of the U.S.-Austria relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people, and, if confirmed, my goal will be to have everyone inspired to work in that direction.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I have a collaborative management style. I believe in sharing information and empowering my team, being open to ideas and suggestions from throughout the mission, and providing clear guidance and decisions as needed to lead. I regularly engage with members of my team and always seek to create a space for open dialogue and diversity of thought.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* As I understand it, the State Department continuously reviews its priorities, organization, and staffing relevant to the needs of each mission. If confirmed, my commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. If necessary, I would advocate for additional resources to carry out our mission.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Vienna and to schedule opportunities for regular coordination and planning of Embassy operations. I will also create opportunities for more informal meetings and events with members from across the Embassy community, so that I have a strong awareness of community concerns and the state of Embassy morale.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I do not believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I hope to establish a positive relationship where my Deputy Chief of Mission will be my trusted partner, confidante, and alter ego in managing and leading the Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to having a close working relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). The DCM must be fully engaged on and informed about all aspects of policy and Mission management should the Deputy need to step in to lead. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my DCM once I arrive in Vienna to collaboratively work through the best division of labor in managing the Mission.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would stress the importance of getting outside of our Embassy by example. Access to and engagement with local contacts and populations is an important part of our work overseas. If confirmed, I look forward to participating in public outreach to all parts of society, from students to non-governmental organizations to the media, and will encourage the diplomats of Embassy Vienna to do the same.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Austria? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* In Austria, as has happened everywhere, COVID has affected in-person public diplomacy programming. Recently announced new travel rules, once implemented, should help alleviate increased skepticism about the perceived imbalance between measures that make travel to the United States very restrictive for Austrians. U.S. public diplomacy programming supports Mission goals through student and scholarly exchanges; media engagement; educational outreach; speaker series; support for culture and the arts; and entrepreneurship, bilateral trade and investment ties. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with the Austrian public to increase dialogue about a range of issues and support for our policies.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Public Diplomacy Section to closely coordinate the efforts of Washington and Vienna-based public diplomacy professionals to ensure that there is a unified approach to highlighting the key U.S. messages

and policies in Austria and around the world. The Public Diplomacy Section engages on six different social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Flickr to deliver tailored messages on U.S. foreign policy priorities, promote Embassy activities and events, provide information on security, voting, and other topics to U.S. citizens, and communicate with the Austrian public.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

*Question.* As Ambassador to Austria, how would you respond to the September 23rd report in the Washington Post alleging that dozens of U.S. personnel, including diplomats, intelligence officials, and in some cases their children, have reported “Havana Syndrome” symptoms?

*Answer.* This is a sensitive ongoing investigation and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. It is also an issue I take very seriously. If I am confirmed, the safety and well-being of Embassy personnel and their families will be my highest priority. If I receive information about individuals being affected by these incidents, I will ensure that they get the immediate, prompt medical attention they deserve and need. I understand a major interagency effort currently is underway to investigate the cause of the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected. If confirmed, I will continue to urge investigation into the cause of the incidents and ways to prevent them.

*Question.* What additional steps would you take to ensure the safety of your staff?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a possible health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and, of course, to find the cause of what has been impacting these members of our Embassy team. I will also consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community. If confirmed, I will work with my team to review the current procedures and modify them in collaboration with Washington if necessary.

*Austria and EU Integration*

*Question.* Some supporters of increased EU integration have criticized Chancellor Kurz for opposing proposals for migrants and refugees to be resettled across the EU, as well as proposals for more EU fiscal integration, including financial assistance to member states in economic difficulty.

- How would you characterize the Kurz Government’s approach to the EU?

*Answer.* Austria is an active and committed member of the EU and regularly supports initiatives in the multilateral field, such as disarmament, strengthening human rights and the rights of minorities, and arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Austria has been a strong supporter of EU enlargement in the Western Balkans. However, within the EU, there is not always unanimity of position on every issue. If I am confirmed, I will continue to speak with officials in the Austrian Government about issues upon which we may differ but where we might be able to find some common ground.

*Question.* As the Ambassador nominee to Austria, do you believe that Kurz’s vision for the EU aligns with the Biden administration’s goals in Europe?

*Answer.* The President has emphasized the United States’ continued commitment to the goal of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. While former Chancellor Kurz stepped down from his position on October 11, 2021, I look forward to emphasizing this continued commitment with new Austrian Chancellor, Alexander Schallenberg.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Given its central location, Austria has long positioned itself as a builder of bridges between the east and the west. But I worry about Russia using that bridge for its own purposes. For instance, the Austrian firm OMV is one of the main companies financing the Nordstream 2 pipeline. Austria reportedly has worked to

block robust EU sanctions in Belarus to protect some of its banks that have interests there and throughout Eastern Europe. Austria was one of the few EU countries that did not expel Russian diplomats in response to the poisoning of Sergei Skripal by Russian intelligence. What is the current relationship between Austria and Russia?

*Answer.* The concept of neutrality has shaped Austria's relations since its adoption of a constitutional law in 1955, allowing it to host many Cold War-era U.S.-Russia meetings. Current attitudes toward Russia, including public support for U.S.-Russia talks on strategic stability and nuclear disarmament and calls for high-level EU-Russia dialogue, remain influenced by these events. Austria supports EU sanctions against Russia over the 2014 invasion of Ukraine, and the ongoing occupation of Crimea and conflict in Ukraine. Austria supported four rounds of EU sanctions related to Belarus. Austria has supported sanctions against Russia in response to the imprisonment of Alexei Navalny and the repression of peaceful protesters.

*Question.* What are Russia's interests in Austria?

*Answer.* Russians invested \$25.9 billion in Austria in 2020, and Russia is the country's second-largest foreign investor. Most recent investments have been in real estate and gas storage infrastructure. Austrian banks established a strong presence in the Russian financial sector after the fall of the Berlin Wall, but with many banks consolidating their Eastern European portfolios, only Raiffeisen Bank International (RBI) remains active in Russia. The Russian market accounted for almost one third of RBI's total profits in 2020 (\$858 million).

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you engage the Austrian Government to better respond to Russian actions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would continue to emphasize to the Austrian Government the importance of maintaining U.S.-EU unity on sanctions, emphasizing that any reduction of sanctions must be contingent on Russian actions—beginning with the withdrawal of its forces from eastern Ukraine, combined with the implementation of Russia's commitments under the Minsk agreements, and, finally, return of control of the Crimean peninsula to Ukraine.

---





## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021 (a.m.)

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:01 a.m., in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Merkley, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

Also Present: Senators Durbin and Hickenlooper.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider nominees for three important positions—Ambassadors to China, Japan, and Singapore. On the first panel, we will hear from Ambassador Nick Burns, to be Ambassador to China. I understand Senator Markey will introduce Ambassador Burns. So, I will turn to him at this time.

Senator Markey?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch.

It is my absolute honor and pleasure to introduce our nominee today, Nicholas Burns, nominated to be the Ambassador of the United States to the People's Republic of China.

Ambassador Burns is a cherished son of Massachusetts, a fellow Boston College alumnus, and a proud member of Red Sox Nation. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Burns' wife, Libby, who has joined us today.

Name a diplomatic flashpoint of the last four decades, and there is a good chance that Ambassador Burns was either a witness or an active participant. In his exemplary career as a member of the Foreign Service, he served four U.S. Presidents. Among his assignments, he spent 5 years at the National Security Council, first as Director of Soviet Affairs under President George H.W. Bush and later as Senior Director for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia Affairs under President Clinton.

In those roles, Ambassador Burns helped shepherd the United States through the collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of new relationships with the former Soviet bloc countries. In 1997, he was named U.S. Ambassador to Greece, where he helped to expand our bilateral defense relationship and counterterrorism.

In 2001, President George Bush selected him to serve as U.S. Ambassador to NATO. He took this post 1 month before the attacks of 9/11, just 1 month before 9/11, when the alliance invoked Article 5 for the first time in its history. He later served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, the highest-ranking Foreign Service officer in Foggy Bottom.

Ambassador Burns has established a deep understanding of the United States' relationship with China and has been a returning visitor to China for more than three decades. As a junior officer, he first accompanied Secretary George Shultz in 1988 and President Bush in 1989. He later accompanied Secretary Madeleine Albright to Hong Kong in June of 1997 for its handover from the United Kingdom to the People's Republic of China.

After his retirement from the Foreign Service, Ambassador Burns turned his attention to training the next generation of diplomats and security professionals at the Harvard Kennedy School. In short, there is no more qualified person than Ambassador Burns to serve in Beijing as our top diplomat.

I am confident that Ambassador Burns will seek to engage Beijing where we must on the existential issues of the climate crisis and nuclear nonproliferation, on curbing the flow of synthetic opioids to our shores, and bringing North Korea to the negotiating table. But I am equally confident that he will speak out forcefully against the Chinese Government's abuses in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and elsewhere.

In Ambassador Burns, the men and women of the Foreign Service will have no greater champion. He has the experience, the knowledge, and the leadership skills for this critical post in a difficult, but crucial time in our relationship with the People's Republic of China.

In a commencement speech at our alma mater, Boston College, in 2002, Ambassador Burns concluded in summing up the school's ethos. "It is the core belief that how we lead our lives should not be just about and for ourselves, but about what we all can do, in the poet Tennyson's words, 'to seek a newer world' here on Earth."

We are honored that you have again decided to take this opportunity, Ambassador Burns, to once again seek that newer world here on Earth.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman, and I urge the support of every committee member for this great Ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey, for that glowing introduction. We appreciate it. You are, of course, an important member of our committee. So, we look forward to you joining us on the regular dais when you are finished.

Ambassador Burns, welcome to you and your wife. You are an outstanding public servant. As a career Foreign Service officer, we are grateful to you and your family for your willingness to serve our country again.

As you know, if confirmed, you will have a monumental task before you. As I have said before, the China of 2021 is not the China of 1971 or even the China of 2011. China today is challenging the United States and destabilizing the international community across every dimension of power—political, diplomatic, economic, military, and even cultural—with an alternative and deeply disturbing model for global governance.

I truly believe that China today, led by the Communist Party and propelled by Xi Jinping's hypernationalism, is unlike any challenge we have faced as a nation before. For decades, we failed to comprehensively address China's growing reach, from its predatory economic behavior and aggressive efforts to coerce its neighbors in the maritime domain, its dangerous flexing of military muscle against Taiwan, to the crushing of the religious and cultural autonomy of Tibet, and its campaign of genocide against the Uyghur people, as well as the imposition of a chilling system of digital authoritarianism to suppress and oppress its own people. China today is more active and more emboldened than ever before.

There should be little doubt that the right basic framework for thinking about our relationship with China today is strategic competition. Not because that is necessarily what we want, but because of the choices Beijing is making. Therefore, if confirmed, you will need to be clear-eyed about Beijing's intentions and actions and play a key role in calibrating this administration's still-emerging policy and strategy regarding China.

This committee has engaged extensively on China over the last several months, including passing the Strategic Competition Act with overwhelming bipartisan support. Enacting the bill is one critical step in ensuring a solid framework for White House and State Department efforts to address the challenge posed by China.

I know you bring to this job a wealth of diplomatic experience and skill. So, we are very interested in hearing from you today about how you think of the challenge and the international—that the challenge that the international community faces from China and how you think we need to frame our strategy for success in this new era of strategic competition.

I look forward to hearing your testimony. Let me turn to the ranking member for his opening comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, like most members or many members of the committee, have known Nick for a long time. We first met in the early part of the last decade in Luxembourg when he was serving as the Ambassador to NATO.

It is, I think, appropriate that Ambassador Burns was appointed to this position, which really demands a bipartisan approach, and, I think, Congress, notwithstanding our other emaciations on other issues, has certainly been—has taken a bipartisan approach to the challenges that China has presented to us and that we will face over the rest of the century, I believe.

The position of Ambassador to China is one of the most important ambassadorial nominations we will consider in this committee.

The People's Republic of China is leveraging its political, diplomatic, economic, military, technological, and ideological power to wage strategic competition against the United States. Chinese Communist Party policies and actions threaten U.S. interests and values, as well as allies and partners, on just about every continent, but particularly in the Indo-Pacific.

While this challenge will persist for decades, the competition is here now, and we must act urgently. Advancing U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region must be our number-one foreign policy priority. If confirmed, Ambassador Burns, you will be on the front lines of this competition.

There are a few priorities that form the foundation of the bipartisan Strategic Competition Act, led by Senator Menendez and myself, which passed through this committee earlier this year. First, China's growing military might is dramatically shifting the regional balance of power in the Indo-Pacific in its favor. We need to counter China's conventional and nuclear build-up that threatens our interests and our allies.

Nowhere is China flexing this military might as much as it is in the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan's President Tsai is right. "If our Taiwan were to fall, the consequences would be catastrophic for regional peace and the democratic alliance system." It is imperative that we work actively to deter PRC's coercion and aggression towards Taiwan.

Another issue that is not discussed as often, but must be, is China's pursuit of life sciences research with potential for weaponization, causing concern about potential violations of the Biological Weapons Convention. I have introduced legislation, the Biological Weapons Policy Act, that would give our country team in China a larger role in ensuring that biological research cooperation with China does not put us or the world at risk.

Second, our diplomatic mission in China must be strengthened to address the economic and political facets of the competition at hand. That includes providing information to decision-makers in Washington on how the CCP seeks to exert undue political influence in our open society.

On the economic front, we must ensure our economic corps in Mission China is up to the task of dealing with new challenges. China is rolling out laws and regulations to punish companies for complying with U.S. law, including our sanctions laws. The Chinese Government is also stamping out all free market activity by asserting control over its financial institutions and its technology companies.

Another challenge where we need an active economic corps is addressing pressing supply chain vulnerabilities, especially in technology and healthcare. Of course, advancing human rights must continue to be a central priority in our China policy.

Ambassador Burns, you face a tough environment. China has said it will not work with us on anything until the United States gives into the demands of its two lists. You and I discussed those lists yesterday, and some day, I hope to be able to see those lists. How the Biden administration plans to deal with that is not clear.

In our diplomatic engagements, China has repeatedly shown a lack of interest in good faith discussions. Yet the administration

continues to assert that China can be a partner on a variety of issues, notably climate. On Taiwan, I applaud recent defense sales, but we have also seen a lot of unclear messaging, including recent allusions to a Taiwan agreement.

And despite China's massive and unconstrained nuclear build-up, the administration is considering, considering, a sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy that would put U.S. allies at immense risk and shake confidence in U.S. deterrence commitments. I know that our allies have communicated serious objections to the administration on this topic.

So, far, the administration is refusing to share those communications with Congress. This issue is even more important given China's test this past weekend of a fractional orbital bombardment system carrying a hypersonic glide vehicle. Such a system would allow the PRC to completely circumvent U.S. early warning capabilities and increase the vulnerability of the continental U.S. to a nuclear attack.

I look forward to hearing how you plan to address all of these challenges and to help us win this competition.

With that, I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

And with that, Ambassador, you are recognized. We ask you to summarize your statement in about 5 minutes or so. We will include your full statement for the record.

And with that, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF HON. R. NICHOLAS BURNS OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

Ambassador BURNS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thanks very much for the opportunity to be with you this morning.

I am very grateful to President Biden for this nomination to be the next United States Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

I owe profound thanks to my wife of 40 years, Libby, who is with me today, seated just behind me. Together, we have served the U.S. Government overseas in Mauritania, West Africa, in Egypt, in Israel, in Greece, and at NATO in Belgium. And both of us are grateful to our three daughters, our son-in-law, and our grandchildren.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to returning to public service and a State Department where I have spent the bulk of my professional career. I worked for administrations of both parties, and I would be honored to lead our team at the U.S. Mission in China. That team is on the front lines of this complicated and consequential relationship that we have with China.

I would like to explain our policy and the policy that I would like to support, if confirmed by the Senate. Secretary Tony Blinken said in March that the United States' relationship with the PRC is the biggest geopolitical test of the 21st century. We will compete and compete vigorously with the People's Republic where we should, in-

cluding on jobs and the economy, on critical infrastructure, on emerging technologies.

As President Biden has said, when the United States competes on a level playing field, there is no country on Earth that can match us. We will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest, including on climate change, counternarcotics, global health, and of course, on nonproliferation.

The world cannot solve the climate crisis without the PRC doing more to reduce their emissions. It is to our benefit to maintain engagements between our peoples as well, including students, scholars, diplomats, and journalists, so long as America's laws are respected.

Finally, and crucially, we will challenge Beijing where we must, including when it takes actions that run counter to American values and American interests, actions that might threaten the security of the United States or our allies and partners, or undermine the rules-based international order.

The PRC seeks to become the most powerful country economically, politically, and militarily in the Indo-Pacific. We have to stand with our allies and our friends to uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific, including by maintaining America's commercial and military superiority in 21st century technologies. We also have to hold the PRC accountable for failing to play by the rules on trade and investment, including its theft of intellectual property, use of state subsidies, dumping of goods, and unfair labor practices. These hurt American workers, and they hurt American businesses.

Beijing has been an aggressor against India along their long Himalayan border, against Vietnam, the Philippines, and others in the South China Sea, against Japan in the East China Sea, and Beijing has launched an intimidation campaign against Australia and, even more recently, Lithuania.

The PRC's genocide in Xinjiang, its abuses in Tibet, its smothering of Hong Kong's autonomy and freedoms, and its bullying of Taiwan are unjust and must stop. Beijing's recent actions against Taiwan are especially objectionable. The United States is right to continue its one China policy, but we are also right to support the peaceful resolution of disputes in this region and to oppose unilateral actions that undermine the status quo and undermine the stability of the region.

The administration and Congress, together on a bipartisan basis, should help Taiwan to maintain a self-defense capability, and that is the language of Taiwan Relations Act of 1979. The Biden administration as well is surely right to seek effective channels of communication with Beijing to manage this competition responsibly, to diminish the risk of an accidental conflict, and above all, to maintain the peace. The United States has to proceed from a position of strength and pursue intense diplomacy in all these matters.

Beijing proclaims that the East is rising, and the West is in decline. I am confident in our own country. I believe that, together with our allies and our partners, we can prove them wrong. This will require very close alignment here in Washington between Congress and the executive branch. The bipartisan Senate passage of the Innovation and Competition Act earlier this year is a very wise investment in America's future and our ability to compete.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, I say this, my final point. The People's Republic of China is not an Olympian power. It is a country of extraordinary strength, but it also has substantial weaknesses and challenges demographically, economically, politically.

We should have confidence in our strengths, American strengths. Confidence in our business community, in our innovation community, in our universities, in our ability to attract the best students from around the world, confidence in our unmatched military and our first-rate Foreign Service and civil service. Confidence in our values that stand in brilliant opposition to China's authoritarian regime.

We will succeed if we build this American strength around our diplomacy with the People's Republic of China. On that basis, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I am looking forward to working with you, the ranking member, and Republicans and Democrats on this committee. I have enjoyed my meetings over the last 3 weeks, and I hope together we can form an effective and strong policy towards China.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Burns follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. NICHOLAS BURNS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity.

I am grateful to President Biden for this nomination to be the next Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

I owe profound thanks to my wife, Libby, who is here with me today. Together, we have served the U.S. Government overseas in Mauritania, Egypt, Israel, Greece, and Belgium. I am also grateful for the support of our three daughters, our son-in-law, and our grandchildren.

If confirmed, I look forward to returning to public service and the State Department, where I have spent the bulk of my career in administrations of both parties. I would be honored to lead our team at the U.S. Mission in China, which is on the front lines of this complicated and consequential relationship.

As Secretary Blinken said in March, the United States' relationship with the People's Republic of China is "the biggest geopolitical test of the 21st century."

We will compete—and compete vigorously—with the PRC where we should, including on jobs and the economy, critical infrastructure, and emerging technologies. As President Biden has said, when the United States competes on a level playing field, "there's no country on Earth . . . that can match us."

We will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest, including on climate change, counter-narcotics, global health, and nonproliferation. The world cannot solve the climate crisis unless the PRC does more to reduce their emissions. And it is to our benefit to maintain engagement between our people, including students, scholars, diplomats, and journalists—so long as America's laws are respected.

Finally, and crucially, we will challenge the PRC where we must, including when Beijing takes actions that run counter to America's values and interests; threaten the security of the United States or our allies and partners; or undermine the rules-based international order.

The PRC seeks to become the most powerful military, economic, and political actor in the Indo-Pacific. We must stand with our allies and partners to uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific—including by maintaining America's commercial and military superiority in 21st century technologies.

We also must hold the PRC accountable for failing to play by the rules on trade and investment, including its thefts of intellectual property, use of state subsidies, dumping of goods, and unfair labor practices. These actions harm American workers and businesses.

Beijing has been an aggressor against India along their Himalayan border; against Vietnam, the Philippines, and others in the South China Sea; against Japan in the East China Sea; and has launched an intimidation campaign against Australia and Lithuania.

The PRC's genocide in Xinjiang and abuses in Tibet, its smothering of Hong Kong's autonomy and freedoms, and its bullying of Taiwan are unjust, and must stop.

Beijing's recent actions against Taiwan are especially objectionable. The United States is right to continue to adhere to its one-China policy. We are also right to support the peaceful resolution of disputes, and to oppose unilateral actions that undermine the status quo and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

The administration and Congress should help Taiwan "to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability," as the Taiwan Relations Act clearly states.

The Biden administration is right to seek effective channels of communication with Beijing to manage our competition responsibly, to diminish the risk of an accidental conflict and, above all, to maintain peace.

The United States must proceed from a position of strength and pursue intense diplomacy—with the People's Republic of China, and with our allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and around the world. Our alliances and partnerships are a unique comparative advantage for the United States.

As in all things, the United States will lead with our values—democracy and free expression, free press and free enterprise, support for human rights and human dignity. These are at the center of the Biden administration's foreign policy.

Beijing proclaims that the "East is Rising and the West is in Decline." I am confident in our country, and believe that, together with our allies and partners, we will prove them wrong.

That will require alignment in Washington. The bipartisan Senate passage of the Innovation and Competition Act earlier this year is a wise investment in America's future.

Finally, it is important to keep our rivalry with Beijing in perspective.

The PRC is not an Olympian power. While the PRC has many strengths, it also faces substantial demographic, economic, and political challenges.

We should have confidence in our own strengths—our scientific and technological capacities, world-class universities and research institutions, our military power, our first-rate diplomatic corps across both the Foreign Service and civil service, and, especially, our values that stand in brilliant opposition to Beijing's actions. We will succeed if we build our diplomacy around these strengths and remain optimistic about America's future.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the members of the Senate to pursue such a strategy that will protect and advance American interests in our relationship with the PRC.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.

We will start a round of 5 minutes. Before I start mine, let me ask some questions we ask for the committee as a whole. These are questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch that we expect and will be seeking from you. So, I ask you to provide just a simple "yes" or "no" answer to these questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff, when invited?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep the committee fully and currently informed about the activities that will be under your purview?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Ambassador BURNS. Yes.



The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Well, let me start off. First of all, I think your statement encompasses many of the sentiments, concerns, and questions that members of the committee have, and so it was very encompassing of many of the issues I think we care about. And together, we have to work to make sure that Xi Jinping is wrong. That the West is not setting, but it will continue to shine.

Now many experts emphasize the importance of U.S. collaboration and joint action with allies, partners, and multilateral organizations to address the challenges that China poses. However, collaboration can be harder in practice than in theory, particularly when countries have different views and competing interests.

In what specific areas can you speak to that collaboration has been helpful in addressing the challenges that China poses? And in what areas and with which country do you see particular opportunities or constraints?

Ambassador BURNS. Mr. Chairman, thank you. And I think this is the right question to ask about how we form a strategy that can be successful against the Chinese Government.

The comparative advantage that we have versus China is that we have treaty allies. We have partners who deeply believe in us, and the Chinese really do not. And so, in the Indo-Pacific, I think President Biden has tried to emphasize the need for us to be very closely aligned with Japan, with South Korea, with Australia, our treaty allies, our defense partners, the Philippines and Thailand.

As you know, and I think every administration since President Clinton has been working on this, we have a newfound security partner in India. That makes a great difference to have Indian-American interests aligned, as they clearly are, strategically in the Indo-Pacific. And President Biden, of course, has taken the QUAD idea—and I give credit to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for reinvigorating the QUAD in 2019 and 2020. But President Biden has held two head of government meetings of the QUAD, one virtual and one in person at the White House.

President Biden's initiative for AUKUS, to deepen our strategic engagement with our great ally Australia and our ally the United Kingdom, could be transformational and I think has been widely praised to be such in the Indo-Pacific. So, as we confront China, whether it is on the military balance of power in the Indo-Pacific, whether it is the fight that we have to convince China, push China to play by the rules on trade, we have a coincidence of use with Japan, the European Union, the European allies on all these issues, and I think the President has focused on the Indo-Pacific, but he is also focusing on the European allies.

And I have seen a change in the last 2 or 3 years in the attitudes of most European governments, now much more skeptical about China on 5G, on China's nefarious belt-and-road initiative influence in Eastern Europe. And so I do think this is a big part of the strategy that we need to continue to work on.

The CHAIRMAN. Now let me turn to Taiwan. Given increasing aggression and threatening rhetoric from Beijing, some have called for an end to the policy of strategic ambiguity with regard to Taiwan. How do you think the United States can most effectively signal our resolve and deter Chinese aggression towards Taiwan?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a central question these days, particularly after all the bullying and intimidation tactics of the Chinese towards Taiwan, the sending of 150 Chinese aircraft into the air identification zone of Taiwan just 10 days ago.

My own view—and fortunately, this is backed up, I think, by both the Biden administration's and every other administration going back four decades—is that we have enormous latitude—Congress and the executive branch—under the Taiwan Relations Act to deepen our security assistance to Taiwan.

The Taiwan Relations Act, written in January 1979, is remarkably modern for the strategic questions we are facing in 2021. It says that we have an unofficial relationship with Taiwan, obviously, but we have a responsibility to help Taiwan achieve a self-defense capability through the provision of defense articles and services. So, in the last—since 2009, the Obama and the Trump and the Biden administrations have provided about \$30 billion worth of assistance to Taiwan.

Given what China has done, given China's, frankly, objectionable statements towards Taiwan, I think the Congress and the executive branch have every right to continue to deepen our security cooperation, to expand our arms provisions to Taiwan. That is the most important thing we can do.

In addition to that, the Taiwan Relations Act also calls for the United States to provide the strongest possible deterrent in the Western Pacific, the language of 1979, or the Indian Ocean, as we would refer to it today. And in addition to that, as a third measure, we ought to be asking and we are asking our allies to show a real commitment to Taiwan. And we are seeing that from Japan and other allies.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we have got to be very clear about our criticism of China. And what the Chinese are trying to do to this very successful society on Taiwan, with its very healthy democracy, extraordinary performance in the coronavirus, is to simply intimidate them. And so we have all got to speak up and shine a light on those Chinese actions and Chinese rhetoric.

That is essentially the policy of the last 40 years. I think that policy is the right one and the smart one for today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let us pick up with Taiwan where you left off.

How do you differentiate what happened in Hong Kong with Taiwan? In reading and listening to the Chinese, it seems to me that Taiwan is even more of an irritant to them than Hong Kong was. Fortunately, Taiwan has got the sea between themselves and China, but I really fear that we are going to see the same kind of pushing the envelope in Taiwan that gets it to a point where there is a crisis. What are your views on it?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, you are right to ask that question. I share your concern.

As Senator Markey mentioned, I was State Department spokesperson. I accompanied Secretary Albright on June 30, 1997, to the handover from the UK to the PRC on Hong Kong. And all of us remember, but I particularly remember from our meeting with the

Chinese leadership that day the commitments they made to the people of Hong Kong and to the rest of us around the world. And the Chinese have gone back on every one of those commitments.

So, if we link that to Taiwan, we obviously cannot trust China to meet the commitments it has made on the Taiwan issue. When Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act, when administration after administration pursued a one China policy, we obviously did so on the presumption that there would be peace in the cross-strait relationship between Taiwan and China, and there is not much peace today. There is assertiveness and aggression.

So, I do not think we can—we certainly cannot trust the Chinese on this issue. We have to be aware of their rhetoric, aware of it. And the rhetoric of its leader and many other Chinese leaders in recent months has been that they intend to take back Taiwan.

Our responsibility is to make Taiwan a tough nut to crack, help it increase its asymmetric defenses through the Taiwan Relations Act. And other countries can do that as well. It is a central issue in the relationship now.

Senator RISCH. And I agree with that. The thing that I guess I am concerned about as much as anything, watching what they have been doing with their incursions into the air space reminds me a lot of Hong Kong. It is just pushing the envelope. It is a camel's nose in the tent, and it just gets worse and worse until it collapses. So, that is going to be something I think we are going to have to watch very closely.

Let us talk about China's nuclear build-up. Do you agree that they are pursuing a massive nuclear build-up in China?

Ambassador BURNS. It certainly appears so, both in the western part of China, where their IC—the reports of the ICBM expansion and also with this novel delivery system that has been publicized of late.

Senator RISCH. One thing that is very concerning to me and I think other members of this committee is that there is this discussion within the administration of a sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy, which is, in essence, no first use. It is another way of saying no first use, but it is not as direct. But it is the exact same thing.

I would hope you would become a spokesman within the administration about how damaging that that kind of a declaration would be, a sole purpose declaration. I am not sure if you are aware of this or not, but I can guarantee you that the allies, particularly the ones that are counting on us in the Indo-Pacific region, are very concerned about the declaration of sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy. What are your thoughts on that?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, I appreciated our conversation last evening about this in your office, and as I explained, I am a private citizen appearing before you as a nominee without access to the intelligence. I do not have a security clearance. So, I am very reluctant to speak specifically about the Nuclear Posture Review, which is underway.

But I do know that President Biden has indicated clearly that he is going to support the strongest possible and the safest American nuclear deterrent, as every President has done since President Harry Truman, and that is obviously an obligation to the American

people. I would also just add, Senator Risch—we also talked about this last week—I think the spotlight should be on China. They have said for decades, the Chinese Government, that they want to have a minimum nuclear deterrent. They are blasting past that definition, and they are rapidly engaged in a build-up of their nuclear arsenal, including the disturbing reports of the hypersonic technology.

So, I think the spotlight has to be on the Government of China.

Senator RISCH. Well, I agree with that. You having the credentials that you have on a bipartisan basis and your deep knowledge of our allies, particularly ones that we have a defense posture with, I would hope you would be a spokesman within the administration regarding this. I am very concerned about it. A lot of people are concerned about it.

And I understand that you have done an excellent job throughout your career of carrying water on both shoulders for administration from either party. I think that brings a tremendous amount of credibility to you, and I think your words in that regard would be very important as they proceed with the Nuclear Posture Review. I have no doubt they will be consulting with you, given the position you are in. So, I would urge that you communicate in the strongest terms to the administration the concern that our allies in the region have with this policy.

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, first of all, let me thank you for your incredible career of public service. You have really advanced American values globally in every post that you have held, and I personally have appreciated your advice during very difficult times. So, thank you very much for your service to our country and your willingness to continue in this critical role as our Ambassador in China.

There are so many issues that we need to talk about, and we have already mentioned a lot of our national security concerns. We know that China is belligerent in the China seas, making claims that are outrageous and affect international commerce and our national security. We know that they are trying to change the rules of engagement economically so that they determine the rules based upon a government-controlled economy rather than an open economy, which is against our national security interests. We know how belligerent they are against Taiwan, and the list goes on and on and on.

But I want to devote my time to what President Biden has said that we are strongest when we conduct our foreign policy based upon our values. And China, in the recent decades, has just been moving in the wrong direction on universal human rights values, and we could go through the entire list, and it is a long list.

So, I guess, my question to you is: how will you balance and strategize America's presence in China through your mission to advance universal values—of the respect for individuals' religious freedom, human rights, and basic beliefs that the universal community that believes in democracy looks to America's leadership as hope for the future?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you very much for that question, and thank you for your decades of service to those issues, and I am very well aware of that.

I think you are right to suggest that as we think about our tools, our strengths, as we compete with China, it is our belief in human freedom and human rights and democracy and the rule of law and press freedoms that really stands in opposition to an authoritarian dictatorship in Beijing. And so if we can marshal those strengths—and President Biden and his administration believe this is at the center of their foreign policy—on Xinjiang, on Tibet, on Hong Kong, on the repression of the Chinese people, we cannot just do that sometimes. We cannot be silent if there are atrocities occurring or, in the case of Xinjiang, a genocide is occurring. We have to speak out.

And you have seen the President, Secretary Blinken, and all of the officials been very forthright about that since January 20 of this year. I think that will continue, and that will certainly be, if I am confirmed, a hallmark of what I try to do, speaking directly to the Chinese Government in Beijing.

Senator CARDIN. I would ask also that you inform this committee as to how we can give you a stronger hand in dealing on these issues. We have passed sanction regime laws that have been used against oppressors in China, individual sanctions such as Magnitsky as well as sectoral sanctions have been used, and I think they have their effect. I think they are extremely important.

But we need to also think beyond that as to what we can do to give you what you need. The competitiveness bill that the chairman mentioned I think is going to be an extremely important part of our strategy again in standing up to China's oppression on the economic front. But we should also be looking at what we can do as a Congress to give you a stronger hand in China in dealing with these universal rights.

So, I would welcome your advice as to what we can do to give you a stronger toolbox in dealing with these issues.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator. And I would just suggest a couple of things, and I have spoken to the chairman and other members of the committee in my individual meetings about them.

First and foremost, when the coronavirus mercifully ends and when the restrictions on China—there is a 3-week quarantine in China for visitors—at some point end, I hope that Members of Congress from both parties will travel to China. And if I am confirmed, I would like to help you to do that. I think they need to hear directly from our legislative branch on these issues. These will be difficult conversations for you and for me with the Chinese leadership, but we have to have them.

Secondly, I would encourage you, respectfully, to continue what you are doing, what this committee has done under the chairman's leadership and Senator Risch's leadership, on a bipartisan basis to speak out and legislate when necessary and to sanction when necessary.

Third and finally, President Biden was right on the issue of Xinjiang and the Uyghurs and the other Turkic Muslim peoples when he coalesced with Canada, the European Union, and the

United Kingdom in multinational sanctions against specific Chinese individuals responsible for carrying out the atrocities in Xinjiang. I think that can be helpful as well, to expand the universe of—expand our voice to work with other nations, perhaps through the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and your parliamentary exchanges with the Japanese, the Australians, and others.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Johnson?

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, thank you for your prior service and your willingness to serve in this capacity.

I agree with you that if we act intelligently, the U.S. in concert with our allies in the West, we can compete with China. China, though, has advantages in terms of very long-term, very strategic thinking, authoritarian. They do not have the back-and-forth of elections, that type of thing. So, they have utilized that long-term strategic thinking while the West literally has not done much to counter their infiltration to our institutions, their stealing of our intellectual property since their entry into the WTO.

I would just like you to comment on how do we—how do we counter what they have done, and how do we do that effectively?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you. I think it is—I think it is a central question.

We have to have a strategy to match China's strategy. I think that is beginning to develop over the last several years in the last three administrations—President Obama, President Trump, and President Biden.

And as I said in my testimony, what distinguishes us and strengthens us is the fact that we have our alliance with Japan and our alliance with Australia and South Korea. And I have been involved in my past diplomatic career in intensive discussions with the Europeans. I think they are less united perhaps in the European Union right now, but I sense that the Europeans are shifting to understand the threat, a threat to them as well as to us and our Indo-Pacific allies.

So, I think operating on an allied basis is the most important thing we can do. And sometimes that means we form institutions. So, the QUAD is an institution that both parties can be proud of. Republican and Democratic Presidents have supported the QUAD, and now President Biden is operationalizing it at the head of government level, which we had not done before.

AUKUS, three countries coming together. We need to build the institutions that are permanent and that take this policy that we are discussing this morning into the 2030s because the competition with China will be multi-decade.

Senator JOHNSON. Yes, I do want to address specifically their infiltration into our university systems, the Confucius institutes, their investment in things like medical journals. It really concerns me.

There is so much we do not know, for example, about the coronavirus, so much we do not know about COVID. I really do—I really want to get your take on a real potential fault line when we start learning more, for example, about the origin theory. I

mean, I do not know whether it was lab leak or whether it was natural origin. People are starting to look into that.

Obviously, there was a cover-up here for 18 months, and it, as a result, gave China a really good head start at burying evidence. Back in March of 2020, you participated in a virtual event at Harvard's Kennedy Center, and you definitely were critical of China, saying that this was an army exercise. But at the same time, you were very critical of President Trump for calling it the "Chinese virus" and the "Wuhan virus." You said that we all know that is wrong. We all know that is racist. We all know that is not true.

I guess I am kind of wondering how did you know? We still do not know. How were you so positive that this was not a lab leak theory, and have you changed your mind? Have you seen other evidence that would at least open up your mind to that prospect? Because if it is determined that it probably was not natural origin and did leak from a lab in Wuhan, that will have very serious geopolitical repercussions between—in our relationship with China.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator. I want to agree with you briefly on the issue of students and exchanges.

We ought to welcome Chinese students into the United States. But student visas are not a right. They have to be earned. Our laws have to be observed. There are some Chinese student applicants who have ties to the PLA, the People's Liberation Army, and China's intelligence services, and we should turn them down for visas. And we have to be clear about that.

But we also have 375,000 students in our universities and secondary schools in your State and my State, at my university, and we are better off having them in this country to learn about our democracy.

On the coronavirus, the problem here is with China. The Chinese Government withheld information very clearly from their own people and the rest of the world for about a month in late December and January of 2020. I have consistently criticized the Chinese Government for that, and they deserve to be criticized. And they have been stonewalling all of us around the world since January of 2020, including this week, when they refused to act to work with the World Health Organization's new investigative body to answer the question that you rightfully asked.

Senator JOHNSON. But again, my question, are you still so certain that lab leak is off the table? Because you were very certain back then. You said it was, you know, we all know that is not true. Have you changed your thinking on that? Because I mean, it is important if you are going to be Ambassador to China that you have a more open mind on this than you exhibited back in March of 2020.

Ambassador BURNS. So, Senator, I spoke often about this issue of U.S.-China relations at that period of time, and I believe that that quote from the Kennedy School event was directed to President Trump's use of the term "Wuhan virus," which I did not think would be effective with the Chinese Government or Chinese people or people around the world. It had nothing to do with the origins of the crisis, of the pandemic.

My position has been all along, and continues this day, we need to investigate. We do not know where the—how this virus origi-

nated for sure. There are multiple theories, and the Chinese need to answer the questions.

So, I have never been a proponent of either one of these two options. But I think, as President Biden has said, we need to push the Chinese to come clean about what happened.

Senator JOHNSON. Okay, thanks for that clarification. I appreciate it. Thank you.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Ambassador Burns, thank you for your willingness to continue to serve the United States.

As I am sure you are aware, there have been reported cases of anomalous health incidents in China, also known as “Havana syndrome” cases. Have you been briefed on the reported cases in China?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, I do not have a security clearance. So, I have not been briefed in detail about what has happened to our mission personnel there, but I have had unclassified, open conversations with the State Department. And what I would say to you is my own view, just as a private citizen, is that this is real. It is happening to our diplomats and other Government personnel all around the world. And if confirmed, my obligation to you and, more particularly, to the men and women of our mission in China is to do everything under my power to protect them, working with the Secretary of State and all of our other officials.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you very much. I appreciate that. I hope you will also request from the State Department, once confirmed, that classified briefing that also includes how to encourage personnel to respond if they are affected and what to look for in terms of those attacks because, to date, there does not seem to be a consistent response and direction for personnel.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. You mentioned in your opening remarks and in the questioning about the increased Chinese influence in Eastern Europe and also Lithuania, which is one example of an Eastern European country that has taken a hard stance on China. In July, they actually became the first European country to allow a Taiwanese diplomatic presence using the island’s name in the country.

Can you talk about what you think the impact of Lithuania’s stance is? We know it has produced a response from China, but will it have impact on other Eastern European countries and encourage them to take a hard look at what China is doing?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you.

Lithuania has chosen its course, and every country has a right to define its relationship with Taiwan. And I am proud that the Biden administration has stood up for Lithuania. And you know, it is extraordinary. The Chinese Government has launched an intensive intimidation campaign, economic intimidation of Lithuania, and the Lithuanians have stood up and they have held their ground. They deserve our support, as Australia does. And Australia has been subjected to the same treatment.

We have our own policy, the one China policy, which we should adhere to. Our unofficial relationship with Taiwan, which has



served us well. Every other country should have a right to determine what they want to do, and they should not be bludgeoned and bullied by the Chinese leadership.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you very much. I could not agree more with that, and I think Lithuania deserves a lot of credit for a small country being willing to stand up in the way that they have.

Earlier this month, NATO Secretary Jens Stoltenberg insisted that NATO must engage politically with China, but the alliance does not seem to see China as as much of a threat as they do Russia. Does China view NATO in the same way, and what do you think NATO's strategy should be towards China?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

It has been really interesting for me, as a former Ambassador to NATO, to see how high on the agenda China has become over the last couple of years during President Trump's time and now President Biden's time. And the focus is right. I mean, certainly, Russia is the immediate focus of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and especially considering Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland right up on the front lines as we try to contain Russian power.

But I think the NATO countries, led by a great Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, also understand China is—the belt-and-road initiative is now in 16 countries in Eastern Europe. The Chinese are actively trying to separate countries in Eastern Europe from the European Union and NATO. And if you think about Chinese energy activities and military activities in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, which is part of the NATO littoral geography, and think about the interests of Germany and France, Italy, any of the NATO countries, they have got to be concerned by what is happening in Xinjiang Province and what has happened to Hong Kong, the threats against Taiwan, and the economic practices of China.

My last point would be if we can coalesce with the European Union, the United States and Japan, on some of the economic issues, we are well more than 60 percent of GDP. It is real leverage. So, Europe has to be part of this strategy, and I credit the Secretary General. I credit Ambassador Kay Bailey Hutchison, who was our great American Ambassador under President Trump. She pushed this issue, and she was right to do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. And do you think China has become concerned about NATO's increasing interest in what China is doing in Europe, or are they ignoring that?

Ambassador BURNS. I do not think they are ignoring it, Senator. I mean, the reason I used the term "China is not an Olympian power" in my statement, and I meant it specifically. They have enormous strengths. They have very few friends. They have no real allies.

And think of the strategic advantage we have with our 29 allies in Canada, the Europeans in NATO, and our multiple treaty allies in the Indo-Pacific. It is our comparative advantage, and I think President Biden has been working overtime with Secretary Blinken to reach out to the allies both in NATO and the Indo-Pacific to say we need to be working together strategically on China.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me just quickly echo Senator Shaheen's comments about Lithuania.

Lithuania and how we respond to help it is a test for the West. Because when a country stands up against China and then faces the enormous economic consequences that China is creating against Lithuanian businesses by denying them supply chain opportunities, which is a wakeup call for the world, I think it is incredibly important that we stand by Lithuania extremely strongly.

Senator Romney?

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I wish to associate myself with the comments of the chairman and the ranking member at the beginning of this hearing. It is good to see you, Ambassador, and very deeply appreciate your willingness to serve once again your country at a critical time.

We all know China's ambition. They have described what it is. They seek to replace us as the global leader. The prospect of a global order led by China is one which is troubling for many reasons. We could see what that might look like based upon what they are doing even now, censoring their media, blacking out social media in their country, stealing intellectual property from us and from others, reneging on treaties and promises they made, repressing religion and people of faith, monitoring their own citizens and assigning social grades based upon their loyalty to the Chinese regime, the Communist regime, oppressing minorities of all kinds and, of course, committing genocide.

We say that quickly, but genocide. Eliminating a people, enslaving a people, as they are—all these things suggest that a global order led by China would be something which the world could not possibly endure.

There was probably a time a decade or so ago when, if you were the Ambassador to China, you could go in and pound your fist on the table, and they would take note and perhaps change course on some of the things we care most about because they were worried about their access to the U.S. market. Is that true today? Can we sort of tell China what to do, and do they respond? Or are we no longer in that position?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you, and I appreciated the conversation we had in your office 2 weeks ago about all these issues.

I think our relationship is fundamentally different now than it was 10 years ago or 20 years ago. And I have spoken to most of the former American Ambassadors about this, and we are in an entirely new age where we have got to have channels of communication to work with the Chinese.

First of all, we want to mitigate the danger of an accidental conflict. We want to maintain the peace, but we also want to have clear messaging, and I think multiple channels make sense. If confirmed, I will be on point for the country and the Government in Beijing talking directly to the Chinese. I think it is very important for Members to travel there, Members of Congress, and ultimately, most important for the President to have direct conversations, as he is seeking to do. He has had phone conversations with President Xi Jinping.

But these are difficult conversations, and you have seen the aggressiveness of the Chinese officials. You have seen the nationalism. You have seen the warrior diplomacy. It is part of the fabric of what we are dealing with now.

And my final point, Senator, would be to say we are a strong country. We should be confident of our values and our interests, and we can stand up to the Chinese, but our allies and partners can help to do that so that there is real weight and leverage. And I do think that is the focus.

Senator ROMNEY. What is your sense of the commitment of our allies to that effort? We have spoken already this morning about NATO and our friends and allies there. Perhaps Germany is not quite as committed as, let us say, Lithuania. But as you look at our allies, are we advancing in terms of our mutual efforts, or is there some retreat on the part of key allies?

Ambassador BURNS. I do not see retreat. Certainly, I think we are seeing a stiffening of the resolve of Japan, which is so important for us. Australia, rock solid on these issues. India, not an ally, not a treaty ally, but a strategic military partner in the Bay of Bengal and the Western Pacific. Very important for us.

Europe is different. There are so many countries with different views. Of course, we are waiting for the formation of the German Government. So, we will have to wait and see what the Social Democrats and the Greens do, but I would note that the Greens were very critical of China during the recent campaign in Germany. And certainly, President Macron has spoken out about the dangers of China in the Indo-Pacific, and France is unique among the European powers because it is an Indo-Pacific country as well.

And so, I think, we have got to work both the North Atlantic Alliance, the European Union, but especially our Indo-Pacific allies to be successful.

Senator ROMNEY. There are some who look at China and say it is a juggernaut. There is no way to slow it down. It is on a course that is unstoppable. Do you see it that way? Is there a way of dissuading China from a course as malevolent as what we are seeing today? Do they have some fundamental weaknesses that the rest of the world recognizes and can get them to divert from the course they are on?

Ambassador BURNS. It is certainly—yours is certainly a key analytical question, and none of us can deny the extraordinary growth in the power of China militarily, technologically, economically, and politically over the last 30 to 40 years. But we should not exaggerate that power. I said in my statement China has significant demographic challenges over the next few decades. It has angered nearly all the countries on its border by being overly aggressive and overly acquisitive.

Think of the South China Sea and the outrageous attempts by the Chinese Government to run roughshod over the Law of the Sea Treaty and the legal obligations that China is ignoring. Think of the East China Sea and their attempt to intimidate, but they have not succeeded, our ally Japan, and think of Taiwan.

And so I think the Chinese have, by being so aggressive, they have now stirred up a lot of opposition to them, and I think we ought not to exaggerate their strengths or underestimate the

strengths of the United States. What we need is self-confidence that the United States is a strong country, and I do think our values are the strongest part of our strategy towards China.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member.

Thank you, Ambassador Burns, for your willingness to continue your service overseas. You are the right nominee at the right moment for what is an absolutely critical relationship for the 21st century, and I think in your opening statement you laid out wisely the challenges that are before us.

So, I am particularly pleased, given your deep experience in the Foreign Service, as Ambassador to Greece and to NATO, your work leading the Aspen Strategy Group, through which I have gotten to see your remarkable talents of both strategic insight and interpersonal diplomacy. And my thanks to Libby, to the support you have gotten from your spouse and your family across a long career in service.

Just a few questions, if I might, because I know there are many others who have questions. But first, I think part of what you bring to this is an understanding of how to effectively deploy that key strategic advantage of allies and partners, and I think you correctly point out that China's greatest current global weakness is the absence of any real partners or allies.

So, given your experience as Ambassador, first to Greece and then later to NATO, how do you envision the U.S.-Europe Transatlantic alliance responding to the strategic competition with China, the values competition? And how do you think you can best play a role in engaging our allies in the Indo-Pacific and in Europe?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you very much for those comments and for your question.

In my entire diplomatic career, probably the lesson I learned most most vividly was 9/11, when I was a very new Ambassador. I was in my 12th day, and we were hit hard, 3,000 people dead in the United States. And we could not reach the Pentagon, the White House, and the State Department because they had all been evacuated, but my phone started to ring at NATO headquarters, and it was the Canadian Ambassador, David Wright, and the German Ambassador, and the Italian and French Ambassadors. "We are with you. We want to invoke Article 5." That is the bond.

We invoked Article 5 the next day, and that is the bond we have in our allies. And it is based in part on strategic interests that we have in common, but it is fundamentally based on values and belief in democracy and human rights. And that is the coalition that we need to form vis-à-vis China.

And I credit President Biden. When he came to office from his inaugural speech, to his first speech at the State Department, to his G7 and NATO and EU meetings—and you know this very well, Senator, because you are so close to him—he has been consistent in saying we are going to succeed most if we are with our allies. And Secretary Blinken has been working tirelessly on this.

And I think it is going to be, frankly, most challenging perhaps in Europe. It is not the fault of the Europeans, but it is a big group of countries and a multiplicity of views. NATO is in one way the

right institution for certain issues, and we are working those there, but the European Union on others.

And I would just say, and we had a chance to talk about this this morning together, we need to be together on human rights. We need to stand up together, Europeans and Americans, on the Uyghur issue, on Tibet, on Hong Kong, and on Taiwan. And we need to be together on trade because both of us are victims of Chinese unfair trade practices.

And think of the power of the EU, the U.S., perhaps Japan, working together. I think that is the part of the strategy that we have to operate.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador.

I do think we are in an era where concerns about the digital world and the role of the individual in a digital age are also at the forefront. I am very concerned about the way in which China has developed and deployed the technology to surveil and to censor, to even control its own population and actions they have taken to export not just that technology, but that attitude to other countries around the world.

How do you think we can best work with global partners to offer an alternative vision in which digital technologies serve democratic values and then to embed that in a common trade framework with the values partners you were just referencing?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

This is also a central question, and President Biden, from his inaugural speech on, has been talking about the need for democracies to recognize the threat from the authoritarian world. And that is principally the People's Republic of China and Russia and others around the world.

And to see the pernicious use of—misuse of technology to repress their own citizens and then to try to export that technology in countries where there is a struggle between democratic, small “d” democratic forces and authoritarian forces, we have got to be operating all across the world to help the democratic forces and to help blunt this technological impact.

I think it is a very important issue. I know the State Department and Secretary Blinken are seized by it.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I look forward to supporting your nomination and working closely with you. I think better understanding China, better communicating with China about our risks and opportunities is an important and critical role, but also clearly advocating for America's interests and values is an essential role, and I think you will be an excellent Ambassador. I look forward to supporting your nomination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Barrasso?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, welcome to the committee.

The Chinese Communist Party cannot be trusted. The world has seen China's brutality, deception, illegal activities. We have seen China cover up, spread disinformation about the coronavirus. We have seen China destroy Hong Kong's autonomy. We have seen them engage in unlawful military activities in the South China

Sea. We have seen China steal American intellectual property, commit terrible human rights abuses.

Now these, to me, are actions of a dangerous and authoritarian regime. It is not a nation committed to the rule of law, to free markets, to protecting the rights of people. It is clear the United States and the international community must hold China accountable for its increasingly dangerous behavior.

So, just recently, the CIA Director Bill Burns stated that China “presents the greatest challenge to U.S. interests and to international order.” He also announced the creation of a new China Mission Center to “strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat that we face in the 21st century, which is an increasingly adversarial Chinese Government.”

Do you concur and believe that China’s increasingly adversarial government is the most important geopolitical threat that the United States faces in the 21st century?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

I agree with my longtime friend and Foreign Service colleague Director Bill Burns. I agree with the statement he made. I noticed it. I read his statement. He and I grew up in the first 10 years of our career where the end of the Cold War, when the Soviet Union was the greatest threat.

There is no question in the 21st century, given Chinese power that we have talked about this morning, China is the greatest threat to the security of our country and of the democratic world.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

I want to ask you about the U.S.-China Phase One agreement. Remember, January of 2020, the United States and China signed a Phase One trade agreement. China committed to buy \$468 billion of U.S. goods, energy, agriculture, and services over a 2-year period of time. But they really do—China appears to be failing to comply to this agreement.

Reports indicate that China’s purchases have fallen far short for both 2020 and 2021. Do you believe China is committed to abiding by its promises under this agreement, and what are options available to us to ensure that China does fulfill the terms of the agreement?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

This is going to be a contentious issue, and it has been for a long time between our two countries. I think you know that the U.S. Trade Representative, Ambassador Katherine Tai, gave a speech here in Washington 2 1/2 weeks ago, and she was very forthright in saying—I will just summarize, which—her main point, saying that she would talk to her Chinese counterpart about that Phase One deal and about the performance of the Chinese Government in meeting or not meeting its commitments.

And I think she was right to suggest that that has to be the first order of business on trade with China. And obviously, we in the United States need to make investments in our own economy to strengthen it, which the President and Congress are working on. And we have to overcome the ravages of COVID-19 before we can probably get on to bigger initiatives, but I think she was right to start there. Hold China to account for what it promised President

Trump, and I think most observers and experts would say they have not fulfilled their obligations.

Senator BARRASSO. In addition to goods and energy and agriculture products, there is also intellectual property obligations under this U.S.-China Phase One agreement. What steps can we take to ensure that China fully implements and complies with the intellectual property?

Ambassador BURNS. That is a key issue because it gets to the systemic violations of China's WTO commitments. I named some of them in my statement—intellectual property theft, dumping, state subsidies, unfair labor practices. So, when we talk to the Chinese about trade, part of it is our two-way \$559 billion trade relationship in goods and then more in services. Part of it is getting at these systemic problems that I think every recent President has wrestled the Chinese on.

Senator BARRASSO. For my final question, earlier this year, China and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in which China would invest as much as \$400 billion in Iran over the next 25 years. Last month, Iran was accepted as a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China has long been importing Iranian oil in contravention of the U.S. sanctions on Iran. Sanctioned Iranian airlines continue to fly to China.

Not simply a matter of a few Chinese companies violating U.S. law, there is a lot going on here. It appears to be a strategic decision by the Chinese Government to allow these violations to take place. What is your assessment of the current relationship between China and Iran?

Ambassador BURNS. This is a very serious issue. As you portray it, and you are right, this is a closer relationship than China and Iran had, say, when I was the Iran negotiator for Secretary Condoleezza Rice, when China joined us in three U.N. Security Council sanctions resolutions Chapter 7 against the Iranians in 2006, '07, and '08. And now they have a closer relationship.

I think what we ought to do and we will do, I am sure, under President Biden's administration, talk to the Chinese directly about this and, obviously, hold the Chinese to account to abide by every U.N. Security Council sanctions resolution that prohibits most of this activity.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, thank you very much for your long service to the Nation, for your willingness to continue in a very difficult, but critical post.

When the Obama administration negotiated the Paris Accords, it was critical that they secure commitments from the fastest-growing economies, which happened to be the fastest-growing polluters, to make significant commitments. Of course, India and China are at the top of this list. We lost 4 years in holding both of those nations to their commitments, and so you and this administration are going to be making up for lost time.

India is, arguably, in the neighborhood of being able to make their commitment in Paris. China is not. In fact, a recent report

found that Chinese emissions in 2019 were so big that they were larger than that of the entire developed world as a whole.

And so I would be interested to hear from you what you believe are the commitments that can be realistically made by the Chinese, especially in the short term as we get ready for COP26, and the extent to which our ability to pass significant climate legislation will enable you to be a more forceful interlocutor with the Chinese on questions of climate.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator. Another central question.

And it does—this is a side of the relationship where we have to engage China and seek cooperation, if it is possible. And this makes this relationship so difficult because we are competing, and we are engaging at the same time.

Climate is perhaps the signature issue on the cooperation side, and obviously, President Obama was able to work with President Xi Jinping back in 2015. That was positive. Former Secretary John Kerry is now working tirelessly on this issue. And China, as I understand China's current position, its emissions will not begin to diminish until 2030. And most climate experts, if not all, think that is not sustainable, that China needs to make a greater effort to diminish its carbon emissions before 2030.

And also they say they will be carbon neutral by 2060. It has got to be well before that. Because you are right, China is by far the larger emitter of carbon in the world today, by a long mile past the United States and any other country. And so they have an obligation to the rest of us. Beginning at COP26 and going on, this will be a major issue in our relationship.

Senator MURPHY. I want to ask you, second, about your assessment of the scope and breadth of Chinese diplomacy today. There was a sort of flurry of attention to a milestone in 2019, where China surpassed the United States with respect to the number of diplomatic posts it has around the world.

I was in Ireland that same year, where there was an important telecommunications tender, and we were hearing stories about a surge of diplomats being sent to the embassy in Dublin. Meanwhile, we had one very nice and capable military attache, who was the beginning and end of our diplomatic team working on behalf of U.S. companies for this tender.

It seems as if China is—has diplomatic reach in new places and has an ability to be flexible and nimble in a way that we do not. One of the things that I believe we should be engaging in is more subnational diplomacy, using our State leaders and our local leaders to engage all around the world on behalf of the United States, something that China does fairly well.

Just a quick assessment from you as to the state of Chinese diplomatic efforts around the world, how it has changed over the past 5 or 10 years, and any recommendations that you might give to this committee as we seek to empower U.S. diplomacy to compete with China.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

The Chinese have sought to become the most active, in their minds, and most powerful diplomatic force in the world. For my entire career until a couple of years ago, the United States had more



embassies and consulates in the world than any country. As of last autumn, China had 275 embassies and consulates, and the United States 273. Is it meaningful? Yes.

It means we have to compete—we are competing militarily. We are competing economically. We have got to compete diplomatically. I can assure you we have an outstanding Foreign Service. I have gotten to know over the last couple of months the men and women of the China desk in our East Asia Bureau. They are superb experts, and we do need to make a commitment, as the President and Secretary Blinken are doing, to modernize, strengthen our Foreign Service and our civil service. That is part of our diplomatic power.

And finally, Senator, I think you are right. Diplomacy is not just for people like me, State Department diplomats. We need multiple channels to create the coalitions and friendships that can limit China, and that can be State governors and legislatures and NGOs, subnational actors, as you call them.

And I think we have got to have an all-country embrace of connecting with our allies to support our interests vis-à-vis China.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, nice to have you here today. I would like to talk with you about China's strategy to dominate the 21st century.

We just learned over the weekend that China has deployed for the first time what is known as the hypersonic glide missile. As the Financial Times reported, and I am going to quote, "China tested a nuclear-capable hypersonic missile in August that circled the globe before speeding toward its target, demonstrating an advanced space capability that caught U.S. intelligence by surprise."

If China deploys hypersonic glide vehicles, this would enable China to circumvent U.S. ballistic missile defense and strike the U.S. homeland without warning.

Ambassador Burns, this new military capability is deeply worrisome, but I believe the even bigger alarm is continued complacency about China, complacency that we still see far too much in the national security establishment here in America. We see this when China probes and menaces our democratic ally Taiwan, and the administration responds with silence or with presidential talk about a so-called Taiwan agreement that does not exist.

Xi Jinping has made clear that the Chinese Communist Party has a plan for China to dominate the world diplomatically, economically, technologically, and militarily. Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party want to achieve dominance and displace the United States by 2049, the 100-year anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. And they are certainly locking in every advantage that they can along the way.

President Trump awakened our Nation to the Chinese threat, and the Biden administration has inherited a very strong China strategy, one that I helped to craft and implement when I served as U.S. Ambassador to Japan. As part of the China strategy, the Trump administration also rightly determined that China is engaged in genocide and crimes against humanity with the Uyghur population and other Muslims that live in the Xinjiang Province.

I worry that the Biden administration will try to strike some sort of naive grand bargain on climate or other issues with China that effectively might erase the strong position that we have with China today. Such a naive deal could significantly weaken our energy independence.

Meanwhile, China will continue to burn more coal and emit more greenhouse gases than all of the developed world combined, with an unenforceable pledge to reduce their carbon footprint at some undetermined time in the future. Ambassador Burns, that is my view of what is at stake strategically, but let us focus on China's immediate threat with respect to Taiwan.

It is clear that the Chinese Communist Party is stepping up its military posture in the Taiwan Strait. The world is alarmed, and Taiwan could be the first domino to fall in the Indo-Pacific. Ambassador, what is your view on the Taiwan issue, and should the United States revisit the issue of strategic ambiguity with respect to Taiwan?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you, and thank you for your service as a U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

I agree with you that China is our strongest, I would say most dangerous, competitor in the world. President Biden has followed a very tough-minded policy against China. I counted up yesterday at least 15 sanctions or executive orders limiting the ability of the Chinese Government to be influential around the world or in our own society. So, I think there has been—under President Obama, President Trump, now President Biden—an increasing emphasis on what we need to do to limit China, and President Biden's policies are very tough and very strong.

On Taiwan, we need to do multiple things. We need to strengthen our commitment to Taiwan's security under the Taiwan Relations Act. The Biden administration proposed the sale of M109A6 Howitzers this past spring, a \$750 million deal that would help the Taiwan authorities to defend themselves. There is substantial leverage in the Taiwan Relations Act available to the executive and legislative branches to continue to provide arms sales for defensive purposes, defense articles and services, to Taiwan.

And maybe the most important thing we can do is maintain a strong American military deterrence in the Indo-Pacific. You were part of that as Ambassador. Our alliance with Japan, our alliance with the Republic of Korea, our alliance with Australia, the presence of our Navy and Air Force at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, our rotational deployments. Of course, our deployments through the international waters of the South China Sea. This is all-encompassing strategy designed to support our side and to strengthen our ability to help Taiwan defend itself.

Senator HAGERTY. I agree with you on our military strategy and our posture. We need to maintain it. We need to strengthen it. I am interested still, though, in your view on whether we should revisit our posture of strategic ambiguity, how we talk about the Taiwan situation.

Ambassador BURNS. This is an important question. My own view is that we are better off and will be more effective in staying with the one China policy of the last four decades. We recognize the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China, and

yet we have unofficial relations with Taiwan, and we have under the Taiwan Relations Act the ability, in fact, the imperative of helping Taiwan to defend itself.

Every President, Republican and Democrat, has followed that policy. In the face of the Chinese build-up—and they are more aggressive now—that is the best way for us to strengthen the ability of Taiwan to defend itself.

Senator HAGERTY. My time has come to a close. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Kaine [presiding]. Absolutely. Ambassador Burns, I am sitting in while Senator Menendez votes, and it is my turn in the order.

So, congratulations to you. You are a wonderful public servant.

I am going to ask you a couple of questions about assumptions. So, pre-2000, China had to sort of make a case to the United States every year to be granted Most Favored Nation status, and it was an annual decision that the President would make. And China, that annual decision provided a forum for discussions about human rights issues and such.

In 2000, Congress granted China permanent normal trade relation status, which paved their path to becoming a member of the WTO. So, we no longer have that annual determination and opportunity, and I think possibly we have lost some focus on some of the human rights and other issues for that reason.

The decision was made because of a belief that if China was part of the WTO, they would conform themselves to global trade rules, and I think everyone, whatever their thought at the time, would say that China's behavior has been disappointing, that they have not done what we hoped. I am curious, do you think that was a mistake for us to grant China legal permanent trade relations in 2000?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

I was not involved in U.S.-China relations at that time. I was focused on Greece and NATO in those years. And of course, it is always perilous to be a Monday morning quarterback and sit in judgment of people I really admire. But personally, the assumptions that many made about China in those years turned out not to be accurate.

China took advantage of its presence in the WTO as a so-called developing country. China then did not meet its obligations under the WTO, and who suffered? American workers and American businesses. And you and I have met with a lot of American businesses who had their IP ripped off by the Chinese and made their business decisions very difficult.

So, I do think at this point in 2021, I hope there will be bipartisan support for a very aggressive American policy to hold China to account. If you read Ambassador Tai's speech of 2 1/2 weeks ago, Ambassador Katherine Tai's speech, the U.S. Trade Rep, she was very clear about her determination on behalf of the President to protect American workers and protect American businesses, and I think that has to be the focus of our efforts right now.

Senator Kaine. Thank you for that answer.

Some of my Republican colleagues actually have filed a bill to undo the legal permanent trade relations that we accorded China

21 years ago. It might be hard to get the genie back in the bottle because supply chains and others have sort of reformed and recombined to reflect the new reality.

But I think with the best of intentions, there were a lot of optimism and hopes about China—members of both parties, Presidents of both parties—that have proven to be wrong. And we have to be willing, as we were with the Competitiveness Act we recently passed, to lean much more forward in the relationship.

There is another assumption, and you touched on it in your discussion. The United States has a wonderful network of allies, but China really does not. China really does not. And we see this again and again. I think it is a statement that is actually true.

But here is something I worry about. When I see China and Russia doing joint naval exercises in the Straits of Japan, as they recently did, or other joint military exercises—they have done joint military exercises with Iran in the Persian Gulf—I start to worry a little bit about an assumption that we have long made in national security thinking that China and Russia will never be too cooperative. They seem to be combining frequently now.

They are very different countries, but they both are authoritarian nations that do not respect democratic norms and institutions and actually believe democracy is a dying governmental model. How worried should the United States be about increasing cooperation between China and Russia, especially on military matters?

Ambassador BURNS. It is a very—it is a reality, and I think a lot of us maybe 10, 20 years ago would not have anticipated that China and Russia would begin to work together strategically, but they are. All the more reason why we need to deepen our own alliances and partnerships.

I would say this, Senator, and this is just speculative. I spent 5 years of my career at the White House on Soviet and Russian affairs. My numbers may be a little bit off, but I think there are 6 or 7 million Russians living east of the Ural Mountains in that vast expanse, and there are 300 or 400 million Chinese living below them. The Russians are going to have to worry long term about economic domination of Russia by China.

And in response to what Senator Risch asked me, the Russians ought to be worried about a Chinese nuclear weapons build-up in the western part of China, about the hypersonic missile that Senator Hagerty—test that Senator Hagerty just raised, and the fact that China is completely unconstrained.

Of the five permanent nuclear powers of the Security Council, it is the only one that refuses to be part of any arms control regime. We have been part of one for 60 years, since the Test Ban Treaty of 1963. And so, obviously, that has got to be a focus for all of us, I would say including the Russians, going forward.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. I am over my time. I believe Senator Young by Webex is next up?

Senator YOUNG. Yes, Senator Kaine, Chairman, thank you so much.

Yes, Mr. Burns, I am sorry I just hopped on, Ambassador, but congratulations on your nomination, and thank you for your years of distinguished service.

This week, we have seen public reporting suggesting that China successfully tested a nuclear-capable hypersonic missile. Earlier this summer, we saw additional reporting indicating that China had dramatically increased the size and scope of its nuclear arsenal. These reports have evoked fears of a new cold war with China.

These nuclear weapons concerns come amid rapidly escalating tensions over Taiwan. Our strategic competition, of course, is nothing new, but I am concerned with the growing risks of miscommunication or misinterpretation of our actions. In your view, sir, what is motivating these sorts of provocative actions from Beijing?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator Young, thank you, and thank you for your leadership on the strategic innovation bill that is so important to the future of our country.

I think you are right to focus on this issue. Part of what we will need to do in the U.S.-China relationship is mitigate the possibility of an accidental conflict and to maintain the peace between our two countries and in the region. And that will require our military leadership, the civilian leadership of the Defense Department, the State Department, and the White House to have effective communication channels into the Chinese leadership.

And of course, every administration has wanted to do this, has worked on it, but we need to work on it very intensively because, at all costs, we want to compete with China, but we do not want to find ourselves, in the words of my Harvard colleague Joe Nye, being “sleepwalkers” into a conflict with China. So, part of the job of an American Ambassador to China, if I am confirmed, will be to work with my colleagues in the U.S. Government to make sure we have those effective communications channels with the Chinese leadership.

And finally, Senator, I would just say to you I completely agree with you. We should all be concerned by the nuclear build-up in China, and that has to be a concern for allied nations as well as the United States.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you. I wish you luck. If there is any way Congress can be constructive in helping open up those channels of communication, whether it is through visits to the country, expressing our collective desire to make sure that we are talking, we avoid any scenarios that our leadership and our peoples would regret, I am—enlist me in the cause, sir.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. My State of Indiana, Ambassador, is the most manufacturing-intensive State in the United States, and our businesses rely on a diversified supply chain and market access. Over the years, China has used localization requirements, intellectual property theft, and forced transfer of data to hamstring our enterprises that are dependent on technology.

I firmly believe the United States should advocate for integrity in digital trade provisions of our trade agreements. This includes holding bad actors accountable, especially Communist China. I am currently working on a resolution to solidify the U.S. commitment to high-standard digital trade principles.

If confirmed, how will you address continued action by China that purposefully causes harm to American businesses, knowing that you will need to coordinate with Ambassador Tai on this?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you.

In my opening statement, I focused on this issue of trade because of the enormous damage to your State and every other State, to our workers, and to our businesses. This is a high priority for the Biden administration, and obviously, if confirmed, I will be working very intensively on this issue with the White House, with the Commerce Department, the Treasury Department, and of course, principally with Ambassador Tai and her colleagues.

Senator YOUNG. Ambassador, accept my apologies if you discussed this in your opening statement, but could you just explain why actions like IP theft and data localization requirements are issues of national security, not just economic issues?

Ambassador BURNS. In thinking about this job, I have been consulting with a lot of experts on China across the country, and it has really been interesting to hear. But I think the great majority of them would say that the focal point, the most important part of our competition with China will be on economics and technology in the future.

We are going to have a military competition for power, which we had with the Soviets in the old Cold War. What distinguishes our competition with China, which makes it unlike the old Cold War, is the fact that they seek dominance on technology, on AI and machine learning, quantum sciences, biotechnology. They seek to militarize those technologies.

That may be the central focus of the competition. So, therefore, we in the executive branch and you in Congress need to unite on a bipartisan basis and be fundamentally focused on it.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. And I would say, Ambassador, thank you for bringing up my legislation. That is the purpose, to address this threat, technology threat, economic threat, that China poses to us, the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act. So, I hope that broadly bipartisan legislation passes before year's end.

Thank you so much, sir.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you for your leadership.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And congratulations, Mr. Ambassador. Thank you for your long service to this country, and to your family.

Just picking up on some of the points Senator Young made, and I was pleased to hear you mention in your opening remarks the issue of China's systematic theft of intellectual property. That is why Senator Sasse and I teamed up, and we passed a bipartisan bill here in the Senate called Protecting American Intellectual Property Act. It is actually incorporated in the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, which, as you know, passed the Senate and is pending in the House.

And the whole idea is that U.S. companies that are victimized by intellectual property theft do not have just sole recourse in the United States courts. And so in those situations where we are not talking about garden-variety trademark violations, but in fact, sys-

tematic theft of U.S. strategic technology and other cutting-edge technologies, the U.S. Government would weigh in and be authorized to impose economic sanctions and penalties. This was a measure supported by the previous administration and I think also by the current administration.

I want to flag that because I look forward to working with you as we get that through the congressional process because there has to be a price to pay. And when you are talking about the Chinese Government weighing in and being part of this theft, you cannot leave it simply to the court system to defend American companies.

Similarly, I believe China has got to be paying a higher price for its malign actions and its violation of international agreements, and we have seen a gross violation of those agreements in the case of Hong Kong, where China has cracked down on democracy. Senator Toomey and I passed legislation last year called the Hong Kong Autonomy Act. It is in—part of the law now.

This administration has used it to apply sanctions to 24 individuals who were complicit in cracking down on democracy in Hong Kong. But we would like to see them identify some of the banks and financial institutions that are aiding and abetting that activity because the sanctions also apply to them.

But my broader question here relates to how we raise the price China has got to pay for these malign actions. Yes, we have got to make sure we strengthen our own position, both at home and around the world, certainly with our allies, certainly provide Taiwan with more of the means to defend itself. But how can we raise the cost to China of the kind of actions they have taken in Hong Kong, and do you agree that they have felt the pain at all of international response, for example, in Hong Kong? Is there more we can be doing?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you very much, and thank you for authoring that legislation. I do think it was particularly effective to sanction specific individuals in Hong Kong who are responsible for the repression of the people of Hong Kong, and that is similar to the Biden administration sanctions on those individuals in Xinjiang Province who did the same.

I do think that we are stronger if we can create global alliances on all of these issues. So, encouraging the European Union to be with us, not just in condemning human rights violations, but sanctioning. And that was the case, they were with us in sanctions on Xinjiang. And I think Hong Kong is particularly important.

I mentioned earlier in the testimony I was with Secretary Albright in Hong Kong on the day of the handover, June 30, 1997, and all of us with Secretary Albright remember the specific commitments China made, and it has reneged on all of them. So, this is not just a U.S. concern. It has to be a global concern.

And I do think one of the changes President Biden has brought to our strategic policy towards China is to emphasize our allies and partners on this issue as well as the others that we have been talking about.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. I think you have to have that multiplier effect in order to make these sanctions ultimately effective. If not reversing the actions that China has taken, letting

them know that they will pay a higher price for similar actions going forward.

Just in conclusion, you are obviously going to be our Ambassador to China and talking about these important issues between our two countries, but how important is it that we strengthen ourselves here at home, both in terms of modernizing our infrastructure and trying to address the depolarization that we face in this country?

Ambassador BURNS. It may be the most important thing we could do is to invest in our technological future, as the Senate is doing with your strategic innovation bill, which I very strongly—that the administration very strongly supported, and I do, too. And it is to prepare ourselves to strengthen—to have a clean energy future; strengthen our technology base; be funding, I would hope, our universities and research institutions because that is where the cutting-edge technology is happening.

Supporting our businesses because they are the ones who make America powerful economically in large part. And so that strategy is probably the most important thing we can do to stand up to the China challenge over the next 20 to 30 years. I do think this is going to be a long-term challenge.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Rounds?

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, first of all, let me just begin by saying thank you for the time that you spent with us last evening. It is appreciated, and I most certainly enjoyed the conversation.

As you know, I sit on the Senate Armed Services Committee and its Strategic Forces Subcommittee. I would be very interested in your thoughts on China's nuclear stockpile and its expanding capabilities, specifically with regard to our challenge right now here within the discussions going on that some of our members think it is okay if we were to perhaps not modernize our own triad. In fact, they question whether anybody really cares whether we have a triad or not.

China—and this is on an unclassified level—they have been increasing their stockpile. Some folks do not think that we need to be improving and upgrading and modernizing our own nuclear triad. I think China is aggressively growing their own, and I think this is a critical part of their foreign policy strategy, and I think it is one way in which the PRC in terms of their diplomatic efforts uses it as a hammer when they deal with other countries. Could you share a little bit about how you see that impacting your ability to negotiate with the PRC once you are there?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you, and thank you for the conversation we had in your office last evening.

And as I explained to you, one of the curiosities of coming up for confirmation as a private citizen is that, quite properly, I do not have access to classified information. So, in this realm, and Senator Hagerty asked me about it as well, I am a little bit limited by not having that access. But I will say this.

Based on the press reports, we should all be concerned by the build-up of China's nuclear forces in the western part of China. And then many Members have asked me about these press reports of these novel delivery systems, these hypersonic systems. What I



think has to bother all of us is the attitude of the Chinese Government. They do not believe that they should be constrained in any way, shape, or form by arms control.

The United States submits to that. Russia submits to that, at least did in the past. Our other nuclear allies—the United Kingdom and France—do. And so I think it is going to be very important.

I know the Trump administration made an effort to do this and was right to do it, to push the Chinese to think about their obligations, and I think it is very important that we do that on a bipartisan basis. But certainly, these are troubling developments, and I said earlier, Senator, the Chinese have been saying for decades that they would like to have a minimum nuclear deterrence, and they seem to be quite rapidly moving away from that older policy of the Chinese Government.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Let me just continue down that line a little bit. It is more than simply nuclear development. There is also the issue of artificial intelligence. They will be a key player with regard to the deployment of artificial intelligence not just in regard to national defense issues, but in all areas of technology. We have got before us the opportunity and I think the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence made major requests to Congress to fund artificial intelligence activity and opportunities, not real expensive, but clearly something that is not just the United States, but China is working on.

Could you talk about the need for the United States to continue to take a very active role in the most technologically advanced fields, including artificial intelligence, in order to maintain our leadership role not just with regard to defense, but with regard to trade as well?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

Two years ago, I organized a meeting of the bipartisan Aspen Strategy Group. I am the Director of the group. And we focused over 3 days on this issue, and we had some of the best experts from the U.S. Government and the private sector, the tech companies come and talk to us. And they identified the same concern that you have, that China will be competing us for commercial superiority in AI and machine learning—and this is their stated 2025 policy—in quantum sciences and biotechnology.

They are obviously going to try to militarize those technologies, and the United States cannot let ourselves be in an inferior position and have the Chinese leapfrog over us on these technologies 5 or 10 or 30 years from now. So, I think I agree wholeheartedly with you. We need to make strategic investments, and the Senate is doing that.

And we need to continue to do that in this strength of the American economy, innovation, high tech, biotech because it is likely to be the central arena of competition between us with China. And if I am confirmed, it will be a central focus. It already is of the Biden administration, but I will be very focused on it.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir, and I look forward to supporting your nomination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Merkley?

Senator MERKLEY. Thank very much, Ambassador, for service over a long career.

I wanted to start with recognizing you have noted that China is not an Olympian power, and that just catches my attention because the Olympics in China are just 4 months away in February. And as we discussed in my office, I am very concerned about the fact that the International Olympic Committee has placed the Olympics in a nation that is conducting genocide against its own people.

And my preference would certainly have been for the Olympic Committee to say China had failed to follow its 2015 promises on human rights and that the Olympics were to be moved. That is not going to happen. The IOC has made that very clear.

However, there are things that can be done to keep China from using the Olympics to gloss over its horrific human rights activities. For example, a diplomatic boycott. Another example would be fiercely defending the right of athletes to express themselves on what is going on in China while they are in China performing.

What do you think is—what would you recommend to essentially try not to have China be able to use the Olympics as a way to create a cheerful facade over their horrific activities against minorities in their own country?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you.

And I used the term “Olympian” not to refer, as you know, to the Olympics, but just to suggest that and if you think about ancient Greece, China is not all-powerful.

Senator MERKLEY. No, understood.

Ambassador BURNS. On the question of the Olympic Games, the Winter Games to be held in Beijing, it looks like it is going to be the most unusual games ever. It looks like, if you look at the rules and regulations that the Chinese authorities have worked out with the International Olympic Committee, there will be really nobody there from around the world because the precautionary measures that people are being asked to take, and obviously given a pandemic, will make it almost impossible for spectators from Japan or the United States to be there. So, I think you will largely have a Chinese audience.

I think you are right, and I enjoyed our conversation about this 3 days ago. We obviously want to make sure that the American athletes, if they are there, and other athletes are able to speak their minds, are able to have access to the media to say what they wish to say because they come from democratic countries. And I hope and trust that the International Olympic Committee will make that possible.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you, Ambassador. And I think fierce advocacy will be very valuable and in coordination with other nations.

The Olympic Committee members say it is all about the athletes so we do not really want to bring up “political issues” like human rights. But what they have done is force the athletes to become unwilling or unwitting participants in this—well, this effort to put a very bright and happy face on China at the same time there are such tragic and horrific practices.

One of the biggest factors is the treatment of the Uyghurs and essentially engaging millions in slavery, many high-tech practices, forced sterilization, forced birth control, forced labor that is slave labor, and in Hong Kong, where they have stripped the political rights. The Congressional Executive Commission on China held a hearing in which we heard advocate after advocate say this is a moment for the United States to grant P2 status to those who are trying—are particularly vulnerable in these two situations, both in Hong Kong and, if you will, among Xinjiang Province, the Uyghur community.

This is status given to groups of special humanitarian concern. Individuals still have to establish their personal vulnerability within that group that allows them to apply from inside or outside the country and that it is the right fit. Is P2 status for those who are vulnerable in Hong Kong and in Xinjiang Province something that you would support?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you.

What I would like to do is check with the State Department, because I am unsure of the answer to your question, and come back to you with an answer. Perhaps we can do that in written form, or I can—we can meet and talk about it.

I do know that President Biden has allowed Hong Kong residents to stay in the United States on a lengthier basis than they normally would because of the fear of persecution should they go back, given what has happened in Hong Kong. But I am just not aware of what other measures the administration has taken or is planning, but I am happy to take that question for the record.

[The response to Senator Merkley's question follows:]

The United States Government is exploring migration policies that would best support Hong Kongers. The Department of State also remains focused on the humanitarian concerns of the Uyghur community by coordinating with UNHCR to ensure it can refer vulnerable Uyghurs to the United States Refugee Admissions Program for resettlement consideration without delay and to determine if there are other steps needed to ensure humanitarian access to resettlement.

If confirmed, I will continue to support policies that show our unwavering support for the Uyghur community, as well as for people in Hong Kong, including humanitarian pathways to the United States.

Senator MERKLEY. Yes, that status of deferred and forced departure has been granted to those from Hong Kong who are already in the country.

Ambassador BURNS. Right.

Senator MERKLEY. It is an 18-month provision, has not been granted to Uyghurs. We had testimony from Uyghurs who have been here for 4 years because of their high vulnerability in return and have lost—their families have lost any formal status in our country, and they are awaiting action.

I will just close with a comment. If the chair feels there is time to respond, fine, but I am over time. Which is that I would really love to see champions in our diplomatic team push for an official determination of genocide in Myanmar because the actions against the Rohingya fully justify it, just horrific activities. The hesitation amongst some in the State Department has been to be critical because there is a fledgling democracy, except there is no longer a fledgling democracy because the military conducted a military coup and put Aung San Suu Kyi under arrest.

When we fail to call out genocide in Myanmar, it undermines the legitimacy of the strength of our position on genocide elsewhere, including Xinjiang Province. So, I am encouraging consistency in calling out such horrific human practices when they occur.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Burns, welcome. I have long believed China poses the single-greatest geopolitical threat to the United States for the next century. There are many domains on which we are standing up to China. One of the most important concerns Taiwan, and I worry that the threat to our Taiwanese allies is becoming acute.

This week, the Chinese filled commercial ships with dozens of military tanks and practiced their amphibious landing capabilities in preparation for “future battlefields.” Earlier in the month, 149 Chinese aircraft made incursions into Taiwan’s air defense zone over the span of just 4 days. U.S. commanders have publicly assessed that an invasion of Taiwan is “much closer to us than most think.”

Meanwhile, Taiwan has been asking the United States to expedite the delivery of several squadrons of F-16s ordered in 2019. I strongly believe we have to do more to get them what they need to defend themselves, and I want to ask you a couple of questions about that.

Number one, how do you see the Chinese threat to Taiwan, and what should we be doing to deter that threat?

Ambassador BURNS. Senator, thank you.

It is a growing Chinese threat to Taiwan, attempts to bully and intimidate and to send these 149 aircraft into the air defense identification zone of Taiwan. And you combine that with the statements of the Chinese leadership, which are very aggressive and clear, we obviously have a self-interest and under the Taiwan Relations Act an obligation and commitment to help deepen our involvement in helping Taiwan to defend itself. And Congress and the executive branch—and we talked about this when we met in your office—have that authority and have that responsibility.

On the F-16 issue, the Biden administration has come forward with advanced Howitzer sale of \$750 million. I think a lot of experts believe that Taiwan needs a greater asymmetric defense capacity, needs to spend money on that to repel, as you say, an amphibious, the threat of an amphibious invasion or an airborne invasion, whatever the Chinese are thinking of. And I think that in the Taiwan Relations Act, it talks about the United States needing to make clear that its deterrent is in place, the power of our military, in the Indo-Pacific, and our allies, of course, have to be part of this.

So, I think everyone here who has talked about Taiwan, and myself included, ought to be more concerned because the Chinese clearly are on a different path than they were 30 or 20 years ago.

Senator CRUZ. I think one of the most important steps we can and should take to stand with Taiwan is help prepare and equip them to defend themselves and to defend themselves effectively against a serious military incursion from China. I am intending to introduce legislation, the Taiwan Arms Act, that raises Taiwan’s status for arms sales to that of our closest allies and partners.

It is important, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on this committee and other committees to see that it expeditiously becomes law.

But let me turn to another aspect. One part of the solution to ensuring that our Taiwan allies have what they need to defend themselves involve arms sales such as the legislation I am introducing, the Taiwan Arms Act. Another component of it, however, derives from our current policy of strategic ambiguity towards Taiwan and towards Taiwan status. And I am concerned that that longstanding policy—and it is a policy that has existed across Democrat and Republican administrations. I am concerned that it is undermining our efforts to bolster Taiwan.

I have long advocated there is great virtue to clarity in foreign policy. The State Department is notorious for embracing lack of clarity, and strategic ambiguity seems to be one of the favorite tools of Foggy Bottom. In the context of China and Taiwan, the Chinese Communist Party I believe interprets ambiguity as weakness and as a signal that we are not committed to Taiwan's security.

How do you assess our current efforts to deter China, and what do you think the role that strategic ambiguity has in those current efforts?

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you, Senator.

My own view, and this is also the view, of course, and more importantly of the Biden administration, is that the smartest and effective way for us to help deter aggressive actions by Taiwan—by China, excuse me, across the Taiwan Strait will be to stay with the policy that has been in place, and that is the Taiwan Relations Act, the three joint statements of 1972, '79, and '82, and President Reagan's six assurances of 1982.

They are time-tested. They allow under the Taiwan Relations Act the executive and Congress to do more, if you choose to do more, if both branches choose to do more to help Taiwan defend itself. Clearly, this is a different situation. You are right about that, but this is a policy that can succeed if we execute it consistently and with some strength.

And as I said before, and I do not mean to repeat myself, but maybe the most important thing we could do is maintain the American military position in Japan, in the Republic of Korea, in that first island chain, but also out to our Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, and to be an effective deterrent to keep the peace. That is also part of the Taiwan Relations Act, that the United States has a role. Japan has a role.

And I think under the banner or the umbrella of a one China policy, where we recognize the People's Republic as the sole legal Government of China that has been the policy since 1979, we also have this unofficial relationship with Taiwan, and we can exercise responsibilities within that context. And I think that is the smartest way to deter the Chinese from trying to exercise force, as opposed to keeping the peace and having a more respectful, long-term conversation with Taiwan.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Thank you, Ambassador, for your answers to the questions that have been posed.

The record for this particular part of the hearing will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, October 21. Please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than Thursday. I would urge you, Ambassador, that upon receipt of questions for the record that you answer them as expeditiously and as fully as possible so that we can schedule your nomination for a business meeting.

And with that and the thanks of the committee, you are excused at this time.

Ambassador BURNS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We have two nominations on the next panel, and we will ask those nominees to come forward.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. I would ask our nominees to take their seats. We have two nominations on this second panel. They are Rahm Emanuel to be the Ambassador to Japan and Mr. Jonathan Kaplan to be the Ambassador to Singapore.

I understand that Senator Durbin and also Senator Hagerty will be introducing Mayor Emanuel today and that Senator Hickenlooper will be introducing Mr. Kaplan.

So, I see Senator Durbin is here with us. Let me turn to Senator Durbin.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD J. DURBIN,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS**

Senator DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Risch.

It is an honor to have the opportunity to share a few words of introduction for Rahm Emanuel to be our next Ambassador to Japan. Yesterday, a few colleagues and I had a chance to speak with the new IAEA Director General, Mariano Grossi. I think several of you may have met with him as well.

We talked about not only Iran's future and nuclear program, but also North Korea. It reminded me that Japan, one of our most important allies in Asia, is at the forefront of several key national security priorities for our Nation. Notably, the nuclear threat on and from the Korean peninsula, Chinese actions in the South China Sea, and regional economic pressure, the undermining of Hong Kong's democracy and threats against Taiwan.

With the dawn of the AUKUS pact, America has signaled a national commitment to the Indo-Pacific region. We need to be certain that our allies and friends and partners like Japan have a clear understanding of our goals. That is why the appointment of a new Ambassador to Japan is timely and critical. Rahm Emanuel is the right person for that responsibility.

I have known Rahm for more than 30 years. Perhaps his wife Amy is the only one in the room who has known him longer. I have worked with him in many capacities, his work as staff leader in the Clinton White House, as a member of the Illinois congressional delegation, when he became chief of staff to President Obama, and

most closely when he was mayor of the city of Chicago. I can tell you what is obvious. He is bright, energetic, and focused.

Any mayor who can cobble together a budget in the Chicago City Council is ready for major league diplomacy. He has repeatedly shown that he can build winning coalitions at every level, and he has delivered with a legacy that we still enjoy in the city of Chicago and State of Illinois. We can still see his good work today in the Chicago Public School System, transportation modernization, and in the game-changing projects like the Riverwalk in the city of Chicago.

I understand Senator Hagerty is also going to introduce Rahm. I thank him for that, and he previously served as Ambassador to Japan and knows the challenges all too well.

Quite simply, Rahm Emanuel's lifetime of public service has prepared him to speak for America on the global stage. As such, I hope this committee will look favorably on his nomination.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Durbin.

I see Senator Hickenlooper is with us. So, let me turn to Senator Hickenlooper.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO**

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Thank you, Chair and Ranking Member. Appreciate your time and effort on this committee.

I am honored to join you today to introduce Jonathan Kaplan, President Biden's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore.

Mr. Kaplan—well, in politics, as you all know, you get to meet a number of remarkable people, and Mr. Kaplan is one of the more, if not one of the most, perhaps the most remarkable person I know. But before I go into some of the accolades on Mr. Kaplan, let me give a little context.

Singapore is a crucial partner in an important region, Asia's largest recipient of U.S. foreign direct investment, a close ally in cooperation on security and defense. There is a truly dynamic trade relationship with Singapore, and they share our commitment to the rule of law. It is also a part of the world that has an enduring sense of possibility.

Both of our countries are diverse, multicultural hubs of innovation. They are both grappling with the looming threat of climate change and the rise of China. So, much in common and a lot to learn from one another, and it is essential to have someone of great quality to steer this partnership at such a sensitive moment.

And that leader we have in Jonathan Kaplan, who shares that enduring sense of possibility. He is a tested entrepreneur who understands the importance of bringing people together to achieve common goals to solve problems in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

He is the chair of EducationSuperHighway, a nonprofit organization dedicated to bridging the digital divide in schools. Jon and his team built a bipartisan movement across all 50 States to bring high-speed Internet to over 99 percent of American schoolchildren.

He worked with governors like me. In 2016, Colorado partnered with EducationSuperHighway on Kids Link Colorado and expanded

quality, affordable broadband to schools across the State. It was a huge success, and these investments proved critical when learning went online during COVID.

Jon has the mindset of an inventor and an innovator. As an inventor, he has the patents to prove it. He never accepts things as they always have been. He is always envisioning how they could be better and then bringing people together to create that future.

Maybe you will remember the flip phone video, which he was behind and responsible for. His numerous business ventures have transformed how we use not just technology, but how we record video, as I said, how we play online games, and even how you get your lunch to go.

He has extensive experience in the East Asian theater. He has traveled to over 75 countries around the world. He has worked especially closely with corporate and government officials in China, Japan, and South Korea. He has exactly the right perspective and exactly the right experience to represent the United States in Singapore, a country that embodies the same commitment to innovation and that same enduring sense of possibility for this vitally important partner at this vitally important time.

It has been now almost 4 years since this post was last filled. It is critical that we act swiftly to confirm a U.S. Ambassador to Singapore and, hopefully, with a large majority, which sends a message in and of itself.

So, I support Jon's nomination, and I hope this committee will do the same.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hickenlooper.

I see that Senator Hagerty has joined us as well and wants to join in introducing Senator—excuse me, Mayor Emanuel.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BILL HAGERTY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch. I appreciate your holding this hearing.

I want to thank you for allowing me to introduce the person I think will be the next U.S. Ambassador to Japan. It is a position that I hold very near and dear to my heart, having served as our most recent Ambassador to Japan from 2017 to 2019.

And I would like to say this. That representing one's own country is one of the greatest honors in the world. It really brings home the importance of the exceptional nation that the United States is, and it is an incredible honor that is being bestowed upon those of you that will serve our Nation as Ambassador. It is certainly an incredible honor that my family and I cherished, and I feel certain that you will, too.

Today, I am here in a very different role. I am here as a member of the committee that oversaw my nomination. I am over here in a different seat to introduce the nominee to be our next Ambassador to Japan.

While our political backgrounds could not be more different and I am sure there are many issues upon which we strongly disagree, but through our recent discussions it has become clear to me that Mayor Emanuel shares my unwavering conviction that the U.S.-



Japan relationship is the cornerstone for peace and prosperity in the entire Indo-Pacific region. It is a region that has become even more dangerous day by day, and that makes the position of U.S. Ambassador to Japan all the more important for the United States. This is a position that has remained vacant for too long.

When I served as U.S. Ambassador in Tokyo, my ability to directly engage in person with senior Japanese Government officials, with business leaders, and most importantly, the Japanese people helped to bring our strategic relationship with Japan to new heights. During my tenure, tensions in the region were remarkably high, with North Korea launching multiple ballistic missiles over Japan and Communist China threatening Japan's administration of the Senkaku Islands in the South China—in the East China Sea. The Japanese people and the world needed to hear directly from the U.S. Ambassador when those threats occurred, and they did.

As the global security focus continues to shift toward the Indo-Pacific to counter Russia's aggression and the predatory actions of Communist China, the U.S.-Japan alliance must remain the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and security in the region. And for this posture to hold, the U.S. Ambassador will need to play a critical role in advancing the relationship.

Today, we have a great threat from Communist China toward our mutual friend Taiwan. This is a threat that requires a strong and unified response from both the U.S. and Japan. Mayor Emanuel understands this critical circumstance and has assured me that he will do everything in the immense power of the U.S. Ambassador to Japan to stand strong for Taiwan's freedom, for their democratic rule.

Our next Ambassador to Japan must be prepared to continue a strong and clear-eyed stance for America's interest in the Indo-Pacific. He must stand for the strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance throughout the region while continuing to support and strengthen our military presence in Japan. This presence is the largest complement of U.S. military forces stationed anywhere in the world. Mayor Emanuel has committed to me that he will be that Ambassador.

As a former Ambassador, I know that sometimes challenges occur from within the host nation. Japan has an outdated judicial system that places that nation at a constant competitive disadvantage. We have American citizens—today, a Tennessee citizen—who are caught in the Japanese judicial system, suffering from unfair and barbaric treatment in the so-called hostage justice system of Japan. It is cruel, it is inhumane, and it is unjust.

Mayor Emanuel has assured me that he will make addressing this sad and difficult situation a top priority if he is confirmed. This matters a great deal to me, and it matters to the people of Tennessee. We must stand for the human rights of U.S. citizens. And when our citizens are unjustly held, they must be returned home.

The region and the world will need to hear that the commitment of the United States to defend Japan remains ironclad and unwavering. That was my message as Ambassador, and it is a message that I am confident Mayor Emanuel will deliver if he is confirmed.

While the United States will remain the predominant global power for the foreseeable future, the emerging set of challenges in the Indo-Pacific region will require our friends to stand shoulder to shoulder with us, especially Japan. As I mentioned, Mayor Emanuel and I have had many long and productive conversations about this position, both the challenges of the position and the expectations. I welcome him today, and I intend to provide him with the bipartisan support that I was fortunate to receive from this committee during my U.S. Senate confirmation. A critical post like this deserves no less from a qualified and capable nominee.

I once again congratulate Mayor Emanuel and his family. I welcome them here. And as I said at the beginning of my remarks, I hope this committee takes into consideration the importance of the position and the consequence for our national security if this post were allowed to remain vacant any longer.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty. Thank you for your service to our Nation as our former Ambassador to Japan. We appreciate that service and your insights here on the committee, and we appreciate you lending your bipartisan vote—voice Mayor Emanuel's nomination.

Let us turn to the nominees. Mayor Emanuel, it is good to see you again. We welcome you and your family. And I want to note that your son Zach is with us, who is a U.S. Naval officer, and we appreciate his service to our country.

I believe that you have the necessary knowledge and experience to represent us well in Japan. As you know, Japan is one of our four most important allies in the world. For over 70 years, the U.S.-Japan partnership has played a vital role in ensuring peace, stability, and economic development in Asia and beyond. Our bilateral alliance serves as proof that two nations can overcome past differences and work together towards a better future.

If confirmed, I trust that Mayor Emanuel's vast experience, both in public service and in the private sector, will serve him and our country well as he navigates the opportunities and complexities of the U.S.-Japan relationship and safeguarding our partnership, one that is grounded in common interests and common values. I will look forward to hearing from you about how you plan to approach Japan and the region as well and the type of Ambassador you hope to be.

As you are aware, today is also the anniversary of the murder of Laquan McDonald. My heart goes out to his family on this day. I believe all of us share that sentiment. And just so many other victims and their families, as we work to deliver meaningful reforms to the black and brown communities who endure injustices every day. And certainly, we will give you an opportunity to speak to that in the course of this hearing.

Mr. Kaplan, congratulations on your nomination. We welcome your family as well. Singapore, as I know you appreciate, is central for our engagement in Southeast Asia and with ASEAN, and success in Southeast Asia is central to our success in the Indo-Pacific and with our challenge with China.

While the Biden administration has launched significant initiatives to bolster the broader regional architecture, including through

AUKUS and the QUAD, I believe that more attention is needed in Southeast Asia, including on issues like regional trade engagement and economic statecraft. At the end of the day, how we integrate with the region's political economy is far more consequential than our military or security presence alone, and Singapore is, of course, a key regional trade and economic partner.

I was encouraged by recent agreements with Singapore to support our common goals in addressing climate change, cybersecurity, and supply chain resilience. Overall, I believe we need to reinvigorate our diplomatic presence and outreach to Singapore, and I trust that you will be up to that task. I look forward to hearing your goals for how we can deepen this important diplomatic relationship even further.

We recently—Senator Risch and I recently had the Singaporean foreign minister here, and he spoke about how he desires—he and Singapore desires to see our engagement. But when we have not had a confirmed Ambassador in Singapore for almost 5 years now, it is tough to have diplomatic engagement, which underscores the importance of getting you in place as soon as possible.

With that, let me turn to the ranking member for his remarks.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, both of you, to our nominees for your willingness to serve, and your families as well.

On the nomination of Ambassador to Japan, our alliance with Japan is the bedrock of our ability to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific. Over the past decades, the U.S.-Japan alliance has become a critical example of how strong defense ties can bring about stability and prosperity.

As we look forward to working with the new Japanese prime minister and his team, it is vital that we strengthen and sustain this critical alliance, especially in the face of growing regional threats. We have seen important steps in that direction, including the emphasis on cooperation with Japan, Australia, and India through the QUAD.

The U.S. and Japan are also working together with other partners in the region to finance the construction of a reliable and secure undersea cable connecting Palau to the rest of the Indo-Pacific as well as bring electricity to Papua New Guinea. This is the foundation for future U.S.-Japan cooperation in advanced technology, supply chain diversification, global health, and other critical areas.

On the security front, we must maintain and strengthen the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence commitments. I have said it before, and I will say it again now. A sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy or any perceived weakening of our extended deterrence is a betrayal of our alliance in the Indo-Pacific, including Japan. We must ensure our system is equipped to provide advanced capabilities to our allies in the region. To achieve this, Japan must do its part and work with us on cybersecurity and technology security as committed during the Suga summit, or the Biden-Suga summit.

However, certain parts of the State Department that come up with reasons not to provide these critical capabilities are a major impediment on this issue. If confirmed, you are—Mayor Emanuel, you are going to see the security environment we face firsthand, and I expect that you will encounter instincts and policies that

would weaken our security ties with Japan. We should not tolerate those.

On the nomination, Mr. Kaplan, to be Ambassador to Singapore, if confirmed, you will be our steward in one of our closest partners in Southeast Asia. Idahoans know just how important our security partnership with Singapore is. We are proud to host, and have for some time, Singaporean F-15 pilots and their families as they train at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Mountain Home, Idaho. We should all support expanding our security cooperation with Singapore, building on the memorandum of understanding renewed in 2019.

On the economic side, I want to hear how you will apply your private sector background to growing economic cooperation with Singapore, including on supply chain issues. Singapore is an important trading partner for the State of Idaho.

On the defense side, Singapore has made clear that while it seeks a close relationship with the United States, it also seeks to maintain cooperation with China, including through increased defense ties. Another critical task for our next Ambassador is to work with Singapore on the issues where China seeks to exert pressure or undue influence in the country.

And along with the chairman, I want to underscore the meeting that we had that was, I think, a very significant and forward-looking meeting we had with the people from Singapore. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on all of those issues. With that, I yield back, Mr. chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

We will turn to our nominees. We ask you to summarize your statements in about 5 minutes. Your full statements will be included in the record, without objection.

And we will recognize Mayor Emanuel first.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RAHM EMANUEL OF ILLINOIS, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO JAPAN**

Mr. EMANUEL. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Japan. I appreciate the confidence that President Biden has placed in me, and I am grateful for the consideration of this distinguished committee.

Over 23 years in public service, there has been one constant in my life—Amy, my wife of 27 years. Six elections, two White House appointments, and one nomination later, she is the reason I am here today. Amy is living proof of the timeless truth that behind every successful person is an astonished spouse.

Together, we have raised three great children. Zach graduated from UCLA and is serving as an intelligence officer in the United States Navy. Ilana, a Brown graduate, joined a cable news network, and Leah is a junior at Princeton.

This post has been held by distinguished Americans—Vice President Walter Mondale, Speaker Tom Foley, Senator Majority Leaders Howard Baker, Mike Mansfield, and Ambassador Caroline Ken-

nedy. This long list also includes a member of this committee, Senator Hagerty. I want to thank him for his words and his comments earlier. If confirmed, I will continue the example he and his predecessors set and ensure America's interests in the region remain paramount.

An Ambassador is only as effective as the civil and Foreign Service professionals and U.S. armed forces who surround them. In Japan, these Americans have advanced our Nation's ideals without an appointed Ambassador for 2 years. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their patriotism and professionalism to our mission in Japan, and I hope soon to serve our country alongside them.

We are at a critical juncture in our foreign policy, in American foreign policy in this region. What we build in partnership with Japan over the next 3 years will determine America's posture for the next 30. The challenges and opportunities we face underscore the imperative of strengthening our bonds with our closest ally, Japan.

For more than 60 years, the partnership between the United States and Japan has been the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in a free and open Indo-Pacific. Our alliance advances our shared interests and shared values. If confirmed, my top priority will be to deepen these ties while we confront our common challenges.

China aims to conquer through division. America's strategy is security through unity. That regional unity is built on the shoulders of the U.S.-Japan alliance. If confirmed, I will draw on my two and a half decades of public service. As senior adviser to President Clinton and chief of staff to President Obama, I served as a trusted adviser on domestic and national security issues.

As mayor, my administration made it a priority to bring the world to Chicago and Chicago to the world. During my tenure, Chicago led the Nation in corporate relocations and foreign direct investment for 7 consecutive years. I also presided over the most active sister city organizations in America.

As mayor, I traveled to Japan to meet with public and private sector leaders and signed the Japan-Chicago Partnership Agreement with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and eight additional ministries, marking the first time the Japanese Government entered into a formal agreement with a North American city.

In addition, the Governor of Tokyo signed the Chicago Climate Charter, a first-of-its-kind municipal agreement. This trip laid the groundwork for deepening Chicago and Japan relations, including corporate relocations by two preeminent Japanese companies, DMG Mori and Beam Suntory, and many cultural exchange initiatives.

Two people inspired me to enter public service nearly 30 years ago. My mother, Marsha Emanuel, has spent her entire life serving others as a nurse, social worker, and a leader of CORE, the Congress On Racial Equality, in Chicago, where she was instrumental in the integration of Chicago's beaches and housing in the early '60s.

This past October 3 marked the 2-year anniversary of my father's passing. Dr. Benjamin Emanuel immigrated to this country in 1953 with just \$13 in his pocket after fighting in Israel's War

of Independence. He campaigned for national healthcare during the early '60s and quit the AMA over its opposition.

He then sued the City of Chicago for lead in household paint and started a pediatrics practice based on one rule. No child was rejected because their parents could not pay. Through his years, he built his practice into one of the largest in Chicago.

If confirmed, this will be the first professional pursuit I will undertake without my best friend, my father, by my side. The drive and values I have come from my parents, who always loved and supported me, even though I did not become a doctor like my older brother.

For my mother and father, America was a place of possibility. In his wallet, my father carried a picture of the boat that brought him to the United States. That photo represents what he instilled in me and my two brothers, the beacon of hope, possibility, and endless opportunity this country is to the world.

I wish he were here today. First, while my mother is proud, he would be shocked and amazed that I am sitting here. And second, it would reaffirm his belief in that special place we all love, America.

And the final thing I have to say is the first thing I want to do, work closely with this committee and the Congress as a whole to ensure that we work seamlessly across the aisle, across the Capitol, and across the Pacific to advance America's interests in the vital Indo-Pacific region.

I would like to thank this committee for your consideration of my nomination. If confirmed, I intend to work with you to promote our economic prosperity, strengthen our national security, and ensure our democratic values remain paramount to the U.S.-Japan alliance.

Under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, working with the ranking member, Senator Risch, this committee has continued its proud bipartisan tradition of putting country ahead of party. That is a mission and a mandate I proudly share.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Emanuel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. RAHM EMANUEL

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee: It is an honor to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to Japan. I appreciate the confidence that President Biden has placed in me, and I am grateful for the consideration of this distinguished committee.

Over 23 years in public service, there has been one constant: Amy, my wife of 27 years. Six elections, two White House appointments, and one nomination later, she is the reason I am here today. Amy is living proof of the timeless truth that behind every successful person is an astonished spouse.

Together, we've raised three great children. Zach graduated from UCLA and is serving as an Intelligence Officer in the Navy. Ilana, a Brown graduate, joined a cable news network. Leah is a junior at Princeton.

This post has been held by distinguished Americans—Vice President Walter Mondale, Speaker Tom Foley, Senate Majority Leaders Mike Mansfield and Howard Baker, and Ambassador Caroline Kennedy. This long list also includes a member of this committee—Senator Hagerty. If confirmed, I will continue the example he and his predecessors set, and ensure America's interests in the region remain paramount.

An Ambassador is only as effective as the Civil and Foreign Service Professionals, and U.S. Armed Forces who surround them. In Japan, these Americans have ad-

vanced our nation's ideals without an appointed Ambassador for two years. I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their patriotism and professionalism to our Mission in Japan, and I hope to soon serve our country alongside them.

We are at a critical juncture in American foreign policy in this region. What we build in partnership with Japan over the next three years will determine America's posture for the next 30. The challenges and opportunities we face underscore the imperative of strengthening our bonds with our closest ally, Japan.

For more than 60 years, the partnership between the United States and Japan has been the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in a free and open Indo-Pacific. Our alliance advances our shared interests and shared values. If confirmed, my top priority will be to deepen these ties while we confront our common challenges.

China aims to conquer through division. America's strategy is security through unity. That regional unity is built on the U.S.-Japan alliance.

If confirmed, I will draw on my two-and-a-half decades of public service. As Senior Advisor to President Clinton and Chief of Staff to President Obama, I served as a trusted advisor on major domestic and national security issues.

As Mayor, my administration made it a priority to bring the world to Chicago, and Chicago to the world. During my tenure, Chicago led the nation in corporate relocations and foreign direct investment for seven consecutive years. I also presided over the most active sister cities organization in America.

As Mayor, I traveled to Japan to meet with public and private sector leaders and signed The Japan-Chicago Partnership Agreement with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the eight additional ministries, marking the first time the Japanese Government entered into a formal agreement with a North American city. In addition, the Governor of Tokyo signed the Chicago Climate Charter—a first-of-its-kind municipal agreement. This trip laid the groundwork for deepening Chicago and Japan relations, including corporate relocations by two preeminent Japanese companies—DMG Mori and Beam Suntory—and many cultural exchange initiatives.

Two people inspired me to enter public service nearly 30 years ago. My mother, Marsha Emanuel, has spent her entire life serving others as a nurse, a social worker, and head of CORE—the Congress of Racial Equality—in Chicago, where she was instrumental in the integration of Chicago's beaches and housing in the early 1960s.

October 3rd marked the two-year anniversary of my father's passing. Dr. Benjamin Emanuel immigrated to this country in 1953 with just \$13 in his pocket after fighting in Israel's War of Independence. He campaigned for national health care during the early 1960s and quit the American Medical Association in protest over its opposition. He then sued the City of Chicago for lead in household paint and started a pediatric practice based on one rule: No child was rejected because their parents could not pay. Through his years, he built his practice into one of the largest in Chicago.

If confirmed, this will be the first professional pursuit I will undertake without my best friend—my father—by my side. The drive and values I have come from my parents, who always loved and supported me—even though I didn't become a doctor like my older brother.

For my father and mother, America was a place of possibility. In his wallet, my father carried a picture of the boat that brought him to the United States. That photo represents what he instilled in me and my two brothers: the beacon of hope, opportunity, and endless possibility this great country is to the world.

I wish he was here today. First, while my mother is proud, he would be shocked and amazed that I was sitting here. Second, it would reaffirm his belief in that special place we love—America.

The final thing I have to say is the first thing I want to do: work closely with this committee and the Congress as a whole to ensure that we work seamlessly, across the aisle, across the Capitol, and across the Pacific, to advance America's interests in the vital Indo-Pacific region.

I would like to thank this committee for your consideration of my nomination. If confirmed, I intend to work with you to promote our economic prosperity, strengthen our national security, and ensure our democratic values remain paramount through the U.S.-Japan alliance. Under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, working with Ranking Member Senator Risch, this committee has continued its proud bipartisan tradition of putting country ahead of party. That is a mission and a mandate I proudly share.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mayor.  
Mr. Kaplan?

**STATEMENT OF JONATHAN ERIC KAPLAN OF CALIFORNIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

Mr. KAPLAN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, I am proud and honored to be asked to serve our country as the Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore, and it is my privilege to appear here before you today.

I would like to begin my remarks by thanking President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence in me. I am also grateful to share this day with my friends, family, and especially my daughter, Samantha.

Finally, I would like to thank Senator Hickenlooper for his words of introduction and to the hard-working professionals at the State Department and the White House for their steadfast support of my nomination throughout this process.

Vice President Harris noted during her August visit to Singapore our world is embarking on a new era, one with many new challenges and exciting new opportunities. Our partnership with Singapore is critically important to strengthen our relationship and defend our positions within the Indo-Pacific region. For 55 years, U.S.-Singapore diplomacy has fostered a strong friendship, a mutual respect, and a steadfast commitment to one another.

The United States and Singapore's enduring partnership is based on mutual economic interests, robust security and defense cooperation, and strong people-to-people ties. Our two countries are close partners in support of a rules-based economy and unwavering security throughout the region.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, Singapore is a vital economic partner to the United States. More than 5,400 U.S. companies are registered in the city-state, and these businesses provide responsible, sustainable investment for the region and directly support more than 215,000 American jobs here at home.

In 2003, the United States and Singapore signed a free trade agreement, our first bilateral goods and services agreement with any Asian country and the cornerstone of a now \$90 billion trade partnership. The United States is the largest foreign investor in Singapore with more than \$270 billion in direct investments, making Singapore the largest recipient of U.S. investment in the Indo-Pacific.

If confirmed, I plan to strengthen our bilateral trade relationship, advance an economic agenda that promotes a shared prosperity, further secure our economic resiliency and access to supply, and work closely with Singapore to tackle the climate crisis.

Singapore is a critical partner in enabling strong U.S. security presence in the region. It is Southeast Asia's largest purchaser of U.S. military equipment, with more than \$20 billion invested in both direct commercial sales and foreign military sales over the past decade.

Singapore's agreement to purchase the F-35B aircraft highlights the historically close relationship between our air forces and exemplifies our close security cooperation. The cornerstone of this partnership is the 1990 U.S.-Singapore Memorandum of Under-



standing, which governs our presence in Singapore and allows for the rotational deployment of both U.S. littoral combat ships and Navy P-8s. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to strengthen our security cooperation and defend a rules-based international order, which has supported peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

The United States and Singapore have also benefitted from a strong law enforcement and home security partnership. This work strengthens the security of our citizens, our companies, and our nations by combatting the difficult challenges of commercial crime, terrorism, cybercrime, and illicit trade. Personal relationships are the foundation of a strong and secure Indo-Pacific region. U.S.-Singapore people-to-people ties are robust, and Singaporeans are active participants in U.S. educational and exchange programs.

Prior to the pandemic, more than 4,000 Singaporeans were studying in the United States, and more than 1,000 Americans studied in Singapore. In fact, more than half of Singapore's cabinet ministers have studied in the United States, including the current prime minister, who studied at Harvard.

The United States and Singapore have also bonded together through our third-country training program. For more than 10 years, the program has provided technical assistance and educational opportunities to over 1,500 ASEAN officials, drawing on the depth and breadth of the U.S.-Singaporean friendship and our expertise.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this committee to advance the United States interests in Singapore, to create an even stronger set of relationships between our two countries, and to help further a secure and rules-based Indo-Pacific region overall.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear here today, and I look forward to any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kaplan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN ERIC KAPLAN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and distinguished members of the committee, I am proud and honored to be asked to serve our country as the Ambassador to Singapore and it is a privilege to appear before you today.

I'd like to begin my remarks by thanking President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and confidence in me. I'm also grateful to share this day with my friends, family, and especially with my daughter, Samantha. Finally, I'd like to thank Senator Hickenlooper for his words of introduction and to the hardworking professionals at the State Department and the White House for their steadfast support of my nomination throughout this process.

Over the past several decades, I have had the pleasure to visit more than 75 countries, 22 of them within Asia. I've been a successful executive, entrepreneur, and philanthropist. I've built diverse teams with common purpose and have led large organizations through difficult times and within challenging environments.

As Vice President Harris noted during her August visit to Singapore, our world is embarking on a new era—one with many new challenges and exciting new opportunities. Our partnership with Singapore is critically important to strengthen our relationships and defend our positions within the Indo-Pacific region. U.S.-Singapore diplomacy has fostered a strong friendship, a mutual respect, and a steadfast commitment to one another.

For 55 years, the United States and Singapore have forged an enduring partnership based on our mutual economic interests, robust security and defense coopera-

tion, and strong people-to-people ties. Our two countries are close partners in support of a rules-based economy and unwavering security throughout the region.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, Singapore is a vital economic partner for the United States. More than 5,400 U.S. companies are registered in the city-state, and these businesses provide responsible, sustainable investment for the region and directly support more than 215,000 American jobs here at home. In 2003, the United States and Singapore signed a Free Trade Agreement, our first bilateral goods and services agreement with an Asian country, and the cornerstone of a now more than \$90 billion trade partnership.

The United States is the largest foreign investor in Singapore, with more than \$270 billion in direct investments and making Singapore the largest recipient of U.S. investment in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I plan to strengthen our bilateral trade relationship, advance an economic agenda that promotes a shared prosperity, further secure economic resiliency and our access to supply, and work with Singapore to tackle the climate crisis.

Singapore is a critical partner in enabling a strong U.S. security presence in the region. It is Southeast Asia's largest purchaser of U.S. military equipment, with more than \$20 billion invested in both direct commercial sales and foreign military sales over the past decade. Singapore's agreement to purchase the F-35B aircraft highlights the historically close relationship between our air forces and exemplifies our close partnership. The cornerstone of our security cooperation is the 1990 U.S.-Singapore Memorandum of Understanding, which governs our presence in Singapore and allows for the rotational deployment of both U.S. littoral combat ships and Navy P-8s. If confirmed, I will look for opportunities to strengthen our security partnership and defend the rules-based international order, which has supported peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

The United States and Singapore have also benefited from a robust law enforcement and homeland security partnership that strengthens the security of our citizens, our companies, and our nations by combating the complex challenges of commercial crime, terrorism, cybercrime, border security, and illicit trade.

Personal relationships are a foundation of a strong and secure Indo-Pacific region. U.S.-Singapore people-to-people ties are robust, and Singaporeans are active participants in U.S. educational and exchange programs. Prior to the pandemic, more than 4,000 Singaporeans were studying in U.S. universities, while more than 1,000 Americans studied in Singapore. In addition, more than 350 Singaporeans participated in other cultural and educational exchanges in the United States in 2019, most notably through the Fulbright Program, the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, and the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program. More than half of Singapore's cabinet ministers have studied in the United States, including the current Prime Minister who studied at Harvard University. Over the past decade, the United States and Singapore have partnered together through the Third Country Training Program to provide technical assistance and educational opportunities for over 1,500 ASEAN officials, drawing on the depth and breadth of U.S. and Singaporean friendship and expertise.

If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with this Committee to advance the U.S. interests in Singapore, to create even stronger relationships between our two countries, and help to further a secure and rules-based Indo-Pacific region overall.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear here today, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you both.

We will start a round of 5-minute questions. Before I recognize myself for that, let me ask some questions that are on behalf of the committee as a whole. They speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you. So, I would ask each of you to provide a "yes" or "no" answer to the following questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff, when invited?

Mr. EMANUEL. Yes.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keeping the committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

Mr. EMANUEL. Yes.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

Mr. EMANUEL. Yes.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

Mr. EMANUEL. Yes.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. The nominees have both responded “yes” to all those questions.

Well, let me start off. Mayor Emanuel, I want to talk to you about our previous nominee. We were talking about China a lot, and Japan is going to play a big role in that. Given the realities of our new era of strategic competition with China, what do you think the U.S.-Japan alliance needs to concentrate and act upon to be capable to meet the new and emerging regional challenges? In essence, how do we get them to be all in?

Mr. EMANUEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question.

As we discussed yesterday, I think the world has learned a lot in COVID. We exposed some of our vulnerabilities, and I think China has been exposed for their venality. You can ask that of India. You can ask that of the people leaving Hong Kong. You can ask that of what has happened now to Australia in that area, and you can also see it by how Philippines have reacted to what has happened to their fish fleet out and in their border.

The region is desperate for America’s leadership, and that was seen recently with AUKUS. The entire strategy in the region, when we repeat the words “Indo-Pacific,” that actually was an architectural frame first deposited by former Prime Minister Abe. And we have all adopted it, which means that our ally sees their vision as one that we have adopted and will advance.

Every effort we make in bringing our allies together not only militarily or strategically, but also with economic integration, also with cultural and political, is built on the shoulders of a U.S.-Japan relationship. And to me, the way we confront China, their entire strategy, as I think everybody can see, is to literally make sure that all roads—it is a one-way road to Beijing’s benefit.

And the countries in that area know that. They are desperate for America all in, and Australia showed they are ready to bet long on America. That is also true of Japan, our longest, deepest ally in the region. And what we must do is make that a cornerstone of both military efforts, strategic efforts.

And I would conclude on this one point. The recent prime minister gave a speech and said that they are going to raise their budget in defense spending above 1 percent, which has been the norm. That means for the first time—I know that Senator Hagerty must have been lobbying on that constantly—it is happening.

Making sure that they do the type of weapons acquisitions that are interoperable with us, but also part of our strategic blueprint and frame makes that a key opportunity. Because I think now not just in the region, but in this particular friendship and partnership, it is at an inflection point. As I said in my remarks, and I want to echo it again, what we do over the next 3 years will determine our presence, our vision for the next 30 in the region.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me turn to Japan in terms of the context of being one of the world's leading technology industries, especially in fundamental technologies like semiconductor components. How do we facilitate greater cooperation between the United States and Japan on tech and innovation, and how do we make steps to better integrate those efforts with a regional strategy more broadly?

Mr. EMANUEL. Well, Mr. Chairman, I see this as a unique opportunity. Whether it is on intellectual property, whether it is on infrastructure investment, whether it is on supply chain, we have a partner that is begging for America's continued investment window. When Australia, by way of example, bet long on the United States, China's reaction was to say we want to end TPP. That was an attempt to say we are going to be the dominant player.

Everything we do has to send one message, one signal. It is a good bet to bet long on the United States. And Japan has a huge partnership, whether it is in the pharmaceutical space, the IP in general, infrastructure, supply chain, to be that partner. And you can see that already by President Biden and his partnership is not only in the QUAD, the two meetings they have had, but also in his discussions with individual or with the Japanese prime minister.

The issue of supply chain, the issue of microchips is key to that strategy, and I think Japan is ready for the type of next stage in U.S.-Japan relationships. And that as we make these investments, it is an opportunity to actually start to, as I would say, tighten the economic integration of the largest and the third-largest economy. When those two are tight, it is a very, very strong force.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Lastly, as I noted earlier, I would like to give you an opportunity to address the committee concerning Laquan McDonald. So, take a moment to do so.

Mr. EMANUEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to address the question.

Seven years ago, a young man had his life taken on the streets of the city of Chicago. He had all the promise ahead of him, and a police officer took his life, killed him. I said then I am the mayor, and I am responsible and accountable for fixing this so this never happens again.

And to be honest, there is not a day or a week that has gone by in the last 7 years I have not thought about this and thought about the "what ifs" and the changes and what could have been. And I think we all know that over the last 10 years, there is not a city in this country, regardless of size, that has not dealt with the gulf between police activities and the oversight and accountability that is necessary, and Chicago is no different.

As soon as events happened, IPRA, the oversight authority, is on the scene. Shortly after that, the State's attorney opened an investigation, and not too far from then, the U.S. attorney and the FBI

opened an investigation. And you have three ongoing investigations happening simultaneously of that night and events thereof.

As you know, there is a longstanding protocol and practice that nothing is released in the middle of an investigation for fear of either prejudicing a witness or endangering the prosecution. That was the practice longstanding not just in Chicago, but across the country.

And as recently as May 2 of this year, the New York Times wrote a story saying—or reported a story that there is no uniform standard or policy for the release of police video. It does not exist today, and it did not exist back in 2014 and 2015, except for the policy that had been place about the integrity of an investigation. And you do not want to prejudice a witness. You do not want to prevent a prosecution because of premature release of video or any prima facie evidence.

Now that view and that principle runs headlong into another very important value, and that is the deep suspicion, distrust, and skepticism that exists in the community about the authorities investigating the authorities and getting to the bottom of what happened. And the longer an investigation goes on, the greater the distrust and the greater the skepticism about what is really happening here, that it is not about finding out what happened and getting to the bottom of it, but this is a whitewash and a cover-up.

And you have this kind of tension to conflict between the integrity of an investigation, so you do not harm it, and the deep, well-deserved, and well-earned distrust by the community in the authorities. Now I see in that—and this is my view—that the last person you want to make a unilateral decision about the release of a video while the FBI and the U.S. attorney, the State's attorney, and IPRA are investigating is a politician. It should be made by professionals.

The moment a politician unilaterally makes a decision in the middle of an investigation, you politicize that investigation and, more importantly, you may have endangered the prosecution in bringing somebody to justice.

Second, I would say in the first term of my tenure, I made a number of changes that dealt with oversight accountability, and it is clear to me those changes were inadequate to the level of distrust. They were, on the best, marginal. I thought I was addressing the issue, and I clearly missed the level of distrust and skepticism that existed, and that is on me.

In addition, I would say, third, the point of afterwards, there was a number of inquiries both by the inspector general, a special prosecutor, all looked at what happened and the events afterwards, and nobody suggested or concluded that anybody in my office or I, myself, did anything improper.

Now this committee is in the possession of a lot of letters of support, from the leadership of the Black Caucus in Chicago to the leadership in the House, Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker; Majority Leader Hoyer; Whip Clyburn; the chairmen of the two committees, Greg Meeks, your sister committee in the House; Chairman Adam Schiff.

You also have letters from the Chamber of Commerce and the Chicago Federation of Labor and Building Trades. All speak to my

professional capacities. You also have a letter from Pastor Marvin Hunter. He is a reverend on the West Side of the city of Chicago. And the reason that is relevant is he speaks to my person and my character, not just my professional abilities. And he is Laquan McDonald's great uncle.

We have prayed together over the last couple of years, gotten to know each other. Gotten to talk about if we had a magic wand how we would fix what is broken in our criminal justice system. Talked about current events. We have even argued about the Cubs and the Sox.

But most importantly, we have gotten to find a common understanding, and I am appreciative of his support for my nomination, as I am of the other leaders in Chicago and the leaders here in the House that I served with. And I am appreciative of what they have said.

That all being said, Mr. Chairman, it does not take away from the fact that a grave tragedy occurred 7 years ago to this day on the streets of the city of Chicago, and that tragedy sits with me, as it has every day and every week for the last 7 years.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

And you mentioned letters in the possession of the committee. All of those letters will be included in the record, including Mr. McDonald's relative.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of this hearing transcript.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Hagerty has an important engagement and has asked me to yield to him.

The CHAIRMAN. Happy to have you defer to Senator Hagerty. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you very much, Ranking Member Risch and Chairman Menendez. I will have to confess that that important engagement is my ninth grade daughter's parent-teacher conference that is coming up, and I appreciate your accommodating me to take care of that.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a super important engagement.

Senator HAGERTY. Indeed, sir. Thank you.

Mayor Emanuel, I would like to talk about the relationship between the United States and Japan. As you know, we have a critically important economic relationship with Japan. In fact, Japan is the number-one investor in my home State of Tennessee, more than all the other nations combined, in fact. That has been a vital and critical relationship with my home State.

But today, there exists a real impediment to that relationship. It has to do with the case of a U.S. citizen, a Tennessee citizen named Greg Kelly, and it is in our Nation's interest to resolve this situation quickly.

I would like to go through the facts. Greg Kelly of Tennessee was arrested in Tokyo, Japan, on November 19, 2018. Greg, a lawyer at Nissan, was charged by a Tokyo prosecutor with conspiring to underreport Carlos Ghosn's compensation as a Nissan director. Greg's defense attorneys plan to present their closing arguments

next Wednesday, October 27, 35 months after Greg was deceived into leaving his home in Tennessee and he was arrested in Japan.

Let me underscore that. It has been 35 months to get to this point where his defense attorneys are actually able to close their case. For reasons that defy logic, a verdict is not expected until March of next year, 18 months after the trial began and more than 3 1/2 years after Greg's trial—after Greg was first detained.

Here is the injustice. Impartial Japanese expert observers, including private corporate lawyer Keiko Ohara, have said that this matter should have been handled internally, not in a courtroom. Media reports indicate even Prime Minister Shinzo Abe held this view. Former Japanese prosecutor Nobuo Gohara and criminal accounting specialist Yuji Hosono have publicly stated Japan's judicial system has violated Greg's human rights and that there was no reason to arrest him because there was no criminal violation.

Mr. Kelly's lawyers believe the evidence introduced at his trial made abundantly clear that no crime was committed. In reality, this was a coup by those within Nissan management who resisted further integration into the parent Renault, and they were willing to do anything to take down someone standing in their way.

I have conveyed this concern directly to the cabinet level in Japan. I have let them know that America is the largest investor in Japan, that American executives see this as an issue that rightfully should have been resolved in a corporate boardroom, not in a prosecutor's office. This is a terrible message to send to the rest of the world.

It is bad for Japan's brand, and it is devastating to any American that happens to get caught in this system. With this type of justice system, I fear that American executives will start thinking twice about doing business in Japan.

So, here is the duty. Our embassy has a responsibility to protect U.S. citizens, to protect Mr. Kelly from this injustice. Mayor Emanuel, if you are confirmed as Ambassador, will you make it matter of top priority to see that Mr. Kelly's name is cleared and he is returned to the United States as soon as possible?

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator Hagerty, as you know, we have talked about this. The good news is there is Japanese media here. So, I want them to hear exactly, if I am fortunate to have the support of this committee. I have already started to inquire about this, and I want a report on my desk. You and I both know that if you start asking that, that goes from here to up here as a top priority.

Number two, this is a constituent. I was a former congressman. I am going to not treat this as a piece of business as being an Ambassador. I am going to treat this as would a former congressman approach when a constituent is in trouble and underscore what I think is an important point right now. Number-one responsibility of an embassy and an Ambassador is to make sure of the safety and ensure the safety of a U.S. citizen on foreign soil.

You have my word. As I said to you privately, I am saying it publicly. Again, I am not confirmed, and I wish I—hope I do get the confidence of this committee. But I know that the Japanese media is here. So, they can hear it directly.

This is not just another piece of business to be checked off. I am going to be approaching this subject as a former U.S. congressman who knows what it means when you have a constituent at heart.

Senator HAGERTY. Well, thank you very much. I intend to support your confirmation, and I appreciate your taking on this matter of critical interest to Tennesseans and to my constituent, but also a matter of critical national interest for our two nations.

Thank you.

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator, I have had a ninth grader, a 9-year-old on my watch, three of them. You get the medical slip right now. I would get over there.

Thank you.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me thank both of our nominees for their willingness to serve our Nation in critically important positions.

Mr. Kaplan, later today I am going to be chairing a hearing of the U.S.-Helsinki Commission on the freedom of the media. We will have the OSCE representative Ribeiro, who is the representative for the freedom of the media. I mention that because when people think of Singapore, and I have been to Singapore, you know its economic power, and you know what it means as a strategic location in the shipping lanes. You recognize the importance of this economic partnership that the United States has with Singapore, including the free trade agreement.

But there is another part of Singapore. It is a rigid country. It is ranked by Reporters without Borders as 160th out of 180 in its annual World Press Freedom Index behind its neighbors such as Cambodia and Myanmar.

So, my question to you, President Biden has made it clear that our foreign policy is going to be wrapped in our values, and freedom of the media is critically important for any democratic state. How will you make this a priority, that the safety of reporters and the freedom of the media will have a voice in our mission in Singapore?

Mr. KAPLAN. Thank you very much for that question, Senator.

You know, for 55 years, the United States and Singapore have been incredible partners. We have been partners on counterproliferation. We have been partners on maritime security. We have been, as you said so eloquently, incredible trading partners and economic partners.

And when it comes to fundamental freedoms, especially freedom of the press, which is an incredibly important topic for us as a country for sure, you know, I think this is an area where, if I am confirmed, we are going to have to engage with the Singapore Government. The nice thing is friends are able to talk about difficult topics. They may not want to change. We are going to want them to change, but we are going to have a dialogue.

This is an area of fundamental freedoms. This is a topic of importance for the administration, and this is a priority for me.

Senator CARDIN. Will you make your office available for those in Singapore who need a voice in regards to the freedom of the media?

Mr. KAPLAN. Absolutely.



Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Mr. KAPLAN. Again, globally, this is an important issue. It is not just an issue that is personally important to me, but is important to the United States and to the administration overall.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Mayor Emanuel, it is good to see you. Thank you for your willingness to continue to get involved in helping our communities. You have taken on some tough assignments, from the chief of staff of a President to being a congressman dealing with the day-to-day activities of keeping the constituents happy to being a mayor of Chicago.

I want to talk about one issue in regards to our relationship with Japan. We can talk about a lot of different issues. We have already talked about some of the military aspects.

We have 50,000 troops stationed in Japan. We are in a process of negotiating the special measures agreement that will deal with a transition—you already mentioned the 1 percent, but the transition to the post World War II concept of Japan being a strategic partner of the Western powers in dealing with protecting democracy.

So, I just really want to get your thoughts as to how you will be engaged with our committee, with Congress, and certainly with the Defense Department and the White House as we talk about Japan's modernization of its military capacity and commitment and how that will affect U.S. military presence in Japan and the current arrangements that we have between our two countries?

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator, thank you very much for the question.

As we have talked before, Japan today willing to go from 1 percent to 2 percent is a sea change in thinking. It is a reflection that they know they have a greater role to play and they have greater threats. Not just the percentage of a number, but what that number would reflect. What are they looking at buying. What are they looking at adding. That is essential for their security and also essential for our partnership and that effort.

I do think not just in that 2 percent and that strategy, I do not think it gets lost on all of us that they were the first country to articulate the idea of a free and open Indo-Pacific. That has now become the nomenclature and the term that we use, they use, and our other allies do.

And it is also a bulwark that it makes sure that China hears that this is a part of the world that we are going to stay in, that our ally, our number-one ally in the region is now upping its game in a way that could not happen before. If you look over the span of the last 60 years, Japan has moved forward each time in taking a more critical and a more, for lack of a better way of saying it, forward-leaning effort.

But I would like to also stress the military hardware is one thing. It is just a component when you link up the United States and Japan. It is also the opportunity to seek climate change investments, infrastructure investments, IP protection, IP investments. Those are not challenges. Those are opportunities.

And so, when we do that together not only do we send a signal to China, but more importantly, we send a signal about America. We are strong because of our allies and our unity.

China has one strategy, a one-way road to Beijing's benefit, and everybody in that region—most importantly, Japan—know that a United States doubling down on its commitments in the Indo-Pacific area makes them more secure, makes the region more safe and open. And it is a values-based system, not based on one country's proclivity. And anything that challenges that must be met with the united force of all of our allies and friends in the region.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mayor Emanuel, you and I have talked about this, but I want to underscore again this particular subject. As you know, our extended nuclear deterrence underpins U.S. security architecture in the Indo-Pacific, and of course, a part of that is strategic ambiguity. You maybe heard our discussions a bit about consideration at least of U.S. adopting a sole purpose statement, as opposed to strategic ambiguity.

I would urge that when you go to the Indo-Pacific and you hear not only from Japan, but from all of our partners there, their concerns about this, I hope you will convey that in the strongest terms to the current administration. Can I get your thoughts on that?

Mr. EMANUEL. Thank you, Ranking Member Risch.

It is a good question, and I would—as I said to you privately, you and I know that the last time there was a review of our posture in the region, there was no country—and not just in the region, internationally, around the world—no country was greater consulted and whose views were greater considered as we enunciated our policy than Japan. While I am not privy to those conversations today, I would be shocked that it was not following that pattern, that Japan's security interests are paramount to the articulation and vision as we look to the policy.

And I will just say nothing about the current events, whether that is what is happening in North Korea, what China just did over the last 2 weeks vis-a-vis Taiwan or with the hypersonic, has given anybody any sense that as we review this policy, it has to be done in consultation with our allies and friends in the area. And none more important than Japan.

And so when I articulate it, but it is not me, it is President Biden who has said everything we do there is built on the shoulders of the U.S.-Japan friendship, that is where the rubber hits the road exactly on that area.

Senator RISCH. Well, I am glad to hear that. And with your experience, I have no doubt that you are able to deliver tough messages sometimes when people do not want to hear it. So, I will be—

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator, Mr. Ranking Member, I think it can be said, a moment of self-awareness, nobody has ever walked out of a meeting saying, "I wonder where Rahm stands on this?" So, you have my assurance.

Senator RISCH. That is comforting. Thank you so much for that.

Mr. Kaplan, I really am impressed with the fact that the administration has seen fit to appoint someone with your qualifications from the private sector, a capitalist, if you would, to Singapore. Our trade relationship with Singapore, I think, is not very much appre-

ciated by most Americans, and your appointment there I think will help underscore that.

In Idaho, they are one of our important trade partners. We have enjoyed a great relationship with them, and of course, they have the troops stationed there that are in constant training. So, appreciate you doing that. I hope that you will take into consideration how important they are as a trading partner and continue to encourage that. It is a great benefit both ways.

So, thank you much.

Mr. KAPLAN. I look forward to it. Thank you, sir.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and congratulations to both of the nominees.

Mr. Kaplan, your background of work in Asia makes you uniquely suited for this position, and Mr. Mayor, it is good to see you here. The Japan-U.S. relationship requires that an Ambassador go to Japan and the Japanese understand this is somebody who is very close to the President, that they really want to see an Ambassador who has a direct line to the President. And you do, and I believe that is the reason you have been chosen.

I appreciate you sharing at length about Mr. McDonald because what a tragedy. And I was a mayor, and every day in cities, beautiful things happen, and tragic things happen. And that is the case in any city, and you cannot be a mayor, especially of a city like Chicago, without picking up some scar tissue on the way.

But your description of what you learned along the way, the levels of distrust that some in communities feel toward people in power, toward politicians, toward police, I had to learn and then relearn those lessons often in my time as the mayor of a majority African-American city. And I am sure, since Chicago is a much bigger city than Richmond, Virginia, those lessons were challenging and painful for you during your entire tenure, but you served in an admirable way.

I want to just ask you one question that really it is maybe a little bit about Japan's domestic politics, which Ambassadors do not get involved in. But you pointed out accurately that the U.S. network of alliances in the Indo-Pacific is incredibly important as we think about the China threat. And there is no alliance that is more important than the U.S.-Japan alliance.

I am very excited that numerous Presidents now have invested in this notion of the QUAD and that—and President Biden is really operationalizing it beyond strategic dialogue to do vaccine diplomacy and other things. But as I look at the QUAD, there is an obvious omission, and that is South Korea.

South Korea should be in that, and yet the challenges between Japan and South Korea have been of longstanding—you know, longstanding historical challenges. What might you be able to do as an Ambassador to Japan to help encourage closer and closer relationships between these two nations that are such great allies of the United States and have so much in common in terms of the threats that they face in the region?

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator Kaine, thank you for the question.

I think that Japan, I mean, to be—Japan has a new prime minister, and there is a new election. That will also be true in the spring of the coming year in South Korea. I think we are both familiar, having run for office, what that does.

As a general principle, and this has been articulated by the President, and I have heard him in different situations in the prior—when I wore a different hat than mayor, but as a chief of staff. I think as it relates to this as a general kind of 10,000 feet, you never want the 20th century to rob us of the opportunities of the 21st century.

Not that those are not heartfelt and serious, and they are. So, it is, one, keeping people focused on the future and our commonality, not what divides us. And the United States and our Ambassador both from the United States here, but also in South Korea can play an important role in facilitating that focus on the future rather than any tensions that legitimately exist about the past.

And that said, and I am aware like you of politics, which is not a bad word, is nobody at this point, you do not want to embarrass or shame any one of the two parties publicly. So, the goal would be to keep the private conversations moving forward so there is no sense in a public way that they have been from their own respective roles and responsibilities to their publics are not cornered from the opportunity to make the most of the 21st century.

What Japan faces, South Korea, the United States, I see the—what people refer to as either climate change, infrastructure, IP protection, investments in the supply chain, those are not challenges. They are tremendous opportunities for greater integration, greater advancements of our cooperation, and strengthening a rules-based system that all three share.

So, from the challenges, make them opportunities for greater cooperation between the three parties. Two, focus on the 21st century opportunities, not the challenges of the 20th century, and do not let the 20th century rob us of what we can build together, the three. And third, do not do anything that surprises people in public so they have the opportunity to be, for lack of another way of saying it, to lean forward in a collaborative and productive way.

Senator Kaine. Thank you for that.

And Mr. Kaplan, I am going to be very proud to support your nomination. I am just going to ask you a question about press freedom, the same question that Senator Cardin asked. There is so much right in the U.S.-Singapore relationship. The low ranking of Singapore on global press indices is a continuing challenge, and I will look forward to—I am confident you will be confirmed, and I will look forward to working with you on this.

Mr. Kaplan. If I am confirmed, I will obviously look forward to working with you.

Senator Kaine. Thank you so much. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

The Chairman. Senator Coons?

Senator Coons. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And Mayor Emanuel and Mr. Kaplan, I very much look forward to our exchange today and appreciate the testimony you have already provided. And let me also thank your families for supporting you. To Amy and to Zach, who I had the opportunity to meet in person but had spoken to before, and to Ilana and other family

members, Leah, who are watching. And thank you, Mayor, for sharing your personal story and journey and what that has brought to you in your decades of public service.

And to Mr. Kaplan and your daughter, Samantha, and other members of your life who are with us today, it is wonderful to have both of you in front of us and to have this chance to interact with you about these two important positions that have been vacant for too long with two absolutely vital Indo-Pacific partners for the United States.

I am, as I think you both know, the chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee responsible for our foreign assistance. Japan is also a major donor in development assistance in the region, and one of the reasons I worked with a number of my colleagues to help create the Development Finance Corporation was so that we had a new and more modern tool, more capable of partnering with JBIC and ADB, the Asian Development Bank and Japanese investment entity.

How do you believe, Mr. Mayor, that we can use the DFC to more closely partner with Japan's development entities, and how do you think partnering with our regional allies, whether it is Australia or Japan, South Korea, others, in development finance that might actually create a new chapter in providing alternatives that are more transparent, that are more sustainable for the development of the region?

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator Coons, thank you for that question.

I do want to take one second and personally, as I have privately, thank you publicly. When you were on a CODEL to Korea, you personally called Zach to check in on him. In a high order, you made one Jewish grandmother and mother very happy, and that is a very tall order. So, I want to thank you, Senator, for doing that personally.

On a serious note, in the process of talking to a lot of people, one, I did not realize that Japan is an actually larger investor in infrastructure around the region than China. We hear a lot about belt and roads, about the China plan. Japan is actually by about a number of about 75 billion in U.S. dollars bigger than China in the region. That is a big asset with our ally.

Second, on top of it, if you do polling among the public in the region, Japan is the most popular country. Again, a big asset in our partnership.

Third, as I have repeated—as I said earlier and I want to repeat, the architecture from Prime Minister Abe lives on and is now adopted by all, which is a free and open Indo-Pacific.

I think making these investments in infrastructure, our creative financing, our strategy to make an opportunity both for these type of economic opportunities that would exist and infrastructure that is linked in with the United States and Japan. And two, because we will do it in a way that is open, based on a rules-based system, it will stand in direct contrast to the violations of China's belt and roads that does not meet the standards of OECD standards.

And I think that opportunity for us to talk to future countries that may be looking at the United States or Japan and say here are the way we are going to do this so you do not become debt dependent like often happens with China. That is a key opportunity

with an ally, a popular ally who shares the same values and commitment to a rules-based system. That is something that we want to harness to our strategic overall interests in the region.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Let us talk a little bit more, if we can, about the modern digital economy and ways in which trade and better integration with Singapore, with Japan, with the region would actually serve our interests. The digital trade agreement between the United States and Japan that we concluded in 2019 could be a useful starting point.

Singapore has been a leader in creating digital trade agreements with its trading partners, and USTR Katherine Tai recently met with her Singaporean counterpart, and they expressed an intent to work together on digital trade. I would be interested in hearing from both of you, if I can, how we could advance work with Japan and with Singapore to set rules and standards for the digital economy that can serve as a model for the region, model for the world, and help provide a more attractive alternative to digital authoritarianism.

Mr. EMANUEL. Do you want to go first?

Mr. KAPLAN. Sure. Thank you so much for that question.

I think, as I said, since 2003, we have enjoyed an incredible free trade agreement with Singapore, and the \$90 billion that is passing between our borders is a critical component to the economic success of really the region and of both countries. And I think as the world moves digital, I think it is going to be incredibly important for me, if I am confirmed, to make sure that Singapore understands this, make sure that we are involved in these discussions, make sure that as Japan and other countries in the Indo-Pacific region start to develop these agreements that the United States is right there front and center.

Mr. EMANUEL. I want to echo my friend. Ambassador-to-be, hopefully, Kaplan has said we talked about this in our training, and I would just say, again, if I have the opportunity to be confirmed, work alongside. A digital writing of the rules is exactly what we want to be doing by saying this is a rules-based system, not based on one country's own self-interest, but what stands the test of time for all the countries in the party.

And as somebody who has been a student of our politics, talking about it this way, approaching the digital piece of the economy, the writing of rules gets us away from the kind of what I would call hunger games of our politics the moment you say the word "trade" or the moment you talk about that. But dealing with writing the rules goes to the strength of a partnership based on a values-based, rules-based system rather than going and dealing with I think the weaker part of our politics.

And I think that would advance our interests in the region, and it is very clear that the Ambassador to the USTR for the United States, she has made that clear as well.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you both. Mr. Mayor, you have demonstrated your diplomatic skill with the breadth of who introduced you today. You were both introduced by wonderful colleagues. I look forward to visiting Japan and Singapore in the future and to working with you in your roles.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And congratulations to both of these nominees. I wanted to get back in person, but the scheduling prevented that.

So, to Congressman Emanuel, good to see you back on Capitol Hill. I want to ask you about the North Korean threat because, as you know, just a few days ago, North Korea launched a ballistic missile into the waters off of Japan. This has been part of a pattern over many, many years as North Korea has also strengthened its nuclear weapons capacity.

Japanese Prime Minister Kishida said in response to the most recent launch, "We cannot overlook North Korea's recent development in missile technology and must work with them and the threat—work to address the threat in the region."

So, a number of years ago, Senator Toomey and I worked together. The Congress passed something called the BRINK Act, the Otto Warmbier BRINK Act. And it requires the executive branch to impose secondary sanctions on financial institutions that are helping North Korea escape the sanctions regime. I think we need to do a better job at making sure that we are imposing those sanctions because it seems to be a pretty leaky sanctions regime right now.

But given the interest that Japan and, of course, South Korea have in addressing the ongoing threat of North Korea, what should this administration be doing, the Biden administration be doing, and what will you do, if confirmed as our Ambassador to Japan, to help address this threat?

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator Van Hollen, thank you for the question.

I would like to note since we usually—since we were in the first—our classes together when we got elected to Congress, we talk to each other by first name, but Senator Van Hollen. Look, I think North Korea's recent actions in just the past month, a number of tests of new missiles and new offensive weapons, has alerted Japan and South Korea to the collaboration and cooperation that is essential with the United States of having a common front. And my intention is to work as a representative for the United States Government and doing everything to facilitate, as I think I said to an earlier question, that we make sure that we deal with 21st century issues as allies and partners and not let the 20th century rob or mug that opportunity.

This is a serious challenge as it relates to security, and it is security related to both South Korea and Japan. And therefore, it is a security concern for the United States. And it will be one of the top priorities I will have is to work on that collaboration and understanding so there is a united front with the United States, Japan, and South Korea.

And I will be put—you know, obviously, this is much higher, if I was to be confirmed, than my pay grade, but I will be putting my oar in the water to pull alongside and make sure that the objectives laid out by the Secretary of State, the President of the United States, as we confront this common challenge is make sure that it is executed upon and that it stays front and center.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. No, I appreciate that. Look, I think the new administration, the Biden administration is still sort of framing its approach to North Korea. But I think this most recent missile test underscores the importance of determining exactly what approach we are going to take and, obviously, working closely with our allies Japan and South Korea and others.

Speaking about security arrangements and allies, the QUAD has become an increasingly important sort of structure for addressing security and economic and other issues in the Indo-Pacific region. Can you talk a little bit about how you envision working with Japan to strengthen the QUAD partnership?

Mr. EMANUEL. I mean, you are exactly right, and I would say, if you could, we could hold the QUAD up, and what the President is doing is taking something that was a bipartisan concept started in prior administrations and really has evolved, including under President Trump and prior to that President Obama, and President Biden has put some real meat on the bones, and it is not an accident. That is, the QUAD, both virtually and in person, is the only entity that he has met with now twice in his short tenure as President.

And all the parties—India on its own border, Australia with the recent change in the nuclear sub, nuclear-powered sub acquisition, and then Japan with its own recent budget on its defense investment—know that the partnership here is an essential one for the strategic interests as we—all the parties confront a threat both by China and any threat strategically or militarily.

And so I see the QUAD as the President has enunciated, as the backbone of both economic and security interests in the region of the United States and working with our closest allies who have the same sense that this is an important—for now a very, very important tool for America's foreign policy in the area in strategic interests being articulated and acted upon.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, and Mr. Chairman, thank you. And my best to Amy and the family, and I look forward to supporting your nomination.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Senator Merkley?

Senator MERKLEY. Oh, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both. Extensive records of public service. And Mayor, there is no question, as members of the Senate have pointed out, you have an extensive depth and breadth of public service that brings a tremendous amount of knowledge to serving the United States, when confirmed.

But I feel it is important to explore one piece that you have made reference to. We received on the committee a letter from a dozen aldermen, State representatives, State senators, a county commissioner, asking we take a close look at the question of systemic racism and how the role of city leaders working closely with police departments sustains inequities.

And certainly in my home State, we have wrestled with this. My largest city, Portland, has a predominantly white police force. It has a record of shootings and shootings of members of the minority community, black and Hispanic citizens, that has been a very contentious issue.



And Chicago had this as well. 2010 to 2015, police fired 528 cases. They hit citizens 262 times. They fatally shot 92 individuals. Of those who were hit, 94 percent were members of minority communities, Asian, black, or Hispanic.

When you and I met—and I appreciated your comments and thoughts—you said kind of the big mistake you made was that you took at full faith an evaluation from a group of police officers that the shooting of Laquan McDonald was a “good shooting,” a term that apparently the police use. That group of officers that rendered that, was that an official police review board?

Mr. EMANUEL. We said, Senator—and I thank you for the question—and I think there are two parts. So, I would like to address both, if I could?

Senator MERKLEY. But please do not eat up all my time.

Mr. EMANUEL. Oh, no, I will not.

Senator MERKLEY. I know that is a great tactic, but I really wanted to get to the heart of this, and I just want to understand since that is the key thing that you said was a mistake. I want to understand was an official police board that rendered that evaluation?

Mr. EMANUEL. No, no. The police leadership the next morning after a police-involved shooting reviews a shooting.

Senator MERKLEY. It was the morning after?

Mr. EMANUEL. Right. Yes, yes. Right.

Senator MERKLEY. So, you had conveyed to me that that kind of shaped your thinking up through the eventual release the following—a year later, and then your public commentary in November of 2015.

My understanding is that the mother of Laquan McDonald learned about the nature of the shooting when she was called by the funeral house who said to her, “Do you realize your son was shot multiple times? That his body is riddled with bullets.” She did not know apparently at that point. That information had not been shared with her.

And then her attorney subpoenaed records in November of 2014, and when the attorney subpoenaed records, did that trigger the conversation that filled you in? I know you have said you never saw the videos, but filled you in on the fact that this was an unusual case where a child had been shot 16 times?

Mr. EMANUEL. As I said in the answer to Chairman Menendez, there is an investigation going on by three entities—the U.S. attorney, the State’s attorney, IPRA. They were the ones dealing with this, and as I believe, you do not want a politician to make a unilateral decision while those investigations are going on because it would violate a sacrosanct protocol and principle of ensuring that nothing is out prior to an investigation being wrapped up.

Senator MERKLEY. Yes, Mayor, but that was not my question. My question was when her attorneys sought the evidence from the city, is that when you learned about the nature of what had happened from the city attorney or from the police or—

Mr. EMANUEL. As I said, when the video became public is when I learned what happened and the consequence and what happened that night.

Senator MERKLEY. Okay. So, in December, the family viewed the tapes, and the city required that they enter into a nondisclose agreement. That is a pretty significant decision. You are saying you had no idea of the circumstances of the shooting? No one had told you that a child had been shot 16 times or that the child was lying on the ground, that a revolver was reloaded? You had no idea in December when the family reviewed the tapes?

Mr. EMANUEL. Senator, is that situation, the family approached the city about a settlement. An NDA is a standard practice at that time, and also the public information, as you know, when the city council is asked to work with the family, come up with the resources for the compensation, all the members of the city council heard that, and it passed 50 to 0. So, that was the kind of description that was in the public domain when it was voted on.

Senator MERKLEY. Yes. Of course, I did not ask about the NDA. I asked if at that point you were briefed on the details of the shooting?

Mr. EMANUEL. Oh, I am sorry. The details were in the public domain when the corporation counsel briefed the aldermen.

Senator MERKLEY. So, in February and March, the city reached out proactively. Please, Chairman, can I finish a few questions here?

The CHAIRMAN. I do not know about a few questions, but this has been explored, and it is now almost 2 minutes over. So, I will give you another minute.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will submit questions for the record so that you can address these things. But I think that in this time of national reckoning with the challenge of Black Lives Matter, when aldermen and State representatives and State senators say this was an issue that there was close cooperation during your time as mayor between the mayor's office to essentially discourage the release of information and to not develop significant reforms, which I know that you have a story to tell about the reforms. And I will submit questions for the record so you can tell that story.

I think it is important for this committee to actually weigh this. And so thank you for meeting with me before. Thank you for addressing this now.

But just to clarify, because all these things happened—the family requested the video. The city attorney reached out proactively before there was a lawsuit to ask for a settlement. The settlement was approved in a less than 1 minute meeting with no public discussion. It seems hard to believe that all those things happened, and yet you were never briefed on the details of the situation when you were leading the city.

Mr. EMANUEL. Since you brought up the aldermanic letters, as you will see also here, the leadership of the Black Caucus has signed a letter in support of my nomination. Those are the members that worked with me. That does not take away from the fact, as I have said before, and I want to repeat because I think it is important, all those are not technicalities.

This is a tragedy that happened, as you know, as you have made reference to what is going on in Portland. And as I said, no city of any size has not confronted the gulf and the gap that exists be-

tween police practices and the oversight and accountability. I made efforts of them. They missed the mark because they totally missed how deep that distrust is and, as in the reverend or the pastor's letter, how broken the system is that we all relied on.

Senator MERKLEY. Yes, and I did note that—

The CHAIRMAN. The chair—the chair would just say to my distinguished colleague I have allowed you to go 4 minutes over the 5 minutes. So, I think that questions for the record would be appropriate.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Kaplan, before we adjourn this hearing, I do not want you to think you are not the object of my affection for the position you are going to have. So, let me ask you, Singapore along with other countries in the region face a time of increasing geopolitical uncertainty with China's growing assertiveness in the Pacific. What is your assessment of how Singapore's thinking on China has evolved in recent years?

How do we influence Singapore's approach towards both confronting and competing with China in a way that aligns it more with our values, which I believe they generally share, versus the values that China is promoting?

Mr. KAPLAN. Thank you very much for that question.

The U.S. must engage with China from a position of strength, and strength comes from our partnerships and our partnerships within the region. We have talked about this throughout this hearing, and I believe that Singapore is a tremendously strong partner of the United States. They are involved in our F-35 program. We have naval operations that we do with them. As the ranking member mentioned, we train their air force.

So, if I am confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work with the Government, continuing to come up with ways for us to support a partnership that addresses these threats that China continues to bring upon not just the United States, but the world overall.

The CHAIRMAN. Enduring support for ASEAN is critical to the United States posture in the Indo-Pacific and central to the engagement with our partnership with Singapore. When the foreign minister was here, we had a significant conversation about ASEAN.

What steps would you take to help Singapore in bolstering ASEAN centrality in the Asia-Pacific region?

Mr. KAPLAN. Well, I think the President and the Secretary of State want to have a multifaceted approach to the region. They have AUKUS. We have QUAD. And of course, we have ASEAN. And Singapore is a founding member of ASEAN. The United States has always been a firm supporter of ASEAN. The Secretary and the President have reaffirmed their commitment to ASEAN.

And again, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the Government, working with industry, working with Singapore to ensure that everyone knows that we are behind ASEAN. Singapore remains an important part of ASEAN, and ASEAN will play a critical role in the safety and security of the region.

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, Mayor Emanuel, I want to just go back to Japan very quickly, but importantly. We need—and I said this to leaders from both countries who have come to visit us here

in Washington. We need Japan and South Korea to understand that their unity along with us is critical to deal with the regional security questions and certainly with North Korea.

And I think, in my 30 years of doing foreign policy between the House and the Senate, this is not one of the best moments I have seen between the two countries. I hope you will use, upon confirmation, your efforts to try to get the Japanese from their side and then we will get our person in South Korea to do the same to find some common ground.

There are historical issues. I understand that. But the security of both nations and its people should supersede their common interests in that regard. Is that something we can count on you to try to do?

Mr. EMANUEL. A hundred percent, Mr. Chairman. And I would just, in the remaining minutes here, say this is, no doubt there has been highs and lows in the relationship between Japan and South Korea. I think that given what North Korea has done and is doing, what China has done and is doing, makes this an opportunity in an organizing way to have both parties try—meaning the United States, Japan, and South Korea—to now focus on what is not a theoretical threat, but a reality, as the recent test just the other day by North Korea has shown. That this is not theoretical, given the sub test that was just—submarine test that was just done.

So, that, to me, underscores there is a level of urgency for all parties to now find the common ground, focus on the future, focus on what binds us together, and not allow tensions of the past and disagreements to actually in any way endanger, and I do think—endanger the relationship.

I would close with one other thought. China, Russia, North Korea are trying to find cracks and fissures in the alliances between the United States and Japan, the United States and South Korea, the United States, Japan, and South Korea. Our job, as a facilitator, is to create the bonds of unity that we speak with one voice, one interest, and one imperative. This is one of, if not the highest priority to find that unity so we can confront the attempt by China and North Korea to divide us.

The CHAIRMAN. Finally, as in all relationships, the question of press freedom of Singapore was raised earlier. In this case, more than 475 U.S. children have been kidnapped in Japan, and the U.S. has named Japan a top three worst offender of international parental child abduction. There has been no significant improvement between since Japan acceded to the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction in 2014.

So, when you are confirmed, I hope that you will make one of your priorities to get the Japanese Government to understand that when you enter into an international convention and when American children are involved, we certainly expect you to live up to your obligations under the convention.

Mr. EMANUEL. And Mr. Chairman, I would underscore at this point, if I was fortunate to get the committee and the full Senate's support to be confirmed, your word is your bond. If you signed into an agreement to be trusted as a partner and ally, you must uphold the principle of that agreement.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. This record for this hearing will remain open until the close of business tomorrow, Thursday, October 21. To members of the committee, please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than Thursday.

To our nominees, I would just urge you upon receipt—inevitably, there will be questions for the record—that you answer them expeditiously and fully so that then we can consider your nominations before the committee for a business meeting.

And with the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

Mr. EMANUEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KAPLAN. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 1:37 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. R. NICHOLAS BURNS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* As you know, the U.S.-China Phase One Agreement requires China to change several of its regulations concerning intellectual property protection. However, many of the ways that China undermines intellectual property protections are through informal coercion or outright theft.

- If confirmed, how will you help to ensure that China fully implements and complies with the intellectual property requirements in the U.S.-China Phase One Agreement?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that we closely monitor the PRC's implementation of its IP commitments under the Phase One Agreement. Along with our inter-agency partners, we will hold the PRC accountable using the full range of tools we have and develop new ones in order to defend U.S. economic interests from the PRC's harmful policies and practices. As we enforce the terms of the Phase One Agreement, I will also work with allies and partners and press Beijing bilaterally to address our concerns with the PRC's unfair, non-market practices that distort competition by propping up PRC state-owned enterprises and limit market access, and its coercive and predatory practices in trade and technology.

*Question.* The Chinese Government has not provided sufficient details regarding how it intends to comply with several of the intellectual property obligations contained in the U.S.-China Phase One Agreement, including those related to biopharmaceutical innovation.

- If confirmed, how will you help to ensure that China complies with its intellectual property obligations under the U.S.-China Phase One Agreement?

*Answer.* The IP Chapter of the Phase One Agreement identified 133 IP-related commitments that the PRC must take action on, including related to biopharmaceutical innovation. If confirmed, I will ensure that we closely monitor the PRC's implementation of all its IP commitments under the Agreement. Along with our inter-agency partners, we will hold the PRC accountable using the full range of those tools we have and develop new ones in order to defend U.S. economic interests from the PRC's harmful policies and practices.

*Question.* As Ambassador, will you commit to making the case of Kai Li and his return back to his family a priority?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will advocate for the immediate and unconditional release of all those wrongfully or arbitrarily detained, and for the immediate lifting of travel restrictions for those subject to coercive exit bans in the PRC. I will work closely with the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs and the Bureau of Consular Affairs to resolve the case of Kai Li and the cases of other U.S. citizens wrongfully detained or subject to coercive exit bans by the PRC.

The use of human beings as bargaining leverage is unacceptable, has been condemned by the global community, and is inconsistent with China's international human rights commitments.

*USICA*

*Question.* As you know, earlier this year, the Senate passed a sweeping China competitiveness legislation that included this committee's Strategic Competition Act. This legislation puts core American values and human rights at the heart of our foreign policy, replenishes sources of our national strength here at home, supports our alliances and stability, and prioritizes fair economic competition. What are your thoughts on the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act?

*Answer.* I strongly support the Senate's passage of the Innovation and Competition Act and the leadership of the Foreign Relations Committee on this vital issue. This bill will strengthen the ability of the United States to compete with China in the decades ahead. As Secretary Blinken has made clear—our domestic renewal and our strength in the world are completely entwined. A key component of the policy is revitalization of our democracy and economy here at home. This also requires we invest in American workers, companies and technologies to outcompete the PRC.

*Question.* What should the United States be doing to deter and respond to such aggression in the digital space?

*Answer.* All instruments of national power are available to respond to malicious cyber activity, including diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, law enforcement, and public attribution capabilities. We collaborate with our like-minded partners to uphold our shared vision for a cyberspace that allows all to prosper and to hold accountable those that would use it to cause harm and sow instability.

Shared concerns regarding the PRC's malicious cyber activities are bringing countries around the world together to call out those activities, promote network defense and cybersecurity, and act to disrupt threats to our economies and national security. We cannot protect against malicious cyber activity on our own. Our allies and partners are a tremendous source of strength, and our collective approach to cyber threat information sharing, defense, and mitigation helps hold countries like the PRC to account.

We have raised our concerns about specific incidents, including the Microsoft Exchange hacks, as well as the PRC's broader malicious cyber activity with senior PRC Government officials, making clear that the PRC's actions threaten security, confidence, and stability in cyberspace. The United States and our allies and partners are not ruling out further actions to hold the PRC accountable.

*Question.* How can the United States strengthen its cooperation with like-minded countries to promote collective norms and values surrounding cyberspace and other emerging technologies?

*Answer.* The United States takes a whole-of-government approach to combating malicious cyber activities. As part of that effort, the Department has achieved international consensus on the elements that make up a framework of responsible state behavior and is building a robust coalition of likeminded states who are willing to hold irresponsible states accountable when they transgress the framework, including through the imposition of consequences when appropriate. In July 2021, 38 countries joined the United States in calling out the PRC's role in the Microsoft Exchange hacks.

In addition, the Department is also ramping up its coordination of U.S. interagency efforts to develop policies and processes to respond quickly to destructive, disruptive or otherwise destabilizing cyber incidents. The Department also works to promote cybersecurity due diligence globally and to strengthen transnational cooperation in the fight against cybercrime.

*Question.* How should the United States evaluate critical supply chains and protect itself from chokehold vulnerabilities and security risks? If confirmed, as Ambassador, what would you see as your role in China?

*Answer.* More secure and resilient supply chains are essential to our national security, our economic security, and our technological leadership. The administration's efforts to diversify supply chains, support increased trade between like-minded partners, and encourage best practices to screen potentially threatening investments will help to build resilience and reduce the impact of PRC coercion. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities in our global supply chains for critical products, including medical equipment, supplies, and semiconductors. If confirmed, I will support the administration's efforts to build diverse, secure, and resilient supply chains for the future.

*Question.* In addition to export control measures, what other actions do you believe the United States should take to limit the Chinese Government's access to

technologies that enhance its military capabilities and facilitate repression in Xinjiang and Hong Kong?

Answer. If confirmed, I will leverage the full breadth of authorities available to us to protect our economic and national security interests, and support enhanced investment screening efforts. I will support the Biden-Harris administration efforts to ensure the PRC cannot exploit U.S. capital markets to support the PRC's national strategy of military-civil fusion and PLA military modernization and the use of PRC surveillance technology in human rights abuse. If confirmed, I would also work with our allies and partners to encourage and strengthen national security-focused investment screening mechanisms to mitigate the risks of concerning third-country investments, including from PRC-backed companies making third country investments.

*Question.* Do you see opportunities for technology collaboration with China? How would you propose the United States pursue these opportunities?

Answer. If confirmed, I will pursue cooperation with the PRC where it is in our interest, and in consultation with the Congress, our allies and partners, and other stakeholders.

#### *South China Sea*

*Question.* I welcomed the Trump administration's clarification of our legal position on China's unlawful claims in the South China Sea. But as you know, international law is not self-enforcing, and having now taken this position, it is critical that we make our legal position a reality, not just a rhetoric.

- How would you, if confirmed, intend to implement this approach? And how would you plan to work with partners and allies to forge unified approach to the South China Sea?

Answer. The Biden-Harris administration has reaffirmed the July 2020 policy statement on the U.S. position on maritime claims in the South China Sea and regularly consults with partners and allies to support international law in this crucial waterway. We have made clear that we stand with Southeast Asian claimant states in resisting PRC coercion. The administration is committed to upholding a free and open South China Sea. As a result of U.S. efforts with allies and partners in Asia and beyond, we have seen a greater willingness by countries to underscore the importance of making and pursuing maritime claims in accordance with international law.

*Question.* How can the United States—working with our partners in the international community—be effective in supporting the people of Hong Kong? If confirmed, what role would you expect to play as Ambassador?

Answer. The United States must stand with the international community on Hong Kong. We must create global partnerships on this issue in both condemning human rights violations and abuses as well as considering responsive actions including sanctions. This is not just a U.S. concern, but a global concern. If confirmed, I will continue President Biden's policy of emphasizing the role of our allies and partners on Hong Kong, as well as other areas of human rights concern in the PRC.

#### *Hostage Diplomacy*

*Question.* I am relieved about the release of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, however, I am disturbed by implications of "hostage diplomacy" in an apparent trade for Meng, which may incentivize China to continue this type of troubling behavior.

- Do you share this assessment? As Ambassador, how will you approach any similar cases that may arise?

Answer. The Department of Justice said it reached the decision to offer a deferred prosecution agreement with Ms. Meng based on the facts and the law, and an assessment of litigation risk.

If confirmed, I intend to raise individual cases with the PRC Government and insist that U.S. citizens wrongfully or arbitrarily detained be released, that coercive exit bans be lifted, and that the PRC refrain from using such measures in the future.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* The Chinese Government is openly hostile to universal human rights and democratic values. We have seen this over and over again, including in its continuous abuses in Tibet and of the Uyghur population in Xinjiang.

- If confirmed, what will you do to defend fundamental human rights in China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to promote accountability for People's Republic of China (PRC) officials responsible for genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang and other human rights abuses in Tibet and elsewhere in the PRC. I will also support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities.

If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible to end abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions.

I will also commit to meet regularly with members of civil society and to raise specific cases of arbitrary detention or human rights violations directly with the PRC Government.

*International Organizations and Standard Setting Bodies*

*Question.* The Chinese Government has demonstrated an increasingly malign presence and willingness to abuse their positions in international organizations and standard setting bodies.

- If confirmed, as Ambassador, what would you do to address these issues in China?

Answer. The People's Republic of China (PRC) seeks to advance its national agenda in a manner that often undermines the independence, impartiality, and transparency, of international organizations. Through partnerships, we have had some success at defending against these attempts and upholding the rules-based international order. In China I will seek to broaden these partnerships to shore up international resolve. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to ensure that international organizations operating in China, including those affiliated with the UN system, remain aligned with UN principles and values, including relating to human rights, and do not inappropriately promote PRC policies to third countries. If confirmed, I will also confront PRC hypocrisy as it rhetorically espouses "true multilateralism" while coercing countries to support its unilateral objectives in international organizations.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you think you will be able to support Special Envoy Kerry by diffusing China's conflation of issues with climate, and create some space for progress on working to enhance China's climate ambition?

Answer. Yes. The United States is engaged in stiff competition with the PRC, but also has an interest in working together on vital transnational challenges, such as climate. We reject the linkage of action on climate to other issues in the bilateral relationship, and we have made this clear to the PRC. We are taking action on climate because it is an existential crisis, and we discuss this with the PRC because that is what responsible nations do—and that is what we have done with other countries around the world to raise the global ambition. As two large nations, we both have responsibilities, and that is why we are engaging and exploring areas where our interests align. The Biden administration is right to seek effective channels of communication with Beijing, in order to manage this competition responsibly. Climate is one of several transnational issues where our interests align, and former Secretary of State John Kerry works tirelessly on this issue. The PRC is by far the largest emitter of carbon in the world today. The world cannot solve the climate crisis without the PRC doing substantially more to reduce its emissions at the pace and magnitude required to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius as the science requires.

*Nury Turkel*

*Question.* Nury Turkel serves as the Vice-Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, appointed by House Speaker Pelosi. For decades, he has shed light on the PRC's atrocities against the Uyghur community and advocated for political dissidents and refugees. Because of Turkel's human rights work and now serving in on a U.S. Government commission, the PRC has engaged in a campaign of harassment against his family members—specifically his ailing parents. Despite Turkel's efforts to reunite with his ailing parents in the past 12 years, Chinese security will not let them leave China to be with their two US citizen sons and five grandchildren born in the US. I understand that Deputy Secretary Sherman raised Turkel's case during her trip to China in July. However, we are not aware of any concrete follow-up related to Turkel's parents' passports. Further delay may signal to the Chinese Government that the U.S. Government is not serious about securing the elderly Turkels departure from China.



- Can you commit to reviewing and prioritizing the Turkels' case; including sharing with us any specific, concrete steps that the Biden administration is considering taking next?

*Answer.* I am very concerned by the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s mistreatment of Mr. Turkel's parents, to include blocking them from leaving China. If confirmed, I will advocate vigorously on their behalf with the PRC Government and work to secure their reunification with Mr. Turkel and with their other children and grandchildren.

*Question.* How would you navigate the situation if the Chinese Government insists on passing the Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law in Hong Kong, and American and other international firms are forced to decide whether to comply with Chinese law or US law?

*Answer.* Hong Kong's success as an international business hub has been built on a transparent regulatory framework and adherence to the rule of law. This law, if imposed, will further undermine the transparency that has been the bedrock of Hong Kong's business environment. Failure to comply with U.S. sanctions can result in civil and criminal penalties under U.S. law. If confirmed, I will advocate for U.S. businesses operating in Hong Kong, provide these companies with my best advice on Hong Kong's operating environment, and will advise companies with questions about their sanctions compliance obligations to contact OFAC.

*Question.* What is your assessment of how the U.S. Government should respond to the potential passage of Article 23 legislation in Hong Kong which will further increase the potential penalties for foreign NGOs and pro-democracy activists in the city?

*Answer.* I am very concerned by the potential passage of Article 23 legislation. When attempts were made to introduce this legislation in 2003, Hong Kongers made clear that they did not agree with the legislation, which would severely curb their rights and freedoms. I was with Secretary Albright in Hong Kong on the day of the handover in 1997. I clearly remember the specific commitments Beijing made, which it has failed to meet. The PRC's actions have undermined Hong Kong's "high degree of autonomy" and Hong Kongers' rights and freedoms protected under the Sino-British Joint Declaration. If confirmed, I will work with the administration to support people in Hong Kong and will continue to stand up for the human rights and freedoms they are guaranteed.

*Question.* Taking into account the current Evergrande crisis, what is your view of Blackrock's recent call for investors to triple their equity holdings in China? How would you navigate a situation where there was a sudden string of property firms defaulting and American investors were caught in the middle? What would you say to the financial executives who will be lobbying you to increase and deepen ties between US and Chinese financial markets? Is this in our interests? What steps should the United States take to protect the international financial system from CCP digital surveillance that undermines human rights and freedoms?

*Answer.* There are significant concerns regarding the lack of transparency in the PRC financial market and the recent series of politically-driven regulatory actions. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor these risks from the field and will work to raise awareness for U.S. and global investors, in support of efforts by the Treasury Department and other economic agencies.

Beijing's recent actions to strengthen political control over financial markets—and the broader economy and society—are drawing international attention to the risks of doing business in an economy that is required to operate at the behest of an autocratic regime, even when this is at odds with market principles.

The United States must continue to demonstrate the strength of our own financial system, including the value of transparency, openness, rule of law, and respect for privacy. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the American business community to help remove barriers to its success in China.

*Question.* Further to this issue, billions of USD is currently invested in Chinese technology firms with ties to the Xinjiang surveillance state, as well as in Chinese state-owned banks which fund firms with ties to the PLA. Can this be justified in the era of ethical—or ESG investing?

*Answer.* Certain transactions with PRC firms can create exposure to a range of risks. These risks include sanctions, human rights abuses, threats posed by the PRC national strategy of military-civil fusion, thefts of intellectual property, and other threats to U.S. national security and technological competitiveness. The President took an important step in issuing Executive Order 14032 on June 3, 2021, "Addressing the Threat from Securities Investments That Finance Certain Companies of the

People's Republic of China." If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. business community and other U.S. parties, such as state and local governments, are aware of these risks, including those outlined in the Xinjiang Supply Chain Business Advisory and applicable U.S. laws, and will encourage them to conduct heightened human rights due diligence on their investments in high-risk markets in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises. If confirmed, I will also work with allies and partners on these issues.

*Question.* In the Spring of this year, H&M faced a major boycott of its goods in China because it refused to source Xinjiang cotton. Do you agree that something is wrong when firms which take the moral stance are punished while those who continue to source cotton farmed by slaves' benefit? Do you agree that the time has come to level the playing field, correct the market inefficiency which encourages the use of slave labor, and that the best and easiest way of doing this would be to introduce a ban on cotton from Xinjiang, similar to that proposed in the United States?

*Answer.* As a matter of law and policy, the United States is opposed to forced labor. At the June 2021 G7 Summit in Cornwall, United Kingdom, the world's leading democracies stood united against forced labor, including in Xinjiang, and committed to ensure global supply chains are free from the use of forced labor. USTR Katherine Tai and the other G7 trade ministers said in their October 22 statement they are seriously working to identify areas for strengthened cooperation and will continue working together to protect individuals from forced labor, to ensure that global supply chains are free from the use of forced labor, and those who perpetrate forced labor are held accountable. The Department is working across multiple bureaus and the interagency to end forced labor and hold those accountable who knowingly contribute to these human rights abuses in our global supply chains. If confirmed, I will support and advocate for the end of forced labor and elimination of human rights abuses in our global supply chains.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* I am deeply troubled by the anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and their family members. Serving one's country overseas should not come at the cost of one's health. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel and must be taken extremely seriously. If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Mission China staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that all reported potential anomalous health incidents are given serious attention and reported swiftly through the appropriate channels. I will also ensure that staff who are affected by these incidents receive prompt access to the treatment, support, and medical care that they need. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO in Mission China during my first working day at the embassy to discuss past reported anomalous health incidents so that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Mission China staff and ensure that all protocols regarding anomalous health incidents are being followed appropriately.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that all reported potential anomalous health incidents are given serious attention and reported swiftly through the appropriate channels. I will also ensure that staff who are affected by these incidents receive prompt access to the treatment, support, and medical care that they need.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO in Mission China during my first working day at the embassy to discuss past reported anomalous health incidents so that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Mis-

**Answer.** Yes, the Biden-Harris administration has based its policy on a sober assessment of strategic competition. We will continue to strengthen our own competitive hand to out-compete the PRC and work closely with our allies and partners on our shared vision. We are approaching Beijing from a position of strength and engaging in robust diplomatic, economic, technological, and military competition. That said, we should also cooperate with Beijing when our interests align.

**Question.** The Chinese Government has doubled down on its “all or nothing” negotiating strategy, demanding the U.S. meet its “two list” criteria—most of which are fundamentally incompatible with U.S. policy and national interests—before China is willing to cooperate with the U.S. on key issues. How should the U.S. engage—and how will you do so in your role if confirmed—with its counterparts if the Chinese Government refuses to cooperate without us meeting their list of demands?

**Answer.** The U.S. is not beholden to any list of demands from the PRC Government. We reject the linkage of action on transnational challenges, such as climate, to other issues in the bilateral relationship. Strategic competition, however, does not, and should not, preclude working with the PRC when it is in the U.S. national interest. If confirmed, I will make clear to my PRC counterparts that we will welcome the PRC Government’s cooperation on issues where our interests align and where the PRC has a global responsibility to act such as the climate crisis, global health security, strategic stability, counter-narcotics, and nonproliferation, while being clear-eyed about the challenges that our relationship with the PRC poses, and will work with the interagency and our allies to overcome those challenges.

**Question.** Do you think the Foreign Service is prepared to execute sustained competition with China? Are there any changes or reforms that need to be made to ensure our diplomatic corps is better positioned to advance these goals? What are some ideas you have in this vein that can be executed in Mission China?

**Answer.** Yes. The Foreign Service is prepared to execute sustained competition with the People’s Republic of China (PRC), as it has with strategic competitors in generations past. As part of this effort, the Department is realigning resources and personnel and developing nimble new organizational structures and strategic approaches. The Department also continues to benefit from Congressional funding to support this new effort, such as the Counter China Influence Fund (CCIF).

All of our foreign posts have dedicated “China Watchers”—reporting or public diplomacy officers covering the PRC as part of their portfolio. These China Watchers collaborate with interagency colleagues to monitor and counter PRC problematic behaviors in State’s global network of posts and missions, under the strategic direction of Chiefs of Mission. In 2019, the Department established the Regional China Officers (RCOs) program, which has recently expanded to 19 officers. RCOs help assess and respond to problematic PRC behavior at the sub-regional, regional, and global levels, in coordination with posts’ “China Watchers” and leadership.

Mission China also continues to work tirelessly and under increasingly difficult conditions to engage the PRC on several important challenges and matters of shared interest, and to provide the best possible reporting back to Washington. To enhance our effectiveness in achieving these diplomatic efforts, Mission China continues to require support for the facilities and personnel appropriate to match the PRC’s rapidly expanding resources and capabilities.

**Question.** Do you commit to messaging to China the dangers and risks of its destabilizing actions against Taiwan?

**Answer.** Yes. The Biden-Harris Administration has repeatedly underscored to the People’s Republic of China (PRC) that the PRC’s actions are destabilizing, risk miscalculations, and undermine regional peace and stability. If confirmed, I commit to continuing to emphasize those points to Beijing and to undertaking efforts to shine a light on those PRC actions and PRC rhetoric.

**Question.** What should we be doing now to deter China from aggressive and destabilizing action in the Taiwan Strait?

**Answer.** This is a priority for the Biden-Harris Administration, which continues to take steps to strengthen deterrence in the Western Pacific. First, we have continued to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our “one China” policy. In doing so, we are in particular focused on helping Taiwan implement an asymmetric defense strategy that best aligns Taiwan’s resources and advantages against the threat posed by the PRC. Second, we are building international support for the maintenance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and for Taiwan, as the joint statements between President Biden and former Prime Minister Suga and President Moon respectively as

well as the G7 Leaders Communiqué, Joint AUSMIN statement, and increasing unilateral messaging from other allies and partners illustrates. Third, we are supporting Taiwan beyond our security cooperation to demonstrate the strength of our partnership, push back on the PRC's destabilizing pressure tactics, and elevate Taiwan's contributions to the international community—we have donated COVID vaccines to Taiwan, restarted Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) talks, and advocated for Taiwan's membership or meaningful participation in international organizations.

*Question.* Do you commit that, in your role, you will always pursue policies that enable the Taiwan people to choose their own future?

*Answer.* Yes, and if confirmed, I would continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan. I would urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure against Taiwan, and instead engage in meaningful dialogue with Taiwan. I will support the longstanding U.S. policy to assist Taiwan in maintaining maintain a sufficient self-defense capability, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our "one China" policy.

*Question.* What are your views on exercising economic, financial, and other tools to limit China's ability to benefit from Hong Kong as a financial center—both to impose costs for violating a treaty and to deter action against Taiwan? That would be a bit more than some individual visa sanctions.

*Answer.* I think it was particularly effective to sanction specific individuals in Hong Kong who are responsible for the repression of the people of Hong Kong. If confirmed, I will continue to consider all available policy tools to impose costs on Beijing for its actions in Hong Kong, including sanctions and highlighting unacceptable PRC behavior through joint messaging with partners and allies.

*Question.* The PLA has established its first overseas military base in Djibouti, and the U.S. is concerned about PLA presence at Ream in Cambodia. How would you address this issue, if confirmed?

*Answer.* Strategic competition, including military competition, with the PRC will remain a major feature of the bilateral relationship for the foreseeable future. The U.S. Government is closely watching the PLA's activities in Djibouti. I have serious concerns about the PRC's military presence and construction of facilities at Ream Naval Base on the Gulf of Thailand. Maintaining an independent and balanced foreign policy is in the best interests of the Cambodian people. If confirmed, I will make this a priority issue.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Strategic competition, including military competition, with the PRC will remain a major feature of the bilateral relationship for the foreseeable future. The U.S. Government is closely watching the PLA's activities in Djibouti. I have serious concerns about the PRC's military presence and construction of facilities at Ream Naval Base on the Gulf of Thailand. Maintaining an independent and balanced foreign policy is in the best interests of the Cambodian people. If confirmed, I will make this a priority issue. If confirmed, I am open to providing more information about this issue and the administration's policy to respond to PRC overseas basing during a closed briefing after I have had the opportunity to consult on the specifics with the Department of State, Department of Defense, and National Security Council.*

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advocate for or take steps to restore China programs under Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act without prior and meaningful congressional consultation?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support the Secretary's goal of working with this Committee and Congress to ensure this Administration meets the China challenge. I commit to prior and meaningful consultations with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* Do you support the designation of certain PRC entities under the Foreign Missions Act?

*Answer.* Organizations in the United States that are wholly owned or effectively controlled by a foreign government ought to operate transparently and in accordance with U.S. laws. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Office of Foreign Missions to advance that goal.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. It is my understanding that the Foreign Missions Act (FMA) permits the Secretary to treat certain types of non-diplomatic organizations as "foreign missions" for FMA purposes. It is also my understanding that the issue of whether any particular organization is eligible and should be treated as a foreign mission under the FMA requires a fact-specific review. As a general matter,*

*organizations in the United States that are wholly owned or effectively controlled by a foreign government ought to operate transparently and in accordance with U.S. laws. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Office of Foreign Missions to advance that goal.*

*Question.* What are your views on the issue of undue influence actors in the PRC in U.S. universities?

*Answer.* This is a major concern and high priority for the U.S. Government. A clear understanding of the organizations and entities Beijing uses to attempt to influence U.S. society is important. They must be held to the same standard as all organizations operating in the United States. Of particular concern are activities that lack transparency and attempt to hide or downplay their affiliations and objectives.

If confirmed, I will continue to promote transparency on the topic to relevant stakeholders within the United States, including state and local governments, universities, and business associations, as appropriate.

*Question.* Do you think there should be greater scrutiny of foreign donations and contracts between U.S. universities and donors from countries that do share our interests, such as China and Russia? If so, how can Mission China contribute to that goal?

*Answer.* I am supportive of measures to ensure that donations and contracts between U.S. universities and foreign entities benefit the United States and are not subject to undue foreign influence, including by the Government of the People's Republic of China. If confirmed, I will encourage Mission China to support the State Department's efforts to educate and inform educational institutions about their possible exposure to undue foreign influence through such arrangements.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021].* I am supportive of measures to ensure that donations and contracts between U.S. universities and foreign entities benefit the United States and are not subject to undue foreign influence, including by the Government of the People's Republic of China. If confirmed, I will also ensure Mission China supports the State Department's efforts to educate and inform educational institutions about their possible exposure to undue foreign influence through such arrangements.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you highlight corrupt Chinese practices, including by government officials and PRC companies operating in the domestic and foreign markets?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will push back on corrupt or coercive political and economic practices that damage our interests and those of our partners, including control over resources, predatory lending practices, and the abusive use of new security technology.

*Question.* In your view, what are the implications of China being able to pressure and punish U.S. persons and companies into accepting or at least not pushing back on the political positions of the Chinese Government, even when those positions undermine the fundamental political principles and values of the United States? What can and should private sector actors be doing to address this issue? What is the proper role of the U.S. Government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage the business community to consider the risks of doing business with the PRC. I will also stress the importance for U.S. companies to ensure they avoid complicity with forced labor in the PRC, adhere to U.S. sanctions, and align their activities with the high standards of responsible business conduct we expect from U.S. firms. While we are not asking U.S. companies to advocate actively for our foreign policy, we expect them to take positions that align with American values and U.S. law. If confirmed, I will work to help U.S. companies to build resilience against PRC efforts to coerce them to take positions at odds with human rights, the rule of law, and responsible business conduct.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021].* U.S. companies face a difficult balancing act in China. Many, from large multinationals to smaller firms operating in the U.S. heartland, have longstanding business relationships and operations in the PRC, whether in manufacturing or sourcing their goods and inputs for Chinese and global markets, or selling to Chinese consumers.

*If confirmed, I will encourage the business community to consider the risks of doing business with the PRC. I will also stress the importance for U.S. companies to ensure they avoid complicity with forced labor in the PRC, adhere to U.S. sanctions, and align their activities with the high standards of responsible business conduct we expect from U.S. firms. While we are not asking U.S. companies to advocate*

*actively for our foreign policy, we should expect them to take positions that align with American values, their own corporate values, and the expectations of their shareholders. If confirmed, I will work to help U.S. companies to build resilience against PRC efforts to coerce them to take positions at odds with human rights, the rule of law, and responsible business conduct.*

*In instances where American corporations are publicly or privately coerced by the PRC to take actions that violate their corporate values or are punished for taking corporate positions that run counter to the PRC's false political or human rights narratives, I will, if confirmed, work to provide them with all available U.S. Government support. I also commit to working with like-minded partners to discourage companies from third countries from backfilling commercial opportunities when American companies stand their ground against the PRC or must refrain from pursuing opportunities due to their compliance with U.S. sanctions. Effective resistance to PRC coercion is most successful when we stand together with our partners and allies to encourage the business community to do what is right in China.*

*Question.* In your view, what are the goals of “One Belt, One Road”?

*Answer.* The Belt and Road Initiative uses projects spread across 125 countries to create new markets for Chinese exports, new sources of energy and other raw materials for the PRC's factories and power plants, and new avenues for rewriting international rules and standards to serve Beijing's own interests.

Unlike the United States and most G20 countries, PRC state-backed lending disregards international standards and best practices that stress transparency, sustainability, and quality. Beijing's state banks generally do not consider debt sustainability risks in the borrowing country, conceal or obfuscate the amount and terms of the country's loans, and discourage borrowing countries from reporting through borrower non-disclosure arrangements. Instead of fair competition, the PRC channels billions of dollars in government subsidies to its exporters and civil engineering companies, allowing it to unfairly undercut its global competitors. BRI projects also often fail to implement international labor standards and environmental and social safeguards.

If confirmed, I will promote development that emphasizes democratic governance, social and economic safeguards, transparency, and sustainable financing. I will work with our allies and partners to shine a spotlight on how the PRC's opaque loans and investments threaten fiscal stability and good governance while contributing to developing countries' unsustainable debt loads.

*Question.* The Trump Administration undertook a major push to keep products from China's Huawei out of 5G networks in countries across the world, especially in allied nations in Europe. Multiple countries have chosen to exclude Huawei from their emerging 5G networks, including the United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Poland, Sweden, Estonia, Romania, Denmark, and Latvia.

- How will you address the issue of keeping 5G networks clean from Chinese equipment and the consequent security hazards?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration views 5G security as a top priority because the stakes for securing these networks could not be higher. The United States advocates for a vibrant digital economy worldwide that enables all citizens to benefit from the promise of 5G and future telecommunications networks. At fora such as the Quad, the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council, the G7, and at the upcoming Third annual Prague 5G Security Conference, and in our bilateral relationships, the Department actively promotes 5G network security and vendor diversity, in partnership with the interagency, as part of that approach.

*Question.* The Trump Administration undertook a major push to keep products from China's Huawei out of 5G networks in countries across the world, especially in allied nations in Europe. Multiple countries have chosen to exclude Huawei from their emerging 5G networks, including the United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Poland, Sweden, Estonia, Romania, Denmark, and Latvia.

- Looking beyond 5G, what other emerging technologies do you think would create risks for the United States and its allies if we have an undue reliance on untrusted vendors? Are there areas you will prioritize, and how so?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris Administration views emerging technologies, infrastructure, and energy as critical to the U.S. future national security and economic prosperity. Advanced and future telecommunications technologies—5G, 6G, and beyond—as well as the semiconductors and microchips that are integral to those and so many other technologies, are high priorities. So too is the responsible stewardship of trustworthy artificial intelligence (AI) that is developed and used in line with democratic values and respect for human rights. Supercomputing, cloud computing,

data storage, and quantum information technologies are already changing the way we live—a trend that will only increase. Advanced energy—from renewable energy and storage to microreactors and fusion energy—will power these technologies. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners, companies, universities, and civil society organizations that promote democratic values and share a commitment to design and deploy technology for the benefit of all people.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advise Secretary Blinken, the President, or any other official to sacrifice other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

*Answer.* I reject the linkage of action on climate to other issues in the bilateral relationship. As Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-PRC relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests. We will compete, and compete vigorously, with the PRC where we should, and we will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest, including on climate change. The PRC is by far the largest emitter of carbon in the world today. The world cannot solve the climate crisis without the PRC doing substantially more to reduce their emissions at the pace and magnitude required to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as the science requires. This is a major issue for the entire world, as well as in our relationship. At the end of the day, this Administration will look at what Beijing does—not what it says it will or will not do—to determine whether the PRC is serious about climate action.

*Question.* Do you commit that you yourself will not take any steps to trade other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit that I will not take steps to trade other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement or promises from the PRC on climate change.

*Question.* To the best of your understanding, does Mr. Kerry have authority to be involved in any other issues in our China policy, other than climate?

*Answer.* No. As Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, former Secretary of State John Kerry's role is to lead U.S. diplomatic efforts worldwide to reassert U.S. climate leadership and raise global ambition to meet the daunting climate challenge. His climate diplomacy work is closely coordinated with other U.S. diplomatic efforts.

*Question.* If Mr. Kerry begins playing a major role in non-climate aspects of the U.S.-China relationship, what will you do to remedy that?

*Answer.* Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (SPEC) Kerry has not done so. His role is to lead the U.S. diplomatic efforts worldwide to reassert U.S. climate leadership and raise global ambition to meet the challenge. His climate diplomacy work will continue to be closely coordinated with other U.S. diplomatic efforts. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with SPEC Kerry on pushing the PRC to take stronger and faster climate action. I have very high regard for John Kerry and his experience and effectiveness as a negotiator.

*Question.* Mr. Kerry and Secretary of Commerce Raimondo have both said that if we cooperate with China on climate and commercial ties, it will help us to cooperate in other areas. Do you agree with that assessment?

*Answer.* I agree with the administration's competitive approach to the PRC. I believe we should continue to strengthen our own competitive hand vis-à-vis the PRC. This does not preclude cooperation in areas where our interests align, such as climate. If confirmed, I will pursue cooperation with the PRC where it is in our interest, and in consultation with the Congress, our allies and partners, and other stakeholders.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. I agree with the administration's competitive approach to the PRC. The United States will compete vigorously with the PRC where we should, and we will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest.*

*I believe we should continue to strengthen our own competitive hand vis-à-vis the PRC. This does not preclude us from raising areas where we have concern with the PRC's actions nor from cooperating in areas where our interests may align, such as climate. If confirmed, I will pursue cooperation with the PRC where it is in our interest, and in consultation with the Congress, our allies and partners, and other stakeholders.*

*Question.* Mr. Kerry stated in a Bloomberg interview on September 22 in response to a question about "how one trades off climate against human rights" (the interviewer's exact words): "Well life is always full of tough choices in the relationship between nations. Even as there were egregious human rights issues [with the Soviet

Union], which Ronald Reagan called them out on, we had to find a way forward to make the world safer and protect our countries and act in our interests. We can and must do the same thing now. Yes, we have issues, but first and foremost, this planet must be protected.”

- Do you agree that climate should come “first and foremost” in the U.S.-China relationship?

Answer. As Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests. This administration will compete, and compete vigorously, with the PRC where we should, and we will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest. Climate is perhaps the signature issue on the cooperation side. The United States is committed to working with the international community and the PRC on climate as an urgent issue, and I hope Beijing will engage with us on the same basis.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. As Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests. This administration will compete, and compete vigorously, with the PRC where we should, and we will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest.*

*The administration has consistently said climate change is an area where our interests align, and has regularly raised with the PRC the importance of taking bold actions to address the climate crisis. There is simply no way to solve the climate crisis without the significant emission reductions from the country that today leads the world with 28% of global emissions.*

*The United States is committed to working with the international community and the PRC on climate as an urgent issue, and I hope Beijing will engage with us on the same basis.*

*Question.* Do you think there is a “tough choice” between promoting human rights in China and coming to an agreement on climate?

Answer. No, as Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests. We will compete, and compete vigorously, with the PRC where we should, and we will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest, including on climate change. Human rights will remain a major priority issue on the U.S. agenda with China.

*Question.* In various publications, you’ve written we need China to “mitigate environmental catastrophe or engineer a stable, global economy,” or cooperate with China on “transnational threats” such as “combatting piracy and drug and crime cartels and responding to pandemics of the future.” You’ve also written that we share interests with China and Russia on “climate change, terrorism, Iran, and North Korea” and “proliferation.” Are there other issues where you have a similar view? What do you think China is willing to do in each of these issue areas?

Answer. I am clear-eyed about the challenges that our relationship with the PRC poses and, if confirmed, will work with the interagency and our allies to overcome them. Strategic competition does not, and should not, preclude working with the PRC when it is in the U.S. national interest to do so. In fact, we will welcome the PRC Government’s cooperation on issues such as the climate crisis, global health security, strategic stability, counter-narcotics, and nonproliferation when our interests align.

We actively seek the PRC’s cooperation in efforts to constrain Iran’s nuclear program, as it has no interest in seeing Iran develop a nuclear weapon and the profoundly destabilizing impact that would have in a region upon which China depends for its oil imports.

On climate issues, the PRC is by far the largest emitter of carbon in the world today. The world cannot solve the climate crisis without the PRC doing substantially more to reduce their emissions at the pace and magnitude required to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as the science requires. This is a major issue for the entire world, as well as in our relationship. At the end of the day, this Administration will look at what Beijing does—not what it says it will or will not do—to determine whether the PRC is serious about climate action.

*Question.* The Chinese Communist Party is cracking down against financial institutions, technology companies, and individual wealth accumulation. What is your assessment of the future of China’s economy, and what risks do these regulatory changes present to U.S. businesses in China or with supply chains in China?



Answer. The PRC's increasingly intrusive business regulations, political demands, and national security laws are contributing to a deteriorating investment climate and rising political risk for companies. If confirmed, I will encourage the business community to consider the risks of doing business with the PRC. I will make every effort to help U.S. businesses to succeed in China.

*Question.* How will you strengthen the economic corps in Mission China?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Mission China economic corps has the resources and support they need to advance a foreign policy for the middle class, to ensure American businesses are positioned to compete and win on a global stage, and to confront the PRC's economic abuses.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2011]. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Mission China economic corps has the resources and support they need to advance a foreign policy for the middle class, to ensure American businesses are positioned to compete and win on a global stage, and to confront the PRC's economic abuses. If confirmed, I will ask my Country Team to assess ways in which the economic corps could be strengthened, and if needed, work with State Department colleagues and Congress to identify corresponding resources.*

*Question.* What will you ask the economic corps in Mission China to prioritize? Please be specific.

Answer. We must hold the PRC accountable for failing to play by the rules on trade and investment, including its theft of intellectual property, use of state subsidies, dumping of goods, and unfair labor practices. These actions harm American workers and businesses. The best way to meet this challenge is to form common cause with U.S. allies and partners to confront the PRC's anti-competitive, market distorting, and coercive behaviors. If confirmed, I will also work to create a level playing field for U.S. businesses, coordinating with Congress and interagency partners, including the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Agriculture, along with partners and allies to develop policies that counter the PRC's abusive and unfair economic practices.

*Question.* In particular, how would you, if confirmed, and the economic corps at Mission China help deal with the PRC's growing use of laws and regulations to pressure foreign companies not to comply with U.S. laws, including our sanctions laws?

Answer. President Biden is firmly committed to taking on the challenge of the PRC's abusive and unfair practices. The best way to meet this challenge is to work alongside U.S. allies and partners to confront the PRC's anti-competitive, market distorting, and coercive behaviors. If confirmed, I will work to create a level playing field for U.S. businesses, coordinating with Congress and interagency partners, including the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Agriculture to develop policies that counter the PRC's abusive and unfair economic practices and hold Beijing accountable when it employs them.

The administration should not be deterred from taking actions to hold Beijing accountable for human rights violations, the erosion of Hong Kong autonomy, and other problematic behavior. If confirmed, I will work to help American businesses to succeed, while also encouraging the business community to consider the risks of doing business with the PRC. If confirmed, I will also support and encourage U.S. businesses to respect human rights in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

*Question.* Do you agree on the need to move certain supply chains out of China?

Answer. I fully support the Biden-Harris administration's effort to realize resilient, diverse, and secure supply chains to ensure our economic prosperity and national security, including by encouraging American companies to diversify their People's Republic of China (PRC) sourcing and supply chains to create more resilient supply chains that can reduce vulnerabilities to economic coercion and other PRC actions. Chief among our concerns are the PRC's use of state-led, non-market interventions, to capture large portions of value chains in sectors crucial to U.S. national and economic security. Our approach must also reflect other vulnerabilities, such as pandemics and other biological threats, climate shocks and extreme weather events, and cyber and terrorist attacks. The PRC has used its dominance of critical sectors as economic leverage to advance its own geopolitical agenda, including numerous cases of economic coercion against trading partners who do not fully support Beijing's policies. If confirmed, I would support U.S. efforts to diversify critical supply

chains beyond China to avoid the unacceptable risk that the United States could be placed in a similar situation.

*Question.* Do you agree with the need to reduce our reliance on China overall in terms of supply chains? If so, what sectors or items would fall into either of these categories for you?

*Answer.* I fully support the Biden-Harris administration's effort to reduce U.S. reliance on the PRC for critical supply chains. Chief among these are the critical sectors noted in Executive Order (E.O.) 14001 on public health supply chains and E.O. 14017 on America's Supply Chains, which identified semiconductors and advanced packaging, high-capacity batteries, critical minerals, pharmaceuticals, and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and supplies necessary for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Administration's efforts to review supply chains related to six industrial bases—for defense, energy, transportation, information, and communication technology (ICT), public health, and agriculture and food—may yet identify additional critical sectors of concern with respect to the PRC's current or prospective dominance that may merit further action.

Moreover, American companies must ensure that their PRC supply chains are free of forced labor, including those for silica-based products, and those for cotton and tomatoes produced in Xinjiang. As President Biden made clear at the G7 Summit, the United States will not tolerate forced labor in our supply chains.

*Question.* What will you do to help U.S. companies achieve either of the goals of reducing reliance on China in terms of supply chains and moving certain supply chains out of China, and to withstand costs imposed by the PRC Government of doing so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. companies to reduce our reliance on the PRC for critical supply chains. This includes actively engaging with industry and other key stakeholders, including labor and civil society, to fully understand the complex nature of supply chains that originate in the PRC as well as the risks and vulnerabilities that they pose. I will also work within the Administration to use the full extent of our trade, commercial and diplomatic tools to support U.S. firms' efforts to diversify, as appropriate, their PRC-based critical supply chains and sourcing activities. I will also vigorously defend the interests of U.S. companies if PRC authorities punish them for actions taken to support resilient supply chains in the U.S. national interest.

*Question.* The Biden Administration updated a Trump-era executive order addressing the threat of securities investments by Chinese companies linked to the People's Liberation Army. The Trump Administration formed the ICTS process to protect against untrusted information communications technology and services in U.S. supply chains. The SEC is taking a stronger stance on Chinese companies not abiding by accounting and auditing standards. There is greater attention on the presence of PRC companies listed in capital markets that also work with the Chinese military or are potentially complicit in human rights abuses. The State Department can play a role in providing valuable information to support some of these processes. It can also advocate inside the interagency for rigorous enforcement of these tools.

- Do you commit to making this a priority?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with my interagency colleagues to hold PRC firms to the same audit compliance standards that apply to other companies around the world as a requirement for listing in U.S. financial markets. I would also work with our allies and partners to encourage and strengthen national security-focused investment screening mechanisms to mitigate the risks of concerning third-country investments, including from PRC-backed companies making third country investments. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris Administration efforts to ensure the PRC cannot exploit U.S. capital markets to support PLA military modernization and the use of PRC surveillance technology in human rights abuse.

*Question.* If so, what steps will you take to do so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will leverage the full breadth of authorities available to us to protect our economic and national security interests, and support enhanced investment screening efforts. I would confront unfair and inappropriate trade practices—including intellectual property theft for commercial and military enhancement and coercive economic practices, use of state subsidies, dumping of goods, and unfair labor practices.

*Question.* You supported TPP. Would you advocate inside the administration for the U.S. joining CPTPP, especially now that China has made a bid for it?

Answer. Trade policy in the Indo-Pacific is a key part of the Biden-Harris administration's effort to Build Back Better. The administration's approach to trade is focused on supporting American working families, defending our values, and protecting the long-term prosperity and security of the United States. As President Biden has said, the United States is focused on making investments in U.S. workers and U.S. competitiveness before he signs new trade agreements, including in the Indo-Pacific. The United States is working with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region to identify ways to address specific trade issues such as infrastructure, the digital economy, and energy.

*Additional Information—11/8/2021. If confirmed, I will faithfully represent the administration's trade policies. The administration's approach to trade is focused on supporting American working families, defending our values, and protecting the long-term prosperity and security of the United States. As President Biden has said, the United States is focused on making investments in U.S. workers and U.S. competitiveness before he signs new trade agreements, including in the Indo-Pacific. Ambassador Tai has stated, "We will create durable trade policy that benefits a broad range of stakeholders by rebuilding trust with our workers and aligning our domestic and foreign policies."*

*Question.* PRC military modernization and expansion is dramatically shifting the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific. Do you commit to ensuring the U.S. does not weaken its defense posture in the Indo-Pacific, or take any measures that would lessen our security commitments to our allies and partners in the region?

Answer. The Peoples Republic of China's (PRC) military build-up and coercive activities highlight Beijing's increasing comfort with employing military forces to achieve its foreign policy objectives. The United States and its allies and partners will continue to make every effort to strengthen our ability to deter and defend against aggression, and the administration has been clear that our security commitments to our allies and partners will remain strong and credible.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Yes. The Peoples Republic of China's (PRC) military build-up and coercive activities highlight Beijing's increasing comfort with employing military forces to achieve its foreign policy objectives. The United States and its allies and partners will continue to make every effort to strengthen our ability to deter and defend against aggression, and the administration has been clear that our security commitments to our allies and partners will remain strong and credible.*

*Question.* What do you think is motivating China's massive nuclear build-up?

Answer. China's build-up highlights why the administration will pursue strategic stability measures to reduce the dangers from the PRC's growing nuclear arsenal. These efforts will be paired with actions to bolster deterrence in the region. Because Beijing is the least transparent member of the P5 nuclear weapons states, accurate assessments of its nuclear intentions are difficult. I defer to the Intelligence Community for a specific assessment of the factors driving the PRC's rapid nuclear build-up.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. China's build-up highlights why the administration will pursue strategic stability measures to reduce the dangers from the PRC's growing nuclear arsenal. These efforts will be paired with actions to bolster deterrence in the region. Because Beijing is the least transparent member of the P5 nuclear weapons states, accurate assessments of its nuclear intentions are difficult. I defer to the Intelligence Community for a specific assessment of the factors driving the PRC's rapid nuclear build-up. If confirmed, I commit to brief you and your staff after I have had the opportunity to consult within the administration.*

*Question.* In light of China's nuclear build-up, do you think it is the right decision for the United States to adopt a 'sole purpose doctrine' or a 'no first use' policy, based on information that's in open source?

Answer. I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Congress, and experts regarding potential U.S. adoption of a no-first-use or sole purpose policy. In the face of the PRC's rapid nuclear build-up, the Administration will ensure our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies and partners remain strong and credible, while also taking steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy. The ongoing analysis within the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review will inform the Administration's approach to nuclear posture and policy. I do not want to get ahead of that process.

*Question.* Do you believe that unilateral U.S. nuclear reductions would enable the United States to negotiate with Russia and China from a position of strength?

Answer. I would never support unilateral reductions that endanger U.S. security or weaken U.S. negotiating leverage. The U.S. should maintain a modern, credible and effective nuclear deterrent.

*Question.* What do you think would incentivize China to engage in arms control discussions?

Answer. The Administration hopes that Beijing will come to see that arms control is in its own security interest, as such measures would contribute to reducing the risk of military crises and would manage the threat of destabilizing arms races. U.S. allies and partners will be key to success in these efforts. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress at an appropriate time on potential measures to be pursued with Beijing.

*Question.* If we are not able to commence discussions on arms control with China, what should the U.S. be doing instead to address various arms controls issues we have with China?

Answer. Given the PRC's rapid military expansion, the United States and its allies and partners need to strengthen their ability to deter and defend against aggression. Beijing's nuclear build-up highlights that there is a need for crisis communication, risk reduction, and strategic stability. These efforts will be paired with actions to bolster deterrence in the region.

*Question.* Do you think the United States should cooperate with countries where we have concerns about compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention on biotechnology, pathogen research, and other categories of biological research that could be weaponized or serve a dual-use function?

Answer. It is my view that the United States should not cooperate with countries of compliance concern on specific biological research where we believe there is significant potential that information, technology, or material we provide could be used for nefarious purposes. In this vein, I strongly support oversight of life sciences dual use research of concern. It is important, however, to continue dialogue with those countries to clarify and resolve compliance concerns. Further, if certain countries have the only access to certain pathogens, then the United States must find a way to ensure that public health experts can continue their necessary collaborative work to be able to protect us from naturally occurring outbreaks and accidents, while minimizing risks to our national security.

*Question.* Would you work to limit cooperation with the PRC on biotechnology, and to increase scrutiny of any such cooperation?

Answer. The United States has oversight policies and regulations for federally funded research. These policies require careful consideration of risks and benefits of proposed research, and where appropriate, measures to mitigate those risks. Policy development is led by the National Security Council and by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and decisions about the funding of specific research proposals are made by the responsible funding agency. If confirmed, I will work closely with the ISN and AVC Bureaus on issues concerning the PRC to ensure that policy development considers both our international obligations and the international implications of policy choices.

*Question.* Do you commit to prioritizing engagement with industry, academia, the health research community, and other stakeholders outside traditional national security circles on the United States' compliance concerns with respect to the Biological Weapons Convention? If so, what three steps will you take to make good on this commitment, should you be confirmed?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working with the AVC Bureau to engage those outside traditional national security circles (e.g., industry, academia, the health research community) and with international counterparts about United States' concerns regarding other countries' compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention. The State Department plans to engage those outside (and inside) traditional national security circles in the run up to the BWC Review Conference and during the BWC Review Conference itself through bilateral engagements and briefings, NGO roundtables, workshops, and public outreach events.

*Question.* Do you think the U.S. Government should be funding research with China on pathogens, viruses, and toxins? If so, do you think the State Department should have a role in reviewing whether such proposals are in the national security interests of the United States?

Answer. It is my view that the United States should not cooperate with countries of compliance concern on specific biological research where we believe there is sig-

nificant potential that information, technology, or material we provide could be used for nefarious purposes. It is important, however, to continue dialogue with those countries to clarify and resolve compliance concerns. Further, if the PRC has the only access to certain pathogens, the United States must find a way to ensure that public health experts can continue their necessary collaborative work to be able to protect us from naturally occurring outbreaks, while minimizing our national security risks.

The United States has federal funding and oversight for research that might pose safety or security risks and require additional oversight by Departments that fund such research. These policies establish a high bar for funding based on a careful assessment of risks and benefits and require steps to mitigate any risks. The AVC Bureau would be consulted if the proposed cooperation raised any potential issues related to compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the strategic threat China presents in the Arctic?

*Answer.* China is pursuing greater influence in the Arctic, seeking to leverage investments in scientific research and critical infrastructure to secure footholds and extend its soft power across the region. We coordinate closely with allies and partners in the Arctic on the protection of critical infrastructure and to keep Arctic states at the forefront of governance in the region.

*Question.* According to the 2019 National Drug Threat Assessment, fentanyl and other highly potent synthetic opioids continue to be the most lethal category of illicit substances in the United States. The 2020 DEA report on fentanyl flows to the United States highlights that China remains the primary source of fentanyl and fentanyl-related substances trafficked into the United States, increasingly through Mexico. Mexican transnational criminal organizations are producing increased quantities of fentanyl and cartels such as the Sinaloa and the New Generation Jalisco cartel are the primary trafficking groups responsible for smuggling fentanyl into the United States from Mexico.

- Please explain your understanding of the actions and steps the Chinese Government needs to take to reduce, and eventually eliminate, the transshipment of fentanyl precursor chemicals to Mexico.

*Answer.* The PRC is the primary source for precursor chemicals used to manufacture fentanyl, opioids, methamphetamine, and other synthetic drugs globally. Addressing this challenge is an Administration priority. If confirmed, I will support this priority and coordinate closely with interagency partners to raise this issue through bilateral channels and multilaterally with allies and partners. If confirmed, I will press the PRC to take a number of actions that could reduce the transshipment of fentanyl precursor chemicals, including the investigation and prosecution of the use of false documents and shipping labels, implementation of “know your customer” regulations.

Diminishing shipments of fentanyl precursors from the PRC to Latin American transnational criminal organizations to stop flows to the United States will require tangible working-level with Beijing and cooperation with allies and partners, including in Congress. If confirmed, I also will work with interagency partners to utilize all available tools to promote accountability for illicit actors involved in the fentanyl supply chain. I look forward to close continued consultation and cooperation with Congress on this issue.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of U.S. concerns with Chinese malign behavior in the Western Hemisphere.

*Answer.* The Secretary called our competition with the PRC a defining challenge for the 21st century. The PRC represents a serious challenge to U.S. interests in the region, with its growing security ties and opaque infrastructure investments that undermine transparency and sovereignty. The Department does not oppose Beijing’s engagement and investment throughout the region. The Department, however, echoes the long-standing calls from Latin American capitals that PRC actions respect local laws and interests, particularly regarding the human rights of all, including workers, and protections for the environment.

*Question.* Do you agree with these concerns?

*Answer.* The Department seeks to strengthen the Western Hemisphere as a coalition of resilient democracies that champions our shared values. The Department does this by working with allies and partners, with a sustained commitment in virtually every dimension of our bilateral and multilateral relationships. As Secretary Blinken has made clear, we do not seek to force our partners to choose between the United States and the PRC. We offer a partnership that works in our interests and

those of our partners, undergirded by our shared values of democratic governance; respect for human rights; entrepreneurship; transparency; inclusive economic growth; environmental stewardship; and diversity, equality, and inclusion.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific steps will you recommend to diminish Chinese malign influence in the Western Hemisphere region?

*Answer.* I support the Administration's efforts to build on our shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We welcome our allies and partners' expertise and resources to support the region's COVID-19 response, entrepreneurship, and sustainable infrastructure. We support high-standard investment in infrastructure and transparent economic development that creates jobs essential for regional pandemic recovery. We employ a diverse range of tools to strengthen regional prosperity, security, and democracy, from diplomatic engagement to technical exchanges, public diplomacy and targeted foreign assistance, and partnership with the private sector and civil society.

*Question.* Please describe your views about Chinese illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the waters of the Western Hemisphere?

*Answer.* IUU fishing by foreign vessels in our Western Hemisphere waters, particularly by PRC-flagged and PRC-associated vessels, raises serious concerns. The Department works with the interagency community, including U.S. Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Agency of International Development, to improve diplomatic and enforcement tools and to promote respect for maritime sovereignty and international standards in environmental and labor practices. IUU fishing activities negatively affect coastal countries in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, whose coastal communities rely on fishery resources. The actions of a large, primarily PRC-flagged fishing fleet that targets squid in the high seas outside of South American exclusive economic zones have raised substantial concerns. Analysts have linked this fleet to IUU fishing activities in the past, and its behaviors, such as vessels turning off identification systems for periods of time, have raised questions about the fleet's activities. Analysts have most frequently cited PRC-associated vessels as engaging in IUU fishing activities in other countries' jurisdictions. PRC-associated vessels around the world also engage in other concerning behavior—including overfishing, using forced labor, operating in disputed waters accompanied by the Chinese Coast Guard, and reinforcing unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea.

*Question.* Please explain how you would convey U.S. concerns about IUU fishing in the Western Hemisphere to the Chinese Government.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would recommend continuing to raise our concerns about IUU fishing in the Western Hemisphere to the PRC in bilateral meetings, as well as through public statements and cooperation with like-minded coastal, fishing, and market states. IUU fishing remains a growing global concern. The Department urges the PRC to operate transparently about its fishing activities, enforce its own stated "zero-tolerance" policy regarding IUU fishing, and fulfill its flag state responsibilities to monitor and control its fleet.

*Question.* Please describe your concerns about the objectives of Chinese military engagement throughout Latin America.

*Answer.* The United States must maintain its substantial edge in military cooperation and sales to the hemisphere. The PRC's growing military engagement with the hemisphere remains limited but is growing and requires close attention.

*Question.* Please describe your concerns about the purpose of the so-called space station and the threat it presents to national security.

*Answer.* We have publicly discussed our concerns regarding the People's Liberation Army's efforts to develop bases around the world. Those concerns apply to the ground station in Argentina that supports the PRC's space operations. We would be happy to provide you with more detail about our national security concerns about that particular facility in a closed session.

*Question.* Chinese companies such as ZTE and Huawei have made significant inroads in Latin America. Chinese surveillance system providers have updated security and telecommunications infrastructure in countries like Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela, among others, and have sought to export Chinese surveillance techniques and equipment throughout the region.

- Please describe the threat Chinese surveillance systems present to the safety and security of citizens in these countries.

Answer. The Chinese Communist Party seeks to obtain sensitive personal data around the world. The PRC could compel PRC-linked companies to provide access to data, facilities, and equipment to security and intelligence services, potentially including those companies that export communications equipment and services around the world, including in the Western Hemisphere. The financing of “safe cities” in the region, often through the sales of surveillance technology, is not altruism—it is potentially unimpeded access to bulk surveillance data and the export of the tools of authoritarianism.

*Question.* Chinese companies such as ZTE and Huawei have made significant inroads in Latin America. Chinese surveillance system providers have updated security and telecommunications infrastructure in countries like Mexico, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela, among others, and have sought to export Chinese surveillance techniques and equipment throughout the region.

- How does the proliferation of Chinese telecommunications infrastructure in Latin America threaten U.S. national security interest?

Answer. The United States is deeply concerned about the dangers of installing networks that can be manipulated, disrupted, or controlled by governments that have no regard for privacy or human rights. In the PRC, where vendors are beholden to the whims of the PRC, this control is spelled out explicitly in the Chinese National Intelligence Law: “Any organization and citizen shall, in accordance with the law, support, provide assistance, and cooperate in national intelligence work, and guard the secrecy of any national intelligence work they are aware of.” There can be no trust when a company lacks meaningful judicial recourse to challenge government overreach. These vendors could provide the PRC the capability and opportunity to disrupt or weaponize critical applications and infrastructure.

These concerns are not hypothetical—we have all seen news reports of the PRC attempting to coerce countries by withholding COVID-19 vaccines or threatening economic or trade retaliation if they do not allow Huawei access to their markets.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the human rights situation in China?

Answer. Human rights and democracy are at the core of U.S. foreign policy. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) is committing genocide and crimes against humanity, including sexual violence, against members of ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang, including Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim. The PRC continues a government policy of widespread forced labor, including through the continued mass arbitrary detention of more than one million Uyghurs, and members of other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang. The PRC Government is repressing Tibetans’ distinct language, religion, and culture. It is eroding Hong Kong’s autonomy and democratic institutions and processes. The PRC continues to detain lawyers and other human rights defenders and to curtail the freedoms of expression, religion and belief, and movement throughout the country. The United States has called on the PRC to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to adhere to its obligations with regard to Hong Kong.

If confirmed, I will seek to promote accountability for those responsible for PRC human rights violations and abuses and support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities.

*Question.* What additional tools are available to the United States Government to incentivize the Chinese Government to improve its human rights record?

Answer. If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible to end abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible to end abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions.*

*In consultation with the White House and within the State Department, I will actively consider additional tools to incentivize the PRC government to improve its human rights record.*

*Question.* Do you commit to implementing laws passed in the 116th Congress on both Hong Kong and Xinjiang?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will prioritize investigating forced labor issues in China to inform broader interagency efforts such as sanctions and issuance of withhold release orders?

Answer. Human rights and democracy are at the core of U.S. foreign policy. If confirmed, I will ensure that the PRC is held accountable for its human rights abuses and support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities.

*[Additional Information]. Human rights and democracy are at the core of U.S. foreign policy. The sanctions against two PRC nationals for their role in serious human rights abuses in Xinjiang, and the release of an updated business advisory pointing to growing evidence of the use of forced labor in Xinjiang demonstrate the administration's continuing commitment to human rights. If confirmed, I will implement the administration's priorities, ensure that the PRC is held accountable for its human rights abuses, including forced labor, and support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities.*

*Question.* Do you commit to prioritizing this issue even if it endangers U.S. climate goals with China?

Answer. As Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship will not be traded for U.S. interests.

*Question.* Do you commit to contributing to ensuring that U.S. Government financing does not touch—in any way, shape, or form—any entity in China that engages in forced labor?

Answer. Forced labor and human rights abuses in the PRC span multiple sectors and regions, and PRC officials continue to obstruct international efforts to identify and monitor these abuses. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris Administration's steadfast commitment to combat forced labor.

*Question.* Should the Development Finance Corporation invest in solar projects that source equipment from China until the United States has a fuller understanding of how prevalent forced labor is in solar panel and other related supply chains in China?

Answer. Forced labor and human rights abuses in the PRC span multiple sectors and regions, and PRC officials continue to obstruct international efforts to identify and monitor these abuses. Addressing this will require work with allies and partners, as well as a whole-of-government effort to diversify solar supply chains away from the PRC and end their dominance of the sector. If confirmed, I will work to support the Biden-Harris Administration in its steadfast commitment to combat forced labor while promoting the global clean-energy transition with secure, diversified supply chains.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Forced labor and human rights abuses in the PRC span multiple sectors and regions, and PRC officials continue to obstruct international efforts to identify and monitor these abuses. The world's largest producers of silicon metal and polysilicon have known ties to forced labor programs in Xinjiang, which could taint global solar supply chains and other industries that rely on silicon metal and products, such as electronics, automobiles, and shampoos, deodorants, and skincare. DFC is exploring opportunities in the solar sector to support geographical diversification of the supply chain as well as technologies that may not have the same reliance on traditional solar panels. In the meantime, I believe we must carefully scrutinize PRC sourcing of each solar project that comes before the board on a case-by-case basis. Addressing this will require work with allies and partners. If confirmed, I will work to support the Biden-Harris administration in its steadfast commitment to combat forced labor while promoting the global clean-energy transition with secure, diversified supply chains.*

*Question.* Do you believe Beijing should have the honor of hosting the 2022 Olympics while it is conducting ongoing human rights abuses, including crackdowns on nearly all types of civil liberties, a genocide against the Uyghur minority, and obliterating Hong Kong's autonomy at the expense of thousands of protestors?

Answer. If confirmed, I will closely review the issue of China hosting the Winter Olympics in 2022, particularly in light of its abhorrent human rights record and genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang.

The administration will consult closely with Congress, allies and partners to define our common concerns and establish a shared approach to the PRC in advance of and during the 2022 Beijing Games.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Developing a position on the Beijing Winter Olympics is important. If confirmed, I will closely review the issue of China hosting the Winter Olympics in 2022, particularly in light of its abhorrent human rights record and genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang.*



*Further, if confirmed, I will consult closely with Congress, allies, and partners to define our common concerns and establish a shared approach to the PRC in advance of the 2022 Beijing Games.*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to working with the American Olympic Committee to ensure the safety of our athletes while in Beijing or while trying to exit China after the 2022 Olympics?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Olympic Committee to help ensure the safety of American athletes in Beijing. I am deeply concerned by the PRC's continued use of arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive, non-transparent exit bans on foreign citizens. As a former Consular Officer serving in Egypt, I understand protecting U.S. citizens overseas is a fundamental obligation of the U.S. Government.

The use of human beings as bargaining leverage is unacceptable, has been condemned by the global community, and is inconsistent with China's international human rights commitments. If confirmed, I will raise arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive exit bans at every opportunity. I will also call on Beijing to end arbitrary travel restrictions imposed on U.S. citizens and other foreigners in China.

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States Government should execute a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Olympic Games to be held in Beijing? Please explain your answer.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consult closely with key stakeholders in developing our approach in advance of and during the 2022 Beijing Games.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. I agree that developing an appropriate U.S. Government posture for the Beijing Winter Olympics is important, and I will participate in these discussions in consultation with the White House and Department of State, if I am confirmed. If confirmed, I will consult closely with key stakeholders on our approach in advance of and during the 2022 Beijing Games.*

*Question.* The recent deal between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Canadian Government to engage in hostage diplomacy was a win for the CCP. How do you intend to keep Americans safe when traveling within China?

*Answer.* The use of human beings as bargaining leverage is unacceptable, has been condemned by the global community, and is inconsistent with China's international human rights commitments.

I am deeply concerned by the PRC's continued use of arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive, non-transparent exit bans on foreign citizens. As a former Consular Officer serving in Egypt, I understand protecting U.S. citizens overseas is a fundamental obligation of the U.S. Government. If confirmed, I will raise arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive exit bans at every opportunity. I will also call on Beijing to end arbitrary travel restrictions imposed on U.S. citizens and other foreigners in China.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to pursuing release for all Americans who are being held as hostages or are detained on political grounds with a robust engagement within the interagency to secure their immediate release?

*Answer.* I am deeply concerned by the PRC's continued use of arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive, non-transparent exit bans on foreign citizens. Protecting U.S. citizens overseas is the U.S. Government's highest priority.

If confirmed, I will raise arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive exit bans at every opportunity and pursue the release of all Americans imprisoned. I will also call on Beijing to end arbitrary travel restrictions imposed on U.S. citizens and other foreigners in China.

*Question.* The CCP has detained millions of Uyghurs and put them into internment camps with little to no hope of escape or reuniting with their loved ones. This includes family members of American citizens, especially as retribution for speaking out about the atrocities committed against their community and families. If confirmed, do you commit to raising these cases directly with the CCP?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to raising individual cases with the PRC Government directly, including cases of family members of U.S. citizens affected by these atrocities and other human rights defenders.

If confirmed, I will work with likeminded partners and the international community in calling on the PRC to end atrocities in Xinjiang, immediately and unconditionally release all those arbitrarily detained, abolish internment camps, and end forced labor. I will also continue pressing for the international community to protect those from Xinjiang who seek asylum and to resist PRC pressure to forcibly return these asylum-seekers back to the PRC.

*Question.* China is ranked #177 out of #180 on Reporters Without Border's (RSF) 2020 Press Freedom Index, indicating one of the most restrictive and oppressive environments for journalism in the world. What is your assessment of freedom of the press in China, and if confirmed, do you commit to working with civil society on bolstering press freedom in country?

*Answer.* Unfortunately, the pandemic has provided a pretext for repressive governments to intensify pressure on independent media. The hostile environment that media now face in these countries means that freedom of expression is even more crucial in alerting the public to abuses and corruption and in countering dangerous misinformation and disinformation.

I am deeply concerned with the increasingly harsh surveillance, harassment, and intimidation of U.S. and other foreign journalists in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The PRC Government's harsh rhetoric, promoted through official state media, toward any news it perceives to be critical of PRC policies, has provoked negative public sentiment leading to tense, in-person confrontations and harassment, including online verbal abuse and death threats of journalists simply doing their jobs. We have called on the PRC Government to release citizen journalists arrested and detained for their work covering the pandemic.

If confirmed, I will continue to call on PRC officials to ensure that journalists remain safe and are able to report freely.

*Question.* According to RSF, China jailed the most journalists globally in 2021, totaling more than 115 persons. If confirmed, what actions are available to you to advocate for the release of these journalists?

*Answer.* Many foreign journalists say they face the toughest conditions reporting in the PRC since 1989. I also know the number of U.S. reporters in the PRC right now is roughly half what it was just two years ago. The United States draws on a range of diplomatic tools to advocate for press freedom online and offline, and to protect journalists and media workers worldwide. In her July 26 meetings with PRC officials in Tianjin, Deputy Secretary Sherman specifically raised the importance of media access, freedom from harassment, and press freedom for journalists working in the PRC. If confirmed, I will continue to call on PRC officials to ensure that journalists remain safe and able to report freely.

*Question.* Does the definition of human rights include the right to "safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment?" why or why not?

*Answer.* The United States recognizes that climate change and environmental degradation can affect the enjoyment of human rights. A "right" to a clean environment has no agreed definition in international law. In our view, trying to define a right detracts from the important work of ensuring that States have strong environmental laws and enforcement.

If confirmed, I will continue to support the rights of all individuals to freedoms of association, peaceful assembly, and expression, which includes the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information. These rights protect environmental defenders, facilitate public awareness of environmental information, and contribute to good environmental policy making.

*Question.* Last year, Beijing implemented the "National Security Law" in Hong Kong, which effectively put Hong Kong's legal system and law enforcement under Beijing's control and severely undermined China's international treaty obligations to respect Hong Kong's autonomy and the rights protected in the Basic Law.

- How will the Biden administration address these violations of international law?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration will continue to consider all policy tools available, including sanctions, highlighting unacceptable PRC behavior through joint messaging with partners and allies, and exploring ways to support Hong Kongers that fear persecution.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. The Biden-Harris administration will continue to consider all policy tools available to address Beijing's failure to meet its commitments, including sanctions of individuals involved in the implementation of the National Security Law or other actions that have reduced Hong Kong's autonomy, highlighting the National Security Law and other unacceptable PRC actions through joint messaging with partners and allies, and exploring ways to support Hong Kongers that fear persecution.*

*Question.* Will you commit to continue imposing costs on Beijing for its oppressive actions in Hong Kong?

Answer. The Department will consider all available policy tools to impose costs on Beijing for its actions in Hong Kong, including responsive policies such as sanctions.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Yes. Since the implementation of the National Security Law, the United States has sanctioned 42 Hong Kong or PRC nationals. If confirmed, I will work with the Department to continue considering all available policy tools to impose costs on Beijing for its oppressive actions in Hong Kong, including responsive policies such as sanctions.*

*Question.* Do you believe that our government has effectively taken measures to counter Beijing's actions in Hong Kong? Please explain your answer.

Answer. The Department of State, often in concert with the Departments of the Treasury, Homeland Security, and Commerce, as well as the White House, has undertaken a number of actions to counter Beijing's escalatory actions in Hong Kong, including issuing the Hong Kong Business Advisory warning of emerging risks, sanctioning senior PRC and Hong Kong officials, authorizing Deferred Enforced Departure for Hong Kongers in the United States, and pursuing sustained joint messaging with likeminded allies and partners. If confirmed, I will continue to pursue policies that hold Beijing to account for its unacceptable actions to undermine Hong Kong's autonomy and stifle the democratic freedoms of people there.

*Question.* Various countries globally have forcibly returned Uyghurs to China at the request of the CCP. What actions can you take, specifically within the interagency, to end this practice?

Answer. I am clear-eyed about the challenges that our relationship with the PRC poses and, if confirmed, will work with the interagency and our allies to overcome them.

If confirmed, I will work with likeminded partners and the international community in calling on the PRC to end atrocities in Xinjiang, immediately and unconditionally release all those arbitrarily detained, abolish internment camps, and end forced labor. I will also continue to press other governments to protect those subjected to PRC atrocities, harassment, and surveillance, including those seeking asylum. I will also work within the interagency to ensure we leverage all possible tools to combat PRC Government transnational repression and will work with civil society to identify perpetrators of these abuses that expand well beyond the PRC's borders.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. I am clear-eyed about the challenges that our relationship with the PRC poses and, if confirmed, will work with the interagency and our allies to overcome them. If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners to urge third countries to act to avoid complicity in the PRC's human rights violations and abuses committed against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities from Xinjiang, including by providing protection to and preventing the forcible return of individuals seeking to flee the PRC's repressive policies. I will also work within the interagency to ensure we leverage all possible tools to combat PRC government transnational repression and will work with civil society to identify perpetrators of these abuses that expand well beyond the PRC's borders.*

*Question.* The Chinese Government continues to "Sinicize" religions, which the Congressional Executive Commission on China describes as "a campaign that aims to bring religion in China under closer official control and into conformity with officially sanctioned interpretations of Chinese culture." These policies affect Christians, Muslims, Han Buddhists, Taoists, and many others. What can the Biden Administration do to support freedom of religious practice for the people of China, free from interference and enforced conformity?

Answer. I share your concerns regarding the ongoing deterioration of freedom of religion or belief in the PRC. The PRC demonstrates blatant disregard for freedom of religion or belief and exercises extreme hostility toward members of all religious and spiritual communities, particularly Muslim Uyghurs, Tibetan Buddhists, Protestants, Catholics, and Falun Gong.

If confirmed, I will speak out consistently with allies and partners to condemn these abuses against members of minority religious groups, and I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and to deter future abuses. I will also continue to press the PRC to uphold its international commitments with respect to freedom of religion or belief for all individuals and call on the international community to condemn with a united voice the PRC's genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang.

*Question.* Various bureaus within the State Department have been developing programs with civil society to bolster internet freedom in China. How can you, if confirmed, assist with this endeavor?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will remain committed to the principle that people everywhere should enjoy the human rights online that are inherent to their dignity offline.

For over a decade, the U.S. Department of State has funded programs to advance Internet freedom globally—and especially in Internet-repressive environments such as the People’s Republic of China, where governments and other actors actively restrict the right of individuals to be free from arbitrary violations of their privacy and deny fundamental freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association online.

These programs support research to identify the greatest threats to Internet freedom, seek to secure and safeguard protections for human rights online under the rule of law through policy advocacy, support essential digital security capacity-building and emergency response services for civil society organizations and members of at-risk and vulnerable populations, and support the development, localization, deployment, and operation of anti-censorship circumvention tools that allow unrestricted access to the open, interoperable, reliable, and secure Internet.

*Question.* Do you believe that internet shutdowns are a threat to human rights?

*Answer.* In May, Secretary Blinken condemned the use of partial or complete government-imposed Internet shutdowns, among other tactics, to prevent the exercise of freedom of expression online. I believe that in addition to restricting the exercise of human rights, Internet shutdowns disrupt access to essential services such as healthcare and emergency services, and negatively affect the economy. If confirmed, I will raise U.S. concerns bilaterally and will support the U.S. Government’s continued participation in multilateral fora that raise awareness, such as the G7 and the President’s Summit for Democracy process, and our efforts in multi-stakeholder coalitions to address Internet shutdowns such as the Freedom Online Coalition, where I understand the United States plays a leadership role.

*Question.* Big Tech companies like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and others have been forced to cease or significantly scale back their operations in China due to the CCP’s encroaching demands on free speech. Most of these companies are American and inherently want to provide access for free speech and dialogue online.

- How will you engage with the Chinese Government on this particular issue?

*Answer.* Beijing’s use of propaganda and disinformation overseas through its state-owned media platforms to undermine and interfere in democracies, while restricting freedoms of the press and speech in China, is a serious concern for the U.S. and our allies. If confirmed, I will work with like-minded allies and partners to define an affirmative, rights-respecting vision for the global information space, build resilience against these threats, and expose the PRC’s activity. I will also raise these areas of concern directly with the PRC Government.

*Question.* How will you engage with American companies on free speech and human rights issues?

*Answer.* Defending freedom of expression in the global information space is a priority concern for me. Beijing’s use of propaganda and disinformation overseas through its state-owned media platforms to undermine and interfere in democracies, while restricting freedoms of the press and speech in China, is a serious concern for the United States and our allies. The PRC continues to target its own citizens, as well as the people of the United States and countries around the world, through well-resourced state-run media operations.

If confirmed, I will encourage the business community to consider the risks of doing business with the PRC and ensure they are aware of Beijing’s disinformation and propaganda efforts. If confirmed, I will also support and encourage U.S. businesses to respect human rights in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

If confirmed, I will support efforts of the Global Engagement Center (GEC) and other bureaus in the Department to counter PRC coercive and corrupting information activities and boost understanding of the tactics, techniques and procedures the PRC uses to advance its interests in the information space.

*Question.* In my China-Europe report released last year, I laid out a strategy to combat malign Chinese influence at and within the United Nations. Are you familiar with this report and its recommendations? What are your views on these recommendations?

Answer. The United States and Europe share interests in ensuring that qualified and independent candidates are selected to lead the U.N., its specialized agencies, and related organizations; reforming key institutions to be more effective, accountable, and transparent; and using our combined influence to protect the values, principles, and institutions that have built and kept the peace, fostered sustainable development, and promoted respect for human rights for more than 75 years. If confirmed, I would consistently engage allies and partners at senior levels on our multilateral priorities, expanding outreach beyond European countries and the European Union to include allies and emerging partners in other regions.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. I am familiar with the report and its recommendations. I agree that the United States and Europe, working together with other developed and developing countries, should build upon existing efforts and strengthen transparency, accountability, and good governance throughout the U.N. system. I also agree with the report's recommendations that the United States and its partners share interests in ensuring that qualified and independent candidates are selected to lead the UN, its specialized agencies, and related organizations; reforming key institutions to be more effective, accountable, and transparent; and using our combined influence to protect the values, principles, and institutions that have built and kept the peace, fostered sustainable development, and promoted respect for human rights for more than 75 years. If confirmed, I will engage allies and partners at senior levels on our multilateral priorities, expanding outreach beyond European countries and the European Union to include allies and emerging partners in other regions. If confirmed, I would also appreciate the opportunity to continue consultations with you and your staff on these matters.*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to working with the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, the Assistant Secretary for International Organizations, and the Secretary to combatting this malign influence at every opportunity?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, the Assistant Secretary for International Organizations, and the Secretary to defend and strengthen the rules-based international order. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs has established a new office focused in part on advancing this effort, including opposing efforts by the PRC to reshape the international system. If confirmed, I will work with the Bureau of International Organization Affairs to address the PRC's harmful efforts both within China and in international organizations.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to engaging with Congress and my office about campaigns to elect qualified, independent candidates to important posts like Doreen Bogdan-Martin to lead the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support efforts to ensure appointment and election of qualified, independent candidates to leadership positions in the UN system, including the U.S.-nominated candidate for Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin. U.S. candidates are critical to ensuring the UN operates effectively and in line with its foundational principles and values. They bring strong technical and policy skills that enhance the performance and outcomes within the UN system, which, in turn, bolster our efforts on UN reform and good governance.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you engage with your interagency partners as you push back on CCP goals in the International Organization space?

Answer. The United States' Mission to China can provide critical support to Department and interagency efforts to strengthen and defend the rules-based international order, including through international organizations. This includes analyzing how the PRC seeks to reshape international values and principles or to use international organizations to advance its unilateral priorities, such as the Belt and Road Initiative. If confirmed, I will work with interagency partners based in Beijing as well as through interagency processes to assist in the development and implementation of strategies to address these challenges.

*Question.* In March 2020, the Peace Corps evacuated nearly 7,000 volunteers across the globe, including from China. The Peace Corps in China had already been slated to close and the Peace Corps was in the process of phasing out new cohorts of volunteers. Do you believe that the Peace Corps should have a mission in China? Please explain your answer.

Answer. If confirmed, I will consult closely with key stakeholders in determining whether to resume Peace Corps operations.

*Question.* The Dalai Lama is the most important spiritual leader of Tibet and self-selection of its next leader should be paramount to you, if confirmed. In 2011, Chinese leadership asserted that only China should be able to select the next Dalai Lama and no recognition should be given to any other succession candidate.

- Who do you believe should select the next Dalai Lama?

*Answer.* The matter of the Dalai Lama's succession should strictly be left to Tibetan Buddhists to decide in accordance with their faith, beliefs, and traditions. If confirmed, I am committed to supporting Tibetans' religious freedom, including their ability to select, educate, and venerate their religious leaders, like the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, according to their own beliefs and without government interference.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to engaging directly with the Chinese on this religious freedom and human rights issue?

*Answer.* The Biden-Harris administration is committed to putting human rights, democratic values at the center of our foreign policy and to standing up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity. If confirmed, I will always be willing to speak out on behalf of our values and the rights of the people of China. Also, if confirmed, I plan to work with the Office of the U.S. Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, and will press Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to achieve meaningful autonomy and religious freedom for Tibetans.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to publicly disavowing Chinese meddling of the selection of the next Dalai Lama?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to promoting respect for the religious freedom of all Tibetans globally and to taking all appropriate measures to promote accountability for PRC Government officials who attempt to interfere in the Dalai Lama's succession, consistent with the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020.

*Question.* The Vatican recently extended an agreement with the Chinese Government that establishes a process for appointing bishops in China. Under the Agreement, bishops in China are in communion with Rome but also approved by the Chinese Government. The details of this agreement have never been made public. Despite the agreement, Catholic bishops not affiliated with the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association continue to face persecution.

- Will you, if confirmed as Ambassador, raise this issue with your counterparts?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I would urge PRC officials to uphold the PRC's international commitments with respect to the right to freedom of religion or belief for all individuals in China, including Catholics.

*Question.* In your testimony before this committee, you mentioned the necessity of working with the United States' treaty allies like Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

- What role, if any, do you believe that NATO and its member allies should play in standing up to China's wide variety of abuses, assertiveness, and aggression?

*Answer.* The revitalization and modernization of U.S. alliances is a central pillar of President Biden's strategy to reinforce the rules-based international order. NATO's partnerships with U.S. treaty allies in the region should foster inter-theater strategic alignment, including on the PRC, and NATO's Asia-Pacific Four format for consultation with its partners in the region is a novel forum for collaboration.

In June, NATO Allies pointed out the challenges the PRC poses to our values and collective security. Cooperation with our Transatlantic Allies is essential to maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific and enrich the fabric and resilience of the international order.

*Question.* How do you plan to leverage your NATO experience to best represent U.S. interests in the PRC?

*Answer.* China has very few friends and no real allies. Our 29 NATO allies in Canada and Europe, and our multiple treaty allies in the Indo-Pacific are our comparative advantage. I understand that President Biden has been working with Secretary Blinken to reach out to allies, both in NATO and the Indo-Pacific, to emphasize the need to work together strategically on China. If confirmed, I will use my NATO experience working with these same partners and allies to promote security, stability and the rules-based international order, to meet the challenge posed to U.S. interests by the PRC.

*Question.* Do you believe that Freedom of Navigation Operations conducted in the South China Sea by NATO members like France are useful to the United States' goals in the region? Why or why not?

*Answer.* I believe that Freedom of Navigation Operations conducted by France and other NATO allies are supportive of U.S. goals in the region. The United States believes that all nations—whether they are NATO members or not—enjoy as a matter of international law the freedoms of navigation, overflight and other lawful uses of the sea. The exercise of those freedoms ought to be routine and not elicit particular notice or attention. That said, in the context of the South China Sea, a country's exercise of those rights and freedoms can also be a strong symbol of support for the rights enjoyed by all states under the international law of the sea.

*Question.* What capabilities, either military or diplomatic, would you advise NATO allies to strengthen in order to better stand up against China's abuses, assertiveness, and aggression?

*Answer.* The PRC is a full-spectrum, long term, systemic threat, and the most significant geopolitical test of the 21st century for the international order. At the June 2021 NATO Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government declared that the PRC's "stated ambitions and assertive behavior present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security." If confirmed, I will continue this Administration's work with allies to prepare NATO for the challenges the PRC poses, including from its rapidly expanding nuclear arsenal, opaque military modernization, military-civil fusion strategy, investments in critical infrastructure that can threaten Allies' resilience, and cyberspace threats.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to regularly engaging with your counterpart, the U.S. Ambassador to NATO?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage regularly with my counterpart, the U.S. Ambassador to NATO, to work together strategically to advance our and our Allies' readiness to counter the challenges the PRC poses to our values and collective security.

*Question.* How do you believe China views the NATO alliance?

*Answer.* The NATO alliance is a comparative advantage for all NATO members, and the PRC recognizes that. In June, the PRC Mission to the EU denounced a NATO statement that declared the PRC a "security challenge" as a "slander on China's peaceful development, a misjudgment of the international situation and (NATO's) own role." If confirmed, I will draw from my NATO experience to reach out to our NATO allies and other partners to promote security, stability, and the rules-based international order that PRC continues to challenge. The persistent strength of NATO signals to Beijing that members stand together to safeguard the security of members and their surrounding regions.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the way that Germany, a leader in the European Union, views the PRC and its business interests in the PRC?

*Answer.* In line with the EU, Germany sees the PRC as a partner, economic competitor, and systemic rival. The German government has maintained an uneasy balance in protecting German firms' access to the PRC market while increasingly criticizing Beijing's crackdowns in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet. A leader in shaping a more assertive China policy in the EU, including pushing for an EU-level investment-screening mechanism, Germany has increasingly countered the threats the PRC's aggressive actions pose to the rules-based international order. If confirmed, I will work to find a strategic alignment with Germany so that we can both successfully manage our relationships with the PRC.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. In line with the EU, Germany sees the PRC as a partner, economic competitor, and systemic rival. The German government has maintained an uneasy balance in protecting German firms' access to the PRC market while increasingly criticizing Beijing's crackdowns in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet. A leader in shaping a more assertive China policy in the EU, including pushing for an EU-level investment-screening mechanism, Germany has increasingly countered the threats the PRC's aggressive actions pose to the rules-based international order. If confirmed, I will encourage Germany to continue working closely with the United States to advance our shared interest in countering the malign influence of the PRC.*

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to working with Embassy Berlin to decrease China's influence in Germany?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Embassy in Berlin and German counterparts in Beijing to deepen U.S.-German cooperation to further increase the

scrutiny of China's influence in Europe. Germany's September 2020 Indo-Pacific policy guidelines outline plans to expand defense cooperation and call for more economic transparency, sustainability, and fair competition. As the United States finalizes its own national Indo-Pacific Strategy, we will seek to identify opportunities to bolster the United States' and Germany's strategic and security ties with Indo-Pacific partners; diversify and strengthen our countries' economic ties with the region; and jointly tackle global challenges like climate change and protection of universal human rights.

*Question.* How do you believe China views its relationship with Russia?

Answer. I understand that China and Russia cooperate in certain areas, touting their relationship as a "comprehensive strategic partnership," but remain competitors in others. If confirmed, I would work to stop Beijing and Moscow from undermining U.S. leadership and reshaping the rules-based international order, particularly in the defense, democracy, and human rights realms. The partnership is still one of convenience and transaction, and the PRC appears to view it as such.

*Question.* What benefits do you believe China gets from its seemingly growing relationship with Russia?

Answer. Russia and China share certain common goals, including undermining the United States' global leadership role and subverting the international rules-based order to advance their own interests. Russia's aggression in foreign affairs can be both an asset and a liability to the PRC, depending on the situation. They have supported each other's efforts in international fora to advance ideology and policy of mutual interest, including jointly blocking the appointment of candidates for senior UN positions. The two countries have also repeatedly threatened to veto UNSC resolutions and block Presidential Statements and other products to keep them from being tabled and have stymied other discussions, including on the Venezuelan presidency crisis. Given the alignment of their interests in the multilateral realm, Russia and China are likely to remain in lockstep.

*Question.* What, in your opinion, is the most concerning aspect of the China-Russia relationship?

Answer. President Biden, from his inaugural speech on, has discussed the need for democracies to recognize the threat from the authoritarian world, including Russia and China. In addition to their concerning and aggressive joint military exercises, I am concerned about their mutual misuse of technology to repress their own citizens and continued joint efforts to export that technology to states struggling to maintain a democratic governance system.

*Question.* In 2020, the United States—European Union China Dialogue was initiated. Do you believe that this collaboration has thus far proven useful to the United States?

Answer. The dialogue appears to be facilitating an increased convergence in understanding between the United States and the EU of the challenges the PRC poses to our shared values, prosperity, and the rules-based international order. I welcome the joint public statements made since the dialogue's launch identifying the PRC as a systemic rival and competitor; concerns about Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong; the risks of PRC economic coercion; and the importance of Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Embassy in Beijing and colleagues in Washington and Brussels to carry out joint and coordinated actions with the EU, including through this dialogue.

*Question.* In 2020, the United States—European Union China Dialogue was initiated. What elements does the Dialogue not address that you believe it should?

Answer. I do not have any knowledge of the non-public specifics of the dialogue, including meetings that may have taken place or topics that have been discussed since the first high-level meeting in May 2021. The public messaging from the United States and EU around this dialogue has been positive and appears to outline a strong basis for cooperation, including on important issues such as Taiwan, human rights, disinformation, and cooperation with the PRC on areas of shared concern. If confirmed, I will prioritize working with EU counterparts to ensure this dialogue is a forum not only to exchange views but also to identify concrete areas for U.S.-EU cooperation and implement them.

*Question.* In 2020, the United States—European Union China Dialogue was initiated. How do you believe China thinks about this Dialogue?

Answer. At the first U.S.-EU Dialogue on China in May, the two sides underscored the shared U.S.-EU interest in strengthening the rules-based international



order and pledged further close cooperation in support of democratic values, global and regional stability, and human rights. The two sides reiterated that the United States' and EU's relations with China are multifaceted and comprise elements of cooperation, competition, and systemic rivalry. They also discussed pursuing constructive engagement with China on issues such as climate change and non-proliferation, and on certain regional issues.

The U.S.-EU Dialogue on China signals to Beijing the intent of the United States and the EU to work together and coordinate our approaches to China on issues including security, economics, human rights, and strengthening the rules-based international order.

*Question.* The Belt and Road is planned to cut straight through Central Asia to reach Europe by land. Central Asian nations have strived to maintain a balance among the increasing influences of the West, the Middle East, Russia, and China. Now, China has been making inroads by funding infrastructure projects and embedding itself in their economies.

- Does the fall of Afghanistan and a decline in U.S. leadership in the region leave C5 countries vulnerable to outsized Chinese influence?

*Answer.* Following the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, U.S. leadership and engagement in Central Asia remain strong and growing. Russia and China remain involved in the region for historical and geographic reasons. Three ministerial-level C5+1 diplomatic platform meetings in 2021 led by Secretary Blinken, Homeland Security Advisor to the President Sherwood-Randall, and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry, demonstrate U.S. commitment and involvement in the region and the meetings' outcomes reflect success advancing U.S. national security interests.

*[Additional Information 11/8/2021].* China has influence with C5 countries due to its geographic proximity and strong economic ties. To support the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Central Asian states, U.S. leadership in Central Asia has increased during this Administration. More senior-level engagements, including through the C5+1, increased programming, and shared security interests have elevated our regional and bilateral relationships and counters the growth of Chinese government influence.

*Question.* How can the U.S. best compete with Chinese targeted investment and infrastructure embedment in Central Asia?

*Answer.* The U.S. Central Asia Strategy represents a clear-eyed vision for advancing U.S. values and interests in Central Asia, including enabling an environment for business in Central Asia that is transparent, open, fair, attractive to U.S. businesses, and supportive of broader development goals. The United States is working with each Central Asian country to undertake the reforms needed to attract more quality foreign investment, including from U.S. businesses.

*Question.* Mission China has been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission China?

*Answer.* I am advised that Mission China faces a very challenging work environment due to rigid quarantine restrictions and additional travel and other restrictions put in place by Chinese authorities. These realities have a major impact on morale. I take morale very seriously and will work hard, if confirmed, to improve it and the quality of life and work environment for all our personnel.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission China?

*Answer.* I will make morale at Mission China an immediate priority, if confirmed. Based on my prior experience as a Chief of Mission, I know how important it is that we listen to all our personnel, respond quickly to their concerns and seek to improve conditions of work and daily life for them and for their families. As in my past leadership roles, I will seek to meet each employee in my first weeks in Beijing at the embassy. I will seek to travel to each of our Consulate Generals in my first months as Ambassador to meet our employees in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and Shenyang. If confirmed, one of the issues that will be at the top of my management agenda will be supporting any personnel affected by health incidents. Finally, I will advocate personally for our mission employees with the State Department and other cabinet agencies in Washington on issues that affect morale.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission China?

*Answer.* One of the keys to our diplomatic success in China will be a unified mission based on the President's instructions to me and overall U.S. policy toward China. I will lead regular country team meetings and visit each of our embassy offices to listen to the ideas of my colleagues and to ensure that all understand our policy objectives in China.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* As Ambassador to Greece and NATO, as Under Secretary of State and during my time at Harvard University, I have taken my management and leadership responsibilities seriously and treated them as very high priorities. My practice has been to meet frequently with my colleagues, to communicate openly, to invite ideas and constructive criticism and to help each employee to succeed in his or her responsibilities. If confirmed as Ambassador to the PRC, it will be my responsibility to ensure the President's guidance, instructions and policy priorities are being carried out faithfully and effectively by Mission China.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No. I believe it is always more productive and effective to deliver feedback or criticism in a constructive, respectful and helpful manner.

*Question.* What lessons did you learn from your prior tenures as a chief of mission?

*Answer.* I learned many lessons about mission management and leadership. I learned to listen carefully to mission colleagues about policy issues and to invite alternative views and constructive criticism so that we avoided group think and challenged our working assumptions. I also learned the effectiveness of delegating responsibility when that is possible. While the Ambassador must lead on priority issues, our mission colleagues respond well to the delegation of responsibility. In particular, it is important for the training and formation of mid-level and junior officers that they be given real responsibilities in their areas of competence. Finally, I learned how important it is to have a close-knit country team, to meet with the team regularly and to form a sense of collegiality on policy and administrative issues.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes. Mission employees deserve honest, constructive feedback on their work. This can have a major, positive impact on morale.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes. This will be a priority for my management of the mission.

It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

*Question.* In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* Based on my prior experience in the Foreign Service, it depends on local and national conditions, the security and terrorist threats and whether or not the host government is friendly and takes its responsibility seriously to provide external security for the embassy and its employees. It also depends on mission leadership. I believe it is important that our mission officers get outside of the embassy as frequently as possible and to travel in the country. This is essential for them to be successful in their work. Protecting mission personnel from terrorist and criminal threats is also a fundamental responsibility for mission management. If confirmed, I will take that responsibility seriously and be attentive to the need to protect all our employees.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* I agree that we should insist on reciprocal treatment to that afforded to PRC diplomats in our own country. If confirmed, I will work with other mission leaders to facilitate the work of our employees and to encourage them to be in contact with Chinese citizens in all regions of the country.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in China?

*Answer.* The operating environment for United States public diplomacy in the PRC is challenging. Yet, our public diplomacy programs are critical to the U.S. Government's ability to engage with current and future government and civil society leaders. Exchange programs provide authentic first-hand experiences of the United States and its people. Exchange experiences can lead participants to a more nuanced understanding of U.S. policy objectives, and demonstrate the benefits to political, economic, and social life of a diverse, engaged civil society.

Exchanges that involve athletes, musicians, and other artists show the dynamism of American culture that thrives in our free society. They advance conversations on American values that lead to positive change in important areas such as human rights.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face in China?

*Answer.* PRC authorities restrict the ability of U.S. diplomats to engage with university faculty and students. Despite the strong interest in, and expressed need for, English to contribute to China's development, Mission China educational programs also face increasing challenges reaching Chinese secondary school students.

Despite these difficulties, Mission China continues to reach out to contacts in the academic and think tank communities to discuss how they can work together to convene important conversations on topics of common concern.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Effective public diplomacy must be strategic. We must survey the global terrain to ascertain America's natural competitive advantages in meeting threats and challenges.

Every Mission's Public Affairs Section undertakes an annual strategic planning process to align public diplomacy activity to foreign policy goals. If confirmed, I will ensure our strategic planning takes into account both local conditions and Main State priorities and guidance.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Yes. It will be a high priority for me as Chief of Mission. As the Department does, I consider the safety and health of our employees and their family members as my top priority. If confirmed, I will energetically support the Department's established reporting and care protocols for possible anomalous health incidents.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission China personnel?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will tackle this issue on my first day as Ambassador in Beijing, meet with employees to discuss it, invite their views and remind them that every report will be handled with sensitivity and the utmost discretion, consistent with appropriate regulations and protocols. Communication that is clear, complete, concise, and timely is a central part of leadership and management. I believe that a well-informed workforce is a more effective one. If confirmed, I will use the Mission's weekly Country Team meetings, regular meetings with top managers, established procedures for notices and policies, and town hall meetings to convey our mission and vision and to give all information needed to enable our success.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. R. NICHOLAS BURNS BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*Question.* Dr. Gulshan Abbas, a medical doctor who spent her career caring for patients in Xinjiang and whose family resides in Virginia, has been unjustly detained by the Government of China since September 2018. Dr. Abbas is being held due to her daughter Rushan Abbas' advocacy on behalf of the Uyghur community

in China. Ms. Rushan Abbas is a former journalist for Radio Free Asia and U.S. Government translator.

If confirmed, how would you push China to end its unjust detention of Uyghurs, especially the continued detention of individuals with family members in the United States?

Answer. If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible and deter future abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, financial sanctions. If confirmed, I will advocate for the release of Dr. Abbas and other detained individuals with family members in the United States.

*Question.* China is utilizing transnational repression—like family intimidation and detention—to silence dissent among diasporas and exiles aboard. As Ambassador, how would you confront China over the use of these tactics?

Answer. The United States opposes People's Republic of China (PRC) efforts to repress its citizens outside of the PRC and continues to provide support for Uyghurs and dissidents and coordinate with allies and partners to speak out against such actions and to provide protection to targeted individuals. If confirmed, I would call on PRC authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, consistent with the PRC's international obligations and commitments, within its borders and outside of them.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. R. NICHOLAS BURNS BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* As you know, there is bipartisan consensus on the need to address the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) human rights abuses and genocide against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang. My and Senator Merkley's Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act would go a long way to end the financial incentives for the CCP's oppression of the Uyghurs. However, there are recent concerns that certain figures in the Biden administration would prefer this legislation not get enacted, because they believe it is acceptable to sacrifice America's commitment to human rights in order to extract empty promises from the CCP to address climate change.

- Are you aware that there are voices inside the Biden administration lobbying against the bipartisan Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act?

Answer. As a nominee, I am not yet part of the President's administration and cannot speak to the validity of these claims. If confirmed, I remain committed to working with the administration to address forced labor practices in Xinjiang and elsewhere in the PRC. I will also work closely with you and other Members of Congress on this important issue.

*Question.* What are your views on this legislation? Do you support its passage?

Answer. I am aware of the legislation and, if confirmed, will plan to work with the administration to address forced labor practices in Xinjiang and elsewhere in the PRC. If confirmed, I also plan to work with you and Members of this Committee to address forced labor practices in China, and will follow all U.S. laws as they pertain to this issue.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you approach those in the administration who would rather the United States give up its support for Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Chinese victims of the CCP's human rights abuses in hopes that the CCP will support global efforts to reduce carbon emissions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will advocate vigorously to promote accountability for the PRC's human rights abuses and support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities. I will not advise that the United States sacrifice vital U.S. interests for PRC promises on climate change. As Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has noted, climate is a critical standalone issue, and other aspects of the U.S.-PRC relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to regularly advocate for the basic rights and fundamental freedoms of all Uyghurs, Tibetans, Hong Kongers and Chinese in your interactions with senior Chinese officials?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will advocate vigorously to promote accountability for the PRC's human rights abuses and support efforts to protect human rights in the PRC, including for religious and ethnic minorities.

Human rights and democracy are at the core of U.S. foreign policy. I agree with the Biden-Harris administration's position that the PRC is committing genocide and crimes against humanity against members of ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang, including Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim. It is repressing Tibetans' distinct language, religion, and culture. It is eroding Hong Kong's autonomy and democratic institutions and processes. The United States has called on the PRC to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to adhere to its obligations with regard to Hong Kong.

*Question.* If so, what does this support look like in actionable terms?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will consider all appropriate tools to promote accountability for those responsible to end abuses, to include but not limited to, actions already implemented by the U.S. Government: visa restrictions, import restrictions, export restrictions, and financial sanctions.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is possible to rule out the use of forced labor for producing solar panels in China?

*Answer.* Forced labor and human rights abuses are widespread in the PRC, including in sectors other than the solar industry. If confirmed, I will support and amplify the administration's ongoing efforts to ensure that suppliers in the solar industry and other industries that use forced labor are unable to import goods into the U.S. market and promote accountability for human rights abuses.

*Question.* If so, how can this be done in an environment in which PRC authorities do not permit companies to conduct proper due diligence?

*Answer.* I support U.S. Government efforts, such as the Xinjiang Supply Chain Business Advisory, to highlight the risks for U.S. businesses with supply chain and investment links to Xinjiang and other locations in the People's Republic of China where entities are complicit in forced labor and other human rights abuses. If confirmed, I will continue efforts to make clear that U.S. businesses and individuals that do not exit supply chains, ventures, and/or investments connected to Xinjiang run a risk of violating U.S. law.

*Question.* In your opinion, can climate targets and human rights be treated on different tracks when negotiating with Chinese officials?

*Answer.* Support for human rights and human dignity go hand-in-hand with climate progress. If confirmed, I will advocate for both issues to remain at the forefront of American foreign policy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do plan to press the CCP to stop its oppression of the Uyghurs and other groups forced to work in renewable energy supply chains?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the work of the Department, in coordination with the interagency, to promote accountability for the PRC's human rights record in Xinjiang. I will support the administration's efforts to impose costs on Beijing's use of forced labor, signaling to the renewable energy industry the imperative to diversify and clean up its supply chain. I will work with like-minded partners and the international community to call on the PRC to end genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, immediately and unconditionally release all those arbitrarily detained, abolish internment camps, and end forced labor. I will also urge the international community to protect those from Xinjiang who seek asylum and to resist PRC pressure to forcibly return these asylum-seekers back to the PRC. We will continue utilizing public messaging, diplomacy, and other foreign policy tools to bring attention to the PRC's poor human rights record in Xinjiang.

*Question.* Do you commit to bringing up human rights cases—including all of those identified by the CECC—in your discussions with PRC officials?

*Answer.* The United States has utilized public messaging, diplomacy, and other foreign policy tools to bring attention to the PRC's poor human rights record in Xinjiang and elsewhere. If confirmed, I will raise directly with PRC officials specific human rights cases to promote accountability.

*Question.* Do you commit to prioritizing seeking the release of prisoners who are the family of American citizens and legal permanent residents?

*Answer.* If confirmed, this will be a major priority for me. I commit to raise directly and vigorously the need for the PRC to release prisoners who are the family of American citizens and legal permanent residents. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs and the Bureau

of Consular Affairs to resolve the cases of U.S. citizens wrongfully detained or subject to coercive exit bans by the PRC. I also commit to keeping you and interested members informed, in concert with my colleagues and in accordance with applicable privacy concerns.

I am deeply concerned by the PRC's continued use of arbitrary or wrongful detentions and coercive, non-transparent exit bans on foreign citizens. Protecting U.S. citizens overseas is the U.S. Government's highest priority.

*Question.* I noticed that since 2011 you have served as a Director for Entegris, Inc. According to its website, Entegris has operated in China for more than 25 years, and has offices in Shanghai, Beijing, Xi'an, Xiamen, and Wuhan. I understand that Entegris produces inputs for use in the electronics and technology industry. I've called out this administration for failing to fully confront the CCP's injecting of forced labor into global supply chains, notably for the solar and apparel industries. Last week, we learned that Special Envoy for the Climate John Kerry holds large investments in Chinese companies determined by the previous administration to be complicit in the surveillance, detention, and repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Knowing this, you can understand why I'm concerned by your ten-year tenure on the board of a company that operates in China's technology sector.

- Could you explain why you thought it was in the best interests of the United States to support a U.S. company that sells key products needed for semiconductor fabrication to China?

*Answer.* I am proud of my service on the Board of Directors of Entegris, Inc. since 2011. Entegris is a successful firm headquartered in the United States with significant manufacturing and Research and Development operations in Texas, Colorado, Minnesota, Massachusetts, California, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and six other states. A majority of the firm's roughly 6,600 employees are located in the United States and the firm expects to have hired approximately 1,000 additional employees in the United States this year.

Entegris produces products and solutions used by the global semiconductor ecosystem, as well as other high-technology industries, including life sciences. For example, Entegris developed a unique high-purity bag used for the cold storage of biologics. This bag has been critical to the Covid-19 global vaccination campaign.

Entegris sells its products and solutions to many markets around the world, including China, in full compliance with all applicable laws. Entegris has never transferred any manufacturing to China.

*Question.* Are you aware of the CCP's goal to become independent of foreign semiconductor manufacturing and to eventually dominate the global industry?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) has invested heavily in its semiconductor industry to build indigenous capabilities and has ambitions to develop the most advanced chips that can support military applications. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to strengthen diverse, resilient, and secure supply chains that will maintain U.S. technological advantage over strategic competitors such as the PRC and create good jobs for U.S. citizens in the semiconductor field.

*Question.* Do you understand the tremendous risks to our national security that would result if the CCP were to succeed in this endeavor?

*Answer.* The United States is engaged in strategic competition with the People's Republic of China (PRC), and technology is the central domain of that competition. The PRC's objectives are to undercut U.S. longstanding technological advantage and to displace the United States as the global leader in cutting edge research and development, and the technologies and industries of the future. The national security and economic consequences of allowing that to happen are simply unacceptable. It is a critical U.S. interest to make sure we protect the technology and intellectual property that is produced in this country and that, if used to advance the PRC's military modernization, could undermine our security.

*Question.* Are you confident that Entegris' supply chains in China are free of inputs produced through the forced labor of Uyghurs and other groups?

*Answer.* Yes. I consulted with the company, and can confirm the following information. Entegris performs regular reviews of its supply chain to ensure that its inputs are not produced through the forced labor of Uyghurs and other groups. Entegris does not source material from regions identified for using the forced labor of Uyghurs and other groups and, to Entegris' knowledge, none of the suppliers utilized by Entegris use the forced labor of Uyghurs and other groups. Furthermore, Entegris has maintained a supply chain that does not have significant reliance on operations in China. For the first three quarters of 2021, less than 3 percent of Entegris' overall supply spending was for goods exported from China.

*Question.* Do you believe that your ten-year history with Entegris has created biases that will shape your decisions and influence U.S. policy towards China?

*Answer.* No. If confirmed, I will take an oath of office to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and will swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office. I will serve the United States with professional excellence, the highest standards of ethical conduct, and diplomatic discretion and effectiveness.

*Question.* Specifically, will you commit to making decisions in the best interests of the United States, even if those decisions stand to significantly reduce the profitability of Entegris' operations in China?

*Answer.* If confirmed by the Senate as U.S. Ambassador to China, I will always act in the best interest of the United States. If confirmed, I will support the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to use of the full array of tools necessary to counter the PRC's abusive economic practices and hold Beijing accountable.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you resign immediately from Entegris' Board of Directors and divest yourself from the company?

*Answer.* If confirmed by the Senate, I will resign from the board of Entegris and divest all my stock holdings as soon as practicable but no later than 90 days after confirmation. The ethics agreement I entered into with the State Department's Designated Agency Ethics Official was provided to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

*Question.* If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to press the PRC authorities to allow a credible international forensic investigation of the Wuhan Institute of Virology and other labs in question?

*Answer.* Reaching any conclusive assessment on the COVID-19 virus's origin would likely require cooperation from Beijing, yet the PRC continues to hinder the global investigation, resist information-sharing, and shift blame elsewhere throughout the world. If confirmed, I support using the tools that could have the greatest chance of getting to the goal of the PRC Government's cooperation to an international inquiry. I would not cease to keep up the pressure on this issue, in conjunction with partners in the international community. If confirmed, I will also continue working with likeminded partners around the world to press the PRC Government to participate in a full, transparent, evidence-based, expert-led study into the origins of COVID-19 and to provide access to all relevant complete, original data and samples.

*Question.* U.S. federal agencies funded risky research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology that could have contributed to the outbreak of SARS-CoV-2. Until we can get to the bottom of what exactly caused the pandemic, what will you do, if confirmed, to prevent U.S. funding and collaboration for risky lines of research involving human pathogens and potential pathogens?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of its origins, underscores the need to prevent, detect, and address emerging threats to global health security—whether naturally occurring, accidental, or deliberate. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Department, interagency, and intelligence community to ensure appropriate oversight of life sciences research collaborations with China.

*Question.* More generally, what would you do as Ambassador to ensure that the United States does not unintentionally contribute to research in the PRC that has dual-use applications, or the potential to enable the PRC to develop a technological edge over the United States in emerging fields?

*Answer.* Whether in life sciences or other sectors, we need to be vigilant against transactions that could potentially facilitate the transfer of sensitive technologies to the PRC that could threaten our national security. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Department, interagency, and intelligence community to work to ensure appropriate oversight of life sciences research collaborations with China.

*Question.* If confirmed, what are your plans for CCP leaders to understand that the United States is serious about its "rock-solid" commitment to Taiwan, and will respond forcefully to any acts of aggression or coercion aimed at Taiwan?

*Answer.* I would continue to reinforce to PRC leaders that the Biden-Harris administration remains committed to upholding the principles of the Taiwan Relations Act, namely: that the United States will continue to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability; that the United States would regard any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means a threat to the

peace and security of the Western Pacific and of grave concern to the United States; and that the United States will maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan.

*Question.* U.S. policy toward Taiwan differs in many important respects from the PRC's "one-China principle." If confirmed, do you commit to articulating those key differences and resisting PRC efforts to conflate our policy with theirs?

*Answer.* Our one China policy, which is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances, has fostered peace and prosperity in the region for over 40 years. We will continue to note publicly that our policy differs from the PRC's "one China principle."

*Question.* Specifically, will you oppose all suggestions that the United States must recognize Taiwan as a part of the PRC?

*Answer.* Consistent with our one China policy, we do not take a position on the ultimate status of Taiwan—we acknowledge the PRC's position on this, but we do not accept it. We will continue to make clear that we support a peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan.

*Question.* Will you instead insist that Taiwan's status remains unresolved, and that a PRC resort to force to resolve Taiwan's status will be met with a robust counter response from the United States and our allies and partners?

*Answer.* The United States has a long abiding interest in maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. The United States will continue to make available to Taiwan the defense articles and services necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability that is commensurate with the growing PRC threat. We also will continue to deepen our security relationship with Taiwan in line with the one China policy, which is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances. And we will continue to underscore to the PRC that any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means is a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific and of grave concern to the United States.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to counter the CCP's propaganda about the "superiority" of its totalitarian system, and to promote Taiwan instead as a model of how democracy can flourish in a Chinese speaking society?

*Answer.* Taiwan is a leading democracy and critical economic and security partner. Working with allies and partners, we have highlighted Taiwan's successful democratic processes as well as its importance to the global community. The international community has increasingly expressed its concern over the PRC's coercive and aggressive behavior toward Taiwan.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. R. NICHOLAS BURNS BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* The reported use of Cambodia's Ream Naval Base on the Gulf of Thailand by the People's Republic of China (PRC) is inconsistent with Cambodia's status of neutrality under the Paris Peace Agreements, which the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia later defined, in part, as: "not permit(ing) any foreign military base on its territory." When confirmed, will you pledge to report regularly with the Committee on the People's Republic of China's (PRC) activities at the Ream Naval Base and all those related to its Belt and Road Initiative?

*Answer.* Yes, I pledge to do so. I am concerned about PRC activity in the region, including the PRC's military presence and construction of facilities at Ream Naval Base. The State Department has raised these concerns at the highest levels of the Cambodian government. The Government of Cambodia has not been fully transparent about the intent, nature, and scope of this project nor the role the PRC military is playing in its construction, raising concerns about the intended use of the naval facility. I agree with the administration's concerns that the erosion of multiparty democracy in Cambodia has exacerbated this situation.

*Question.* The PRC has thus far been unwilling to engage with the United States on substantive discussions on nuclear weapons policy and doctrine. As Ambassador, how will you specifically encourage Beijing to engage on these issues? What motiva-



tion is behind efforts by the PRC to increase the role of nuclear weapons in its military strategy?

Answer. President Biden has indicated clearly that he is going to support the strongest possible and the safest American nuclear deterrent, as every president has done, since President Harry Truman. The administration will pursue strategic risk management measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal. These efforts will be paired with actions to bolster deterrence in the region. The administration is developing and evaluating specific proposals to be pursued with the PRC. Beijing's larger nuclear arsenal will buttress a broader PRC military build-up and its increasingly assertive and threatening behavior to U.S. allies and partners. Precisely because Beijing is the least transparent member of the P5 nuclear weapons states, accurate assessments of its nuclear trajectory and intentions are difficult.

*Question.* We must find ways to lower tensions and avoid miscalculation in the Taiwan Strait to avoid an inadvertent conflict. In your experience, what role can Track 1.5 dialogues—those that include a mix of government and non-government officials—play in reducing mistrust between countries? As Ambassador, will you commit that the State Department will actively promote such dialogues on regional stability issues in the Indo-Pacific?

Answer. Yes. The administration seeks to minimize the risk of miscalculations on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and dialogue is a means to do that. If confirmed, I will speak directly to the PRC Government about the importance of a stable and peaceful dialogue across the Taiwan Strait free from coercion.

*Question.* President Biden and President Xi Jinping are due to hold a virtual summit in December 2021. If confirmed by that date, will you commit to advocate that negotiating nuclear risk reduction measures with the PRC will be a focal point of that summit?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Biden administration to seek effective channels of communication with Beijing to manage competition responsibly, to diminish the risk of an accidental conflict, and above all, to maintain the peace. The United States has to proceed from a position of strength and pursue intense diplomacy in all these matters. The administration will pursue crisis communications, risk reduction, and strategic stability measures to reduce the dangers from the People's Republic of China's (PRC) growing nuclear arsenal. The administration hopes that Beijing will come to see that reducing nuclear risks is in its security interest and the administration has raised these issues with the PRC, making very clear the U.S. interest in substantively engaging with China.

*Question.* In your testimony, you signaled your support for the longstanding U.S. "One China" policy and for a robust unofficial U.S. relationship with Taiwan consistent with our commitments under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). The TRA makes it U.S. policy: "to preserve and promote extensive, close, and friendly commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan, as well as the people on the China mainland and all other peoples of the Western Pacific area." Is it your assessment that creating a fellowship program with Taiwan—modeled on the Mansfield Fellowship with Japan—would strengthen implementation of this provision of TRA and expand U.S. Government employee's knowledge of the Indo Pacific region?

Answer. Taiwan is a leading democracy, an important economic and security partner, and force for good in the world. If confirmed, I will support the Department's longstanding efforts and will work with Congress to deepen our people-to-people ties and enhance our ability to learn from each other and work on issues of common concern. If confirmed, I will be happy to discuss the Fellowship proposal with you.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. R. NICHOLAS BURNS BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* China and Iran struck a deal earlier this year which resulted in a \$400 million commitment by the Chinese to invest in Iran's oil and gas sector, in addition to a military cooperation component. While U.S. sanctions on Iranian oil exports are still on the books, enforcement has faded to insignificance. According to an August report by the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), Iran's crude oil production fell to an almost 40-year low in 2020. This decline in production was triggered in 2018, when President Trump pulled the U.S. out of the JCPOA, and reimposed

sanctions on Iran. Today, China receives half of all Iran's crude and condensate exports.

- What do you assess is going wrong with sanctions enforcement?

Answer. The United States has been engaged with JCPOA participants, including China, in an effort to achieve a mutual return to compliance with JCPOA commitments with Iran. Current Iran-related sanctions remain in effect.

China has long been importing Iranian oil, and the administration will continue to oppose Iranian sanctions evasion efforts, including those involving Chinese entities.

The administration will continue to raise this issue directly with the Chinese as part of its dialogue on Iran policy and I agree that, in general, this is a more effective path forward to address our concerns.

I agree with the administration that while strategic competition defines many aspects of our relationship with China, multilateral cooperation to constrain Iran's nuclear program is vital, as the world has no interest in seeing Iran develop a nuclear weapon. If confirmed, I will engage vigorously with China to discourage them from taking steps vis-a-vis Iran that threaten our interests.

*Question.* Please assess the benefits that China gets from such sanctions-busting.

Answer. The U.S. opposes China's decision to permit some of its companies to import oil from Iran in contravention of U.S. sanctions. While strategic competition defines many aspects of our relationship with China, multilateral cooperation to constrain Iran's nuclear program is very much in its interest, as it has no desire to see Iran develop a nuclear weapon and the profoundly destabilizing impact that would have in a region upon which China depends for its oil imports.

The President is committed to ensuring as broad a multilateral coalition as possible to address Iran's nuclear program and destabilizing activities. That will mean seeking to work with China, which has close ties to Iran, and some of whose small independent refiners continue to transact with Iran notwithstanding U.S. sanctions. China's large state-owned oil companies have avoided purchasing Iranian oil because they place greater weight on the risk of exposure to U.S. sanctions due to their global business.

If confirmed, I will engage vigorously with China to discourage them from taking steps vis-a-vis Iran that threaten our interests.

#### *Uyghur Human Rights Case*

*Question.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) engage in sustained, systematic, and granular intimidation of dissidents in China and abroad. That harassment includes the abuse and imprisonment of dissidents' family members.

Nury Turkel is a Uyghur-American lawyer and leading critic of the PRC's atrocities against, and genocide of, the Uyghurs. In addition to testimony, op-eds, speeches, and other activities he currently serves as the Vice Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The PRC is engaged in a campaign of intimidation to silence Turkel by targeting his family members. They refuse to let his ailing parents leave China and be reunited with him.

This campaign directly harms U.S. citizens: his parents have two sons who are U.S. citizens and five U.S.-born grandchildren, who they've never met. Additionally, the campaign is an effort to interfere in American internal affairs and exercise leverage over U.S. policy on religious freedom.

U.S. officials have reportedly raised Turkel's case with the Chinese, but there has been no sustained follow-up and the Chinese are apparently under the impression the inquiries were pro-forma.

- What leverage does the U.S. have to mitigate the harassment and intimidation of family members of Chinese dissidents, especially American citizens?

Answer. The United States opposes PRC efforts to repress its citizens or their family members, whether inside or outside of China. If confirmed, I will continue administration efforts to provide support for Uyghurs and other human rights defenders and coordinate with allies and partners to speak out against such actions and to provide protection to targeted individuals. If confirmed, I also commit to raising individual cases with my PRC Government counterparts.

*Question.* Can you commit to conveying to the Chinese that the United States expects and demands they allow Turkel's parents to be reunited with their American citizen children and grandchildren?

Answer. I am very concerned by the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s mistreatment of Mr. Turkel's parents, to include blocking them from leaving China. If confirmed, I will advocate strongly on their behalf with the PRC government and work to secure their reunification with Mr. Turkel and with their other children and grandchildren.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RAHM EMANUEL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* As Ambassador, will you be prepared to work with the organizing committee to find ways to alleviate the financial harm shouldered to U.S. companies in this regard, including Jet Set Sports?

Answer. Regarding Jet Set Sports (JSS), I understand that neither the U.S. Government nor the Government of Japan is a party to the commercial contract between the Tokyo Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and JSS. If confirmed, I will encourage both parties to seek an amicable resolution in accordance with the terms of their agreement.

*Question.* What do you plan to do to encourage the Japanese to continue and expand their reconciliation program for former American POWs of Japan and their families that began in 2010?

Answer. The Japanese-American POW Friendship Program has signaled an important step in our bilateral relationship and is giving both Japan and the United States an opportunity to remember and learn from the U.S. POW World War II experience and to reflect on our past, present, and future. We have come far since the dark days of the Pacific campaign to today's world where the U.S.-Japan Alliance had its 50th Anniversary; this program is yet another important chapter in our shared history.

*Question.* What opportunities and what challenges do you see for the Quad's resurgence in the region, and in our foreign policy?

Answer. The U.S.-Japan Alliance has served as the cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and across the world for more than six decades, and it has never been stronger. The American and Japanese people share deeply rooted values of defending freedom, championing economic and social opportunity and inclusion, and respecting human rights, and the rule of law. We welcome Japan's expanding position as a leader not just in the Indo-Pacific but globally. Its founding role in creating the Quad was an example of this leadership. If confirmed, I would work with Japan to take advantage of the Quad forum to support the rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, solutions to the climate crisis, peaceful resolution of disputes, democratic values, and territorial integrity in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

*Question.* If you're confirmed as Ambassador to Japan, what role do you anticipate playing as it relates to the Quad?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support Japanese leadership in the Quad and work with Quad counterparts and other likeminded nations to better coordinate and advance our common goals of prosperity, security, and freedom in the Indo-Pacific. The Embassy Tokyo team is expanding joint engagement with partners such as Australia and the UK, and I would seek to continue partner-focused outreach.

*Question.* Where do you think the U.S.-Japan alliance needs to concentrate, and act, to be capable to meet new and emergent regional challenges?

Answer. In an increasingly challenging security environment, the United States and Japan will continue to closely coordinate on how to effectively deter and, if necessary, respond to growing threats to the U.S.-Japan Alliance and regional security in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I would work with Japan to promote greater mutual investment in defense and improve our forces' interoperability to ensure our alliance is able to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness. Japan is in a position to play an even greater role on regional security issues by supporting and encouraging closer cooperation with other like-minded partners.

*Question.* What specific steps would you take as ambassador to help improve relations between Tokyo and Seoul?

Answer. A robust and effective trilateral relationship between and among the United States, the ROK, and Japan is critical for our shared security and common

interests. If confirmed, I would work to strengthen the relationship with our key allies, Japan, and the ROK, both trilaterally and bilaterally.

*Question.* What role should Japan play in facilitating nuclear and missile diplomacy with North Korea?

*Answer.* We have worked hand-in-hand with Japan and the ROK on the security challenges related to the DPRK, including through Deputy Secretary Sherman's bilateral and trilateral discussions with her South Korean and Japanese counterparts, as well as discussions between Special Representative for the DPRK Sung Kim and his counterparts. Japan is and will continue to be a key player on this and all security issues in the region.

*Question.* Has there been any indication from North Korea that it will attempt to address the Japanese abductions issue?

*Answer.* I understand that Prime Minister Kishida is prepared to meet with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Un without preconditions and remains committed to the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. We hope the DPRK will respond positively. As President Biden and former Prime Minister Suga reaffirmed in their April 2021 Joint Leaders' statement, the United States is committed to the immediate resolution of the abductions issues.

*Question.* What are the economic and strategic implications for the United States of not participating in these initiatives and how can the United States ensure that its economic priorities are shaping regional trade rules?

*Answer.* We are looking at a range of options to forge stronger economic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific that promote shared goals of cooperation and inclusive prosperity. We are committed to strengthening trade and investment in the region in a manner that promotes good paying American jobs, high standards, and supply chain resiliency and offer the same benefits for our Indo-Pacific partners. The administration is reviewing the CPTPP to evaluate its consistency with the Build Back Better agenda. If confirmed, I will support trade policies that advance the interests of all Americans, support U.S. innovation, and enhance our competitiveness.

*Question.* Where do you see opportunities for US-Japan development cooperation in Southeast Asia and with the Pacific Islands, including to address climate change and a transition to a zero-carbon future?

*Answer.* The United States-Japan Climate Partnership provides a strong basis for U.S.-Japan cooperation in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. If confirmed, I would work with Japan to further these shared objectives in the region, including supporting the energy transition, enhancing resilience, and ensuring we reach our collective climate goals. The United States and Japan held the first Japan-U.S. Clean Energy Partnership (JUCEP) meeting on June 10, chaired by the U.S. Department of State and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. The United States and Japan will focus JUCEP cooperation in the Indo-Pacific to address climate change, support competitive energy markets, facilitate universal access to affordable, clean, and reliable energy, and engage Indo-Pacific partners to encourage rapid deployment of clean energy and drive the decarbonization of their economies. In addition, we are working with Japan through the Japan-U.S. Mekong Power Partnership (JUMPP) to promote sustainable energy in the Lower Mekong region. If confirmed, I would push forward U.S.-Japan cooperation in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands under JUCEP, JUMPP, and other initiatives.

*Question.* How can we facilitate greater collaboration between the United States and Japan on tech and innovation? What steps can be taken to better integrate those efforts with the regional strategy more broadly?

*Answer.* Japan is one of our closest partners on technology development and deployment. Joint initiatives have produced results in such fields as clean energy, infectious diseases, particle physics, advanced computing, fusion plasma, materials discovery, natural resources, neuroscience, space, cancer biology, and natural disaster resiliency. Our two countries have ongoing cooperation and hold regular bilateral meetings on a full range of the most challenging and relevant science and technology issues, including cyber security, AI, quantum computing, and "beyond 5G" telecommunications networks. If confirmed, I would work to deepen these ties with Japan to help ensure we are working effectively with them and all of our regional partners to advance technology and innovation.

*Question.* Beyond the quiet diplomacy that has been tried for years, what specifically will you do, if confirmed, to prioritize the reunification and return of the hundreds of American children kidnapped to Japan?

Answer. These cases of family separation are painful and tragic. If confirmed, the rights and wellbeing of U.S. citizen children and parents would be one of my highest priorities. While it has been a long time coming, I understand there has been improvement in terms of Japan's record in parental child abduction cases over the last four to five years. We cannot undo the pain of the past, but I believe Japan's ratification of the Hague Convention on International Child Abductions in 2014 was an important step forward in recognizing that custodial determinations should be made solely with the court of competent jurisdiction in the child's place of habitual residence, and not necessarily where the child is located. If confirmed as Ambassador, I would work with our Consular officials in resolving these cases and advocate for the parental rights of American citizen parents.

*Question.* Anomalous Health Incidents: I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. I am also deeply troubled by potential anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and their family members. Serving one's country overseas should not come at the cost of one's health. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel and must be taken extremely seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Mission Japan staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that all reported potential anomalous health incidents are given serious attention and reported swiftly through the appropriate channels. I will also ensure that staff who are affected by these incidents receive prompt access to the treatment, support, and medical care that they need.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO team at Mission Japan and to discuss past reported anomalous health incidents so that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Mission Japan staff and ensure that all protocols regarding anomalous health incidents are being followed appropriately.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RAHM EMANUEL BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What are the core American strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific, and what role does Japan play in securing those interests?

Answer. For more than 60 years, the partnership between the United States and Japan has been the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in a free and open Indo-Pacific. Our alliance advances our shared interests, shared values, and shared goals. As Ambassador, my top priority would be to deepen these ties while we confront our common challenges.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. The United States is a proud part of the Indo-Pacific. Our exports to the Indo-Pacific region in 2019 supported more than three million American jobs, and in 2020 the United States conducted \$1.75 trillion in two-way trade in the region. As part of the Indo-Pacific community, I believe the United States shares a strategic interest in helping to bring forth the vision we share with Japan and other key allies of peace and stability, freedom of the seas, unimpeded lawful commerce, protecting human rights, a commitment to the international rules-based order, and the recognition that our common interests are not zero-sum. These shared interests also include peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and support for Taiwan's participation in the international community. As I mentioned in my testimony, the United States is committed to a free and open Indo-Pacific, a vision we closely share with Japan. I believe there is no country more cen-*

*tral to our interests—political, strategic, or economic—in the Indo-Pacific than Japan.*

*Question.* In your opinion, what is going well in the U.S.-Japan alliance right now, and where should Japan be taking on a greater role and responsibility?

*Answer.* As the most dynamic and fastest-growing region on earth, the Indo-Pacific is a vital region that is a leading priority for U.S. foreign policy. The concept of a free and open Indo Pacific (FOIP), first coined by former Japanese Prime Minister Abe, has shaped the vision of all of our allies in the region. In an increasingly challenging security environment, the United States and Japan will continue to closely coordinate on how to effectively deter and, if necessary, respond to growing threats to the U.S.-Japan Alliance and regional security in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I would work with Japan to promote greater mutual investment in defense and improve our forces' interoperability to ensure our alliance is able to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness. Japan is in a position to play an even greater role on regional security issues by supporting and encouraging closer cooperation with other like-minded partners.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you encourage Japan to increase its defense spending?

*Answer.* Yes. And as recently as last week, Japan's new prime minister announced the goal to increase defense spending. Simply put, security costs more in today's increasingly challenging regional environment. Only with greater mutual investment in defense can we ensure the U.S.-Japan Alliance is positioned to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness. We appreciate Japan's acknowledgement that its alliance contributions must expand to meet future challenges.

*Question.* Do you agree the Senkaku Islands are covered by our Mutual Defense Treaty with Japan, and that any attack on these islands would fall under our security commitments to mainland Japan?

*Answer.* Yes. Every recent president from President Obama to President Trump to President Biden has emphasized that the United States' commitment to Japan's security is absolute. This is the stated policy of the United States. I understand that the Senkaku islands fall within the scope of Article V of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and that the U.S. Government is opposed to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea. The U.S.-Japan Alliance has never been more important, and, if confirmed, I would stand firmly behind this commitment.

*Question.* Do you support Japan's acquisition of independent counterstrike capabilities designed to defend against missile threats from China and DPRK?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with the Department of Defense and my counterparts in the Government of Japan to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow and defend against threats to our shared security interests. I would consult closely regarding the appropriate mix of offensive and defensive capabilities required to effectively deter and, if necessary, respond to growing threats to the U.S.-Japan Alliance and regional security in the Indo-Pacific region. I would work with these officials to facilitate a strategic plan to meet the challenges posed by the People's Republic of China and North Korea.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Against the backdrop of an increasingly challenging regional security environment, if confirmed, I would welcome the expansion of Japan's contributions towards enhancing our mutual defenses against threats to our shared security interests. I understand Japan's deliberations regarding these capabilities are internal and under political consideration, but if confirmed, my top priority would be to strengthen our alliance, so of course I would welcome Japan's decision if it decided to acquire new capabilities. I would work with the Department of Defense and my counterparts in the Government of Japan to ensure we collaborate closely to effectively deter and, if necessary, respond to growing threats to the U.S.-Japan Alliance and regional security in the Indo-Pacific region.*

*Question.* What are your views on deployment of U.S.-origin intermediate range missiles in the Indo-Pacific, including Japan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with Japan to defend against threats to our shared security interests and consult closely with relevant U.S. and Japanese officials regarding our defense posture and capabilities. I understand the Department of Defense continues work on capabilities that would previously have been prohibited under the INF Treaty. I defer to DoD for further program details, but the

United States would consult with allies, partners, and Congress prior to any foreign deployments.

*Question.* Where do you think our conversations with Japan on missile defense should be focused now that Aegis Ashore has been cancelled?

*Answer.* For decades, U.S.-Japan Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) cooperation, and Japan's deployments of missile defense capabilities, have been critical not only for Japan's own self-defense but also for the U.S.-Japan Alliance and regional stability in East Asia. The United States worked closely with Japan to assist in their study of Aegis Ashore alternatives and I understand its decision demonstrates Tokyo's determination to enhance its BMD capabilities. The development of Aegis System-Equipped Vessels will improve the alliance's defensive coverage of the Japanese archipelago. If confirmed, I would ensure that the United States and Japan continue to coordinate closely on how to deter most effectively and defend against increasingly sophisticated regional missile threats.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. The United States worked closely with Japan to assist in its study of Aegis Ashore alternatives. I understand its decision to develop Aegis System-Equipped Vessels demonstrates Tokyo's determination to enhance its ballistic missile defense capabilities. Recognizing the increasingly challenging range of regional ballistic and air-breathing missile threats, the Japanese are studying additional defensive options. As allies with shared security interests, the United States and Japan must continue to coordinate closely on how to deter most effectively and defend against increasingly sophisticated regional missile threats. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with the Department of Defense and Japanese leaders to continue improving the alliance's defensive coverage of the Japanese archipelago.*

*Question.* What role do you see Japan playing in the Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) deal in which UK will help Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines?

*Answer.* AUKUS builds on the administration's commitment to two key priorities: 1) revitalizing and modernizing our alliances and partnerships around the world; and 2) enhanced engagement in the Indo-Pacific to advance our long-term interests. It is about connecting with existing U.S. allies and partners in new ways and amplifying our ability to collaborate. Japan is foremost among our regional allies and this initiative is an important supplement to—not a replacement for—the other institutions and mechanisms we have in the Indo-Pacific region to advance security cooperation.

*Question.* Does Japan have a role in helping in the construction or development of the nuclear-powered submarines for Australia?

*Answer.* The pact announced in September between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, AUKUS, is about more than submarines. It will bring together our sailors, our scientists, and our industries to maintain and expand our edge in military capabilities and critical technologies. Much of the history of the 21st century will be written in the Indo-Pacific, and I was pleased Japan welcomed the partnership, which is why it is crucial for us to deepen cooperation on new and emerging areas of interest. We need to be able to address both the current strategic environment in the region and how it may evolve. Through AUKUS, we will significantly deepen cooperation on a range of security and defense capabilities.

*Question.* Military readiness is critical to deterring aggression by China. If confirmed, how will you work in cooperation with U.S. Forces Japan to encourage the Japanese to improve training and readiness of the Japanese self-defense force and Japan-based U.S. forces?

*Answer.* The U.S.-Japan Alliance and U.S. forward-deployed forces in Japan continue to benefit both our countries and are the cornerstone of peace, stability, and freedom in the Indo-Pacific region. In that spirit—one of friendship and seriousness about the challenges ahead—I understand Japan acknowledged that its alliance contributions must expand to meet future challenges. Greater mutual investment in training is essential to ensuring U.S. and Japan forces are able to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness.

*Question.* Do you support the adoption of a "sole purpose" nuclear declaratory policy?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is undertaking a review of various national security policies, including nuclear deterrence issues through the ongoing Nuclear Posture Review. If confirmed, I would contribute to those processes. I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Con-

gress, and experts regarding U.S. adoption of a sole purpose policy. I do not want to get ahead of the NPR process, but if confirmed, that ongoing analysis would inform my own view on declaratory policy.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. I understand that the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in deterring a conventional or chemical and biological weapon attack against the United States or its allies and partners is among the issues being evaluated as part of the ongoing DoD-led Nuclear Posture Review. It would be premature to comment prior to that analysis being completed.*

*Question.* What impact would a U.S. sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy have on our extended deterrence commitments in the Indo-Pacific, especially to Japan?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is working to reinvigorate and modernize U.S. alliances and partnerships around the world and has highlighted the need to ensure extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies remain strong and credible. It is my understanding that various declaratory policy options are being reviewed as part of the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review. I do not want to get ahead of the NPR process, but if confirmed, I look forward to working with U.S. and Japanese leaders to ensure our nuclear deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Whether nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or chemical and biological weapon attack against the United States or its allies and partners is among the contingencies being evaluated as part of the ongoing DoD-led Nuclear Posture Review. It would be premature to comment prior to that analysis being completed. Regardless of the U.S. nuclear declaratory policy, President Biden has underscored the United States' unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan through the full range of U.S. capabilities, including nuclear weapons. I strongly support this decades-long commitment.*

*Question.* Do you think a sole purpose doctrine would increase or decrease Japan's security?

*Answer.* President Biden has underscored the United States' unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan through the full range of U.S. capabilities, including nuclear weapons. It is my understanding that various declaratory policy options will be reviewed as part of the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review, which includes consultations with close allies such as Japan. I do not want to get ahead of that process, but if confirmed, that ongoing analysis would inform my own view on declaratory policy.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Whether nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or chemical and biological weapon attack against the United States or its allies and partners is among the contingencies being evaluated as part of the ongoing DoD-led Nuclear Posture Review. It would be premature to comment prior to that analysis being completed. Regardless of the U.S. nuclear declaratory policy, President Biden has underscored the United States' unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan through the full range of U.S. capabilities, including nuclear weapons. I strongly support this decades-long commitment.*

*Question.* Do you agree that weakening U.S. nuclear deterrence increases the likelihood that Japan would develop its own nuclear capabilities?

*Answer.* While the administration will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, it will ensure our nuclear deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible. Japan is party to and in full compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, forswearing its development of nuclear weapons.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. As stated in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, the administration will ensure that our strategic deterrent will remain safe, secure, and effective, not be weakened. For decades, U.S. extended deterrence has formed the basis for allied and partner security, which enables most to eschew possession of nuclear weapons. In addition, Japan is party to and in full compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, forswearing its development of nuclear weapons.*

*Question.* Please describe your views on China, including your views on what you think U.S.-China policy should be. In your opinion, is China the number-one foreign policy challenge for the United States?

*Answer.* I do believe the PRC is the number one foreign policy challenge for the United States. The PRC has adopted an aggressive foreign policy. It is the only com-



petitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to the stable and open rules-based international order. As Secretary Blinken has said, our relationship with the PRC should be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be.

*Question.* Japan has been the target of Chinese economic coercion, which other U.S. allies, such as Australia, have also experienced. What role can the United States play in helping to push back against such coercion and support our allies and partners who are harmed?

*Answer.* I understand the goal of the administration is to reassure allies that the U.S. economy is a safe and strong bet. That means reviewing IPR, 6G, AI, climate change, supply chains, semiconductors infrastructure—strengthening our economic ties with Japan and expanding opportunities for greater collaboration and integration to help Japan and the United States withstand any economic coercion from malign actors. The United States must continue to work with Japan to strengthen economic security to ensure critical technology and technical expertise will not illicitly flow into countries of concern. At the same time, we will need to hold the PRC accountable for its unfair economic practices and its coercive actions around the world. If confirmed, I would support work bilaterally and multilaterally, including through the Quad, to advance economic opportunity and our vision for a rules-based international order in the region. If confirmed, I would work towards a free and open Indo-Pacific in partnership with Japan.

*Question.* Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said recently that commercial ties with China will help improve our relationship overall. John Kerry has also said we should prioritize climate cooperation with China so we can make gains on other issues like cyber and nuclear non-proliferation.

- Do you agree with Secretary Raimondo's statement?

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken has said, our relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. The United States has longstanding concerns about the PRC's unfair business practices. If confirmed, I will work with Japan and other allies and partners in the region to stop the PRC's state-centered, non-market trade practices that distort competition by propping up state-owned enterprises, limit market access, and undermine the global trading system.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021].* If confirmed as the Ambassador to Japan, I will not only work to deepen our trade and investment ties with Japan, but also work with Japan to stop the PRC's state-centered, non-market trade practices that distort competition by propping up state-owned enterprises, limit market access, and undermine the global trading system. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan has recently raised a number of areas where we have concern with the PRC's actions, including actions related to human rights, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, the South China Sea, and Taiwan, yet made clear that we will also continue to engage with the PRC at a senior level to ensure responsible competition. At the same time, strategic competition does not, and should not, preclude working with the PRC when it is in the U.S. national interest.

*Question.* Do you agree with Mr. Kerry's statement?

*Answer.* This administration will compete, and compete vigorously, with the PRC where we should, and we will cooperate with the PRC where it is in our interest. Climate is perhaps the signature issue on the cooperation side. The PRC has consistently sought to link their action on climate with us making changes in the bilateral relationship, and we reject that linkage. If confirmed, I will pursue cooperation with the PRC where it is in our interest to do so, and in consultation with the Congress, our partners and allies, and other stakeholders. I would work to rally allies such as Japan to join us in promoting our shared interests, pooling our negotiating leverage, and showing our collective power and resolve.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021].* I have not had the opportunity to discuss with Special Presidential Envoy Kerry the above statement or the exact context of the remarks. But I will note that Special Presidential Envoy Kerry has regularly made clear that he approached his engagement with China on climate as a standalone issue, and that other aspects of the U.S.-PRC relationship will not be traded for separate U.S. interests. Japan has taken a similar approach on its engagement with China on its climate policy. If confirmed as the Ambassador to Japan, I will work with Japanese officials, Congress, the administration, and other stakeholders to press the PRC and other countries to raise their ambition to address the climate crisis.

*Question.* In your opinion, on what evidence were Secretary Raimondo and Mr. Kerry relying upon with regard to our past experience with China?

Answer. I defer to Secretary Raimondo and Secretary Kerry on their statements. However, I would reiterate that the relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. We must manage the relationship responsibly and work with Beijing when our interests align, including parts of the trade relationship.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021] I have not discussed the statements with Secretary Raimondo and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry, and do not have the context of their statements.*

*Question.* How do you think a change in Taiwan's status quo would affect the U.S. relationship with Japan?

Answer. In their joint statement in April of this year, President Biden and former Prime Minister Suga underscored the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues. The United States' commitment to Taiwan is rock-solid and contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and within the region. The administration has stated that United States will continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan, and has urged Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure against Taiwan and instead engage in meaningful dialogue with Taiwan.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait is critical to broader regional peace, stability, and prosperity. We have no more important ally than Japan. If confirmed, I would continue to work closely with Japanese leaders to ensure we remain well aligned across the full range of policy priorities, including on shared security interests such as maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.*

*Question.* What are your views on comments by Japanese leaders regarding Taiwan?

Answer. The United States and our allies and partners must work together to support Taiwan and preserve peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. I understand that the United States welcomes comments by Japanese leaders, including former Prime Minister Suga and President Biden's Joint Leaders' statement from April of this year which underscored the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.

*Question.* Do you support pushing for more U.S.-Japan-Taiwan cooperation, including defense cooperation?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I would encourage our allies and partners to continue to work together to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values in the Indo-Pacific region.

*Question.* Do you support working with Japan on preparing for potential diplomatic or intervention scenarios involving Taiwan?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed I will work to ensure that the United States and our allies and partners pool our collective strength to advance shared interests and deter common threats. We will underscore the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

*Question.* How would you describe the role of the Quad in the region?

Answer. The Quad is an essential multilateral grouping that convenes four like-minded democracies—the United States, Australia, Japan, and India—to coordinate in the Indo-Pacific, reflecting our collective commitment to peace, security, and prosperity in the region. The United States and our partners strive for a region that is free, open, inclusive, healthy, anchored by democratic values, and unconstrained by coercion. Engagement through the Quad is one of the many ways we support the rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, democratic values, and territorial integrity.

*Question.* In your opinion, what areas are ripe for more Quad cooperation?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with Quad partners to advance coordination on issues such as COVID vaccine assistance, post-pandemic economic recovery, climate change, humanitarian assistance, maritime security, supply chain resilience, critical and emerging technologies, counter-terrorism, infrastructure cooperation, and countering foreign disinformation, among others.

*Question.* Do you support cooperating with European allies in the Indo-Pacific? If so, how? Please be specific.

*Answer.* Yes. The United States should cooperate with European allies in maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific. We should also welcome support from all who believe in a rules-based system, and not arbitrary decisions made by one nation for its own benefit. President Biden has identified the invigoration and modernization of U.S. alliances and partnership as a central pillar of his administration's foreign policy and effort to reinforce the rules-based international order. An important aspect of that overall effort is breaking down the silos between U.S. alliances. NATO's partnerships with U.S. allies such as Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and New Zealand represent an important avenue for increasing strategic alignment on transnational threats and geo-strategic challenges. Such engagement helps to support the rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, democratic values, and territorial integrity. If confirmed, I would continue to coordinate and encourage cooperation with our European allies on shared lines of effort in the Indo-Pacific region.

*Question.* Do you agree with Secretary Austin's comments about the United Kingdom: "If for example, we focus a bit more here [in Asia], are there areas that the UK can be more helpful in other parts of the world"?

*Answer.* Secretary Austin noted in his remarks that "[a]s we look to balance our efforts in various parts of the world, we are not only looking to help each other in the Indo-Pacific but we are looking to ensure that we help each other in other parts of the world as well." I believe that it is that balance that is vital, as the United States and our allies and partners combine our respective strengths to pursue prosperity, security, and freedom not only in the Indo-Pacific, but worldwide.

*Question.* Would you like to see the United Kingdom be more involved in the Indo-Pacific specifically?

*Answer.* The United Kingdom has longstanding interests in the Indo-Pacific. As a likeminded, key ally and friend to the United States, I would welcome their involvement in areas of mutual concern.

*Question.* Do you support Japan undertaking more extensive security cooperation in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Japanese leaders to advance our shared interests and values in Southeast Asia. Enhancing security cooperation, in particular in the realm of maritime domain awareness, is essential to preserving a rules-based order that fosters free, open, inclusive, and healthy societies that are anchored by democratic values and unconstrained by coercion. As a capable, thoughtful, and dynamic partner that is widely admired throughout the region, Japan remains well positioned to help secure our common interests and values more effectively than we could do alone.

*Question.* How do you see the future of Japan-ROK relations?

*Answer.* Japan and the ROK are both key allies, and I am confident that even while they continue to address sensitive historical issues, we will continue moving forward to embrace opportunities to advance our common regional and international priorities, with a focus on the future. The future of the 21st century offers tremendous opportunities for both Japan and ROK. A robust and effective trilateral relationship between and among the United States, the ROK, and Japan is critical for our shared security and common interests. They include defending freedom and democracy, upholding human rights, championing women's empowerment, combating climate change, building secure and resilient supply chains, promoting regional and global peace and economic security, and bolstering the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region and across the globe.

*Question.* What role should the United States play in managing this relationship?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States does not take sides in bilateral tensions between allies. We have long encouraged the ROK and Japan to work together on history-related issues in a way that promotes healing and reconciliation. Even while addressing sensitive historical issues, cooperation on our common regional and international priorities must proceed so that we can together make the most of the 21st century opportunities.

*Question.* What challenges does it present to the trilateral relationship?

*Answer.* The United States is more secure when our key allies, particularly neighboring allies, have good relations. If confirmed as Ambassador, there would be no

greater priority for me than to support closer relations and cooperation among and between the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.

*Question.* Growing our economic relationship with Japan and throughout the Indo-Pacific region is critically important. If confirmed, how would you go about increasing trade and investment with Japan and in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* The United States has the largest economy in the world. Japan's is number three. When our two countries are aligned, it is a powerful force to set standards for the Indo-Pacific region and the globe. With more than \$250 billion worth of goods and services exchanged each year, the United States and Japan are top trading partners, and the U.S.-Japan bilateral economic relationship is one of the strongest in the world. If confirmed, I would work closely with my colleagues in USTR and other relevant agencies to promote the administration trade policy that benefits American workers and U.S. competitiveness in our economic relationship with Japan, as well as throughout the Indo-Pacific.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Under my leadership, Chicago was the number one American destination for Foreign Direct Investment for seven straight years. My team accomplished this by prioritizing trade and investment, and relentlessly helping businesses close deals. If confirmed, as Ambassador, I will prioritize and support the trade and investment efforts of the Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) and Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Japan.*

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should have a robust trade agenda in the Indo-Pacific region? If so, how?

*Answer.* The United States should focus on working with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region to shape the rules for fair trade in the 21st century and facilitate a race to the top for market economies and democracies. If confirmed, I would work to ensure our trade agenda protects workers, transparency, and the environment.

*Question.* What do you think the United States should focus on in its trade and economic relationship with Japan going forward, following the U.S.-Japan trade agreement completed under the Trump administration?

*Answer.* Japan-affiliated firms employ or support more than 973,800 jobs in the United States. The United States is Japan's top source of direct investment, and Japan is the top investor in the United States, with cumulative Japanese direct investment totaling \$648 billion across all 50 states. If confirmed, I will work to expand our economic relationship as well as realize the full potential of the U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement. We also share interests in the region and globally. If confirmed, I would work to deepen our cooperation in the areas identified in the U.S.-Japan Competitiveness and Resilience (CoRe) Partnership announced by President Biden and then Prime Minister Suga in April, including strengthening competitiveness and innovation, responding to COVID-19 and increasing global health security, addressing the climate crisis

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Added the word "and" as well as a period above. Both were missing in the original submission.*

*Question.* What is your view on the United States joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is looking at a range of options to forge stronger economic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific that promote shared goals of cooperation and inclusive prosperity. We must be committed to strengthening trade and investment in the region in a manner that promotes good paying American jobs, high standards, and supply chain resiliency and offer the same benefits for our Indo-Pacific partners.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. The administration's approach to trade is focused on supporting American working families, defending our values, and protecting the long-term prosperity and security of the United States. The United States is focused on making investments in U.S. workers and U.S. competitiveness before he signs new trade agreements, including in the Indo-Pacific. Improvements in CPTPP are needed for the United States to join. If confirmed, I will support the administration's trade policy.*

*Question.* If the United States does not join the CPTPP, what should we do instead on trade and economic engagement?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would not only continue our strong economic engagement with Japan bilaterally, but also work to deepen regional and global economic relations by promoting an international rules-based order and collaborating with re-

gional partners on issues such as infrastructure, supply chains, clean energy, and technology in the areas of AI and 6G.

*Question.* How can we advance U.S.-Japan infrastructure cooperation and financing in the region, particularly Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands, going forward?

*Answer.* I understand that through the Build Back Better World partnership, the Blue Dot Network, and other initiatives, the administration aims to provide high-standard, climate-aligned, and transparently financed infrastructure to Indo-Pacific economies.

*Question.* What are some of the ways you think Japan and the United States can work on technology cooperation?

*Answer.* Japan is one of our closest partners on technology development and deployment. Joint initiatives have produced results in such fields as clean energy, infectious diseases, particle physics, advanced computing, fusion plasma, materials discovery, natural resources, neuroscience, space, cancer biology, and natural disaster resiliency. Our two countries have ongoing cooperation and hold regular bilateral meetings on a full range of the most challenging and relevant science and technology issues, including cyber security, AI, quantum computing, and “beyond 5G” telecommunications networks. If confirmed, I would work to deepen these ties with Japan to help ensure we are working effectively with them and all of our regional partners to advance technology and innovation, and address collaboration on critical supplies, including rare earth elements and other materials.

*Question.* TSMC is building a factory in Japan. Do you think there are opportunities to involve Japanese companies in efforts to get high tech manufacturing out of China and into the U.S. and allied countries?

*Answer.* Japan shares our views on the need to diversify technology manufacturing to likeminded nations and is implementing policies designed to encourage private industry to invest in Japan, the United States, and other partners. If confirmed, I would work with the Japanese Government and private sector to build on our countries’ longstanding ties to ensure the security of advanced technology manufacturing, which is vital to both of our economies.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will be your priorities for getting high tech manufacturing out of China and into allied countries?

*Answer.* I understand the United States and Japan have already had multiple high-level meetings on supply chain issues and U.S. agencies are now working directly with their Japanese counterparts to address shared supply chain challenges, such as the global semiconductor chip shortage, which has harmed both U.S. and Japanese companies. I understand this work has already made major strides in improving the security of our advanced manufacturing capacity and—if confirmed—I would make every effort to drive this initiative forward.

*Question.* Two major challenges to more cooperation with Japan regarding sensitive and emerging technologies are 1) the gaps in our two classification systems, and 2) the different approaches to military- and commercial-application research. Do you think the United States should explore opportunities to broaden the bilateral defense trade and exchanges with Japan?

*Answer.* President Biden and former Prime Minister Suga highlighted in their Joint Leaders’ Statement the importance of “strengthening bilateral cybersecurity and information security,” which they described as a “foundational component of closer defense cooperation, and of safeguarding our technological advantages.” I understand the United States and Japan continue the important work of securing our information security systems, including through government-wide standards and programs and enhanced counter-intelligence measures. I understand the administration has welcomed Japan’s efforts to strengthen industrial security, cybersecurity, and its overall legal framework for information security, and expects such efforts will contribute to our ability to broaden bilateral defense trade and exchanges.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Yes, I believe the United States and Japan should expand bilateral cooperation and trade on commercial and military technologies wherever and whenever appropriate opportunities arise. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the you and other members of the committee to broaden our defense trade and exchanges with Japan.*

*Question.* To the best of your understanding, does Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry have authority on any issues related to the U.S. relationship with Japan other than climate change cooperation?

Answer. As Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (SPEC), my understanding is that former Secretary of State John Kerry's role is to lead U.S. diplomatic efforts to reassert U.S. climate leadership and raise global ambition to meet the daunting climate challenge. His climate diplomacy work is closely coordinated with other U.S. diplomatic efforts.

*Question.* If Mr. Kerry begins playing a major role in non-climate aspects of the U.S.-Japan relationship, what would be your response?

Answer. I understand that Special Presidential Envoy Kerry's role is to lead the U.S. diplomatic efforts to reassert U.S. climate leadership and raise global ambition to meet the challenge. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with SPEC Kerry on our cooperation with Japan on those issues.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. SPEC Kerry has engaged governments around the world with a singular focus on increasing global ambition to act against the climate crisis. That effort is a full-time assignment, and he has not become involved in non-climate issues in his engagement with Japan or other foreign governments. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with SPEC Kerry on our cooperation with Japan on climate issues. His climate diplomacy work is closely coordinated with other U.S. diplomatic efforts.*

*Question.* Do you believe that the United States should encourage the growth of a stronger Japan-European Union relationship? If so, in what areas would a stronger Japan-European Union relationship benefit the United States?

Answer. While if confirmed I would work tirelessly to ensure U.S. businesses are on a footing to outcompete any challengers, I welcome Japan developing stronger ties with our allies and likeminded partners. U.S.-Japan-EU coordination has the potential to make all our people more secure and prosperous, with promising areas of cooperation ranging from climate to supply chains to cybersecurity.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of how Russia economically, geopolitically, and diplomatically views Japan.

Answer. Economically, Russia hopes to use Japan to revitalize the underdeveloped Russian Far East and to maintain some semblance of diversification as Russia becomes more dependent on China. Geopolitically and diplomatically, it aims to drive a wedge between Japan and the United States to weaken our alliance. I do not believe Japan will be tempted by the latter strategy, and if confirmed I would do my best to ensure that Russia does not succeed.

*Question.* Do you believe that there is any prospect of a resolution to the issue of the Northern Territories/Kuril Islands?

Answer. Nothing in the Kremlin's public comments indicates to me that Russia is interested in any resolution to the issue that does not result in its permanent control of the Northern Territories. I understand that the United States recognizes Japanese sovereignty over the islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan, and the Habomai Islets, known in Japan as the "Northern Territories."

*Question.* What is Russia's policy towards the Northeast Asian region broadly and how do these actions affect Japan?

Answer. Russia's interests, particularly regarding the United States, increasingly align with the PRC's, and Russia seeks to capitalize on its proximity to more prosperous neighbors such as Japan and the ROK. It also continues engagement with the DPRK. Thus, Russia's actions have the potential to better or worsen the security situation in the Indo-Pacific, directly affecting Japan.

*Question.* In your opinion, does Japan have any specific concerns regarding Russia's relationship with China?

Answer. I believe the prospect of two autocratic neighbors becoming increasingly aligned and conducting joint military exercises nearby would concern any of our allies and partners.

*Question.* Earlier this week, Russia joined China in conducting a joint anti-submarine drill and a joint passage through the Tsugaru Strait. This is the first time they have conducted a passage through the Strait together.

- What message do you believe Russia and China were trying to send to Japan?

Answer. I am concerned that Russia and China were attempting to intimidate the Japanese people and to constrain Tokyo's actions by implying that its alliance with the United States puts it at odds with Moscow and Beijing. I do not believe these efforts will succeed because the U.S.-Japan Alliance has served as the cornerstone

of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific for more than six decades, and it has never been stronger.

*Question.* What message do you believe Russia and China were trying to send to the United States?

*Answer.* As with their other joint maneuvers, I believe Russia and China were trying to send a message that they aim to push the US out of the region. It will not work. Our friends in the region want a robust U.S. presence to counter both PRC and Russian malign behavior and any system built solely on their interests.

*Question.* After the annexation of Crimea, Japan chose to stand with the United States and Europe and implemented sanctions on Russia despite a significant blow to its economic and diplomatic engagements with Russia. This sacrifice has garnered little attention in the West.

- Please detail your understanding of Japan's concerns with the United States' sanctions policies and actions towards Russia.

*Answer.* I understand that Japan has often shied away from sanctions out of concern that such a course would foreclose channels of dialogue and opportunities to positively influence behavior. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring this difference of opinion with Japanese policymakers.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should continue to undertake sanctions against Russia even though those actions may harm an ally like Japan?

*Answer.* While U.S. interests and values must always remain paramount, I believe our sanctions should be strategically developed.

*Question.* Earlier this year, Russian Railways opened an office in Tokyo. There are also several other burgeoning business connections between Russia and Japan. Do you believe the United States should actively lobby Japan to end, disengage from, or refrain from seeking these kinds of business deals with Russia?

*Answer.* Regarding non-sanctioned sectors, I believe our focus should be on demonstrating to Japanese businesses the advantage of partnering with U.S. businesses and ensuring that U.S. businesses can outcompete any challenger in a free market.

*Question.* Japan has burgeoning economic relationships with the five Central Asian (C5) nations, which have benefited from Japan's ability to stay outside of the political competition that often pushes and pulls the C5 between Western, Middle Eastern, Russian, and Chinese interests.

- Given recent paradigm shifts in the region due to the fall of Afghanistan and increased influence from China and Russia, how can Japan's involvement help the C5 maintain balance in their international relationships?

*Answer.* I welcome Japan's growing role as a leader not just in the Indo-Pacific, but globally. In my view, the engagement of a strong, likeminded democracy such as Japan in Central Asia aligns with U.S. interests.

*Question.* As a global leader in the technology industry, how can Japan compete with Chinese tech trade and investment in Central Asia, and help them resist developing an unhealthy dependence on the Chinese Government for the modernization of their technological infrastructure?

*Answer.* Japan's competitiveness in this regard lies not only in the quality of its technology, but also in the ability to demonstrate the advantages of dealing with a reliable business partner willing to treat Central Asian partners on fair and equal terms. With proper messaging, I believe Central Asian nations will see the long-term benefit of economic cooperation with a partner that believes in transparent, free competition over one that offers short-sighted deals with opaque strings attached.

*Question.* How can we assist Japan in increasing its economic involvement in the C5, in a way that would maintain Japan's relative neutrality in the region and be amenable to Japanese national and economic interests?

*Answer.* I understand the administration sees the United States' primary strategic interest in this region is to build a more stable and prosperous Central Asia that is free to pursue political, economic, and security interests with a variety of partners on its own terms; is connected to global markets and open to international investment; and has strong, democratic institutions, rule of law, and respect for human rights. If confirmed, I would consult and coordinate with like-minded partners where appropriate, to advance these objectives.

*Question.* According to the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Japan is ranked as Tier 2 due to a lack of government will to adequately prevent

further trafficking victims, protect existing victims, and increase prosecutions and consequences for those accused of human trafficking. If confirmed, please outline your strategy for underscoring the importance of Japan's increased political will to end the scourge that is human trafficking.

Answer. Trafficking in persons is a matter of deep concern for me, and if confirmed I would actively engage the Government of Japan to address this issue, including by sharing best practices from the United States and other likeminded partners.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. If confirmed, I would engage the Government of Japan on this critical issue, to reinforce the need especially to vigorously investigate and prosecute sex and labor trafficking cases, and hold convicted traffickers accountable. Specifically, authorities must work to improve victim identification efforts, particularly among child sex trafficking victims and among foreign nationals subjected to forced labor within Japan's Technical Intern Training Program, and convicted traffickers should face stricter sentencing. If confirmed, I would direct my team to encourage Japan to adopt the prioritized recommendations in the Department of State's annual Trafficking in Person's Report.*

*Question.* The State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report indicated that Japan has no incidents of human rights abuses, but there is always work to be done in civil society. How can you, if confirmed, bolster civil society alongside your officers at Mission Tokyo?

Answer. There is a need to address necessary improvements in civil society frankly with a partner like Japan, and that also means admitting our own imperfections openly. If confirmed, I would work to demonstrate the ways we are attempting to address the deficiencies in our own society and direct Mission Japan to promote those actions to benefit Japan, and to explore ways our own civil society groups can engage with Japanese civil society as we pursue common aims.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Engaging civil society and fostering people to people ties with Japan will be one of my key priorities as Ambassador, if confirmed, and I see significant opportunities to deepen engagements between U.S. and Japanese civil society groups. If confirmed, I would work with my team to prioritize engagement across the spectrum of Japanese society, but especially with groups looking to address issues such as human rights. Gender equality is a key area where we could work with civil society groups to advance efforts in Japan to improve opportunities for women both economically and socially.*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, it was reported that Uyghur Muslims continue to have difficulty applying for refugee status in government centers, as well as general feelings of animosity between Uyghurs and other members of the population. How can you, if confirmed, continue to work with the Japanese Government to protect Uyghur Muslims in Japan and around the world?

Answer. If confirmed, I would emphasize the plight of Uyghur Muslims today, and offer to share our experience of welcoming and integrating refugees into the United States.

*[Additional Information—11/8/2021]. Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups face ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang. In the U.S.-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement from April of this year, the United States and Japan noted their "serious concerns regarding the human rights situations in Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region," and I've seen more recent public statements in which Japan has reiterated these concerns about the situation Uyghur Muslims face in the PRC. If confirmed, I would encourage the Government of Japan to explore ways to protect Uyghur asylum seekers and members of other vulnerable groups in Japan, as well as to identify opportunities to jointly engage on and advocate for their human rights in the PRC.*

*Question.* Japan is not a party to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention or Convention), making intercountry adoption particularly difficult for American families. How can you, if confirmed, work with Japanese officials on making this process more efficient for American families and their children?

Answer. While Japan is not a party to the Hague Convention with respect to Intercountry Adoption, I understand that Japan has processes in place (called Special Adoption) that allow for adoption. However, the requirements have more narrow guidelines than American prospective parents are accustomed to. There are limits on the age of children that may be adopted as well as requirements relating to the



age and marital status of prospective parents as well as time living with the child in Japan. The requirement to have lived with the child in Japan for six months makes it difficult for American prospective parents to meet this requirement. If confirmed, I would work with Japanese officials to make the process more feasible for prospective American families.

*Question.* Because Japan is not a part to the Hague Convention, there are few enforcement mechanisms to bring parentally abducted American children home to the United States. What steps can and would you take to bring hope to American parents who have not seen their children because of a parental abduction?

*Answer.* These cases of family separation are painful and tragic. While it has been a long time coming, my understanding is that there has been improvement in terms of Japan's record in these IPCA cases over the last four to five years. We cannot undo the pain of the past, but I believe Japan's acceding to the Hague Convention on Abductions in 2014 was an important step forward in recognizing that responsibility for making custodial determinations should lie solely with the court of competent jurisdiction in the child's place of habitual residence, and not necessarily where the child is currently residing. If confirmed as Ambassador, I look forward to working with our Consular officials in resolving these cases and advocating for the parental rights of American citizen parents.

*Question.* U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Japan?

*Answer.* I cannot yet make a judgment on morale in Mission Japan since I have not been there. An Ambassador is only as effective as the members of the Foreign Service, Civil Service employees, eligible family members (EFMs), local staff and U.S. Armed Forces who surround them. In Japan, Mission community members have advanced our nation's ideals without an appointed ambassador for more than two years. I would like to thank them for their professionalism and dedication to our Mission in Japan, and I hope to soon serve our country alongside them.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Japan?

*Answer.* I have not yet been to the mission, so I do not know the state of morale at the mission. As in all missions, morale always needs attention and strengthening. If confirmed, morale at Mission Japan would be my priority. Throughout my career, whether as Mayor of Chicago or Chief of Staff to the President, I tried to build a mentality that everything is a team effort and a team success. As I said in remarks at the hearing, I'm eager to work alongside members of the diplomatic mission and of the armed services in Japan. If confirmed, I would be committed to creating a strong team across the embassy and all consulates and military institutions in Japan.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Japan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure the entire mission is unified under one vision, to ensure our more than 60-year alliance remains strong and continues to be the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in a free and open Indo-Pacific. Our alliance advances our shared interests, shared values, and shared goals. If confirmed as Ambassador, my top priority would be to unite all members of the mission behind our common goal of deepening these ties while we confront our common challenges. Everyone in our Embassy and five consulates will play a role in contributing to our mission.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I believe every success is a team effort and a collaborative process. I ensure that everyone has a chance to have their voice heard and a seat at the table. I listen and analyze all opinions and views offered, and ask for others to help weigh the equities, which makes my decisions better. Once a decision is made, we move forward in a unified fashion, together as a team.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

*Answer.* I have always found that it is important to lead by example. As mayor, in a time of tight budgets, I led by example. If I asked other departments to make changes, I would tighten my budget as well. I would not require others to make sacrifices or changes if I was not going to make them as well. As I said in the hearing,

I will only be as strong as my team in the Mission, and I would like to thank them for their professionalism and dedication over the past two years without an Ambassador.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe in a culture of mutual respect. Every member of the mission has a role that is important to the future of our alliance with Japan. As stated above, I believe every success is a team effort and a collaborative process. If confirmed, I would ensure that everyone has a chance to have their voice heard. I would ensure that the Ambassador is accessible and does not stand apart from the embassy staffing. I would plan to eat in the embassy cafeteria, join embassy cycling groups and other community activities to build a stronger sense of team. It is my practice to listen and analyze diverse options and opinions, which make my decisions better. Once a decision is made, the team must move forward together in a unified fashion to achieve our goals.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No. Never. In my career, I have found it important to create a culture of loyalty which requires mutual respect and teamwork. I believe mutual respect and loyalty elicits the very best from people. My teams have worked hard and achieved great results. As I stated in the committee hearing, how I was profiled when I was 27 and 30 is not who I am today. For example, I am the only mayor of Chicago who never lost a single vote. When I was mayor of Chicago, I led the country in foreign direct investment (FDI) over seven years. I believe that reflects that I have more than one tool in my toolbox. Each job is different, and we change as we grow and learn from our experiences. If confirmed, I would employ all of the tools in my toolbox to strengthen our relationship with Japan.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* I see it as a close partnership. Ray Greene has had a long and successful career as a diplomat in Japan and in the region that is invaluable. I would plan to rely on that relationship as ambassador. I would be fortunate as an Ambassador to have a DCM like Ray Greene.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* I respect the DCM's 25 years of experience and his deep knowledge, not only of Japan but of the region, which is invaluable to me and to the United States. For example, every former Ambassador notes the sensitivity of issues in Okinawa and Ray Greene was Consul General in Okinawa. If confirmed, I would rely on every aspect of his experience and knowledge for our success.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- If confirmed, will you encourage Mission Japan diplomats to engage in-person with the Japanese people outside of U.S. embassies and consulates?

*Answer.* Yes, of course. If confirmed, I plan to lead by example and look forward to engaging directly with the Japanese people throughout the country, as conditions permit. Face-to-face contact and meetings in local settings where Japanese people engage and work are important to understanding our partners, and also key to visibly showing our commitment to Japan is rock-solid.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Japan? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* The U.S.-Japan Alliance has been the cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond for over six decades, and the American and Japanese people share an unbreakable bond and an unwavering friendship as evidenced by the grassroots efforts to support each other in times of need, including during the aftermath of both Hurricane Katrina and the Great East Japan Earthquake. Public opinion polling confirms that a strong majority of the Japanese people support the Alliance, but our challenge is to ensure that Japan's younger generations continue to view the United States as their first partner of choice on security, economic, and educational/cultural issues. Like many diplomatic posts around the world, the Embassy and Consulates in Tokyo have had to shift to all

virtual programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As public health conditions permit, the Public Affairs team and others will be able to restart in-person engagement on everything from encouraging youth and mid-career professionals to consider study in the United States, to fighting climate change, and identifying ways to promote our shared values across the Indo-Pacific region.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Our public diplomacy professionals in Washington and in the field work closely together, and we rely on that close cooperation to ensure that content and messages developed for a global audience are relevant and effectively localized for audiences at post.

*Question.* “Anomalous health incidents,” commonly referred to as “Havana Syndrome,” have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* As the Department does, I consider the safety and health of our employees and their family members my top priority. If confirmed, I will energetically support the Department’s established reporting and care protocols for anomalous health incidents.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Japan personnel?

*Answer.* Communication that is clear, complete, concise, and timely is a central part of effective leadership and management. I believe that a well-informed workforce is a more effective one. If confirmed, I will use the Mission’s weekly Country Team meetings, regular meetings with top managers, established procedures for notices and policies, and town hall meetings to convey our mission and vision and to give all information needed to enable our success.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RAHM EMANUEL BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* According to a scientific public opinion poll conducted in August 2019, included in the Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament, 75 percent percent of Japanese respondents favored Japan signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)—a Treaty that prohibits the use of and possession of nuclear weapons. If confirmed as Ambassador, how will you reflect this overwhelming attitude towards nuclear weapons in Japan, a close ally, as the interagency completes its Nuclear Posture Review as part of the Defense led Integrated National Defense Strategy?

*Answer.* While I understand and share the desire to make progress toward a world without nuclear weapons, the TPNW is not the right way to achieve that goal. The TPNW risks undermining U.S. deterrence relationships that are still necessary for international peace and security and may reinforce divisions that hinder our ability to work together to address pressing proliferation and security challenges. U.S. allies covered by extended nuclear deterrence (which includes all NATO Allies, plus Australia, Japan, and South Korea) share our view that the TPNW is incompatible with our extended nuclear deterrence arrangements. The best way to achieve a world without nuclear weapons is through a process that takes into account the international security environment and seeks effective, verifiable arms control and disarmament measures.

*Question.* Then-Vice President, Joseph R. Biden, stated on January 11, 2017 that: “it is hard to envision a plausible scenario in which the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States would be necessary. Or make sense.” Do you personally agree with that opinion?

*Answer.* I understand that various declaratory policy options will be reviewed as part of the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review, based on ongoing analysis and continuing allied and partner consultations. It would be premature to adopt a position on U.S. declaratory policy prior to the completion of the NPR process. At the same time, I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Congress, and experts regarding U.S. adoption of a no-first-

use or sole purpose policy. Those concerns will inform the review process. In our last review, there was no country with greater participation or consultation than Japan. I anticipate the same level of engagement for the next review.

*Question.* The United States has several Intra-Parliamentary Working Groups that allow for active U.S. participation of Members of Congress and staff with other governments. How can an Intra-Parliamentary Working Group, such as that is included in the Innovation and Competition Act (S.1260), advance common interests and values of the Quad nations?

*Answer.* Quad cooperation supports the United States' goal of realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific, and our vision for this partnership is ambitious and far-reaching. As a former Congressman, I look forward to engaging with members of Congress on how best to support that goal and advance the work of the Quad, including through intra-parliamentary working groups.

*Question.* How can the United States work with Japan to lessen its reliance on nuclear power and coal and increase its renewable energy infrastructure?

*Answer.* I welcome Prime Minister Kishida's affirmation of Japan's pledge to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46-50 percent by 2030 as part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. Implementation of Japan's NDC will require significant transformations toward a cleaner energy future. The United States is committed to be a partner with Japan in this effort. At their April 16 summit, President Biden and then-Prime Minister Suga launched the U.S.-Japan Climate Partnership on Ambition, Decarbonization, and Clean Energy to advance cooperation on climate ambition, climate and clean energy technology, and decarbonization. In order to expand renewable energy infrastructure—both in Japan and in third countries—the United States and Japan are enhancing cooperation on innovation, including in such areas as renewable energy, energy storage (such as batteries and long-duration energy storage technologies), smart grid, energy efficiency, low carbon hydrogen, and Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage/Carbon Recycling. If confirmed, I would continue and expand opportunities for U.S.-Japan cooperation to address the climate crisis.

*Question.* Japan is currently completing construction on the Rokkasho spent nuclear fuel reprocessing facility which may open as early as next year. Experts estimate this plant could produce up to eight tons of separated plutonium on an annual basis, which would be an unwelcome addition to the 8.9 tons it currently hosts at homes and the 36.6 tons currently being held in France. If confirmed, will you commit to working with Japan to find ways to dispose of its plutonium surplus, both domestically and abroad?

*Answer.* The United States has a long history of productive cooperation with Japan on nuclear safety, security, and nonproliferation. Japan has committed that it will not maintain plutonium reserves for which utilization is unspecified, a commitment which Japan has consistently honored.

In July 2018, the Government of Japan released new policy guidelines stating that Japan intends to keep its plutonium stockpile at current levels and reduce from there. Our decades of close cooperation with Japan, as well as our ongoing dialogue across a wide range of nuclear nonproliferation, safety, and security issues give me confidence that Japan will continue to move forward in ways that are fully consistent with its international obligations and its reputation as a leader in global nuclear nonproliferation. If confirmed, I would work closely with Japan to ensure that it continues to meet its commitments.

*Question.* Japanese automobile companies such as Toyota have engaged in intense lobbying against U.S. efforts to transition to electric vehicles. How can you address this issue with the Japanese Government?

*Answer.* President Biden's Build Back Better Agenda and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal invest in the infrastructure, manufacturing, and incentives that we need to grow good-paying, union jobs at home, lead on electric vehicles around the world, and save American consumers money. The Japanese Government has committed to a clean energy strategy and a 46-50 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. They too, are working toward cleaner vehicles and have set a target toward phasing out the sale of gas and diesel-engine cars by 2035. The United States and Japan are committed to advancing shared interests, including addressing climate change. If confirmed, I would prioritize engagement on climate change and clean energy, and good paying jobs that assist the middle class while supporting robust mutually-beneficial trade between the United States and Japan.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to ensure Japan's concerns about the Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea as well as concerns about Japan's own security are fully represented in any engagements or negotiations between the United States and North Korea?

*Answer.* The United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea continue to deepen trilateral cooperation towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. I understand that Prime Minister Kishida is prepared to meet with the DPRK leader Kim Jong Un without preconditions and remains committed to the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. I hope the DPRK will respond positively. As President Biden and former Prime Minister Suga reaffirmed in their April 2021 Joint Leaders' statement, the United States is committed to the immediate resolution of the abductions issues. Our treaty commitments to Japan's security are rock-solid and inform our bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Japan.

*Question.* If provided additional resources by Congress, in what ways would you expand the U.S.-Japan-Taiwan Global Cooperation Training Framework (GCTF)?

*Answer.* The GCTF is an essential tool for building support for Taiwan around the world and demonstrating the value of Taiwan's participation on the global stage. Since its inception in 2015, the GCTF has featured dozens of workshops that have provided training to over two thousand participants, either virtually or in Taipei. The State Department recently launched a major expansion of the GCTF that will allow the hosting of GCTF workshops around the world, reaching new audiences with regionally focused content.

*Question.* Recent media reports suggest that while Laquan McDonald's great uncle, Pastor Marvin Hunter, has offered support for your nomination, there is not agreement amongst the family on their support. Have you engaged with other members of the family about your nomination?

*Answer.* As Pastor Hunter describes in his letter to the Chairman, our conversation and relationship predates and is unrelated to any nomination. He reached out to me to begin a dialogue about police accountability and the tragic murder of his great nephew. I was honored to be approached by the pastor and have found great meaning and hope in our conversations since then. Out of respect for the family, I have expressed an openness to engaging with any of them who are interested but have deferred to their wishes on when or if they would like to engage in a dialogue.

*Question.* Why did you initially oppose a federal civil rights pattern-and-practice investigation into the systematic issues within Chicago's police department?

*Answer.* In December 2015, I announced the formation of an independent Police Accountability Task Force (PATF) to conduct a comprehensive review of Chicago's system of police accountability, oversight, and training. The PATF was made up of well-respected experts in police accountability and reform, including the former Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division and former Governor of Massachusetts Deval Patrick, the then-Inspector General of Chicago Joe Ferguson, and the then-President of the Chicago Police Board and now Mayor of Chicago Lori Lightfoot. Their mandate was extremely broad—to recommend reforms to improve independent oversight of police misconduct, ensure officers with repeated complaints are identified and evaluated appropriately, and to establish best practices for the release of videos of police-involved incidents—and their timeline for delivering recommendations was an aggressive four months. As former Inspector General Ferguson wrote recently in a letter to the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations (see full letter attached), the PATF's work was done “without constraint or filter,” it was “independent and unconstrained,” and I asked “the truth be found and reported, with the chips to fall where they may.” In addition, at this time there was still an ongoing federal investigation by the United States Attorney's Office and the FBI into the shooting of Laquan McDonald. Under those circumstances, I believed that another investigation into Chicago's police practices was unnecessary and risked duplicating or possibly interfering with the work of the PATF. However, recognizing that the problems of police oversight and accountability and the well-deserved community distrust of the police were so widespread and deep-seated, a federal civil rights pattern-and-practice investigation was not only appropriate but necessary to address the issues in the police department. The federal pattern and practice investigation built on the work done by the PATF. As former Inspector General Ferguson writes: “The work of the PATF was conducted separately but coordinately to the pattern and practice investigation of the Civil Rights Section of the United States Department of Justice, whose findings were consistent with and as it related specifically to use of force, complementary to and a further expansion of those of the PATF.”

*Question.* When and from whom did you learn about the shooting and when and from whom did you learn about the dashcam video? Have you ever viewed the dashcam video? What did you do in response upon learning of the dashcam video and its contents?

*Answer.* I do not recall who first informed me about the shooting or when that information was provided to me. As I stated during my testimony before the committee, almost immediately after the shooting the independent agency tasked with reviewing police use of force incidents, IPRA, and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office began investigations into the shooting, and soon thereafter the United States Attorney's Office launched its own investigation into the shooting. All three of these independent investigative agencies had access to all available video at the time. The longstanding practice and protocol at that time was to not release video footage of the police-involved incident while the investigations were ongoing out of concern that release of the video could interfere with the investigation, influence witness statements, and jeopardize a future prosecution, and my office followed that longstanding practice in this case. As the former Inspector General for the City of Chicago Joe Ferguson recently wrote to this committee, "[d]ecisions made about the non- or delayed-disclosure of the body-worn camera videos at that time were in fact the longstanding policy and practice of the City of Chicago and its Law Department." Further, the first time I viewed the dashcam video was when it was eventually released to the public. Ferguson, who's office conducted a "comprehensive investigation" into my administration's handling of the aftermath of the shooting, goes on to write, "there is a complete absence of factual basis to support the claim that Mayor Emanuel was involved directly or indirectly in a 'cover-up' of the McDonald shooting videos." Indeed, the former Inspector General goes on to write: "my office's comprehensive investigation did not reveal any evidence that would support the lingering surmises and accusations of a 'cover-up' orchestrated out of City Hall. None."

*Question.* Why did you not implement all the reforms the Task Force on Police Accountability recommended? Of the reforms you did commit to implement, which were implemented (either partially or fully) before you left office? Which were not, and why not?

*Answer.* The Police Accountability Task Force, which I convened and tasked with conducting a comprehensive, independent review of police oversight and accountability practices in Chicago, issued its report in April 2016. The report was a thorough assessment of the systemic problems throughout Chicago policing and police accountability system, and it included numerous recommendations across a wide array of areas for reform. As former-Inspector General (and PATF member) Ferguson wrote to the committee, "The PATF's findings and recommendations were reported out nationally and to much acclaim for their candor in pulling back the cover on the lived experience of those who have directly and indirectly, over generations, experienced the consequences of aggressive and oppressive historical policing practices and culture. The work of the Emanuel-appointed and charged Task Force was independent and unconstrained." My administration moved quickly to act on the recommendations of the PATF and implemented reforms guided by their recommendations to the Chicago Police Department's use of force policies, de-escalation training, body-worn cameras, and a groundbreaking video release policy. As Mr. Ferguson goes on to explain in his letter, the longstanding practice of not releasing video footage during ongoing investigations, "was the subject of a near unprecedented video release policy implemented in February 2016 by Mayor Emanuel, acting immediately in response to the first-issued recommendation of the PATF." As we made progress on implementing the recommendations of the PATF, that process was eventually incorporated into the police consent decree which my administration entered into with the Illinois Attorney General's office. That consent decree, which I was proud to finalize and sign before leaving office, builds on the excellent work of the PATF, and finally puts the Chicago Police Department on a sustainable path toward true reform.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. RAHM EMANUEL BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* How do you believe the U.S. should react to China's application to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)?

*Answer.* We would expect that China's non-market trade practices, extensive market-distorting support of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and use of economic coer-

cion against other countries would factor into CPTPP parties' evaluation of China as a potential candidate for accession. If confirmed, I would work to uphold our commitment to international rules and standards and work with partners in the region to maintain high standards I would defend our interests and work alongside our partners and allies to ensure fairness-in competition, practices, and trade-and to ensure that the PRC is not permitted to dictate the rules of the road and undermine a free and fair Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* How do you believe the U.S. can leverage its relationships with Japan to build legitimacy for issue-based coalitions to address China's unfair trade practices?

*Answer.* The U.S.-Japan Alliance has served as the cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific for more than six decades, and it has never been stronger. The American and Japanese people share deeply rooted values of defending freedom, championing economic and social opportunity and inclusion, and respecting human rights and the rule of law. Japan has joined the United States and our allies and partners to express our joint concerns about the PRC's unfair trade practices including preferential treatment for state owned enterprises, data restrictions, inadequate enforcement of intellectual property rights, and forced technology transfer. Additionally, the United States and Japan and our other partners are concerned by the PRC's failure to respect International Labor Standards and non-compliance with applicable ILO Conventions. If confirmed, I will work with Japan to uphold freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, and the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor.

*Question.* China is an important trading partner as well as a security threat for both the U.S. and Japan. Could you please share your view of China and whether you see the country as more of a partner or as a threat?

*Answer.* The PRC has adopted an increasingly provocative foreign policy. It is the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system. As Secretary Blinken has said, our relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. The common denominator is the need to work alongside our allies and partners to engage China. Japan will obviously be a key partner in this challenge, and if confirmed I will prioritize working with Japan on our shared security priorities.

*Question.* With the recent security agreement between the U.S., UK, and Australia, and in light of the existing Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) between the U.S., India, Japan, and Australia, what is your view of the role Japan can and should play in efforts to counter Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific region?

*Answer.* I would like to reiterate that the U.S.-Japan Alliance has served as the cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and across the world for more than six decades, and it has never been stronger. The American and Japanese people share deeply rooted values of defending freedom, championing economic and social opportunity and inclusion, and respecting human rights, and the rule of law. This has led us to share some of the same concerns regarding the PRC's actions. We welcome Japan's expanding position as a leader not just in the Indo-Pacific but globally. Its founding role in creating the Quad was an example of this leadership. If confirmed, I will work with Japan to support the rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, democratic values, and territorial integrity in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

*Question.* Do you think there are opportunities for cooperation on technology issues for members of the QUAD? In the future, what kind of cooperation do you think is necessary with Japan, a partner with high technological capabilities, in order to maintain U.S. technological superiority in critical technologies such as AI, cybersecurity, beyond 5G, and quantum computing?

*Answer.* Members of the Quad actively cooperate on a broad range of technology issues. Moreover, Japan is one of our closest partners on technology development and deployment. Joint initiatives have produced results in such fields as infectious diseases, particle physics, advanced computing, fusion plasma, materials discovery, natural resources, neuroscience, space, cancer biology, and natural disaster resiliency. Our two countries have ongoing cooperation and hold regular bilateral meetings on a full range of the most challenging and relevant science and technology issues, including cyber security, AI, quantum computing, and "beyond 5G" telecommunications networks. If confirmed, I would work to deepen these ties with Japan to help ensure our continued technology leadership.

*Question.* As Ambassador, would you propose encouraging the Japanese Government to expand its security role in the Indo-Pacific region?

*Answer.* In an increasingly challenging security environment, the United States and Japan will continue to closely coordinate on how to effectively deter and, if necessary, respond to growing threats to the U.S.-Japan Alliance and regional security in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I would work with Japan to promote greater mutual investment in defense and improve our forces' interoperability to ensure our alliance is able to adapt quickly to a changing security landscape with the necessary capabilities and military readiness. Japan is in the position to play an even greater role on regional security issues by supporting and encouraging closer cooperation with other like-minded partners.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JONATHAN ERIC KAPLAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*ASEAN*

*Question.* Enduring support for ASEAN is critical to the United States' posture in the Indo-Pacific and central to that engagement is our partnership with Singapore.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to help Singapore in bolstering ASEAN's centrality in the Asia-Pacific region? What is your assessment of how ASEAN can improve its functions to more fully establish itself as an important, and problem-solving, regional player?

*Answer.* We value Singapore's role as one of the founding members of ASEAN, alongside Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, and its advocacy for ASEAN centrality and unity. If confirmed, I look forward to future discussions with Singapore that advance the U.S.-ASEAN strategic partnership and highlight ASEAN at the heart of our shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific.

*Economic and Trade Opportunities*

*Question.* Singapore is the United States' largest trading partner in Southeast Asia, and the 18th largest trading partner overall.

- How can the United States continue to improve our economic relationship with Singapore? If confirmed, what economic initiatives would you pursue in light of the U.S. withdrawal from the TPP?

*Answer.* Singapore is one of the United States' strongest economic partners in the region, surpassing \$93 billion in bilateral trade in 2020. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Singapore bilaterally and through regional fora, including APEC and ASEAN, to promote trade and encourage private-sector investment in the region. I will also continue to make the case with Singapore and others in the region to uphold high standards and adhere to global rules and norms for trade.

*Vice President Harris' Recent Visit*

*Question.* As you know, Vice President Harris recently visited Singapore and announced agreements to address climate change, cybersecurity, and supply chain resilience.

- What are your primary goals in executing these agreements and what potential do you see for U.S.-Singapore collaboration on technology and innovation?

*Answer.* Following Vice President Harris' visit in August, Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry and the U.S. Department of Commerce launched on October 7 a new "Partnership for Growth and Innovation" to address immediate- and longer-term challenges that face both of our economies, including the need to enhance supply chain resilience. This partnership is designed to promote inclusive economic growth, innovation and entrepreneurship, and shared prosperity in the United States and Singapore and throughout the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I plan to work with U.S. businesses and the Singaporean government to strengthen our trade and investment relations.

*Security Cooperation*

*Question.* Mutual security interests are a critical element of the U.S.-Singapore bilateral relationship, which includes the important defense cooperation agreements we have concluded over the past decade.



- How can the United States bolster its security relationship with Singapore? If confirmed, how would you encourage and assist Singapore in addressing maritime tensions in the South China Sea?

Answer. Singapore is an important security partner and provides the U.S. military with access to its bases, ports, and runways. Both the United States and Singapore have a clear national interest in promoting respect for international law, including freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, unimpeded lawful commerce, and the peaceful resolution of disputes in the South China Sea (SCS). If confirmed, I intend to work with Singapore to deepen our close military cooperation on shared priority areas such as maritime security and cybersecurity, and I will continue to discuss with Singapore how we can uphold rights and freedoms that are reflected in international law in the SCS and around the world.

*Question.* How do you plan to respond to Singapore's increasing defense cooperation with China?

Answer. Singapore maintains robust relationships with both the United States and the People's Republic of China. Singapore is a reliable partner that welcomes cooperation with the United States and increased U.S. security and economic engagement in the region. If confirmed, I intend to work with Singapore to deepen our close military cooperation.

#### *China*

*Question.* Singapore, along with other countries in the region, face a time of increasing geopolitical uncertainty with China's growing assertiveness in the Pacific.

- What is your assessment of how Singapore's thinking on China has evolved in recent years? And what should the United States be doing to influence Singapore's approach towards confronting and competing with China?

Answer. As Secretary Blinken stated in his March foreign policy speech, our relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. We seek to cooperate with Beijing where our interests align. In other areas, we will compete vigorously. The common denominator is the need to work alongside our allies and partners to engage the PRC from a position of collective strength. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Singapore to ensure that it is a reliable partner that welcomes U.S. security and economic engagement in the region.

#### *Burma*

*Question.* Singapore plays an important role in diplomacy surrounding the political and humanitarian crisis in Burma.

- If confirmed, what will you do to encourage Singapore to place pressure on Burma's military leaders to cease ongoing violence against protestors and to release political prisoners?

Answer. If confirmed, I will urge Singapore and other ASEAN members to hold the Burmese regime accountable to the Five-Point Consensus and urge the military to immediately cease the violence, release all those unjustly detained, and restore Burma's path to inclusive democracy. If confirmed, I will continue to urge all countries to review their economic leverage and ties to Burma to ensure they benefit only the people of Burma and not the military regime.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. I am also deeply troubled by potential anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and their family members. Serving one's country overseas should not come at the cost of one's health. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel, and must be taken extremely seriously. If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Embassy Singapore staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that that all reported potential anomalous health incidents are given serious attention and reported swiftly through the appropriate channels. I will also ensure that staff who are affected by these incidents receive prompt access to the treatment, support, and medical care that they need.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at Embassy Singapore to discuss any reported anomalous health incidents so that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Embassy Singapore staff and ensure that all protocols regarding anomalous health incidents are being followed appropriately.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JONATHAN ERIC KAPLAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What are your top 2-3 priorities for the U.S.-Singapore relationship?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my highest priority would be ensuring the safety and security of the mission and our men and women serving abroad, along with the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Singapore. I am also committed to ensuring that our robust security, economic, and enduring people-to-people ties remain the pillars of our expansive and enduring bilateral partnership and allows us to cooperate as close partners in support of the rules-based economic and security order in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* How would you evaluate Singapore as a defense partner overall? Where are they helpful, and where do they need to do more?

*Answer.* Singapore is a critically important security partner that enables a strong U.S. military presence in the region by providing access to bases, ports, and runways, and allowing for the rotational deployment of U.S. littoral combat ships and Navy P-8s. Singapore maintains a training force of close to 1,000 members in the United States and is also the largest purchaser of U.S. military equipment in Southeast Asia, and has agreed to purchase the F-35B Joint Strike Fighter. If confirmed, I intend to work with Singapore to deepen our close military cooperation. I will work with my colleagues across the interagency to expand our cooperation in our shared priority areas such as maritime security and cybersecurity.

*Question.* Do you agree that extended deterrence is the foundation of the U.S. security apparatus in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* Yes. Extended deterrence plays a foundational role in advancing U.S. national security objectives in the Indo-Pacific, and U.S. nuclear forces, underpin extended deterrence. The administration is committed to reinvigorating and modernizing alliances and partnerships around the world; this includes ensuring U.S. extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies and partners remain strong and credible.

*Question.* Do you commit to not advocating for policies that would dilute or erode U.S. extended deterrence commitments?

*Answer.* I understand the administration is undertaking a review of various national security policies, including nuclear deterrence issues through the ongoing Nuclear Posture Review. If confirmed, I will contribute to those processes as they relate to Singapore and the Indo-Pacific Region. I also understand that the administration is committed to reinvigorating and modernizing alliances and partnerships around the world; this includes ensuring U.S. extended deterrence commitments in the region remain strong and credible.

*Question.* How do you think our Indo-Pacific allies and partners would respond to adopting a 'sole purpose doctrine' as our declaratory policy?

*Answer.* I understand that the administration is working to reinvigorate and modernize U.S. alliances and partnerships around the world and has highlighted the need to ensure extended deterrence commitments to U.S. allies remain strong and credible. If confirmed, I will do my part to reaffirm, invest in, and modernize our global alliances and partnerships, which are America's greatest strategic asset. It

is my understanding that various declaratory policy options are being reviewed as part of the Department of Defense-led Nuclear Posture Review.

*Question.* At the VP's trip to Singapore in August, the U.S. and Singapore finalized three agreements to expand cybersecurity, including military to military engagement. What should our next steps be in cybersecurity cooperation with Singapore, and what challenges do we still face?

*Answer.* Technological advancement continues to create a more inter-connected world that is increasingly vulnerable to cyber threats. Singapore is an important bilateral partner and regional leader on cybersecurity issues. If confirmed, I will work closely with Singapore to expand information sharing, increase cyber capacity building, and improve incident response coordination. These efforts will deepen our cybersecurity cooperation and build on the three recently signed cyber-MOUs related to the financial sector, military-to-military engagement, and regional capacity-building.

*Question.* Singapore has historically taken on a non-alignment policy, in which it hopes to balance its relationship with the U.S. and China. What are your views on this policy and what challenges does it present to the U.S.-Singapore relationship?

*Answer.* Singapore maintains robust relationships with both the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The PRC is Singapore's top trade partner in goods, while the United States remains Singapore's largest investor; largest trading partner in services; and security partner of choice. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that Singapore remains one of the United States' strongest security, economic, and trade partners in the region.

*Question.* Do you commit to keeping Congress informed of any Singapore-Chinese military engagement?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to monitoring Singapore's bilateral relationship with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and providing assessments on the relationship to enable awareness throughout the U.S. Government.

*Question.* What opportunities are there for more U.S.-Singapore economic engagement given efforts to diversify supply chains from China?

*Answer.* The COVID-19 crisis has significantly slowed down global trade and supply chains, including for both Singaporean and U.S. businesses. During Vice President Harris' visit in August, the United States and Singapore committed to holding a high-level dialogue with industry and government representatives to discuss supply chain resilience. The United States and Singapore will also work to address shortages caused by global supply chain disruptions, including identifying ways to remove choke points in the semiconductor supply chain. If confirmed, I plan to work with U.S. businesses and the Singapore government to facilitate travel and strengthen our trade and investment relations.

*Question.* What do you think needs to happen to build more resilient supply chains in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* Stronger industry relationships and increased economic partnerships will ensure a more resilient, diverse, and secure supply chains. The administration's focus centers around four critical product areas: computer chips; electric vehicle batteries; pharmaceuticals; and strategic and critical materials. In coordination with our partners and allies, and if confirmed, I will work with business, the Singapore leadership, and the administration to secure supply chain competitiveness and national security.

*Question.* China has been increasingly exerting its economic, diplomatic, and military pressure against Taiwan in the past few years. How do you think a change in Taiwan's status quo will affect our relationship with Singapore, and regional stability more generally?

*Answer.* The United States remains committed to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and within the Indo-Pacific Region and we continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people on Taiwan. Singapore likewise sees the maintenance of peace and security across the Taiwan Strait as crucial to the entire region. If confirmed, I will work with Singapore to ensure it is a close partner in support of the rules-based economic and security order in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* China has a long history of economic and political coercion in Singapore. This includes tactics like arresting Singaporean shipping vessels that sail through contested waters, engaging in information campaigns to pressure Singapore to adopt China's nine dash line, conducting cyberattacks against Singapore's health system,

and make Singaporean business in China difficult when Singapore speaks publicly about foreign policy views not consistent with the CCP.

- What are your concerns with Chinese political influence in Singapore? Where are the greatest inroads for China in Singapore?

Answer. Singapore has extensive economic ties to the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the PRC is Singapore's top trade partner in goods. As a small nation dependent on trade, Singapore shares our concern in some instances about economic coercion by the PRC. If confirmed, I will continue to make the case with Singapore and other countries in the region to uphold high standards and adhere to global rules and norms for trade. I will continue to advocate for U.S. businesses and ensure that the United States remains competitive in trade with Singapore and in the region.

*Question.* How should the U.S. respond or support allies and partners when they face political and economic coercion from China?

Answer. The United States must continue to push back on corrupt or coercive political and economic practices that damage our interests and those of our partners. The PRC has a history of manipulating its economic power to advance its strategic and political objectives by intimidating other countries, territories, and companies. If confirmed, I will support efforts to build resilience in the face of such coercion and—where necessary—coordinate a collective response with partners and allies. Also, if confirmed, I will work to reestablish the United States as a regional diplomatic leader, and will strongly support U.S. efforts to rally partners around international law.

*Question.* What will you emphasize to Singapore when it comes to the South China Sea?

Answer. The PRC's increased assertiveness in the South China Sea presents a major challenge for all countries' security. Both the United States and Singapore have a national interest in the maintenance of peace and stability, respect for international law, and unimpeded lawful commerce in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I will encourage Singapore to continue to be a leading advocate in ASEAN for a meaningful Code of Conduct between ASEAN and China in the South China Sea that reinforces international law and does not seek to undermine the rights of claimants or third-party states.

*Question.* Where can the U.S. be more active in economic engagement in ASEAN member nations? Where can the U.S. cooperate with Singapore on this activity?

Answer. ASEAN's outlook on the Indo-Pacific closely aligns with our own. ASEAN is looking to increase U.S. support for trade and economic development to help its member states recover from COVID-19. During Vice President Harris's visit, she announced plans to join Singapore in expanding mutual efforts to promote smart, sustainable cities through the ASEAN Smart Cities Network and the U.S.-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership. This partnership will promote business-to-business cooperation and is a key component of demonstrating our commitment to ASEAN and its role at the heart of the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will continue to support the United States' positive involvement in economic engagement through initiatives such as USAID's IGNITE program, which focuses on inclusive growth in ASEAN through innovation, trade, and e-commerce.

*Question.* Do you believe the United States should have a robust trade agenda in the Indo-Pacific?

Answer. Trade policy in the Indo-Pacific is a key part of the Biden-Harris administration's effort to Build Back Better. The administration's approach to trade is focused on supporting American working families, defending our values, and protecting the long-term prosperity and security of the United States. As President Biden has said, the United States is focused on making investments in U.S. workers and U.S. competitiveness before he signs new trade agreements, including in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* The VP launched a U.S.-Singapore Partnership for Growth and Innovation during her trip to the region in August. What do you think this partnership should look like, and what concrete steps can the U.S. take to deepen trade with Singapore?

Answer. The goal of the U.S.-Singapore "Partnership for Growth and Innovation" is to strengthen U.S.-Singapore trade and investment collaboration. It establishes a vehicle for deepening economic integration through government and private sector collaboration under four pillars: digital economy, energy and environmental technologies, advanced manufacturing, and healthcare. If confirmed, I will work with

U.S. businesses and the Singaporean government to strengthen our trade and investment relations and take steps to promote inclusive economic growth, innovation and entrepreneurship, and shared prosperity in the United States and Singapore and throughout the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* What are the opportunities for more technology cooperation with Singapore? Where do we still face major obstacles?

*Answer.* Under the “Partnership for Growth and Innovation,” the United States is committed to cooperating with Singapore in areas such as financial technology, cybersecurity, clean energy and climate change solutions, medical technologies, and artificial intelligence, and to discuss immediate and long-term challenges that face both of our economies, such as supply chain resilience. The United States and Singapore are also working together to promote smart, sustainable cities through the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) by promoting green building standards and co-funding a professional exchange program to share expertise with ASCN officials on water, energy, transportation, cybersecurity, and new technologies.

*Question.* How will you encourage Singapore to address the crisis in Burma? And ASEAN more broadly?

*Answer.* The United States values Singapore’s role as one of the founding members of ASEAN, and its advocacy for ASEAN centrality and unity. If confirmed, I will urge Singapore and other ASEAN members to hold the Burmese regime accountable to the Five-Point Consensus and urge the military to immediately cease the violence, release all those unjustly detained, and restore Burma’s path to inclusive democracy.

*Question.* The State Department has been asking Singapore to assess the Burmese military’s financial and other ties to Singapore. Burmese military officials have money in Singapore. They and their families travel there for education, medical treatment, business, and recreation. Do you commit to pressing Singapore on this issue?

*Answer.* The United States encourages all international partners, including Singapore, to review their financial ties to the Burmese military regime and ensure they are not directly or indirectly supporting the regime’s ability to rule through fear and violence. If confirmed, I will continue to urge all countries to review their economic leverage and ties to Burma to ensure they benefit only the people of Burma and not the military regime. I look forward to working with Singapore to achieve these goals.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JONATHAN ERIC KAPLAN BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* If confirmed as Ambassador, will you commit to working with Singapore to put pressure on ASEAN to hold the military junta in Burma accountable for the coup and the violence that has ensued.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will urge Singapore and other ASEAN members to hold the Burmese regime accountable to the Five-Point Consensus and urge the military to immediately cease the violence, release all those unjustly detained, and restore Burma’s path to inclusive democracy. If confirmed, I will continue to urge all countries to review their economic leverage and ties to Burma to ensure they benefit only the people of Burma and not the military regime.

*Question.* How can the United States and Singapore work together to assist other Southeast Asian nations in efforts to equitably transition to clean energy?

*Answer.* During Vice President Harris’ visit to Singapore in August 2021, the United States and Singapore launched a U.S.-Singapore Climate Partnership, through which both countries intend to work together to develop high-quality climate standards and increase regional ambition on sustainable finance, collaborate on financial sector climate and environmental risk management, support regional clean energy infrastructure development, improve sustainability of ports and shipping, and mobilize climate capital for climate mitigation and adaptation. The United States and Singapore can work together through this and other initiatives to prioritize this transition to clean energy to other counties in Southeast Asia.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JONATHAN ERIC KAPLAN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The Strait of Malacca is the second busiest naval route in the world, and Singapore sits at the most strategic point within the strait. It would be considered by any navy the gateway to the South China Sea and therefore it is important that this area be open to international shipping and freedom of navigation. What is your assessment of Singapore's commitment to freedom of navigation in the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea?

*Answer.* Singapore has a steadfast commitment to freedom of navigation in the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea. The United States and Singapore see eye-to-eye on the importance of compliance with the international law of the sea, including freedoms of navigation, overflight, and other lawful uses of the sea, and on the resolution of disputes in accordance with international law.

*Question.* How has Beijing tried to influence or bully Singapore to accept Chinese claims on the South China Sea?

*Answer.* The People's Republic of China (PRC) has tried to coerce Singapore and other countries within the region to accept its claims in the South China Sea. Singapore is a strong supporter of international law and speaks broadly in support of the rules-based order. Singapore largely focuses its diplomatic efforts on buttressing ASEAN unity while pushing for quick progress in negotiations on a Code of Conduct between ASEAN and the PRC. While Singapore is not a claimant country in South China Sea territorial disputes, it regularly emphasizes the need for freedom of the seas and insists on the resolution of disputes in accordance with international law.

---

1722

CORRESPONDENCE SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE SUPPORTING  
RAHM EMANUEL'S NOMINATION TO BE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN



TOM SCHIEFFER

October 1, 2021

Senator Robert Menendez  
Senator James E. Risch  
United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

Dear Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Risch,

Please allow me to add my name to the many who are supporting President Biden's nomination of Rahm Emanuel to be the United States Ambassador to Japan.

As a Democrat who served in a Republican Administration and was twice unanimously confirmed by the Foreign Relations Committee first as Ambassador to Australia when Democrats were in the majority and second to Japan when Republicans were in the majority, I believe Rahm Emanuel understands the importance of keeping American foreign policy above politics.

North East Asia can be a dangerous place. It is absolutely critical to the future security and economic well-being of the United States. The rise of China, the Korean peninsula and the Taiwan Strait all present challenges that must be managed with a sober, reasoned diplomacy. Rahm Emanuel has the capacity to play a central role in keeping the peace in that part of the world.

Rahm Emanuel is also uniquely qualified to become our Ambassador to Japan. He understands that the US-Japan Alliance is the keystone to America's foreign policy in the Pacific and the stability of Asia. His experience as a leader in Congress and White House Chief of Staff will be invaluable to his success. He will know how to get things done in Washington for the Alliance and our country.

It is with great confidence that I believe Rahm Emanuel's intellect, knowledge and work ethic will make him a successful advocate for America in Japan as our nation's Ambassador. My hope is that the Senate will soon confirm him so that he can begin his vital work for our country. Thank you for your consideration.

With respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Schieffer".

Tom Schieffer

Senator Bob Menendez  
Chair  
United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

October 11, 2021

Dear Senator Menendez,

I am writing to provide a statement of support for the appointment of former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel to be United States Ambassador to Japan. Mayor Emanuel is an outstanding choice for United States Ambassador to Japan for many reasons. I have had the opportunity to work with him in a wide variety of settings over the course of a decade: as President and CEO of the Chicago Urban League, where I served for 5 years following a five year term on the board of the National Urban League; as a member of the Chicago Board of Education; as member of the Chicago Police Board; as Deputy Mayor and Chief Neighborhood Development Officer and as CEO of World Business Chicago, the city's economic development organization.

I have worked with Mayor Emanuel on the development and implementation of policies and strategies aimed at improving the quality of life and access to opportunity for all Chicagoans and I know from first-hand experience that he is fully aligned with the Biden/Harris administration's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. Let me provide just one example from the many I have observed. When I was CEO of the Chicago Urban League, I had the opportunity to partner with the Emanuel administration on the reconstruction of the Red Line South. At Mayor Emanuel's direction, the Chicago Transit Authority worked with the Urban League to create a model for minority inclusion. We doubled the MWBE contracting requirement on the \$425 Million infrastructure investment, set a new standard for community-based minority hiring, and neighborhoods on the South Side were first in line for modernized mass transit.

Mayor Emanuel also has had substantial prior experience that makes him particularly well suited for this appointment. Again, just one example of many I could give. During my time as President and CEO of World Business Chicago, I travelled with former Mayor Emanuel to Japan on an economic development mission where he signed an economic development agreement between Chicago and Japan, the country's first ever with a city. During that trip former Mayor Emanuel had positive interactions with government, business and civic leaders in Japan and developed relationships that will serve him well as he steps into the role of US Ambassador.

Finally, I have seen Mayor Emanuel effectively work, meet, connect and engage with people from every conceivable background and walk of life. From residents in some of Chicago's most challenged communities, to local, state, national and international government officials, to CEO's of some of our region's and country's largest companies. His ability to listen and identify areas of common ground is a tremendous asset that he will bring to the role.



1724

For these reasons and more, I wholeheartedly endorse Mayor Emanuel's appointment as United States Ambassador to Japan and urge you to confirm him for the role.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea L. Zopp". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrea" and last name "Zopp" clearly distinguishable.

Andrea L. Zopp

October 8, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
Chair  
Foreign Relations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Risch  
Ranking Member  
Foreign Relations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Supporting President Joseph R. Biden's Nomination of Rahm Emanuel for  
United States Ambassador to Japan

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

We write today in support of President Joseph R. Biden's nomination of former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel for Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Japan.

As leaders of the Chicago City Council, having worked alongside Mayor Rahm Emanuel during his eight years of service to the City of Chicago—a city with its own spot on the international stage—we are certain that his service as Ambassador to Japan will provide America with a committed and loyal ally. We have seen firsthand his passion for all people of Chicago and his dedication to public service.

As Mayor, Rahm Emanuel was committed to every community in Chicago—especially those that lacked representation. He created the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF), which leveraged downtown growth to make direct investments in commercial corridors across the city's South, West and Southwest Side neighborhoods—a fund that lifted up entrepreneurs of color, who make up 75 percent of the recipients. He worked to bring the first Whole Foods grocery store to the South Side community of Englewood, eliminating a food desert that deprived families of fresh produce and healthy foods.

Mayor Emanuel supported numerous other projects that provided economic support and employment opportunities to Chicago's South and West Side communities. One such project, the \$9 million Carter G. Woodson Regional Library renovation, not only served as a community hub for South Side residents but is also home to one of the largest collections of African American historical documents in the country. On the West Side in Addams/Merrill Park, he led the development of the Exelon Student Recreation Center. He also spearheaded the creation of The Hatchery, a food incubator that helps Chicago entrepreneurs build and grow their businesses.

Mayor Emanuel's efforts to create a longer school day and school year added up to four more years of valuable class time for Chicago's students. He achieved record investments in Chicago

Public Schools (CPS) and fought for free universal full-day pre-kindergarten and free community college for hardworking CPS graduates.

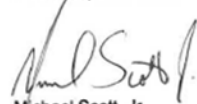
Prior to Mayor Emanuel's election, Chicago's infrastructure suffered from years of neglect. He approached the problem innovatively, saving \$75 million dollars in costs when rebuilding the south branch of the Chicago Transit Authority Red Line and investing those savings into enhancing stations along the line, turning many into places where communities could find inspiration in art and togetherness. He also invested \$35 billion dollars in construction and renovation plans for schools, parks, transit and water/sewer main replacement, creating an estimated 150,000 jobs—many of which were good-paying union jobs.

Mayor Emanuel's decades of public service, as well as his energy and tenacity for tirelessly representing the interests of his constituents, have prepared him well for this important mission on behalf of the United States. There are few nominees more qualified or committed to the President's goal of returning America to the world stage in a position of strength and moral leadership. We urge the Senate to approve his nomination and give our country a dedicated leader who will serve us all in our strategically important ally of Japan.

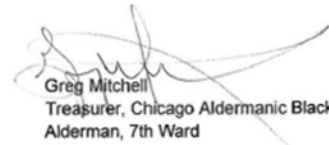
Sincerely,



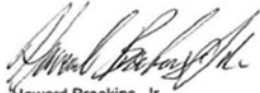
Jason C. Ervin  
Chairman, Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus  
Alderman, 28th Ward



Michael Scott, Jr.  
Secretary, Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus  
Alderman, 24th Ward



Greg Mitchell  
Treasurer, Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus  
Alderman, 7th Ward



Howard Brookins, Jr.  
Former Chairman Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus  
Alderman, 21st Ward



Michelle Harris  
Executive Committee, Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus  
Alderman, 8th Ward



Stephanie Coleman  
Executive Committee, Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus  
Alderman, 16th Ward



Walter Burnett, Jr.  
Alderman, 27th Ward



Emma Mitts  
Alderman, 37th Ward



Anthony Beale  
Alderman, 9th Ward



**INTERNATIONAL  
BROTHERHOOD  
OF ELECTRICAL  
WORKERS.**

900 Seventh Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202.833.7000  
www.ibew.org

LONNIE R. STEPHENSON  
International President

KENNETH W. COOPER  
International  
Secretary-Treasurer

October 12, 2021

**VIA EMAIL**

The Honorable Robert Menendez  
Chairman  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Risch  
Ranking Member  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch:

On behalf of the more than 775,000 active and retired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), I write to express the IBEW's support for the confirmation of Rahm Emanuel to serve as the United States Ambassador to Japan.

In a wide-ranging career spanning government service as well as private industry, Rahm Emanuel has always focused his considerable energy and skills on finding common ground. As mayor of Chicago from 2011 to 2019, his policies supported critical job growth for IBEW members and other skilled workers, resulting in more project labor agreements than any other city in the United States. His instrumental leadership succeeded in bringing new manufacturing jobs to Chicago's underserved communities.

From the helm of one of America's most storied towns to the halls of the West Wing for two presidents, Mayor Emanuel has proven his ability to accommodate unique and sometimes competing perspectives. Indeed, Mayor Emanuel's experience dealing with multiple and oftentimes conflicting parties will serve America's interest well in Japan and Northeast Asia, which are critical for American trade and national security.

On behalf of the IBEW and its members, I ask the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to confirm Mayor Emanuel as U.S. Ambassador to Japan, where he can further our nation's goal of emphasizing common interests and a commitment to freedom, democracy, and a fair economic order for this essential Pacific partnership.

Sincerely yours,

Lonnie R. Stephenson  
International President

LRS:jl



1729

**From:** [Nye, Joseph S.](#)  
**To:** [Ryan, John L.](#)  
**Subject:** Confirmation of Rahm Emanuel  
**Date:** Friday, October 1, 2021 7:28:15 AM

---

Dear Mr. Ryan,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Rahm Emanuel to be ambassador to Japan. I hope you will convey my letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Dear Senators,

I am writing in support of the nomination of Rahm Emanuel to be ambassador to Japan. I regard this as a very strong appointment which will be of great importance for our country.

As Senator (and later Ambassador) Mike Mansfield once said, there is no more important relationship for our country than our alliance with Japan. When I was Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs in the Clinton administration, I repeated the senator's wisdom in our *East Asia Strategy Report*. I also helped to prepare the Clinton-Hashimoto Declaration of 1996 which stated that the US-Japan alliance was the basis for stability in post Cold War Asia. What was true then is more true than ever today as we cope with the rise of Chinese power.

The most important skill of an ambassador is knowledge of the people and politics of our own country, and in this domain, Rahm is unsurpassed. This skill is more important to the relationship than regional expertise. Rahm is a quick study and has already begun his homework in that domain, but no regional expert could ever equal the knowledge he has accumulated through his extensive experience in Washington and Chicago. That is why I regard this as such a distinguished and important appointment. He will be taken very seriously in Tokyo and the United States will be strongly represented.

I have devoted a good deal of my professional career to thinking about the balance of power in Asia and to nurturing the US-Japan alliance. As a frequent visitor to Japan, I am familiar with Japanese views of the United States

1730

and of China. That is why I was so delighted when I learned of President Biden's nomination of Rahm Emanuel, and why I hope you will confirm him. We need him in Tokyo.

Sincerely,

Joseph S. Nye, Jr.  
University Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus  
Harvard Kennedy School of Government  
Cambridge, MA

1731

(312) 454-1340  
FAX (312) 454-1528

MEETS 1st THURSDAY NIGHT OF EACH MONTH

## International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

LOCAL NUMBER 134  
2722 SOUTH DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60616



October 1, 2021

Dear Chairman Menendez,

We write with enthusiastic support of the nomination of Rahm Emanuel as Ambassador to Japan.

As Mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel worked hard every day to bring jobs to Chicago's neighborhoods. His administration's commitment to growth and jobs resulted in Chicago leading the nation in direct foreign investment for seven years in a row.

This hard work and dedication led to critical jobs for our members. During his tenure, Chicago had more project labor agreements than any other city in the United States. The impact can be further felt in the number of new and expanded training facilities that our organization built during this era of growth. We are all proud to say that most of these facilities are located in neighborhoods most in need of investment and jobs.

Just as important, Mayor Emanuel was always an honest broker and trusted partner with us. Even on issues where we may have disagreed, he always gave us a chance and a seat at the table. He took the time to hear our concerns and consider our side of the discussion. He always had an open door when working with us.

We believe that Rahm Emanuel is an excellent choice for Ambassador to Japan and commend President Joe Biden on this choice.

Sincerely

Donald Finn  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary  
IBEW Local 134

<http://www.lu134.org>



1732



---

OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE  
JESSE WHITE • Illinois Secretary of State

---

September 29, 2021

The Honorable Robert Menendez  
Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
528 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez:

I am writing to voice my support for Rahm Emanuel's nomination as ambassador to Japan. I have worked with him and know him to be an effective leader who gets things done.

As the former mayor of Chicago and the former White House Chief of Staff to President Barack Obama, Mayor Emanuel brings a wealth of experience and leadership skills that will allow him to thrive in such a prominent diplomatic role.

In Rahm Emanuel, President Biden has nominated a tested and an adept public servant who will represent the United States with dignity and diplomacy. I wholeheartedly support his nomination.

Thank you for your time, and please accept my best wishes as you continue to serve our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jesse White".

Jesse White  
Illinois Secretary of State

1733

**Pastor Marvin Hunter**

P. O. Box 23344  
Chicago, IL 60623  
(773) 816-4952  
[pastormarvinhunter133@msn.com](mailto:pastormarvinhunter133@msn.com)  
[Walterhunter133@gmail.com](mailto:Walterhunter133@gmail.com)

September 11, 2021

To: THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS.

My name is Reverend Marvin Hunter, Senior Pastor of the Grace Memorial Baptist Church in Chicago Illinois. I'm also the great uncle of Laquan McDonald, a young man who at the age of 17 years old was slain by ex-Chicago Police Officer, Jason Van Dyke.

I am writing this letter in support of Rahm Emanuel, former Mayor of the City of Chicago and current Nominee of President Joe Biden as Ambassador to Japan.

From my pulpit in the North Lawndale neighborhood of Chicago I preach the teachings of the prophets. My parishioners and I hearken back to the words of Amos, who called for "justice to roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." Justice is what I have sought for the murder of my nephew, Laquan McDonald, and a measure of justice is being served as the former Chicago police officer convicted of Laquan's murder sits in prison for his heinous crime.

In addition to justice, my faith is based on redemption and forgiveness and I have always believed in the power of turning misery into meaning. That is why, through an intermediary, I reached out to the former Mayor. I wanted to share with him the depths of the wounds of my family's pain and trauma and discuss police reform and the racial reckoning we are witnessing in America. His response was immediate, open and genuinely engaging. During our many conversations, we listened to each other, we prayed together and I believe we begin the process of healing. There is more to this individual than the caricature that is presented in the public. I felt what is in his heart and I know him to be a decent and honorable man who is willing to listen, eager to learn and show a deep level of compassion.

As Mayor, Rahm Emanuel inherited a deeply flawed system and set of policies as it relates to police misconduct investigations. That system over the decades had become twisted in a way that kept an incidence buried. For decades, this was the case in Chicago and cities all across the country and in many ways exists today, certainly his administration could have acted more quickly to address these issues and rebuild trust in our communities. He has acknowledged as much and more in public as well as in our private conversations.

I stand in solidarity with those in the reform movement who carry the torch for Laquan's memory, and the blessed memories of George Floyd, Ahmad Aubrey, Brianna Taylor, and countless other black lives that have been taken too soon by those who were sworn to serve and protect them. However, I draw the line when it is clear that certain elected officials are using the sacred memory of my nephew to settle political scores or use his name as a weapon to fight intra-party battles. Most of the "outrage" and the perpetuation of conspiracy theories comes from elected officials who have never contacted my family to offer even the simplest condolences or learn about the events surrounding this tragic incident.

I realize that my position on this nomination might come as a surprise to some. I may even be attacked for speaking up. However, I am a man of faith. I believe in what the scripture says about righteous judgment and looking into a person's heart. I have taken the time to get to know Rahm Emanuel. We have listened to each other, truly heard each other. I understand the character of the man and that is why I support this nomination.  
I thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Rev. M. G. Hunter.

  
Great Uncle of Laquan McDonald.



October 21, 2021

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
Chair  
Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate  
Washington D.C.  
20510

Chairman Menendez:

The murder of teenager Laquan McDonald by a Chicago Police Officer in October 2014 continues to have raw immediacy for those who have borne the brunt of generations of the misuse of police authority in Chicago and the United States. The shooting and its aftermath prompted a long past due local and national reckoning respecting the overwhelmingly disproportionate, and in too many contexts, targeted use of officially sanctioned force against Black and brown people. That reckoning has come this time with a consciousness raising about the centrality of officially sanctioned use of force as dating to the formative stages of our country and the original sin of slavery, which was institutionalized in the Founder's Constitution, and whose legacy resides in institutionalized racism and implicit bias in our society today, with continuing tragic consequence reflected in the wrongful taking of the lives of Black and brown Americans by police officers in this nation. One aspect of the reckoning following the release of the video of Laquan McDonald's murder is that our history has fostered a profound mistrust not only of police, but of elected officials, and particularly the elected leaders of our cities under whose stewardship police departments operate.

The Senate confirmation process for the nomination of former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel to be U.S. Ambassador to Japan has resurrected questions that are still actively debated in Chicago regarding his responsibility for the state of the Chicago Police Department during his tenure as Mayor, and most significantly, whether he engaged in a "cover-up" of the shooting by keeping the police body-worn camera videos from the public. As a matter of fact, and given the state of the public record, the questions are appropriate. However, as a matter of premise and accusation by those inveighing against his nomination because of a surmised role in a suspected "cover-up," they are not fair, because they are not grounded in fact, because the facts simply do not exist. I know. I was the Inspector General for the City of Chicago leading the office which investigated the City's handling of the aftermath of the McDonald murder. Inspectors General have as one of their core charges,

the responsibility of investigating and reporting out findings of misconduct, whether of a criminal or administrative nature. What they do not, in general practice, do is report out what they do not find. As a result, the context of existing public record should be understood as much for its negative space, as it is for its affirmatively declared space. I write to address, as a matter of fact, and for the record, the negative space within which factually unsubstantiated surmise, suspicion and narrative has been forged.

In the immediate aftermath of the release of the McDonald videos, then-Mayor Emanuel did three things of particular note. First, he formed and charged the Chicago Police Accountability Task Force (PATF) to independently conduct a full inquiry into and publicly report out its findings on the practices and culture of the Chicago Police Department and their implications in the communities it serves, foremost the impact on Black and brown communities. Which is precisely what the PATF did, without constraint or filter, and as led, at Emanuel's request, by one of his more trenchant critics -- who would eventually succeed him as Mayor. The PATF's findings and recommendations were reported out nationally and to much acclaim for their candor in pulling back the cover on the lived experience of those who have directly and indirectly, over generations, experienced the consequences of aggressive and oppressive historical policing practice and culture. The work of the Emanuel-appointed and charged Task Force was independent and unconstrained. Then-Mayor Emanuel, to his eventual discomfort, asked that the truth be found and reported, with the chips to fall where they may. I know this as affirmative fact, as I too -- an Inspector General with whom he was, in the ordinary course of business, at occasional, and respectful, if at times vociferous and heated odds over findings and recommendations of my office's independently conducted investigations and audits -- was a member of the PATF, along with notable others that included, in advisory capacity, former head of the United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Section and ex-Massachusetts Governor, and Chicago native Deval Patrick. The work of the PATF was conducted separately but coordinately to the pattern and practice investigation of the Civil Rights Section of the United States Department of Justice, whose findings were consistent with and as it related specifically to use of force, complementary to and a further expansion of those of the PATF.

Second, he declared, decried and demanded an end to something few if any elected leaders in the United States had previously acknowledged -- the operation of a so-called "code of silence in the Chicago Police Department (and many law enforcement agencies) in which by culture and practice, often as much through acquiescent inaction as action, sworn personnel close ranks and protect their colleagues who they know to have engaged in misconduct. While some were skeptical of Mayor Emanuel's naming of that pernicious acculturated phenomenon as wrought only of political crisis, what was little acknowledged was that in

doing so, he exposed the City to litigative complication (and, with it, potential financial consequence). Stated another way, he chose a principled over a transactional path. I know. As a former federal prosecutor and as Inspector General with investigative and program audit oversight of the Chicago Police Department, I know from experience the effect the acknowledgement of this pernicious cultural practice has on the litigation of Section 1983 and Monell civil rights claims against a city and its employees and officials.

Third, and most critical to the question of the moment, Mayor Emanuel encouraged and supported a thoroughgoing independent investigation of the conduct of CPD, its sworn personnel and, to the extent indicated, other City officials, respecting the handling of the aftermath of the McDonald shooting by the Office of Inspector General. That investigation, which I led, proceeded without interference, and yielded findings and recommendations of the firing of 11 Chicago police officers and lesser sanctions for 6 others. That investigation and outcome, in addition to the unprecedented successful prosecution and conviction of the shooter, former Officer Jason Van Dyke, constitutes one of the largest scandals in the scandal-ridden history of CPD, which is now going through the wrenching, long-term process of reform under the terms of a federal consent decree. In all of these respects, Mayor Emanuel was fully supportive of a comprehensive inquiry resulting in full accountability, again, letting the chips fall where the evidence indicated. In fact, the investigation revealed the subtle tacit ways in which a “code of silence” operates.

To my earlier point about the need to address the negative space, my office’s comprehensive investigation did not reveal any evidence that would support the lingering surmises and accusations of a “cover-up” orchestrated out of City Hall. None. Decisions made about the non- or delayed- disclosure of the body-worn camera videos at that time were in fact the longstanding policy and practice of the City of Chicago and its Law Department. That policy and practice as it existed then may fairly be questioned, and, indeed, was the subject of a near unprecedented video release policy implemented in February 2016 by Mayor Emanuel, acting immediately in response to the first-issued recommendation of the PATF. That said, there is a complete absence of factual basis to support the claim that Mayor Emanuel was involved directly or indirectly in a “cover-up” of the McDonald shooting videos.

I offer this statement strictly to assure a complete and accurate factual record for the Committee on a very important question that remains open because it resides as a matter of record to this point, in negative, i.e., undeclared, space. The conjecture drawn from that negative space is not supported by any evidence and, as such, may best be understood as a symptom of the very mistrust the public has of police, policing and government that are at

1737

the core of so many of our present societal ills and challenges. I therefore hope my offering clarifies the factual public record and as such is of service to the Committee in these important deliberations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line that tapers to the right.

Joseph M. Ferguson  
Inspector General (2009-2021)  
City of Chicago



## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021 (p.m.)

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:05 p.m., via video-conference, Hon. Chris Van Hollen, presiding.

Present: Senators Van Hollen [presiding], Rounds, and Hagerty.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND

Senator VAN HOLLEN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We apologize to all involved that we are a little late in starting. We have a vote going on in the floor of the United States Senate. I just voted and we may have another one during the course of this hearing and we will just have to juggle things to keep things going.

I want to thank my colleague in this hearing, my Republican colleague, Senator Rounds. We also serve together as the chairman and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on African Global Health Policy, and I want to thank him for his leadership.

I am going to welcome all seven of our nominees here. We have two panels. The first panel will include Ambassador Patricia Mahoney to be Ambassador to the Central African Republic; Ambassador Peter Vrooman, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique; Mr. Peter Haas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Bangladesh; and Ms. Julie Chung, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Sri Lanka.

Our second panel will consist of Mr. Brian Shukan, to be our Ambassador to the Republic of Benin; and Ms. Elizabeth Fitzsimmons to be Ambassador to the Togolese Republic; and Ambassador David Gilmour, to be our Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations. I have had the chance to meet with some of you in the past, to connect with some of you via Zoom, and to review the backgrounds of everybody here. And I just want to thank all of you for your service to the United States, as Foreign Service officers.

As some of you may know, I come from a Foreign Service family and I am really grateful to you and your families for serving our country. For those of you who have been ambassadors, you know this, and for all of you who have already served in the Foreign Service, you know that serving as an ambassador overseas as the representative of the President of the United States is a very im-



portant responsibility and it will be your task to coordinate all U.S. policy and be the go-between, between the United States Government and the governments in the countries where you will be assigned, assuming all are confirmed.

So, I just want to thank all of you. You have the responsibility of bringing together all the sort of tools of American diplomacy and influence, from the military to developmental tools, and, of course, diplomatic tools, and others, to improve, strengthen our relations with the countries in which you will represent the United States, to make clear to those countries, U.S. interests, and importantly, as President Biden has really worked to emphasize, support the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.

That is, of course, a challenge around the world, especially as many of our adversaries continue to export their models of authoritarianism, using all the tools at their disposal. So, we are at a challenging moment, but I know all of you are up to the challenge.

And so, I am pleased to see Mike. Senator Rounds, I mentioned our partnership earlier. It is great to see you. Thank you for your leadership on a range of foreign policy issues.

And with that, let me turn it over to my colleague, Senator Rounds.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROUNDS,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I most certainly appreciate that, and I do appreciate the working relationship that we have. I know we voted at exactly the same time; it just took me a little longer to get back to my office, because I have got further to go.

But, first of all, thank you, and good afternoon to all of you. As career diplomats, I agree with Senator Van Hollen that much of your lives and those of your families have been spent far from home. You have made great sacrifices in the service to your country.

Thank you and your families for your lifetimes of service and your work, which is critical in maintaining and advancing America's influence throughout the world.

Ambassador Mahoney, thank you for your service as a U.S. Ambassador to Benin and for your eagerness to continue to serve in the Central African Republic. CAR remains beset by violence and ongoing humanitarian crisis. Russia's malign influence on the country poses additional concerns. We need to take a hard look at our policy toward CAR and how we can be proactively engaged. So, you have your work cut out for you.

Now, the U.S. Embassy in the Central African Republic is one of the most difficult environments in which to live and work in this entire world. I appreciate your willingness to serve there.

Ambassador Vrooman, thank you for your service as an Ambassador to Rwanda and your long history of service in Africa and the Middle East. I am happy to see an experienced ambassador like you as a nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique.

The violent extremist insurgency in the northern province of Cabo Delgado has threatened and delayed the construction of a

large-scale, onshore, L & G processing complex. The threats posed by Mozambique's northern insurgency have prompted deployments of military assistance forces from other African countries and security cooperation and military training from the U.S. and European Governments.

I look forward to hearing how you plan to further the U.S.-Mozambique relationship in the face of these significant challenges.

Mr. Haas, Bangladesh like many places, is facing the rise of Islamist militancy, a relatively poor nation with 160 million people living in a land area the size of Iowa. It is one of the most densely populated countries on Earth; nevertheless, Bangladesh has opened its borders to nearly one million Rohingya, fleeing persecution in neighboring Burma, and is working with the international community to support the humanitarian response.

Additionally, ties between Bangladesh and China have recently, significantly improved. In short, if confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, you will head to a post at a time when Bangladesh is of increasing bilateral and global importance.

Ms. Chung, bilateral relations between the United States and Sri Lanka are facing critical challenges. As Acting Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere Affairs, you helped focus our Western Hemisphere efforts on countering maligned Chinese influence in the region. This will be useful in Colombo.

Attempts to renegotiate a Status of Forces Agreement faced unexpected opposition, while the Millennium Challenge Corporation discontinued a \$480 million compact, aimed at reducing poverty after a Sri Lankan special committee recommended its rejection. Some say that pressuring Colombo on human rights could push it closer to China, which is partnering on a number of big-ticket infrastructure projects in the country.

I am delighted to meet you all today and I look forward to your comments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Rounds.

And in my earlier comments, I indicated the countries to which each of you has been nominated as our ambassador, now I am going to provide a little bit more background for each of you, and I think all of our colleagues, well, should be impressed with the depth of your experience and expertise.

Beginning with Ambassador Patricia Mahoney, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, who currently serves as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, previously, she served as Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary in the State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and as Office Director in the Office of Mainland Southeast Asia.

Her previous experience also includes posts as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Uganda, Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy in Nepal, and Director for South Asia at the National Security Council.

Ambassador Mahoney is the recipient of multiple State Department awards and she earned her ab cum laude from Harvard College; her MA from the University of Hawaii; and her MS from the National War College. Welcome.

Ambassador Peter Vrooman, Peter Vrooman is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and has been Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda since 2018. He previously served as Charge d'Affaires and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia. He has a former Director for Iraq on the National Security Council staff and was Deputy Political Counselor at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York.

Ambassador Vrooman has also served as the spokesperson at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, as a senior advisor for Northern Iraq at our embassy in Baghdad, and as Deputy Political Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Israel.

He is the recipient of 20 State Department awards and has earned his ab from Harvard College and his MS from the National Defense University's Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Welcome to you.

Mr. Peter Haas is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as both, Acting Assistant Secretary of State and principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs.

Mr. Haas has previously served as a senior advisor and Deputy to Assistant Secretary for Trade Policy and negotiations for the State Department.

Over his career, he has served in positions across five geographic bureaus at the State Department, including Consul General at the Consul General, at U.S. Consulate in Mumbai. He is the recipient of multiple State Department performance awards, including the James Clement Dunn Award for Excellence and the Cordell Hull Award for Economic Achievement by Senior Officers.

Mr. Haas received his BA from Illinois Wesleyan University and holds advanced degrees from the London School of Economics, where he studied as a Marshall Scholar. Welcome to you.

Ms. Julie Chung is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and most recently served as the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at the State Department. She has held positions in both, Baghdad and Bogota, and her other previous assignments include positions as the Director and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Japan in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs; as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia; and Economic Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Thailand.

Ms. Chung is a Pickering Fellow and has received numerous State Department awards, including the Secretary's Distinguished Honor Award.

She earned her BA from the University of California, San Diego, and her MA from Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs.

And on a note of personal privilege, I mentioned I was a member of a Foreign Service family. The last overseas post my father held was Ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and so I did tell Ms. Chung when I had to chance to talk to her, how much I really enjoyed getting to know the people of Sri Lanka; it is a wonderful post, as are the others.

And I am grateful to her and all of you for your service. So, with that, let me turn it over. We are going to go in the order that I introduced all of you and begin with Ambassador Mahoney.

**STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICIA MAHONEY OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

Ambassador MAHONEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee.

I feel privileged and grateful to appear before you today. I thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Central African Republic.

During my time serving in the Department of State, I have worked to advance the United States' diplomatic and policy objectives as deputy chief of mission for our embassies in Uganda and Nepal, Director of South Asia for the National Security Council, and currently as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin. Throughout the course of my career, I have felt honored to serve the American people and to represent our nation and its democratic values.

I also appreciate the tremendous responsibility that embassy leadership has to safeguard the safety and welfare of American citizens and embassy staff abroad. I recognize that, if confirmed, I will be assuming leadership of an embassy in a country in which the United States has suspended operations three times and carried out numerous evacuations. If confirmed, my focus will remain on the well-being and security of our citizens and our embassy staff in the Central African Republic.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the Central African Republic is a fragile country still scarred by its horrific civil war in 2013 and still battling the triple menaces of extreme poverty, armed violence, and instability. More than a quarter of the country's population has been displaced over the past decade and more than half of the country relies on humanitarian assistance for their health and basic needs.

Additionally, inter- and intra-communal violence continues over transhumance issues and control of natural resources, deepening mistrust between communities. The immediate neighborhood just outside its borders consists of six African nations all working through varying degrees of insecurity and governance challenges.

Of profound concern is the fact that we have seen the deleterious impact of Russian-supported mercenaries from the Wagner Group on the safety and security of many of the peoples in the country, which further erodes prospects for regional security and stability.

President Touadera has critical choices to make in the near term regarding with whom he chooses to partner. This choice will affect the United States' and allies' ability to stand with his government.

At this juncture, our continued engagement in concert with allies and like-minded partners is vital to ensure that President Touadera makes the right choice.

If confirmed, I will seek to continue the leadership that our current Ambassador Tamlyn has demonstrated, to show us a good-faith and reliable friend to the people of the Central African Republic that promotes reconciliation, good governance, and a reinvigorated 2019 Peace Agreement as the best path forward.

If confirmed, I will do my utmost to represent that best choice that we offer, both for the good of the people of the Central African Republic, but also for our own humanitarian and strategic interests in the region as well. I think it is important we remain engaged in the Central African Republic to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to its at-risk population, to bolster efforts toward an inclusive and legitimate national dialogue, to encourage fidelity to the 2019 Peace Agreement, to reinforce peace-building and conflict mitigation efforts, and to continue to support, as we have since 2014, the vital role played by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission, known as MINUSCA, one of the largest and most challenging U.N. peacekeeping missions in the world.

If confirmed, I will work with President Touadera, the Government of the Central African Republic, and our partners to strengthen democratic institutions, advance the rule of law, improve access to justice, enable effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, and increase transparency in the mining sector.

I will strive to promote respect for human rights, develop responsible security alternatives to malign Russian-supported mercenaries, urge further progress on combatting human trafficking, and encourage accountability at all levels of the Government. My goal is to work with the Central African Republic Government and our partners to help the country begin the transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee, I recognize that, if confirmed, I will be assuming leadership of an embassy in a country that is contending with an array of threats to its integrity, its security, and its ability to satisfy even the most basic needs of its population. The task is enormous, the challenges complex and exigent, and the need immense.

I am grateful for your advice and counsel in this undertaking. I want to reiterate my thanks for giving me the opportunity to provide this testimony and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.[The prepared statement of Ambassador Mahoney follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICIA MAHONEY

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I feel privileged and grateful to appear before you today. I thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee for Ambassador to the Central African Republic.

During my time serving in the Department of State, I have worked to advance the United States' diplomatic and policy objectives as deputy chief of mission for our embassies in Uganda and Nepal, director of South Asia for the National Security Council, and currently as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Benin. Throughout the course of my career, I have felt honored to serve the American people and to represent our nation and its democratic values.

I also appreciate the tremendous responsibility that Embassy leadership has to safeguard the safety and welfare of American citizens and Embassy staff abroad. I recognize that, if confirmed, I will be assuming leadership of an embassy in a country in which the United States has suspended operations three times and car-

ried out numerous evacuations. If confirmed, my focus will remain on the wellbeing and security of our citizens and our embassy staff in the Central African Republic.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the Central African Republic is a fragile country still scarred by its horrific civil war in 2013 and still battling the triple menaces of extreme poverty, armed violence, and instability. More than a quarter of the country's population has been displaced over the past decade and more than half of the country relies on humanitarian assistance for their health and basic needs. Additionally, inter- and intra-communal violence continues over transhumance issues and control of natural resources, deepening mistrust between communities. The immediate neighborhood just outside its borders consists of six African nations all working through varying degrees of insecurity and governance challenges.

Of profound concern is the fact that since December, we have seen the deleterious impact of Russian-supported mercenaries from the Wagner Group on the safety and security of many of the country's people, which further erodes prospects for regional stability. President Touadera has critical choices to make in the near term regarding with whom he chooses to partner. This choice will affect the United States'—and allies'—ability to stand with his government.

At this juncture, our continued engagement—in concert with allies and like-minded partners—is vital to ensure that President Touadera makes the right choice. If confirmed, I will seek to continue the leadership that our current Ambassador Lucy Tamlyn has demonstrated to show ourselves a good-faith and reliable friend to the people of the Central African Republic that promotes reconciliation, good governance, and a reinvigorated 2019 Peace Agreement as the best path forward. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to represent that best choice we offer, both for the good of the people of the Central African Republic but also for our own humanitarian and strategic interests in the region as well. I think it is important we remain engaged in the Central African Republic to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to its at-risk population, to bolster efforts toward an inclusive and legitimate national dialogue, to encourage fidelity to the 2019 Peace Agreement, to reinforce peacebuilding and conflict mitigation efforts, and to continue to support, as we have since 2014, the vital role played by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA), one of the largest and most challenging U.N. peacekeeping missions in the world.

If confirmed, I will work with President Touadéra, the CAR Government, and our partners to strengthen democratic institutions, advance the rule of law, improve access to justice, enable effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, and increase transparency in the mining sector. Further, I will strive to promote respect for human rights, develop responsible security alternatives to malign Russian-supported mercenaries, urge further progress on combatting human trafficking, and encourage accountability at all levels of the Government. My goal is to work with the Central African Republic Government and our partners to help the country begin the transition from lifesaving humanitarian assistance to sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I recognize that, if confirmed, I will be assuming leadership of an embassy in a country that is contending with an array of threats to its integrity, its security, and its ability to satisfy even the most basic needs of its population. The task is enormous; the challenges complex and exigent; and the need immense. I am grateful for your advice and counsel in this undertaking, I want to reiterate my thanks for giving me the opportunity to provide this testimony, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Ambassador Mahoney.

Next, we will turn to Ambassador Vrooman.

Mr. Ambassador?

**STATEMENT OF HON. PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**

Ambassador VROOMAN. Chairman Van Hollen, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, it is a great privilege and honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the next Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique.

I thank the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me and I am also grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration. I want to recognize my wife, Johnette Iris, for her partnership and passion, and for the resilience and curiosity of my children, Zarah and Hendrick, who are in school in Rwanda this week, and my mother, Sally, for coming to visit, teaching English, and mentoring students wherever the Foreign Service leads me. Finally, I would like to thank my extended family and friends who always lay out their welcome mats when I and we are in the United States.

Thirty years ago, I began my Foreign Service career on the Indian Ocean side of Africa in Djibouti, and I am now the Chief of Mission in Rwanda. I have served in Somalia and Ethiopia, as well, and believe that my experience on the continent has provided me with a unique understanding of some of the challenges facing Mozambique, including those related to the pandemic, climate change, terrorism, and post-conflict stabilization.

If confirmed, I will further strengthen ties between the United States and Mozambique by seizing opportunities to combat infectious diseases, promote global health security, sustain wildlife and maritime conservation efforts, and deepen bilateral ties that foster job creation in both our countries. I also remain committed to promoting respect for human rights and advocating for the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout our policies and programs.

Mozambique remains a strategic and important partner on the African continent. The Government of Mozambique, together with regional forces and allies, are fighting ISIS-Mozambique, which has caused violence that has claimed thousands of casualties and internally displaced more than 700,000 people in the north since 2017. This region is home to massive natural gas reserves that could lead to a once-in-a-generation economic transformation for the country and the continent, provided there is responsible public financial management, community involvement in local decision-making, and transparency in the development of a sovereign wealth fund that allows revenue from natural resources to benefit all Mozambicans.

If confirmed, I will continue our holistic approach to countering violent extremism and terrorism. The United States has committed to support the Mozambican Government in four ways: providing security assistance; strategic communication; socio-economic and humanitarian assistance; and diplomatic engagement.

And together, we are rebuilding vocational schools, promoting dialogue and exchanges with emerging leaders, and marginalized communities, and providing specialized counterterrorism training.

If confirmed, I will partner diligently with the Mozambican Government and its people to address the underlying drivers of extremism and terrorism by protecting the civilian population, addressing their development requirements, and upholding the core values of human rights, good governance, and democratic participation.

Mozambique also confronts the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has strained its health care system and disrupted economic growth. Significantly, the U.S. health partnership combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria helped Mozambique to respond quickly and effectively to COVID-19. We join

international partners not only to end the pandemic, but to build back better for global health security through the more than \$50 million in COVID assistance to Mozambique, including more than 600,000 U.S.-provided vaccines.

Finally, if confirmed, I will dedicate myself to building on the extraordinary progress that Ambassador Hearne and the U.S. Embassy have made in deepening our bilateral relations and supporting Mozambique's efforts to provide for the welfare of its citizens. It would be a tremendous honor to serve as Chief of Mission in Maputo, working at the new chancery that overlooks the same Indian Ocean where I began my Foreign Service career three decades ago.

Our embassy will be a forum for clear-eyed discussions that contribute to concrete actions that advance our shared interests in democracy, security, prosperity, and friendships.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be honored to respond to any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Vrooman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, It is a great privilege and honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the next Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. I thank the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. I am also grateful for this distinguished committee's consideration. I want to recognize my wife, Johnette Iris, for her partnership and passion, and for the resilience and curiosity of my children, Zarah and Hendrick, who are at school in Rwanda this week. And my mother, Sally, for coming to visit, teaching English, and mentoring students wherever the Foreign Service leads me. Finally, I would like to thank my extended family and friends who always lay out their welcome mats when we are in the United States.

Thirty years ago, I began my Foreign Service career on the Indian Ocean side of Africa in Djibouti, and I am now the Chief of Mission in Rwanda. I have served in Somalia and Ethiopia as well and believe that my experience on the continent has provided me with a unique understanding of some of the challenges facing Mozambique, including those related to the pandemic, climate change, terrorism, and post-conflict stabilization. If confirmed, I will further strengthen ties between the United States and Mozambique—by seizing opportunities to combat infectious diseases and promote global health security, sustain wildlife and maritime conservation efforts, and deepen bilateral business ties that foster job creation in both countries. I also remain committed to promoting respect for human rights and advocating for the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout our policies and programs.

Mozambique remains a strategic and important partner on the African continent. The Government of Mozambique together with regional forces and allies are fighting ISIS-Mozambique, which has caused violence that has claimed thousands of casualties and internally displaced more than 700,000 people in the north since 2017. This region is home to massive natural gas reserves that could lead to a once-in-a-generation economic transformation for the country, provided there is responsible public financial management, community involvement in local decision-making, and transparency in the development of a sovereign wealth fund that allows revenue from natural resources to benefit all Mozambicans.

If confirmed, I will continue our holistic approach to countering terrorism and violent extremism. The United States has committed to support the Mozambican Government in four ways: 1) security assistance, 2) strategic communications, 3) socio-economic and humanitarian assistance, and 4) diplomatic engagement. Together, we are rebuilding vocational schools, promoting dialogue and exchanges with emerging leaders and marginalized communities, and providing specialized counterterrorism training. If confirmed, I will partner diligently with the Mozambican Government and its people to address the underlying drivers of extremism and terrorism by protecting the civilian population, addressing their development requirements, and upholding the core values of human rights, good governance, and democratic participation.



Mozambique also confronts the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has strained its health care system and disrupted economic growth. Significantly, the U.S. health partnership combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria helped Mozambique to respond quickly and effectively to COVID-19. We join international partners not only to end the pandemic, but to build back better for global health security through the more than \$55 million in COVID-19 assistance to Mozambique, including almost 640,000 U.S.-provided vaccines.

Finally, if confirmed, I will dedicate myself to building on the extraordinary progress that Ambassador Hearne and the U.S. Embassy have made in deepening our bilateral relations and supporting Mozambique's efforts to provide for the welfare of its citizens. It would be a tremendous honor to serve as Chief of Mission in Maputo, working at the new chancery that overlooks the same Indian Ocean where I began my Foreign Service career three decades ago. Our embassy will be a forum for clear-eyed discussions that contribute to concrete actions that advance our shared interests in democracy, security, prosperity, and friendship.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be honored to respond to any questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Ambassador Vrooman.

Next, we will hear from Mr. Haas.

Mr. Haas?

**STATEMENT OF PETER D. HAAS OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

Mr. HAAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and Members of this Committee. It is a privilege to appear before you today.

It is a privilege to appear before you today. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and support in nominating me to serve as Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh. I am honored by their confidence in me.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize my wife Amy, my steadfast partner over these past 30 years. I would not be here today without her continual support. We have two amazing sons together: Carsten, who is doing a PhD in German, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Cameron, who is doing a PhD in Economics, at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. The three of them have been my home, as we have served the American people around the world.

My recent positions have taught me that there is no corner of the globe whose partnership is more critical to U.S. strategic interests than the Indo-Pacific, and that we have not yet reached the full potential of this partnership. A democratic, stable, and prosperous Bangladesh will benefit the entire region, and if confirmed, I will advance policies that will enhance our relationship with Bangladesh and promote a free, open, interconnected, resilient, and secure region.

The United States has been a reliable friend to and partner with Bangladesh for nearly five decades. We work together on economic development, peacekeeping, tackling the climate crisis, public health, and finding durable solutions to the Rohingya refugee crisis. Our two nations also share a commitment to democratic values. Our people-to-people ties continue to grow and help to deepen our cooperation.

If confirmed, I will be a tireless advocate for America's interests and values as we seek to broaden our partnership with Bangladesh.

Our economic ties are strong and growing, demonstrated by the establishment of the U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council earlier this year. U.S. private sector investment supports Bangladesh's economic development while bringing U.S. technologies and know-how, and promoting transparency, inclusion, and market-based reforms.

Bangladesh has also long-played a leadership role in pressing for solutions to the climate crisis, and if confirmed, I will advocate for policies that promote our partnership on environmental and climate issues.

The United States is also committed to helping Bangladesh recover from the global pandemic. Through COVAX, the United States has donated 11 and a half million vaccine doses to Bangladesh, to date, and has committed to providing additional donations in the coming months.

But for the people of Bangladesh to realize their full potential, they must also be free to express themselves. The Department of State has long been committed to promoting the free operation of media, civil society organizations, workers, and members of the opposition political parties in Bangladesh, without fear of retribution or harm.

If confirmed, I intend to continue the Department's work to bolster full democratic participation in advance of the 2023 national elections and to urge the Government to protect and defend human rights.

The United States appreciates the generosity of Bangladesh for hosting nearly one million Rohingya refugees who have fled violence in Burma. The United States has supported Bangladesh and is the largest international donor in the humanitarian assistance response.

If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Government's work to promote the voluntary, safe, dignified return of Rohingya refugees, in coordination with Bangladesh and the international community. I will also advocate for the protections of the human rights of all Rohingya, wherever they may be.

The United States cooperates closely with Bangladesh on counterterrorism. Bangladesh is one of the largest recipients globally of U.S. counterterrorism assistance.

If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen this partnership, emphasizing the respect for rule of law and human rights. The United States also recognizes Bangladesh's notable contributions to regional security and its active role in U.N. peacekeeping operations.

In 2022, the United States and Bangladesh will celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations. It is an honor to be nominated at this pivotal point in our relationship and during Bangladesh's Golden Jubilee anniversary year.

If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with this Committee and other Members of Congress to support the United States' interests in Bangladesh and the Indo-Pacific region at large.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I look forward to hearing your questions. Thank you. [The prepared statement of Mr. Haas follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PETER D. HAAS

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their trust and support in nominating me to serve as Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh. I am honored by their confidence in me, particularly during this time of unprecedented challenges—and unrivalled opportunity—in Bangladesh and the broader Indo-Pacific.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize my wife Amy, my steadfast partner over these past 30 years. I would not be here today without her continual support. We have two amazing sons: Carsten who is doing a PhD in German at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Cameron who is doing a PhD in Economics at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Together, they have been my portable “home” as we have served the American people around the world.

Most recently, I had the privilege of serving as Acting Assistant Secretary and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the State Department's Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. I also served as Consul General in Mumbai, India, and as Economic Counselor in Jakarta, Indonesia. These positions taught me that there is no corner of the globe whose partnership is more critical to U.S. strategic interests than the Indo-Pacific, and that we have not yet reached the full potential of this partnership. A democratic, stable, and prosperous Bangladesh will benefit the entire region, and if confirmed, I will advance policies that will enhance our relationship with Bangladesh and promote a free, open, interconnected, resilient and secure region.

The United States has been a reliable friend to and partner with Bangladesh for nearly five decades. We work together on economic development, peacekeeping, tackling the climate crisis, public health, and finding durable solutions to the Rohingya refugee crisis. Our two nations also share a commitment to democratic values. Our people-to-people ties continue to grow and help to deepen our cooperation. If confirmed, I will be a tireless advocate for America's interests and values and broadening our partnership with Bangladesh.

Economic development, climate, and health are important cornerstones of the U.S.-Bangladesh relationship. Our economic ties are strong and growing, demonstrated by the establishment of the U.S.-Bangladesh Business Council this year. U.S. private sector investment supports Bangladesh's economic development goals by bringing U.S. technologies and know-how and promoting transparency, inclusion, and market-based reforms. Bangladesh has also long played a leadership role in advocating for solutions to the climate crisis, and if confirmed, I will advocate for policies that promote our partnership on environmental and climate issues. The United States is also committed to helping Bangladesh recover from the global COVID-19 pandemic. Through COVAX, the United States has donated 11.5 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to Bangladesh to date and has committed to providing additional vaccine donations in the coming months.

For the people of Bangladesh to realize their full potential, they must also be free to express themselves. The Department of State has long been committed to promoting the free operation of media, civil society organizations, workers, and members of opposition political parties in Bangladesh, without fear of retribution or harm. If confirmed, I intend to continue the Department's work to bolster full democratic participation in advance of the 2023 national elections and to urge the Government to protect and defend human rights.

The United States appreciates the generosity of Bangladesh for hosting nearly one million Rohingya refugees who fled violence in Burma. The United States has supported Bangladesh as the largest international donor in the humanitarian assistance response. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Government's work to promote the voluntary, safe, dignified return of Rohingya refugees in coordination with Bangladesh and the international community, while continuing to advocate for the protections of the human rights of all Rohingya, wherever they may be.

The United States also cooperates closely with Bangladesh on counterterrorism. Bangladesh is one of the largest recipients globally of U.S. counterterrorism assistance. If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen this partnership, while continuing to promote our emphasis on the respect for rule of law and human rights. The United States also recognizes Bangladesh's notable contributions to regional security and active role in U.N. peacekeeping operations.

In 2022, the United States and Bangladesh will celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations. The common goals and the steadfast friendship between the American and Bangladeshi people have remained constant over these nearly 50 years. It is an honor to be nominated at this pivotal point in our relationship and during Bangladesh's Golden Jubilee anniversary year. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to work with this committee and other members of Congress to support the United States' interests in Bangladesh and the Indo-Pacific region at large.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I look forward to hearing your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Haas.  
And next, we are going to turn to Ms. Chung.  
Ms. Chung?

**STATEMENT OF JULIE CHUNG OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA**

Ms. CHUNG. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka. I am grateful for the confidence President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me by nominating me for this assignment.

As a first generation immigrant from South Korea, I am proud that my parents instilled in me the values of hard work, optimism, love of country, a Christian faith, and the belief that America is a country of opportunity and force for good. I am thankful for the sacrifices they made for my sister and me, and their unconditional love. I am also thankful to my husband Jose Collazo, whose unwavering support and patience have been a strong foundation for our family, including our eight-year-old son, Mateo, who still doesn't understand exactly what Mom does at work, but is proud of me anyways.

During my 25-year career in the Foreign Service, I have served in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, advocating for U.S. interests, building strategic partnerships, and engaging a diverse range of stakeholders to promote democratic values and private sector-led economic growth. My experience in China, Japan, and Southeast Asia have provided me a unique insight into the importance of American leadership to ensuring a free, open, and resilient Indo-Pacific region.

As the Acting Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, I am proud to have led policies that supported democratic partners and strengthened their ability to counter authoritarian oppression, corruption, and terrorism. And I believe that as policy leaders, we also have a responsibility to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in our workforce, something I have actively promoted since joining the Foreign Service as part of the very first cohort of the Pickering Fellowship supported by Congress.

Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka is Asia's oldest democracy and survived the tragedy of a civil war that resulted in unimaginable violence and continued ethnic and religious divisions.

If confirmed, I am committed to speaking clearly and consistently in support of democratic values, human rights, and a strong civil society that are essential to democracies and central to our foreign policy approach. We must also be strong partners in encouraging justice, accountability, and reconciliation so that all Sri Lankans can share in the benefits of peace, security, and prosperity.

Sri Lanka is positioned in a strategic location at the heart of the Indian Ocean and its critical ports with access to global maritime lanes and trading routes play a pivotal role in a free and open Indo-Pacific and beyond.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advocate for quality infrastructure and investment based on transparency, respect for international law, good governance, sustainable environmental and labor standards. We must also support U.S. companies doing business in Sri Lanka and utilize the tools we have with the Development Finance Corporation and the Export-Import Bank to provide alternatives to coercive lending and opaque contracts.

I believe our most important assets are American innovation, people-to-people exchanges, and education. If confirmed, I pledge to expanding and seeking creative ways to build upon these networks and connections. We must also continue to engage the many voices of the Sri Lankan diaspora in the United States, who make valuable contributions in our bilateral relationship.

Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka offers many challenges and opportunities for the United States to grow our relationship. I will make every effort to advance our values and shared interests so that Sri Lanka meets its full potential to be a vital partner in the Indo-Pacific.

Thank you, again, for allowing me to appear before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Chung follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JULIE CHUNG

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka. I am grateful for the confidence President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me by nominating me for this assignment.

As a first generation immigrant from South Korea, I am proud that my parents instilled in me the values of hard work, optimism, love of country, a Christian faith, and the belief that America is a country of opportunity and force for good. I am thankful for the sacrifices they made for my sister and me, and their unconditional love. I am also thankful to my husband Jose Collazo whose unwavering support and patience have been a strong foundation for our family, including our eight year old son, Mateo, who still doesn't understand exactly what mom does at work but is proud of me anyways.

During my 25-year career in the Foreign Service, I have served in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, advocating for U.S. interests, building strategic partnerships, and engaging a diverse range of stakeholders to promote democratic values and private sector-led economic growth. My experience in China, Japan, and throughout Southeast Asia have provided me unique insight into the importance of American leadership to ensuring a free, open, resilient, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. As the Acting Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, I am proud to have led policies that supported democratic partners and strengthened their ability to counter authoritarian oppression, corruption, and terrorism. And I believe that as policy leaders, we also have a responsibility to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in our workforce, something I have actively promoted since joining the Foreign Service as part of the very first cohort of the Pickering Fellowship supported by Congress.

Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka is Asia's oldest democracy and survived the tragedy of a civil war that resulted in unimaginable violence and continued ethnic and religious divisions. If confirmed, I am committed to speaking clearly and consistently in support of democratic values, human rights, and a strong civil society that are essential to democracies and central to our foreign policy approach. We must also be strong partners in encouraging justice, accountability, and reconciliation so that all Sri Lankans can share in the benefits of peace, security, and prosperity.

Sri Lanka is positioned in a strategic location at the heart of the Indian Ocean, and its critical ports with access to global maritime lanes and trading routes play a pivotal role in a free and open Indo-Pacific architecture. This reinforces the necessity for the United States to build constructive relationships with Sri Lanka, including with civil society, the private sector, and the Sri Lankan people. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advocate for quality infrastructure and investment based on transparency, respect for international law, and good governance, which is mindful of sustainable environmental and labor standards. We must also support U.S. companies doing business in Sri Lanka and utilize the tools we have with the Development Finance Corporation and the Export-Import Bank to provide alternatives to coercive lending and opaque contracts.

The sinking of the MV X-Press Pearl cargo ship near the shores of Colombo a few months ago, causing its biggest marine disaster in Sri Lanka's history, points to the need for upholding such standards. U.S. humanitarian assistance, emergency response capabilities, and environmental surveillance tools helped Sri Lanka respond to this tragedy and is emblematic of how we can be a positive force and strong partner to the people of Sri Lanka.

I believe our most important assets are American innovation, people-to-people exchanges, and education. If confirmed, I pledge to expanding and seeking creative ways to build upon these networks and connections. We must also continue to engage the many voices of the Sri Lankan diaspora in the United States who make valuable contributions in our bilateral relationship. Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka offers many challenges and opportunities for the United States to grow our relationship. I will make every effort to advance our values and shared interests so that Sri Lanka meets its full potential to be a vital partner in the Indo-Pacific.

Thank you again for allowing me to appear before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Ms. Chung.

Thank you for that testimony and focusing on all aspects of our relationship with Sri Lanka and stressing the importance of the people-to-people relationships. I have a strong interest in all of the countries to which you have been appointed, including Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, but as I Chair the Africa Subcommittee, I am going to focus my questions on those nominations.

Ambassador Mahoney, you mentioned in your testimony the various armed groups that control different regions of the Central African Republic, contributing to a very fragmented and war-torn landscape. Among those are the Russian-supported forces, the mercenaries that continue to commit human rights abuses, that operate independently under a complicit host government.

How should the United States address the increasing presence of these Russian-sponsored and supported forces and the acute threat to stability that they represent, particularly, as the U.N. peace-keeping mission there struggles to maintain security in the capital and throughout the country.

Ambassador Mahoney: Senator, thank you for your question, and before I respond, I would just like to say that I had the privilege to serve two tours in Sri Lanka and walked by the picture of your father as Ambassador, many times a day. So thank you for his service and thank you for your service as a member of a Foreign Service family.

Senator, thank you, you put your finger on among an array of challenges, one of the most acute right now, the influence of foreign, malign actors, who are further destabilizing the situation in

the Central African Republic and not contributing to the long-term peace and stability that is so desperately needed.

And if I am confirmed as Ambassador, I would work with our partners on the ground in Bangui, and with other regional actors, like the EU and the economic community of Central African states to really highlight the risk of increased international isolation and opprobrium and further destabilization, as I said, further instability that the Government of the Central African Republic is courting, in pursuing this relationship with an actor that has been sanctioned for very good reasons by our Government and others, and that does not have the long-term interests of the Central African Republic and its people at heart. It is not operating with that as a basic principle.

If I am confirmed, I would work to highlight of our existing sanctions on these Russian-supported mercenaries and do whatever I can with other agencies to enforce those sanctions. I would also highlight and raise awareness among Central Africans about the serious human rights violations that these Russian-supported mercenaries have committed, as you very rightly pointed out, who are there at the invitation of the Central African Republic Government, who are committing these violations.

And I was encouraged to see that the Commission of Inquiry Report that the Government recently released on serious human rights violations and abuses did mention the culpability of Russian quote, unquote, instructors.

I would also work, if confirmed, to counter the addition information and propaganda campaigns that are really undermining so much of the good work that is being done in the Central African Republic to support the people there. And we have some good programs right now on the ground that are working to train journalists to independently evaluate sources of news and to have a very, very critical assessment of the stories and narratives being presented to them.

I would work to expand those efforts because I think they are very, very important and can bear a lot of fruit in the long term.

I would also work, as you said, to increase those people-to-people exchanges that are so important. I was so glad to hear you talk about that, because to me, those are pure gold. For very, very little money, we make those very real connections at a very important level with the future leaders of the country.

And I know that the pandemic has probably affected our ability to continue those, but if confirmed and pandemic conditions permit, I would really want to step them up because they really are so very, very productivity and fruitful.

I would work with our U.N. mission to also call-out the irresponsible behavior of these mercenaries in New York and they have been doing a very, very robust job of that.

And, finally, I would work with our partners on the ground, including MINUSCA and the EU, to see what responsible alternatives, security alternatives we might be able to propose. I would explore that avenue so that the Government doesn't feel that it must turn to these very responsible and non-accountable actors.

And I think the mandate of renewal for MINUSCA, which is coming up next month, offers a really prime opportunity for that. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, and thank you for your prior service including in Sri Lanka, and for mentioning my dad. It is good to see you again.

Let me turn it over now to Senator Rounds.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I most certainly appreciated the answer with regard to the influence there. I am going to turn to Ambassador Vrooman to begin with. It is good to see you again, sir, and thank you for your previous service.

Let us talk a little bit about Mozambique and, specifically, combatting the Islamic State Mozambique is among the top priorities, here for the United States, with regard to our policies in Mozambique.

What is driving the extremist insurgency in Mozambique and do you feel the U.S. is adequately engaged, given the various threats and challenges the situation in Mozambique poses to the region?

Ambassador VROOMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Rounds. It is good to see you, as well, and having seen you on the continent in recent years, it is great to see you even, virtually, at this time.

It is a very pertinent question and I think that, obviously, the situation at Cabo Delgado, we have reached, I think, an inflection point in the arrival of forces from SADC and from allies, such as Rwanda, that have enabled the Government of Mozambique to deal with military blow and to recapture some of the cities, towns, and ports that ISIS-Mozambique had taken over during that 4-year period that I mentioned in my testimony.

Now, what I think all of these combined forces are finding is a large swath of destruction. Police stations, health centers, and other government infrastructure has been destroyed. There have been reports, as well, that mines have been laid that raises some questions about returning to and getting the displaced people back to their homes, villages, so that they can resume their livelihoods.

So, really, in terms of our approach right now, it is not, it is really where we come in, in some ways as the major economic and humanitarian partner of the Government of Mozambique, to help them in that reconstruction process. It will be a challenge. The ISIS forces have, some of them have been, you know, dealt a military blow, but some of them will come back if there isn't a response that is able to hold the towns, villages, and ports that have been liberated of the ISIS-Mozambique forces.

So, it is at this stage, I think, that the U.S. engagement is very important and most of our assistance, to date, has been humanitarian in nature or to be directed in crisis response. We will now need to work on these more lasting development challenges, having to do with job creation, having to do with rebuilding, so that people have the means with which to return to their homes.

And I think that will help, moving forward, giving people a view and a stake in their future and more confidence in the security that has returned, at least for now, to Northern Mozambique.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, sir.



Mr. Haas, you spent most of your career as an economic officer. Bangladesh is a relatively poor nation of increasing strategic importance and it is facing critical political and demographic changes.

What are the biggest factors limiting Bangladesh's economic growth and what can the United States do to help, also, what is your assessment of Bangladesh's anticorruption efforts and what are we going to do to promote financial transparency?

Mr. HAAS. Thank you very much, Senator, for that question.

Indeed, there are a lot of economic challenges in Bangladesh. I think their ranking on the World Bank's ease of doing business study is a pretty fair characterization of the problems that exist there. And as you mentioned, one of those problems is the issue of corruption, where, also, Bangladesh has a lot to do.

If confirmed, I will continue to promote the improvement of the economic environment there, the rule of law to make it easier for U.S. companies to compete there, and I will also work very closely with American companies who are seeking to do business there, to ensure that they are treated fairly and that they are not discriminated against and to level the playing field so that they can compete and do business. Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

And Ms. Chung, with opposition to a renegotiated Status of Forces Agreement and the cancellation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation compact worth nearly \$500 million, it seems that our relationship with Sri Lanka is facing some headwinds at the moment.

Do you agree, and if so, how can we turn it around?

Ms. CHUNG. Thank you for that question.

I think there are certainly challenges in the relationship, as we have seen with the MCC project and various other cooperation. I think what is needed more than ever is for us to explain why the U.S. remains a strong partner.

And in terms of issues like infrastructure and investment, to show the benefits of quality, high-quality, good governance, transparent infrastructure projects and why that benefits, directly, the people of Sri Lanka. I think we can go a long way at doing more public diplomacy and engaging with all stakeholders on the ground, beyond the Government, with civil society, with journalists, and those who feel affected by such projects in the future.

In addition, I think we can look for more opportunities with the Development Finance Corporation that already has invested more than \$200 million in small and medium enterprise lending, especially for female-owned businesses. So, I think the initiatives like these, we can reach out more directly to the Sri Lankan people, develop constructive relationships with the Government, and expand our relationship in many ways.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

And once again, thank you all for your service.

Mr. Chairman, I will turn it back to you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Senator Rounds.

And let me now turn it over to Senator Hagerty.

Senator HAGERTY. [Audio malfunction.] That it had been an honor—let us see. Can you hear me now?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Yes. Good, now.

Senator HAGERTY. Okay. I just wanted to thank you for your leadership of this hearing, Senator Van Hollen.

And in honor of your father's service as our Ambassador to Sri Lanka, I would like to turn my attention, now, to our candidate for the Ambassador to Sri Lanka.

Julie, it is good to see you again. I want to thank you for your service on the Japan [inaudible—1:05:11] when I served as U.S. Ambassador to Japan. You and I have had opportunities to talk about this region on a number of occasions.

I would like to point my attention, though, to something I am very concerned about and that is China's use of death trap diplomacy to secure interests in two very strategic ports in Sri Lanka. Back in 2017, Sri Lanka formally handed over the strategic Port of Hambantota to China on a 99-year lease, after Sri Lanka struggled to pay its debt owed to Chinese firms.

This transfer gave China control of territory just an if you hundred miles away from India and it gave China a strategic foothold along a critical sea, commercial and military sea lane.

China also has a stake in another port in Sri Lanka, at the Colombo Port City, where Chinese submarines actually docked at the harbor when Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was visiting there.

China now possesses the largest navy in the world and these strategic ports that they are amassing, will allow China to project power across the Indo-Pacific Region.

The United States must take the lead in pushing back against China or else, the entire Indo-Pacific Region is in danger of following into the greater influence of the Chinese Communist Party.

So, my first question for you is, if confirmed, Julie, what steps would you take to deepen U.S. relations with Sri Lanka's leadership and work with partners, such as India, to ensure that Sri Lanka's relationship with China doesn't contribute to further intensify competition in the Indian Ocean?

Ms. CHUNG. Thank you for that question.

You are exactly right about the influence and the concerns that we have about the PRC's investment; the extent and the types of infrastructure investment they are making in Sri Lanka. I think every country wants options. No country wants to be cornered into making one decision based on one country's deliverance of and their promises.

So, if confirmed, I pledge to working, again, to work with all the tools that we have in the U.S. Government. We have the U.S. Freedom Development Agency. We have the DFC to provide alternatives and that is what is essential.

Unlike other countries, some other countries that direct more than investment and tell their countries' companies where to invest, U.S. companies go where they base on risk and benefits assessments. So, in order to encourage that investment, we have to work with the Government, with their private sector, with their civil society to build the foundations of strong governance, the anticorruption, and strong transparency standards.

And I believe that what you pointed out about India is essential. You can't do this alone and you shouldn't do this alone. The United States is not the only country who cares about robust, international

standards. We have seen this recently with a number of countries and stakeholders coming together around the world to promote the Blue Dot Network, which creates international standards for quality infrastructure.

So, working with multilateral partners, working with India, working with Japan, as we have worked before, Senator, to work with those like-minded countries and co-financing projects and raising these issues of international standards and transparency together will be essential.

Senator HAGERTY. I agree with you, Ms. Chung, and I think that your highlighting the Blue Dot Network certainly brings back a point close to my heart, because I signed on behalf of the United States when we brought Australia and Japan together with their finance development networks, along with our own, so I think that holds great potential. We have a lot more work to do there and I appreciate your keeping that in mind as you move forward.

Back to Sri Lanka. While they are staving off a major financial crisis right now and it is wallowing in debt, China has refused to bail Sri Lanka out. But helping Sri Lanka also presents other actors with a moral hazard.

So, my next question is, what can and should the United States do, including with multilateral agencies, such as the IMF, and with partner countries, such as quad members, to help Sri Lanka clean up its public finances, and how do we do so without contributing to further unsustainable debt burden on Sri Lanka?

Ms. CHUNG. Thank you for that question, Senator.

Yes, the Sri Lankan's debt-to-GDP ratio is over 100 percent and of this external debt, 15 percent is owed to the PRC. Now, 44 percent of this debt is owed to commercial banks, as well, so this is a broader problem than just owing debt to China. They also owe the Asian Development Bank, India, the World Bank, Japan, and commercial banks, as well.

So, I think in order to get into that healthy financial macro-economic situation, we should work to continue to encourage and urge the Sri Lankans to go to the IMF, to consider steps for debt restructuring, to make the essential reforms needed in the country. We certainly have had past programs in the country working with our Treasury colleagues to promote that technical assistance and the capacity-building, so that they can build that strong financial ecosystem.

So, we need to just continue to stay on that and our role in the IMF, our role in international organizations and banks will certainly play a key role in encouraging that message continuously to Sri Lanka.

Senator HAGERTY. Yeah, I think Sri Lanka is a prime candidate for what you described and I appreciate your attention to that, because getting their financial house in order is going to be a key to making certain that their strategic posture remains as we all need to see it in that region.

Thank you very much, and congratulations on your nomination.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator Hagerty.

And I appreciate that line of questioning, as well, with respect to Sri Lanka, and I look forward to working with you and Ms. Chung, if confirmed, on those issues.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And to all our nominees, we have a vote on the Senate, which is why Senator Rounds departed momentarily, and when he returns, I am going to go vote.

But let me thank our entire first panel here. Unless we have any other senators waiting in the Zoom wings here, I just want to, again, congratulate all of you on your nominations. Thank you for your service and I look forward to supporting your nominations.

And, hopefully, we will be able to get them through the Senate in a way that gets you to post as soon as possible. Thank you, all. [Pause.]

Senator VAN HOLLEN. We are now going to begin our second panel of distinguished nominees. I indicated earlier the countries to which they have been nominated as ambassador, and now I am also going to provide a bit more about their backgrounds and experience starting with Mr. Brian Shukan, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and has been the Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum since 2019, and I want to thank Mr. Shukan for his leadership there and for working with Senator Coons and I during our visit to Sudan a little earlier this year. We appreciated your insights and working to make that a successful trip.

Prior to Mr. Shukan's service in Sudan, he was the Director of the Office of Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan. He has also served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Port-au-Prince and Consul General in Casablanca, and Deputy Political Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Mr. Shukan is the recipient of numerous awards, including the James Forrestal Award for Excellence at Strategy and Force Planning from the U.S. Naval War College.

He received his BA from the University of Wisconsin Madison, a JD from Washington University in St. Louis, and an MA from the Naval War College. Welcome.

We also have with us, Ms. Elizabeth Fitzsimmons, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of African Affairs. Previously, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central Africa and Public Diplomacy and is Acting Deputy Spokesperson for the United States Department of State, and also has a senior advisor at the Foreign Service Institute.

In addition, she has held numerous posts across the State Department and around the world in her 26-year-long career, including posts in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Cambodia, India, and Bulgaria.

She is the recipient of a Senior Foreign Service Performance Award and a Superior Honor Award and she holds a BA from the University of Virginia and the certificate from the International Division of Waseda University in Tokyo. Welcome, Ms. Fitzsimmons.

Next, we have Ambassador David Gilmour, who is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as Chargé d'Affaires in Chad. He has also served as Ambassador to the Togolese Republic.

Previously Ambassador Gilmour held posts and Deputy Chief of Mission in Malawi, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Africa

in the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs, and Director of East African Affairs, and as an Director of Public Diplomacy for Africa. His other assignments overseas include positions in Australia, Costa Rica, and Panama.

He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the partnership excellence award from the Secretary of State's Office of Global Partnerships, and he received his BA from Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan and his MA from the University of Texas at Austin.

I, again, want to thank all of our nominees who are here. I don't know if Senator Rounds has had a chance to return yet. When he does, he may also want to provide a few welcoming remarks, but in the interests of time, let us now proceed in the order that I introduced everybody, beginning with Mr. Shukan.

Mr. Shukan?

**STATEMENT OF BRIAN WESLEY SHUKAN OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN**

Mr. SHUKAN. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as President Biden's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Benin.

I appreciate the confidence that the President and Secretary Blinken have shown in me, and I thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I would also like to recognize my family watching online; my wife Clare for her love and support during the last 30 years and throughout our Foreign Service journey; my daughter Abigail, who is serving in the Department of Homeland Security; and my daughter Leah, who is a graduate student in Boston.

It has been a great privilege to serve the U.S. as a Foreign Service Officer for the past 26 years, beginning at our embassy in Benin, and for the past two years as Chief of Mission in Sudan, as we supported the Sudanese people's aspirations for a democratic and prosperous future.

And I appreciate your remarks, Senator Van Hollen, regarding your visit and all the support that you and Senator Coons, and your colleagues, have shown to us as we have worked, here in Khartoum.

Benin has been a strong example of peace, stability, and tolerance. Benin is a solid partner on shared goals of economic prosperity, peace, and security.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to promote democratic governance and human rights, support a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade and people-to-people ties with the United States, and strengthen regional security to address global threats, such as violent extremism and transnational crime.

I would like to briefly highlight a few priorities, starting with democratic and human rights. And personally, I will never forget my experience in 1996, seeing Beninese citizens standing patiently

in long lines to vote in Benin's second democratic election and witnessing a peaceful transfer of power.

For nearly three decades, Benin was a model of multi-party democracy in West Africa. It adopted a democratic constitution in 1990 and has held six consecutive presidential elections with peaceful transitions. We have recently seen undue restrictions on freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly, arrests of opposition members, and laws undermining electoral competitiveness. These developments contribute to our concern about anti-democratic trends in Benin.

If confirmed, I will support and encourage Benin to resume the positive role it once in promoting peaceful, democratic governance, rule of law, and human rights.

A second priority is developing a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade links to the United States. Benin remains one of the world's least developed countries; one-third of its population lives in poverty, and malnutrition has stunted the growth of a third of Benin's children under five.

If confirmed, I will work with the embassy team, Congress, and our Beninese partners to promote a healthier and more prosperous future with growing trade and investment. In 2020, the U.S. provided \$28.2 million in assistance to foster a healthier society in Benin by strengthening health services. The U.S. is also working to improve human rights and strengthen civil society.

A five-year, Millennium Challenge Corporation compact, valued at \$391 million, entered into force in 2017. This compact is strengthening Benin's electric sector, attracting private investment, and removing a major impediment to economic growth.

The U.S. has invested in food assistance, improving child literacy, and increasing class attendance. And USAID maintains programs to build regional and global trade and attract investment.

If confirmed, I will guide these and other programs to partner with Benin for a more prosperous and peaceful future.

I also want to highlight the importance of strengthening regional security and addressing global threats, such as violent extremism and transnational crime. Benin is a strong partner for peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel and has prioritized improving its counter-terrorism capacity and preventing violent extremism. Our assistance to Benin's security forces supports their participation in peacekeeping and regional security efforts, and advances Benin's ability to secure its borders and interdict maritime and transnational crime.

If confirmed, I will prioritize counterterrorism and countering violent extremism through security sector assistance, community building, and youth development.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to advance U.S. interests in Benin and would be pleased to take any questions. Thank you.[The prepared statement of Mr. Shukan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIAN WESLEY SHUKAN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to

be the next Ambassador to the Republic of Benin. I appreciate the confidence the President and Secretary Blinken have shown in me, and I wish to thank the members of the committee for the opportunity to testify.

I would also like to recognize my wife Clare for her love and support during the last 30 years and throughout our Foreign Service journey; my daughter Abigail, who is serving in the Department of Homeland Security; and my daughter Leah, a graduate student in Boston.

It has been a great privilege to serve the United States as a Foreign Service Officer for the past 26 years, beginning with my service at the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou, Benin, and for the past two years as chief of mission in Khartoum, Sudan, as we supported the Sudanese people's aspirations for a democratic and prosperous future.

Benin has been a strong example of peace, stability, and ethnic and religious tolerance in an increasingly turbulent region. Benin is a solid partner on shared goals of economic prosperity and regional peace and security. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and Congress to promote democratic, inclusive, and transparent governance and respect for human rights; support a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade linkages and stronger people to people ties with the United States; and strengthen regional security and address global threats such as violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

I would like to briefly highlight a few priorities in each of these areas, starting with promoting democratic and transparent governance and respect for human rights. I will never forget my experience in 1996 of seeing Beninese citizens patiently stand in long lines to vote in Benin's second democratic election, and witnessing a peaceful transfer of power between political parties. For nearly three decades, Benin had been a model of multi-party democracy in West Africa. It adopted a democratic constitution in 1990 and has held six consecutive presidential elections with peaceful transitions of power. We have recently seen undue restrictions on freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly, arrests of members of the political opposition, and laws undermining electoral competitiveness. These developments contribute to our concern about anti-democratic trends in Benin.

If confirmed, I will support and encourage Benin to resume the positive role it once had in promoting peaceful democratic governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights in the region.

A second priority is developing a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade linkages to the United States. Benin remains one of the world's least developed countries. Over one-third of its population lives in poverty, and malnutrition has stunted the growth of nearly a third of Benin's children under five. If confirmed, I will work with the Embassy team, Congress, U.S. agencies, and our Beninese partners to promote a healthier and more prosperous future with growing trade and investment. I will also engage Benin's fast-growing youth population so that they better understand our longstanding commitment to a prosperous future for their country based on shared values and interests.

In fiscal year 2020, the U.S. Government provided Benin \$28.2 million in bilateral assistance for programs that foster a healthier and more inclusive society by strengthening health services delivery and resources. The U.S. is also working to improve human rights and strengthen civil society. A five-year, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact, valued at \$391 million, entered into force in 2017. This compact is strengthening Benin's electricity sector, attracting private investment to Benin, and removing a major constraint to long-term economic growth. In 2017, the USDA launched a five-year \$21.3 million investment in food assistance to Benin, improving school age children's literacy and increasing class attendance by providing healthy meals at schools. USAID's Regional Mission also maintains economic growth and trade programs focusing on policy advocacy and technical assistance to build regional and global trade linkages and attract investment. If confirmed, I will guide these and other programs to partner with Benin for a more prosperous and peaceful future.

I also want to highlight the importance of strengthening regional security and addressing global threats such as violent extremism and transnational organized crime. Benin is a strong partner for peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel and has prioritized improving its counter terrorism capacity and preventing violent extremism. Our assistance to Benin's security forces supports Benin's participation in peacekeeping and regional security efforts, and advances its ability to secure its own borders and interdict maritime and transnational organized crime. If confirmed, I will prioritize engaging with the Government of Benin on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism in the areas of security sector assistance, community building and youth development, and strategic communications.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, thank you again for this opportunity. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you to advance U.S. interests in Benin and would be pleased to take any questions.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Shukan.

I see my colleague, Senator Rounds, has returned.

Senator, I didn't know if you had any opening remarks that you wanted to provide, before I turn to the next witness.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I do, but if it is all right with you, why don't we have all of them offer their opening statements. I will do mine and I think you have to go vote as well, so this may be a good time for you to do your vote and when we come back, when they are finished, I will move right into my opening statements and then we can proceed from there.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. I will just hand it off to you and go vote and then come back.

Thank you very much.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thanks.

**STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH ANNE NOSEWORTHY FITZSIMMONS OF DELAWARE, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC**

Ms. FITZSIMMONS. Chairman Van Hollen, Ranking Member Rounds, and distinguished members of the committee, what a privilege it is for me to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Togo.

I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for this opportunity. In fact, my very first chance to live outside the United States came from then-Senator Biden, who in 1989, selected me as one of two Japan-U.S. Senate scholars from Delaware and set me on the path that would lead to my diplomatic career.

If confirmed, it will be the honor of a lifetime to lead our embassy to advance the interests of the United States and the American people in Togo.

I am thankful that I get to share this moment with my family and loved ones. Diplomacy is our family business. My husband, Richard Seipert, serves as a Diplomatic Security Special Agent at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and my son-in-law, Grant Holyoak, is a first tour Foreign Service officer at Embassy Beijing. I am so grateful for a lifetime of support from my wonderful husband; my children, Taylor, Morgann, MaKaela, Tyson, and Adam; my daughter-in-law, Laura; and sons-in-law, Grant and Jake.

My grandchildren Molly, Harrison, and William are also watching and I'm thrilled that my mom, Barbara Noseworthy, is as well, because she has visited our family at every one of our postings abroad.

Throughout my 26 years in the Foreign Service, I have served across the globe and in a variety of roles in Washington, DC. As Deputy Executive Secretary, I supported two Secretaries of State as they travelled hundreds of thousands of miles projecting Amer-



ican values and engaging with citizens and Governments across the globe. As Acting Deputy Spokesperson, I helped explain U.S. policy to the world, and most recently, as the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of African Affairs, I led a fantastic team to build stronger, deeper relationships with the countries of Africa to make the continent safer, more secure, more prosperous, and more democratic.

I am a dedicated and engaged mentor to dozens of colleagues and I am committed to making the Foreign Service a more diverse, resilient, and effective organization. I welcome the opportunity to continue this work, if confirmed, as the U.S. Ambassador to Togo.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Togo in 1960. Since then, the United States and Togo have built a strong relationship based on shared goals: advancing peace and security; promoting trade and economic growth; strengthening government and democratic institutions; and supporting opportunity for all Togolese citizens.

Togo is a key regional partner to maintenance of peace and security in West Africa. Togo plays an active role in mediating regional disputes, most recently in Guinea. The Government works alongside civil society, regional partners, and our embassy in Lome, to strengthen national resilience to violent extremism.

Togo currently has more than 1,300 troops and gendarmes in U.N. missions, making it the sixteenth largest national contributor.

If confirmed, I will continue to foster security cooperation between our two countries to enhance the capabilities of Togolese security forces.

The United States works closely with the Government of Togo to improve the investment climate in order to attract U.S. companies to take advantage of Togo's geographic advantages as a logistics hub, with the Gulf of Guinea's deepest deep-water port, and a regional air transport hub.

Before the pandemic, Togo enjoyed a period of steady economic expansion, fueled by international investment and a concerted effort to modernize the country's commercial infrastructure. The Togolese Government calls the Port of Lome the lungs of the economy and promotes Togo as the gateway to West Africa.

As the world recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that the United States support partners like Togo to return to a path of economic success by promoting trade and investment opportunities for the U.S. private sector.

While Togo aspires to become a regional economic and security leader, these goals cannot be achieved without strengthening Togo's democratic institutions. Recent Togolese Government restrictions on the media, politically motivated arrests, limitations on political gatherings, and suspensions of press outlets raise concern.

If confirmed, my embassy team and I will work with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote political reforms, reinforce democratic institutions, and strengthen electoral institutions and processes to promote free and fair elections.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee, for this opportunity.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and my colleagues across the U.S. Government to strengthen our relationship with Togo.

I welcome any questions you may have and hope you and your colleagues will visit Togo to witness the growing bilateral partnership firsthand. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fitzsimmons follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH ANNE NOSEWORTHY FITZSIMMONS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and distinguished members of the committee, what a privilege it is for me to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Togo. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for this opportunity. In fact, my very first chance to live outside the United States came from then-Senator Biden, who in 1989 selected me as one of two Japan-U.S. Senate scholars from Delaware and set me on the path that would lead to my diplomatic career. If confirmed, it will be the honor of a lifetime to lead our Embassy to advance the interests of the United States and the American people in Togo.

I am thankful that I get to share this moment with my family and loved ones. Diplomacy is our “family business”—my husband Richard Seipert serves as a Diplomatic Security Special Agent at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and my son-in-law Grant Holyoak is a first tour Foreign Service officer at Embassy Beijing. I am so grateful for a lifetime of support from my wonderful husband, my children Taylor, Morgann, MaKaela, Tyson, and Adam, my daughter-in-law Laura and sons-in-law Grant and Jake. My grandchildren Molly, Harrison, and William are also watching and I’m thrilled that my mom, Barbara Noseworthy, is as well since she has visited our family at every posting abroad.

Throughout my 26 years in the Foreign Service, I’ve served across the globe and in a variety of roles in Washington, DC. As Deputy Executive Secretary, I supported two Secretaries of State as they travelled hundreds of thousands of miles projecting American values and engaging with citizens and governments across the globe. As acting Deputy Spokesperson, I helped explain U.S. policy to the world. And most recently, as the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of African Affairs, I led a fantastic team to build stronger, deeper relationships with the countries of Africa to make the continent safer, more secure, more prosperous, and more democratic. I am a dedicated and engaged mentor to dozens of colleagues and I am committed to making the Foreign Service a more diverse, resilient, and effective organization. I welcome the opportunity to continue this work, if confirmed, as the U.S. Ambassador to Togo.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Togo in 1960. Since then, the United States and Togo have built a strong relationship based on shared goals: advancing peace and security; promoting trade and economic growth; strengthening government and democratic institutions; and supporting opportunity for all Togolese citizens.

Togo is a key regional partner to maintain peace and security in West Africa. Togo plays an active role in mediating regional disputes, most recently in Guinea. The Government works alongside civil society, regional partners, and our Embassy in Lomé to strengthen national resilience to violent extremism. Togo currently has more than 1,300 troops and gendarmes in U.N. missions, making it the 16th largest national contributor. AFRICOM General Townsend’s recent visit to Togo highlights the importance the United States places on Togo’s partnership in promoting regional peace and stability. If confirmed, I will continue to foster security cooperation between our two countries to enhance the capabilities of Togolese security forces.

The United States works closely with the Government of Togo to improve the investment climate in order to attract U.S. companies to take advantage of Togo’s geographic advantages as a logistics hub, with the Gulf of Guinea’s deepest deep-water port, and a regional air transport hub. Before the pandemic, Togo enjoyed a period of steady economic expansion fueled by international investment and a concerted effort to modernize the country’s commercial infrastructure. The Togolese Government calls the Port of Lomé the “lungs” of the economy and promotes Togo as the gateway to West Africa. As the world recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that the United States support partners like Togo to return to a path of economic success by promoting trade and investment opportunities for the U.S. private sector.

While Togo aspires to become a regional economic and security leader, these goals cannot be achieved without strengthening Togo’s democratic institutions. Recent To-

golese Government restrictions on the media, politically motivated arrests, limitations on political gatherings, and suspensions of press outlets raise concern. If confirmed, my Embassy team and I will work with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote political reforms, reinforce democratic institutions, and strengthen electoral institutions and processes to promote free and fair elections.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee for this opportunity. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and my colleagues across the United States Government to strengthen our relationship by promoting peace, stability, democracy, and economic growth in Togo. I welcome any questions you may have and hope you and your colleagues will visit Togo to witness the growing bilateral partnership firsthand.

Senator ROUNDS [presiding]. Thank you, Ms. Fitzsimmons.  
Ambassador Gilmour, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID R. GILMOUR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA**

Ambassador GILMOUR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify today. It is a great honor to appear before you as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, and I am grateful for the confidence that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me with this nomination.

And if confirmed, I will do my best to uphold this trust and advance U.S. national interests and priorities.

I would like to mention a couple of important people, without whom, I would not be here today. The first is my wife, Judith Martin, who has spent a lifetime in the Foreign Service; first, with her parents. Her father, S. Douglas Martin, was a career State Department Officer, and later, as my cherished partner, as we traveled the world together and raised our three children, doing service in 10 overseas posts and in Washington in the 35 years of my Foreign Service career.

Judith is a civil service employee at the State Department, where she works in the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

I would also like to acknowledge my 93-year-old father, John Gilmour. He worked 34 years in local government, serving as the City Manager in the small town where I grew up in Michigan. Everything I know about respect, integrity, and dedication to public service, I learned from my dad.

Mr. Chairman, I believe my service as Ambassador to Togo, as Chargé d'Affaires in Chad, and in senior positions in the Bureau of African Affairs in Washington, as well as postings elsewhere in the world, have prepared me for this assignment.

And if confirmed, I will tirelessly to advance the foreign policy priorities of the United States, including to promote good governance and respect for human rights, to end COVID-19 and prevent the next pandemic, to improve the business environment for U.S. trade and investment, and to promote regional and maritime security.

Now, since its independence, there have only been two presidents in Equatorial Guinea, and one of whom has ruled for over 40 years. Presidential term limits were established in 2011, but were not applied retroactively to President Obiang, who could remain in office until 2030. Though multiparty elections are technically allowed, the non-ruling political parties faced legal restrictions, and opposition leaders have reportedly faced torture, harassment, intimidation, and politically motivated detention.

And if confirmed, I will raise our concerns with Equatorial Guinea's leadership about human rights and the rule of law, and I will urge Government leaders to enable a true multi-party democracy and to allow the growth of a civil society. I will stress that promoting transparency and ending corrupt practices are key to Equatorial Guinea's long-term growth and stability, and critical to strengthening our commercial ties.

The United States is Equatorial Guinea's largest trading partner and the U.S. Embassy plays a critical role in promoting these American companies' interests.

And if confirmed, I will continue to work to improve the investment climate for U.S. companies in Equatorial Guinea.

Maritime security is Equatorial Guinea's primary security challenge, and since 2019, there have been multiple incidents of piracy and kidnapping in and around Equatorial Guinea's waters that, if left unchecked, could impact U.S. commercial interests.

And if confirmed, I will promote bilateral security cooperation and investment to protect those interests and regional stability.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, I understand that such cooperation must undergo stringent review to ensure that it does not come at the expense of promoting respect for human rights and does not inadvertently enable corruption.

And, if confirmed, no goal will be more important to me than protecting the lives, interests, and welfare of American citizens living and traveling in Equatorial Guinea. I promise to work closely with you and the Members of this Committee in this endeavor.

So, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I would be pleased to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Gilmour follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID R. GILMOUR

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify before you today. It is a great honor to appear before you as the nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. I am grateful for the confidence that President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken have placed in me with this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my best to uphold this trust and advance U.S. national interests and priorities.

I am joined today by my wife Judith Martin, who has spent a lifetime in the Foreign Service, first with her father S. Douglas Martin, a career State Department Officer, and later as my cherished partner as we traveled the world together and raised our family in ten overseas posts and in Washington during the 35 years of my Foreign Service career. I would also like to acknowledge my 93-year-old father, John Gilmour. He worked 34 years in local government, serving the citizens of the small town where I grew up in Michigan. Everything I know about respect, integrity and dedication to public service, I learned from my dad.

Mr. Chairman, I believe my service as Ambassador in Togo, as Chargé d'affaires in Chad, and in senior positions in the Bureau of African Affairs in Washington, as well as postings elsewhere in the world, including as Deputy Chief of Mission

in Panama, have prepared me for this assignment. If confirmed, I will draw upon these experiences to advance U.S. interests in Equatorial Guinea and the Central African region.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rounds, if confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance the foreign policy priorities of the United States, including to promote good governance and respect for human rights, end COVID-19 and prevent the next pandemic, improve the business environment for U.S. trade and investment, and promote regional and maritime security.

Since its independence, there have only been two presidents in Equatorial Guinea, one of whom has ruled for over forty years. Presidential term limits were established in 2011 but were not applied retroactively to President Obiang, who could remain in office until at least 2030. Though multiple party elections are technically allowed, the non-ruling political parties faced legal restrictions, and opposition leaders have reportedly faced torture, harassment, intimidation, and politically motivated detention. If confirmed, I will raise our concerns with Equatorial Guinea's leadership about human rights and the rule of law, including the value of democracy and transparency. I will urge government leaders to enable true multi-party democracy and to allow the growth of a strong civil society. I will stress that promoting transparency and ending corrupt practices are key to Equatorial Guinea's long-term growth and stability, and critical to strengthening our commercial ties.

Equatorial Guinea, like most of the world, is facing the challenge of the global COVID-19 pandemic and is enduring its third wave of the pandemic. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with the U.N. to deliver vaccines through COVAX. I will also seek other action to advance health, wellbeing, and opportunity for all Equatoguineans.

The United States is Equatorial Guinea's largest trading partner and the U.S. Embassy plays a critical role in promoting these U.S. companies' interests. If confirmed, I will continue to work to improve the investment climate for U.S. companies invested in Equatorial Guinea.

Maritime security is Equatorial Guinea's primary security challenge. Since May 2019, there have been multiple incidents of piracy and kidnap for ransom attacks in and around Equatorial Guinea's waters that if left unchecked could impact U.S. commercial interests. If confirmed, I will promote bilateral security cooperation and investment to protect these interests and regional stability. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, I understand that such cooperation must undergo stringent review to ensure it does not come at the expense of our priority to promote respect for human rights and does not inadvertently enable corruption.

Additionally, I believe it is important to note the central role that Equatorial Guinea's improvement on countering trafficking in persons has had on our ability to engage the Government on our top priorities. Without the Government's concerted efforts, and consistent U.S. engagement, we would not be able to advance U.S. interests in areas like maritime security, corruption, human rights, and democracy and governance. Therefore, countering trafficking in persons will remain a key line of effort for our bilateral relationship.

And, if confirmed, no goal will be more important to me than protecting the lives, interests, and welfare of American citizens living and traveling in Equatorial Guinea.

I promise to work closely with you and the members of this committee in this endeavor.

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Ambassador Gilmour.

I would expect that our Chairman will be back shortly and, as I indicated earlier, we seem to have this in the afternoons where our votes are being cast, so we try to tag team those votes.

Let me just begin. As I said for panel one, as career diplomats, much of your lives and those of your families, have been spent far from home. You have made great sacrifices in the service to your country. Thank you and your families for your lifetimes of service and let me just assure you, we understand your work is critical to maintaining and advancing America's influence in the world.

Mr. Shukan, you served ably as Chief of Mission in the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum in a very critical and transitional period in the

U.S.-Sudan relationship. If confirmed, you will serve as Ambassador in a region that is rapidly changing for the worse.

Benin remains one of the world's poorest countries. Countering violent extremism is an emergent focus of U.S. engagement and Benin's standing as a Democratic leader in Africa, has rapidly deteriorated under President Talon, whose Government has arrested opposition leaders and implemented restrictive, new electoral rules.

Ms. Fitzsimmons, much of what I just said about Benin could also be said about its neighbor, Togo. On top of it all, and contributing to Togo's woes, is that one family has dominated Togo's politics for 60 days. I believe your recent tenure as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Africa and Public Diplomacy, and then as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Africa Bureau, will be very useful, if confirmed.

Ambassador Gilmour, you are one of the most experienced U.S. Ambassadors currently serving in Africa. Equatorial Guinea is a small, oil- and gas-rich country of increasing strategic importance. It is notorious for its kleptocratic system of governance.

President Obiang took office in 1979, making him one of the world's longest serving heads of state. Equatorial Guinea requires a perceptive and experienced ambassador to lead the U.S. operations. I am glad that you have been nominated for this post.

I am delighted to meet all of you today and I look forward to, you know, continuing to work with you and I most certainly appreciate the comments that you have shared with us today.

And with that, I am not sure if our Chairman has returned or not yet, but if Senator Van Hollen has not returned yet, I would be happy to begin the questioning at this time. And I just looking to see if he has actually come back yet or not, and I don't see him on the list yet, so let me just turn right to the questions and I will begin with Mr. Shukan.

Your experience in Khartoum as the Charge d'Affaires will contrast in several ways to your new position. If confirmed as the new Ambassador to Benin, you are going to be busy.

Sudan has received significant attention from Washington since the Democratic transition began in 2019 and has been a sustained priority across the Trump and Biden administrations. Benin, despite many challenges, will compete for attention with major economic partners in West Africa and the violent extremist threat in the Sahel.

What lessons will you take from your time in Sudan to Benin and what are you looking forward to that will be different?

Ambassador GILMOUR. Well, thank you, Senator Rounds.

And let me first express my appreciation for the comments that you made about the Foreign Service families. I am glad that I have mine joining me online in this virtual hearing. For me, this has very much been a family affair from the very beginning.

I also share the concerns that you have expressed concerning both, the violent extremist threat and Democratic backsliding. I spent the last 2 years, here in Khartoum and the 2 years prior to that working on Sudan from Washington. And it has really been a privilege and a challenge to support Sudan's efforts to really get their democracy moving, to support this transition, and we have

appreciated all the help that we have received from Members of Congress on that.

The Benin situation is different. As I mentioned in my opening comments, I served in Benin in my first assignment. It really was a formative experience for me to witness a young democracy and seeing the value that Beninese citizens placed on exercising their right to vote on participating in a democratic process and seeing peaceful transitions of power.

And, you know, it is certainly something of a disappointment to see the backsliding that has taken place since that time. We are also concerned about media, restrictions on media freedom and the fact that there are some political prisoners in Benin at this time.

So, I think it is important that as a Chief of Mission, we speak both, privately and publicly about democracy and human rights, about our values. It is important, if confirmed, that we encourage Benin to resume the leadership role that it had in the past.

I think this is very much linked to the vulnerability to violence extremist ideology in areas like Northern Benin. People need to feel that they are being heard, that their government is accountable. So, I see a direct relationship between democracy and governance, and security, as well as economic development.

I think it is important to engage all political groups including the [Audio malfunction.] And I think that one of the lessons I have learned from here in Sudan, but also in my previous assignments is the importance of having a whole of mission approach to these things.

And I think that means working with our team to support these values. I know that public affairs and USAID are going to play a critical role, as well as the security assistance that we are providing to the Beninese military and to the police.

Supporting civil society, youth, even engaging with local radio; all of these things are important and provide good flora to talk about our values and advance our interests.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

Ambassador GILMOUR. Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

And I have had the opportunity to visit Benin and Togo. And, Ms. Fitzsimmons, like Benin, the U.S. mission in Togo is relatively small and Togo commands significantly less attention from Washington than many of its close neighbors.

If confirmed, how will you leverage your public diplomacy background to garner more attention to Togo; conversely, how will you use your public diplomacy background to engage with the Togolese people in new and different ways?

Ms. FITZSIMMONS. Thank you so much for the question, Senator Rounds.

I am delighted at the idea that, if confirmed, I will get to go lead the embassy team at Embassy Lome and think about creative ways that we can use public diplomacy programming, particularly, the Young African Leaders Initiative, which, as you know, is now a decade old, 750,000 strong across the subcontinent. And I think there are tremendous opportunities there to support young African leaders both, in Togo, and network them more effectively with their like-minded colleagues and counterparts, not only in Benin.

I think it is fortuitous that Mr. Shukan and I are on the panel today. I think there are tremendous opportunities to work within the Coastal West African Subregion and across the entire African continent to make sure that young leaders, whether they are in the media, whether they are entrepreneurs, whether they are young educators, have opportunities to hear from, learn from, and teach each other.

There is no question in my mind that an activist in Zimbabwe, for example, has much to teach a young Togolese activist. And I think one of the very effective ways that I would hope to work, if confirmed as Ambassador, is to use my background as someone with experience and exchanges to connect young Africans, so that they can be force multipliers in the many challenges that you have rightly pointed out.

I think, also, it is critically important that we speak clearly when we are talking to the Government, to President Faure, that he understands that things like the current Millennium Challenge Threshold Program in Togo are wonderful opportunities to leverage the Togolese Government's desire to be the gateway to West Africa. But there are very important benchmarks that will need to be met in democracy and governance for that program to move forward successfully and lead, perhaps, ultimately, to a compact for Togo.

So, I would ensure that public and private messaging at the embassy, if confirmed, reinforced the U.S. opportunities in the logistics and services sector in Togo, if Democratic governance space can be maintained and expanded. Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

And my time has expired, Mr. Chairman, so I will turn it back to you. I have not had the opportunity to ask Ambassador Gilmour one question, but I will leave it up to you. If you want me to just proceed with it or if you would like me to come back?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. [Presiding.] Sure. Do you want to go, proceed. That would be fine.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Gilmour, several top members of the Obiang administration and his family have been implicated in large-scale corruption and other financial crimes, especially tied to oil revenues.

If confirmed, how will you balance multiple U.S. strategic interests, including combatting this kind of corruption that could provide a gateway for a malign, foreign influence?

Ambassador GILMOUR. Well, thank you, Senator Rounds.

And it is nice to see you once again. I don't know if you recall, I hosted you when you came to Togo, along with Senator Inhofe, on a delegation a few weeks back.

Senator ROUNDS. Yes.

Ambassador GILMOUR. And, thank you, again, for your very kind comments about the Foreign Service.

Corruption in Equatorial Guinea is certainly one of the most important priorities for the United States, and as you mentioned, certain senior figures in the Government there have been implicated in corruption cases, both in the United States and in numerous countries.

In fact, just recently, there was a case settled with the vice president and some seized assets, about \$30 million had been negotiated



and a happy ending in sense that about \$20 million of those seized assets will be used to purchase COVID vaccines for the people of Equatorial Guinea.

So, I think, if confirmed, I would certainly want to continue along our lines of speaking out about corruption in the country and, certainly, these kinds of cases, I think, coordinating with our partners, the U.K., the Europeans, Brazil, South Africa, other countries that have had these kinds of cases, it is very important to continue these efforts to highlight official corruption in the country.

At the same time, there have been some signals from the Government that they want to address this problem. There is some new legislation that has been passed in the country that is still pending, as I understand, is still pending implementation, but that is a positive signal.

Also, the country has made representations to rejoin the Extracted Industries Transparency Initiative, which would bring some transparency and accountability to the oil and gas and mining sectors in the country.

So, I think we have to take the Government, you know, take a step-by-step approach with this and kind of judge the political will of this Government and see where it takes us, and see where we can collaborate with them to reduce the official corruption. But, you know, given the track record, as you mentioned, of this Government, we have to proceed cautiously.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

And, Mr. Chairman, thank you for your indulgence.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Senator.

And Ms. Fitzsimmons, thanks for mentioning the YALI program. Senator Rounds and I have been working together to provide a regular authorization for that program, as has Congresswoman Karen Bass in the House.

And I am pleased to report that just yesterday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed out a 5-year authorization. So, it will now be codified and we want to also expand it to other areas. So, thank you for mentioning that.

Mr. Shukan, I want to take advantage of this hearing, really, to ask you some questions about where you are now in Sudan, because as I mentioned, you know, and, again, thank you for your good work there and for helping Senator Coons and myself during our visit. And we found it a very promising visit. We recognized that we are now 2 and a half years since the fall of Bashir, and we recognize it is a fragile process.

I will say, in recent days and weeks, it is looking even more fragile. And I wondered if you see the most recent events as just more bumps on the road, along the way to a stable and Democratic Sudan, or is there something more serious going on now that is disrupting the path to progress?

Mr. SHUKAN. Senator, thank you for the question.

It is a good question and I think if you look at where we are, it is 2 years into the Sudanese transition since they signed their constitutional declaration on August 2019 and formed the transitional government. They have made some progress. They have made some pretty major progress in terms of signing a peace agreement and getting off of the state sponsors of terror list, and also

implementing economic reforms that have brought about some improvements on the macroeconomic side, like improved inflation, gotten rid of subsidies on tea commodity.

But they also, there are some key benchmarks that have not yet been met and especially on the security side in terms of progress to integrate the various armed groups that exist, including those represented by Juba Peace Agreement signatories, the formation of a transitional legislative council, for example.

And then, I think despite the economic positives, there is also a gap between improvements on the macro side and the very, very serious difficulties that the ordinary Sudanese man and woman on the street are experiencing.

So, yeah, I do share your concern about the seriousness of the situation right now. We are expecting to see some large demonstrations tomorrow. What we expect is to see a large contingent coming out in support of democracy, in support of civilian leadership. And that is what makes me optimistic, even though we are at a very fragile moment in Sudan.

They really are going to have to redouble their efforts, the various components of this transitional government to work together. There are divisions between civilians and military that got a lot of attention, but the divisions between the different civilian groups, between JPA signatories and the forces for freedom and change, those are very important.

So, the prime minister did form a committee a few days ago to address this kind of situation and it includes the military and it includes the FFC. It includes some of the JPA signatories. That is really positive, but I think we are going to have to just keep pushing. We are doing it in public. We are doing it in private.

There is really no other path forward, except working together and recommitting to implementation of those principles of freedom, peace, and justice from that August 2019 constitutional declaration.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, I appreciate that, because I think we have a continuing important role to play in trying to support the Sudanese people in this move toward democracy.

We saw the failed coup recently. The good news is that it failed. But we have also seen some protests, as you know, in support of the military, probably organized by Bashir forces. So, I am hoping to see a big outpouring of support for the continue to march toward democracy in the days ahead.

And I think Prime Minister Hamdok continues to be a good leader, but I am worried, as I know you are, about the developments in the area. I just want to be clear that we are all united in trying to make sure that we support the success of this peaceful revolution.

I just have one other question for Ambassador Gilmour. As you know, Equatorial Guinea is currently ruled by a regime characterized by Freedom House as, quote, highly authoritarian, unquote, and they further state that it frequently detains the few opposition politicians in the country, cracks down on civil society groups, and censors journalists.

They also point out, quote, the Judiciary is under presidential control and security forces engage in torture and other violence with impunity. That is from Freedom House.

So, my question is this, and I say this as somebody who supports U.S. efforts to professionalize militaries around the world, as a supporter, generally speaking, of the IMEP program, but also one who has seen that in certain cases, those who were trained through the IMEP program or other U.S. efforts to professionalize militaries have participated in coups and in anti-democratic conduct.

The Biden administration requested \$500,000 to support IMEP programs in Equatorial Guinea. Can you talk a little bit about that request and how you would balance that request with our concerns over the direction of the country and the issues that I raised.

Ambassador GILMOUR. Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, thank you, by the way, for your comments about the YALI program. I happen to have the honor to be part of the team that created the Mandela Washington Fellowship, which is the centerpiece of the YALI program. So, thank you for your support for that and, particularly, for continuing to finance it, because it is a tremendous and valuable tool and all of our embassies make great use of it.

And thank you for the question. I think, certainly, it is not a pretty picture in terms of governance and democracy in Equatorial Guinea and it never has been. And as you mentioned, Freedom House, I think since the 1990s, has ranked Equatorial Guinea as not a free country. So, this is a challenging partner to work with.

In the last couple of years, there have been some efforts by the Government to improve, in certain areas, and notably, in trafficking in persons, and you may be aware that they were able to raise their ranking in the annual trafficking of persons survey to the Tier 2 watchlist, and that, then, opened the possibility for some collaboration with the United States in terms of foreign assistance programs, which I believe led to the IMEP request that you mentioned.

I think what is certainly driving the IMEP request and a desire on the part of the United States to increase engagement with Equatorial Guinea on security issues are the very serious security problems going on in the Gulf of Guinea. As I mentioned in my opening statement, there have been, particularly in the past couple of years, many serious incidents of piracy and kidnapping, and, of course, we have, the United States has commercial interests in Equatorial Guinea, but also all around in the surrounding countries, as well; most notably, Nigeria, which is very close to Equatorial Guinea, and Cameroon.

So, there are many Americans working in that region. Enormous investments in, particularly, oil and gas, and particularly offshore platforms, which have been the target of many of these piracy attacks.

So, we, the United States, we need Equatorial Guinea to be a responsible player in terms of security, maritime security in that region. And so, I think, certainly, our concept is we want to work with them to begin to develop their capacity or increase their capacity to be able to respond to some of these attacks. Equatorial Guinea, actually even had one pirate attack in the outskirts of the

capital. There was an attack against a gas-processing facility in 2020.

So, it is a very serious problem and something that we need to work with them on. But, at the same time, we have these very serious concerns about human rights and governance and democracy that we have had for a very long time.

So, my approach, if confirmed, would be to go very cautiously in this direction. We want to work with them, but we need to see what is their political will for reform. We need to be very cautious in terms of not enabling corruption.

There have been allegations of corruption in the military forces; of course, we have the [inaudible—1:56:44] vetting process and if we are to work with security force members there, we need to be very cautious and very thorough in that process to know who we are dealing with.

So, if confirmed, I would take a very cautious approach, a very measured approach, and I think a very step-by-step approach with any engagement we are going to do, in terms of working with their security forces. And I think we need to go slowly, and I think we need to set benchmarks and take a very cautious approach.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

And, right, we all will be working with you and rely on your good judgment on how to best balance all these factors.

Senator Rounds, do you have any other questions, comments?

Senator ROUNDS. Mr. Chairman, I do not.

I have most certainly appreciated the responses that we have received today.

And, once again, it is the fact that we have these qualified individuals before us for these really challenging posts, is appreciated. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Well, let me add my thanks and appreciation, as well, to all of you for your current service in the Foreign Service and for, you know, taking on the responsibilities for which you have been nominated.

And I will certainly support your confirmation. We have a group here with deep expertise and experience. So, many thanks to all of you and to your families.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned. Thank you.

Senator ROUNDS. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 3:44 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. PATRICIA MAHONEY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Various armed groups control regions of the Central Africa Republic (CAR), contributing to a fragmented and war-torn landscape. How can the U.S. work with the Government the Central Africa Republic, the United Nations, and like-minded partners to bring parties to the negotiating table, and return to dialogue on a peace process that will lead to a sustainable peace?

*Answer.* Understanding political grievances where they exist, including through a robust and inclusive Republican Dialogue, and strengthening implementation of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (Khartoum Accord), which the United States has championed, are important factors in bringing signatories

back to the peace process. The United States, working with other international partners, should also support initiatives which improve relations with neighbors, reduce cross-border movement of arms and combatants, and enable CAR to secure its borders. Strengthening CAR's security institutions to consolidate control over government-controlled areas is critical, as is deployment of state services to populations and eventually supporting local elections. If confirmed, I will leverage all the tools at my disposal to support these initiatives.

*Question.* On October 15, President Touadéra declared a unilateral cessation of hostilities against the rebel coalition.

- How has this affected the security situation on the ground and humanitarian access, if at all?
- What prospects are there for negotiations with rebel leaders, and what might such negotiations address?
- What are the implications for the 2019 Khartoum Accord?

*Answer.* President Faustin-Archange Touadéra's unilateral ceasefire is something we and regional partners, including the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) pressed for and welcomed, including through a statement the Embassy and its G-5 partners (African Union (AU), European Union (EU), Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS), France, the World Bank, and the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR (MINUSCA)) issued in the wake of Touadéra's declaration. International partners are encouraging the Government to stand up a monitoring mechanism as soon as possible, and humanitarian actors are assessing the situation on the ground, which remains dynamic.

It is my understanding that through the ICGLR initiative, discussions are ongoing with armed group leaders with a view to having them return to the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (Khartoum Accord).

Touadéra's initiative is an indication he is cognizant the only way out of the current crisis is through dialogue leading to a political settlement. It is my hope that armed groups will return to the framework of the 2019 Accord which offers opportunities for political representation, decentralization, and more equitable management of natural resources.

*Question.* As the people of the Central Africa Republic struggle to cope with multiple crises while attempting to restore basic governance, how can the U.S. most effectively support humanitarian needs and civil society efforts to build the foundations of democracy?

*Answer.* CAR presents a complex relay of urgent challenges, including ongoing violence and instability, weak state institutions, and lack of government control over much of its territory; a dire humanitarian crisis; and now the influence of malign actors.

At the heart of these challenges lies the CARG's inability to exert effective control over its territory. That inability to control and provide essential services allows for the violence and instability of armed groups vying for territory and resources; which in turn leads to increased human rights abuses and constricts humanitarian access; and leaves space for malign actors like the Russia-supported private military company (PMC) Wagner Group (Wagner), and other U.S. sanctioned entities associated with Yevgeny Prigozhin. These actors have demonstrated clearly they do not have the long-term interests of CAR as an operating principle.

Engaging a Russian PMC to help gain the upper hand may seem like a short-term fix to some in the CAR Government, but it is doing long-term damage to the goals of peace, national reconciliation, and rule of law, which are linchpins to CAR's ultimate stability, without strengthening government institutions or capacity that would make the CAR Government able to hold and maintain effective control over additional territory.

The United States, working with international partners, needs to support those diplomatic, security and peace initiatives which are most likely to reduce the violence, and enable CAR to secure its borders. It is important in this context to remember that Security Council members recently agreed to significantly increase MINUSCA's troop strength.

Working with other members of the G-5, if confirmed, I would support the ceasefire recently announced by President Touadéra. In concert with international and regional partners, I would press all stakeholders to recommit to and reinvigorate the peace process under the 2019 Accord. The CARG's recent steps to initiate a national dialogue on peace and reconciliation are an encouraging step.

I would also re-emphasize the perils of working with an entity sanctioned for sound reasons not only by the United States but by other governments (EU and UK) as well. In the long term, I would continue our ongoing efforts to strengthen CAR

Government institutions—most critically in the justice sector but also in the CAR Government's stewardship of national resources.

Further, if confirmed, I would seek out ways to expand the U.S. Government's myriad of successful health initiatives in Africa to improve CAR's ability to respond to health issues including measles, malaria, and infant mortality, if security conditions in country permit increased programming.

*Question.* CAR's Government has pledged to investigate allegations by U.N. human rights officers that state security forces and allied security personnel—including Russian military instructors and private military contractors—are responsible for grave human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings and torture of detainees.

- What is the status of these investigations, and how credible have they been to date?
- How might the allegations, and the CAR Government's response, affect the scope of U.S. security assistance in the future?

*Answer.* Minister of Justice Abazene's mid-October sharing of the summary of the CAR Government commission of inquiry report is a useful step toward accountability in these matters. Abazene mentioned that proceedings related to the human rights abuses enumerated in the report were ongoing in civilian and military courts. Embassy Bangui is gathering more information on the precise number and status of these cases, including through engagement with Abazene, and, if I am confirmed, I will continue to press him and President Touadera to ensure all are pursued to conclusion and perpetrators held accountable.

Human rights considerations factor into all aspects of our security sector cooperation with CAR and are a critical determinant of its breadth and scope. As indicated, and as we have done in the past, we will scale back work if human rights concerns arise.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Throughout my Foreign Service career, I have worked to advance U.S. policy to support and promote democracy and respect for human rights. I regard that work as not only essential to my mission as a diplomat representing the values of the United States but also among the most personally rewarding aspects of my career. The impact of those efforts has often been incremental (as in a counterpart government's long-term efforts to institutionalize accountability mechanisms for its military) or part of a broader team effort (as when colleagues across the U.S. interagency worked to support members of civil society as they advocated against anti-LGBTQI+ legislation in Uganda). As Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, I advocated both publicly and privately for increased space for dissent; greater media freedom; and fair process and equitable treatment for detainees, including those detained on political grounds. If confirmed, I commit to continue promoting and supporting democracy and respect for human rights in the Central African Republic.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in the Central Africa Republic? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Following consultations with colleagues and experts, I see the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in CAR being threefold and interrelated: fragile institutions, ongoing violence that stymies development and progress, and a lack of access to justice by much of the population. Stemming from these foundational challenges, we see troubling symptoms including but not limited to 1) malign influence by Russia, which further erodes the country's stability and respect for the rule of law; 2) a moribund peace process; 3) corruption in the mining sector; and 4) a worsening humanitarian situation throughout the country, which is impacting millions of Central Africans.

If confirmed, I will strive to provide honest counsel to President Touadera and his Government, while ensuring good stewardship of the Department of State's and interagency's resources in concert with the UN, EU, AU, France, regional organizations, and others to strengthen the country's democratic institutions, advance the rule of law, improve access to justice, end impunity, enable effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, and increase transparency in the mining sector. Additionally, I will seek to increase the capacity of Central Africans to identify and call out hate speech, disinformation, and propaganda through education and outreach to civil so-

ciety. One of my primary goals as ambassador, if confirmed, will be to support a viable path for the Government to begin moving from lifesaving humanitarian assistance to sustainable development.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in the Central Africa Republic? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support democracy in CAR in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Rights, and Labor, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, the Office of Global Criminal Justice, and other Department of State colleagues and the interagency to strengthen CAR's judicial and security institutions to make them more responsive to Central Africans' needs. Additionally, I commit to spotlighting reports of human rights violations and abuses and governance concerns to my CAR Government counterparts, and spotlighting these concerns through Embassy Bangui's reporting, in collaboration with NGOs and civil society.

The objectives I hope to accomplish through my engagement, if confirmed, would be increased capacity by the Government to serve more Central Africans throughout the country; security and law enforcement officials who respect the rule of law and human rights; and a more stable environment in which Central African entrepreneurs could begin to make economic progress. Although we need to see further concrete actions to hold those who commit human rights violations and abuses accountable, I think the Government's commission of inquiry into human rights abuses—which released a summary of its report on October 2 and named CAR Armed Forces and "Russian instructors"—represents a potential mechanism in the fight against impunity.

The country's fragile and undeveloped institutions, ongoing violence, and corruption impede the United States' ability to achieve these goals in collaboration with the Central African people. I think it will be important to work with the CAR Government and our international partners to develop innovative solutions to these complex and interrelated issues.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* While the Democracy Commission Small Grants program is only for countries in Europe, if confirmed, I will strive to make sure all U.S. Government democracy and governance assistance for CAR is used effectively and efficiently. I will do my utmost, if confirmed, to ensure Department of State and USAID democracy and governance funding is prioritized in ways that are coordinated, mutually reinforcing, and will advance U.S. Government interests and strategic goals in CAR, including strengthening institutions; increasing civilian security; promoting respect for human rights, and enhancing transparency and accountability in government. In coordination with the CAR Government, civil society, and international partners, I will seek to make U.S. funding responsive to local needs and aligned with our objectives in CAR.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in the Central Africa Republic? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to building on and expanding Embassy Bangui's strong relationships with civil society members, human rights and other NGOs in the United States, and with NGOs and civil society organizations in CAR. As the United States' Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, I used the convening power of my position to create spaces for NGOs and members of civil society to gather and voice their concerns. If confirmed, I will strive to develop a robust dialogue with government and civil society actors to better understand their equities. Additionally, I will work closely with likeminded partners to ensure our messaging to the CAR Government is unified in our advocacy for respect for human rights, access to justice, and stressing the importance of a free and open environment for Central Africans to express their political views without fear of retribution.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties in CAR. As we look ahead to the Republican Dialogue scheduled to begin in November, as well as the first local elections in over 30 years—scheduled for September 2022, our engagement with the CAR Government, political opposition groups, neighboring countries, and likeminded nations will be of utmost importance to ensure constructive political engagement and avoiding violence that has plagued the country for too long.

**Question.** Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the Central Africa Republic on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in the Central Africa Republic?

**Answer.** An independent Central African press is critical to the success of CAR's democracy and to countering malign influence. If confirmed, I will meet regularly with independent and local press in CAR, building on Embassy Bangui's work to maintain strong relationships with local and international journalists in CAR. I will work with Department of State and interagency colleagues to continue providing professional training and exchange opportunities for members of the press to build their resilience to disinformation and hate speech. Finally, I will continue Embassy Bangui's strong advocacy with the Central African Government to protect and facilitate the work of a free and independent press in CAR.

**Question.** Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

**Answer.** It is critical for the United States to build on efforts to counter disinformation and hate speech in CAR, which risks enflaming tensions and exacerbating existing divisions in the country. If confirmed, I will coordinate with Department of State and interagency partners—as well as likeminded nations—to expand training initiatives to empower journalists to report accurately on events and shed light on allegations of human rights violations and abuses, instances of corruption, as well as malign influence by Russian propagandists. I will also seek to support the work of community leaders who promote peace.

**Question.** Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with the Central Africa Republic on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will commit to actively engage with the CAR Government—specifically the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Protection—on the right of workers to exercise freedom of association, including to form and join independent trade unions, and call out incidents when the Government or other actors restricts that right.

**Question.** Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in the Central Africa Republic, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

**Answer.** I commit to using my position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in CAR, no matter their gender identity, expression or sexual orientation. As I did during my service in Uganda as deputy chief of mission, I will work with colleagues across the U.S. interagency to promote respect for the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons in CAR, working in close partnership with local civil society. I will support civil society voices in CAR to strengthen their ability to advocate for the human rights of all persons. I will use all the tools at my disposal, including Embassy Bangui's convening power to bring together key actors from the Government, civil society, private sector, and international community to discuss issues affecting LGBTQI+ persons.

**Question.** What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in the Central Africa Republic?

**Answer.** CAR's penal code criminalizes public expressions of same-sex affection, and LGBTQI+ individuals are stigmatized by societal attitudes and prejudice.

**Question.** What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in the Central Africa Republic?

**Answer.** I commit to better understanding the situation of LGBTQI+ persons in CAR and how the U.S. Government can advance their cause including through our convening power, messaging, and programming.



*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to the Central Africa Republic?

*Answer.* I commit fully to briefing Congress consistently and openly during my tenure as Ambassador to CAR, if I am confirmed.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, I agree these incidents and any threats to the health and safety of U.S. personnel must be taken seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. As Secretary Blinken has said, his number one responsibility as Secretary of State is to protect the men and women representing our country around the world. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring Embassy Bangui treats any reported incident seriously. Should they occur, we will report these incidents through appropriate channels in a timely manner and ensure any affected individual receives prompt medical care.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will meet regularly with medical and Regional Security Office staff in Bangui to ensure I understand the full scope of threats against U.S. personnel and that all safety protocols are being followed carefully.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. PATRICIA MAHONEY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Beyond public messaging and diplomacy, what tools will you have at your disposal to encourage the Touadera administration to distance itself from partnerships developed with Russia and Russia-linked actors, and encourage positive political, economic and security reforms?

*Answer.* The United States supports CAR's efforts to develop strong institutions and strengthen the rule of law through capacity building and technical assistance. If confirmed, I will use my position as ambassador to enhance coordination within the Department of State, across the U.S. Government, with partners such as the European Union and France, as well as regional organizations to ensure U.S. efforts are strengthening the CAR Government's ability to mitigate conflict, stop human rights abuses and violations, and hold those responsible accountable.

To counterbalance Russia's influence, I will use the U.S. Government's wide array of instruments to call out Russian behavior, including working in collaboration with the U.S. Mission to the U.N. and like-minded partners at the U.N. The CAR Government's commission of inquiry—established to investigate allegations of human rights abuses described in an August U.N. report—acknowledged abuses and violations committed by “Russian instructors” and CAR Armed Forces (FACA). If confirmed, I will press the CAR Government to hold perpetrators responsible. I will also highlight the impact of previous sanctions on Russian entities, and individuals operating in CAR, while strengthening coordination with partner governments to ensure our activities have mutually supporting and maximum impact. Within the Department of State, I will build on ongoing collaboration between the bureaus of African Affairs, European and Eurasian Affairs, International Organization Affairs, the Global Engagement Center, and others to ensure U.S. efforts remain aligned and complementary. Additionally, if confirmed, I will ensure there continues to be robust dialogue between Embassy Bangui and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York.

Lastly, it is critical for the United States to build on efforts to counter disinformation in CAR, which risks enflaming tensions and exacerbating existing divisions in the country. If confirmed, I will coordinate with Department of State and

interagency partners—as well as likeminded nations—to expand training initiatives to empower journalists to report accurately on events and shed light on allegations of human rights violations and abuses, instances of corruption, as well as malign influence by Russian propagandists. I will also seek to support the work of community leaders who promote peace.

*Question.* In your view, how does the Central African Republic rank in terms of strategic importance for the United States?

*Answer.* I think it is in the United States' national security interest to continue engaging diplomatically with the CAR Government to assist the country recover from its long history of violence and fragility. The conditions that have led to serious allegations of human rights abuses and violations against civilians, the threat of famine, unlawful child soldier recruitment and use, the malign influence of Russia, and a host of other issues will not stay localized to CAR and will continue to threaten regional peace and security if left unaddressed.

*Question.* Do you feel the U.S. level of engagement with the Central African Republic reflects this level of strategic importance?

*Answer.* Based on my consultations with Department of State colleagues, I have gained a deep appreciation for the tremendous work being done by teammates throughout the U.S. Government to address CAR's humanitarian needs, strengthen the country's institutions—particularly the justice and security sectors, and counter Russia's malign influence. If confirmed, I will explore additional opportunities for the United States to engage diplomatically with the CAR Government—where appropriate, in consultation with key U.S. interlocutors.

*Question.* If you do not feel as if the U.S.' level of engagement with the Central Africa Republic reflects the level of strategic importance, how would you, if confirmed, work as Ambassador to address this imbalance?

*Answer.* The United States' humanitarian engagement in CAR has saved countless lives. If confirmed, I look forward to discussing with you and your colleagues innovative ways the Department of State and interagency can achieve our objectives in the Central African Republic: 1) supporting the 2019 Peace Agreement to end the Central African Republic's violence; 2) ensuring humanitarian assistance reaches those most in need, and 3) strengthening the country's justice and security institutions.

*Question.* The U.S. Embassy in the Central African Republic is a small, unaccompanied mission, in one of the most difficult environments in which to live and work in the world. As Chief of Mission, how will you work to keep staff morale high?

*Answer.* The wellbeing, safety, and security of the embassy community will be my primary concern. If confirmed, I will seek to support my team members in Bangui by fostering an environment where they feel valued, safe, and supported as they work to make progress on critical U.S. policy objectives in CAR. Serving in CAR is undeniably challenging and I will work in tandem with Deputy Chief of Mission James Hogan to ensure 1) we focus our time and resources on tasks that directly support the mission's primary objectives to prevent exhaustion or burnout; 2) create a culture that promotes clear, respectful, and honest communication among all team members; and 3) ensure colleagues are taking advantage of their leave periods so they can recover from the very significant demands service in Bangui imposes. If I am confirmed, I look forward to discussing with my U.S. and Central African locally employed staff colleagues to better understand their needs and concerns so we can explore ways to reinforce what is working well and strengthen areas of opportunity.

*Question.* How will you engage Africa Bureau leadership to support the staff in Bangui?

*Answer.* I will engage my colleagues in the Bureau of African Affairs leadership transparently and candidly to build an effective dialogue between Bangui and Washington. I will continue Ambassador Lucy Tamlyn's regularly scheduled calls with the Bureau of African Affairs and establish new engagement channels if necessary to ensure the Department of State understands the needs and challenges of the Embassy Bangui team. Further, if confirmed, I would seek the counsel of all colleagues at Embassy Bangui to better understand what engagement practices have worked and where there may be areas we can improve upon in collaboration with the Bureau of African Affairs.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presi-

gency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

*Answer.* Based on my years working as a diplomat in Africa and elsewhere I think it is imperative governments respond to the needs of their people and govern from a position of trust and earned legitimacy. I think clearly defined presidential term limits are necessary to a well-functioning democracy. There are too many examples in Africa and elsewhere in the world where the extension of presidential term limits through various mechanisms has weakened institutions, diminished the public's trust in government, and driven instability. No country can thrive when much of its populace feels disaffected by its government.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you respond to the Central African Republic potentially extending the term of the current President in power?

*Answer.* If I am confirmed, building a strong and respectful working relationship with CAR President Faustin-Archange Touadera will be among my top priorities. If the CAR Government considered extending presidential term limits, I would seek out the perspectives of civil society, the political opposition, and Touadera's allies and use those insights to consult with the U.S. interagency. Once U.S. policy was defined, I would leverage my relationship with President Touadera to ensure U.S. objectives were met.

*Question.* Please provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions? Would you support such a mission for the Central African Republic's next general election?

*Answer.* I think there is significant value in the United States supporting independent international election observations, especially in fragile democracies like CAR that faced such destabilizing violence following its December 2020 elections. As we look ahead to the planned September 2022 local elections as well as the general elections scheduled for 2025, I will—if confirmed—consult with the CAR Government, civil society, and allies to understand the conditions on the ground, and work to develop plans and options that permit the holding of genuinely free and fair elections using open and transparent electoral processes.

*Question.* Should the United States build on its existing defense and security cooperation with the Central African Republic?

*Answer.* In collaboration with partners, including the European Union and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR (MINUSCA) and in accordance with all applicable U.S. regulations, I think the United States must continue its investment in strengthening the FACA. The United States, Central African region, and CAR all gain from a FACA that is professional, competent, and respects human rights. The United States' approach to security sector reform is unique in its focus on human rights, and if confirmed, I will work with allies in country and colleagues in Washington to communicate clearly to President Touadera and the CAR Government what is required for the United States and partners to build on past defense and security cooperation.

I will also press the Government to follow through on its promise to investigate reports of human rights abuses by FACA and Russian security forces and hold offenders accountable through a transparent judicial process.

*Question.* Where are the opportunities and the risks if the United States builds on its existing defense and security cooperation with the Central African Republic?

*Answer.* The CAR Government has consistently expressed its appreciation for U.S. security assistance, as well as a desire for additional cooperation. Further engagement between the United States and FACA—provided the CAR Government addresses U.S. concerns with violations related to transfer agreements and other issues, particularly those touching on human rights violations—may lead to a more capable security force able to project state authority throughout the country's territory for the first time in its history. Additionally, the United States' focus on promoting respect for human rights in our defense training is unique and cannot be discounted. I believe that a FACA professionalized through U.S.-provided training and other support will be a critical factor in CAR and the region's stability going forward.

I worry that as allegations of human rights violations and abuses by FACA as well as associated armed elements mount, it will become more challenging for the United States to provide defense sector training or assistance. Allegations of serious human rights abuses by Russia-supported private military company elements from the Wagner Group targeting CAR's Muslim minorities risks further marginalizing those communities and triggering spillover effects across the region. If confirmed, I will continue—and expand where appropriate—Ambassador Tamlyn's engagement

with the Government alongside the European Union, MINUSCA, and allies to reiterate the importance of respecting human rights while continuing to explore African-led security alternatives to the Wagner Group's activities in the country.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Bangui?

*Answer.* Based on my consultations with Embassy Bangui leadership and Department of State colleagues, it is my understanding my teammates in country—from Ambassador Tamlyn to the officers who serve as the mission's engine—are performing at an extraordinary level in terms of their diplomatic engagement and reporting. However, they are also dealing with a tremendous amount of stress associated with expanding mandatory reporting requirements without additional resources, insufficient staffing, and the day-to-day challenges of working in a post far removed from their families and loved ones. Despite these stressors, I understand my teammates in Bangui remain focused on their mission and wholly committed to advancing the United States' interests in the country and doing their utmost to improve the lives of the Central African people.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Bangui?

*Answer.* The wellbeing of my teammates in Bangui will be my paramount concern. If confirmed, I will create space for frequent one-on-one check-ins and work to restart in-person communication and community building events—COVID-19 conditions in country permitting. I have learned as deputy chief of mission for two posts and as ambassador to the Republic of Benin how important it is to consistently and verbally express my appreciation for my colleagues' hard work and efforts to accomplish the mission's objectives. Additionally, I think there is great value in ensuring our priorities are clear and investments in time are directly tied to those priorities. I humbly acknowledge this will be an ongoing process—if I am confirmed—and I am excited to build on Ambassador Tamlyn's exemplary leadership and engage with my U.S. and Central African colleagues to create a culture that allows people to be their best and feel valued.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Bangui?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead regular discussions with all sections to establish and review goals and develop strategies to achieve common objectives. I will engage all teammates to conceive and articulate clearly what we aim to accomplish, and how we will achieve those objectives. If I am confirmed, I will endeavor to create a culture of inclusion in which all employees' contributions are valued.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I would describe my management style as collaborative, respectful, and built on a foundation of trust and clear communication. I think it is critical for chiefs of mission to model effective leadership and management, and I am cognizant—as I learned as deputy chief of mission in Nepal as well as Uganda and as Ambassador to the Republic of Benin—that I set the tone for my U.S. and local team members. Lastly, I think it is important for leaders to demonstrate humility at all times and if confirmed, I commit to doing my utmost to live these ideals every day I serve as the United States' ambassador to the Central African Republic.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No, I do not think it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates in public or private. I think establishing clear expectations and respectfully and constructively explaining why an action did not meet expectations while offering a path forward is the most effective means of helping colleagues reach their potential and improve upon areas of opportunity. We are all human and we will all make mistakes; I have found that delivering clear feedback with empathy leads to more optimal performance. If confirmed, I commit to treating my teammates of all rank with respect.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure leading Embassy Cotonou?

*Answer.* From my tenure leading Embassy Cotonou, I have learned that I do not have all the ideas (or even the best ideas!) and it is important to create an environment in which all colleagues who make an embassy function feel comfortable in offering suggestions. I have also learned that even though I may know that I value

my colleagues' input, they will not necessarily know I appreciate them unless I make a point of telling them clearly and consistently.

*Question.* How will your management style and approach differ from Embassy Cotonou?

*Answer.* With humility, I think the principles I aspire to (inclusivity, appreciation, clear communication) are critical to effective leadership and management regardless of the assignment. That said, there are important differences between Cotonou and Bangui such as security, freedom of movement, and the size of the embassy team. Acknowledging these differences, I will strive to be even more attentive to the morale of those I am responsible to as ambassador, and I will seek to work with the deputy chief of mission and all team members—if confirmed—to make sure we are being mindful of the stress we are carrying, and when our collective and individual wellbeing needs additional care.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* Based on my time serving as deputy chief of mission in Nepal and Uganda, and then as ambassador in Benin, I think the deputy chief of mission-ambassador partnership is one of the most important relationships to nurture in an embassy. If confirmed, I plan to develop a close and collaborative partnership with Deputy Chief of Mission James Hogan to ensure that our expectations related to priorities, operations, reporting, and engagement are aligned and mutually supportive.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* Traditionally, the deputy chief of mission is responsible for an embassy's day-to-day operations as well as management and serving as an ombudsman for colleagues to voice their concerns. With a post such as Embassy Bangui with a smaller team, I think it will be important and useful for Deputy Chief of Mission Hogan and me to begin discussing this question in the coming weeks, if I am confirmed. Considering my current distance from Bangui, I look forward to gaining a more accurate understanding of daily conditions in country and creating a partnership that works for the team and helps us to achieve our objectives.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* I think it is critical for team members' personal and professional growth for managers to provide accurate, constructive feedback on their performance. As ambassador, if confirmed, I will do my utmost in partnership with the deputy chief of mission to ensure Embassy Bangui managers are providing specific and constructive feedback in a respectful manner to colleagues they are responsible to as leaders.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to help them be their best and incentivize those who demonstrate superior effort.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in the Central African Republic.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* The Department of State faces a challenging balancing act in terms of ensuring our diplomats can engage effectively with interlocutors throughout the country they are responsible for understanding while limiting personal risk, especially in a high-threat post like Bangui. As I have expressed previously, I think my team members are the Department of State's most important resource and I take their well-being seriously. That said, if I am confirmed, I will work with my Regional Security Office in Bangui and Diplomatic Security in Washington to ensure we are balancing these two requirements to ensure our staff stay safe while effectively advancing U.S. policy objectives.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* Embassy Bangui's threat environment is complex and creates challenges for accessing many populations, especially outside of Bangui. If confirmed, I will use all tools at my disposal in coordination with partners, including MINUSCA, to actively support the country's 2019 Peace Agreement, the best option we have currently to reduce violence and return CAR to stability. These activities typically involve engaging local populations, something we do as often as possible and which Embassy Bangui did during September and October trips to key areas in the country's center (Bria), southwest (Bayanga), and southeast (Chinko).

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in the Central African Republic?
- What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* Like most institutions in CAR, the country's press is undeveloped and highly partisan. Radio dominates CAR's public messaging space with internet penetration at approximately five percent countrywide. Disinformation by malign Russian actors is also a serious threat that at times compromises the activities of key partners like MINUSCA.

In terms of strengthening our relationship with the Central African people as well as civil servants, I think we can do more to enhance the bonds between our two countries. In coordination with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, I would like to explore how we can expand the use of International Visitor Leadership Programs to more thoughtfully engage with Central Africans who desire the same things we do for CAR, a country at peace with itself and its neighbors. In the same vein, if confirmed, I would like to explore ways to provide training for more journalists to strengthen their ability to tell fact from disinformation and report objectively on events that impact their fellow Central Africans.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Like most endeavors in the Department of State, open and consistent communication between colleagues leads to more effective coordination. If confirmed, I will seek to bolster the already-productive working relationship between the Bureau of African Affairs' public diplomacy office and Embassy Bangui's Public Affairs Section. As we saw following President Touadera's October 15 ceasefire declaration, there will continue to be significant opportunities for the Department of State to amplify post's messages through various media channels, and I will ensure these lanes remain synchronized and open, if I am confirmed.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* The welfare of my teammates is the most important issue I am responsible for as ambassador, and if confirmed, I commit to taking the threat of anomalous health incidents very seriously. Working with the deputy chief of mission and regional security officer, in consultation with colleagues in Washington, I will work to better understand this threat in CAR, and develop plans and responses, as appropriate for conditions in country.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission CAR personnel?

*Answer.* I think transparency—while acknowledging the sensitivity of some information we work with—is integral for a well-functioning embassy. If confirmed, I commit to speaking as openly about anomalous health incidents as possible with my U.S. and Central African colleagues. Further, I would stress that team members should notify me, Embassy Bangui's regional security officer, and the deputy chief of mission if they experience any unexplained medical symptoms. Embassy Bangui is a small team, and it is important we trust each other and can discuss these issues transparently.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively.

- In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in the Central African Republic and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. China's footprint in CAR is lighter than elsewhere in the region. That said, if confirmed, I look forward to deepening work on this question in consultation with colleagues from the bureaus of African Affairs, European and Eurasian Affairs, East Asia and Pacific Affairs, and other key offices. Work in this lane will leverage the already-robust inter-Departmental collaboration on countering Russia's malign influence in CAR that I have observed during my consultations.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, the Central African Republic was identified as Tier 2 due to a lack of adequate victim services, convictions of traffickers, and overall official complicity. Yet, they did demonstrate overall improving efforts during the reporting period and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

- How will you work with the Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. I was pleased to learn the Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) assessed CAR demonstrated overall increasing efforts to prosecute traffickers, identify and protect victims, and prevent the crime over the course of the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report rating period. This achievement is especially notable as the country faced such a myriad of threats and challenges over the course of 2020 and early 2021. If I am confirmed, I will work in partnership with J/TIP to support the CAR Government's anti-trafficking in persons lead, Josiane Bemaka-Soui (one of eight global 2021 TIP Heroes), with training and technical assistance where possible, while encouraging President Touadera to continue prioritizing this important issue, as he has since 2019. Considering the central government's limited presence throughout much of the country, I think it will be important for authorities to focus their efforts in the short term on identifying victims and prosecuting traffickers within Bangui first, before expanding their efforts elsewhere in the country. Lastly, owing to the Government's very limited resources, effective partnership with civil society, NGOs, and international organizations will be imperative for CAR to identify more victims and remove them from their bondage.

Further, I will continue to collaborate with Department of State and interagency teammates as well as our allies to strengthen the country's justice and security institutions to help CAR transition from lifesaving humanitarian assistance to development. Based on my years of experience serving across the world, increasing the capacity of governments to provide for their people and improving economic conditions is the most effective way to prevent the heinous phenomenon of human trafficking.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, the Central African Republic was identified as intolerant of religious freedom, especially for Muslims. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department of State continues to closely monitor the religious freedom situation in CAR. I commit to working with civil society and the CAR Government to ensure all individuals enjoy freedom of religion and equality regardless of religion as stated in the constitution. If confirmed, I will work with the Ambassador At Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious tolerance and to address religious freedom concerns in CAR.

Specifically, I am deeply concerned with reports of Russian mercenaries targeting individuals from the predominantly Muslim Peuhl community. If confirmed, I will work with the Government and civil society to ensure all individuals in CAR—regardless of religion—have access to justice and a voice in their government.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, the Central African Republic was identified as having serious human rights abuses committed by the Government as well as armed groups.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. The 2020 Human Rights Report narrative of human rights abuses and violations in CAR is disturbing and extensive, and it is crucial the Government holds those responsible accountable. I was encouraged to see the CAR Government issue the summary of its commission of inquiry in mid-October, which included an acknowledgement of the involvement of the country's armed forces and "Russian instructors" in some of these incidents. To demonstrate its commitment to justice and

accountability, it will be critical for the Government to provide more transparency on the inquiry's findings and hold offenders accountable.

Additionally, I commit to spotlighting reports of human rights violations and abuses and governance concerns to my Central African counterparts, and spotlighting these concerns through Embassy Bangui's reporting, in collaboration with NGOs and civil society. If confirmed, I would consult with Department of State colleagues from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as well as the Office of Global Criminal Justice, and other agencies on exploring additional actions, where appropriate.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to building on and expanding Embassy Bangui's strong relationships with civil society members, human rights and other NGOs in the United States, and with NGOs and civil society organizations in CAR. As the United States' Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, I used the convening power of my position to create spaces for NGOs and members of civil society to gather and voice their concerns. If confirmed, I will strive to develop a robust dialogue with government and civil society actors to better understand their equities. Additionally, I will work closely with likeminded partners to ensure our messaging to the CAR Government is unified in our advocacy for respect for human rights, access to justice, and stressing the importance of a free and open environment for Central Africans to express their political views without fear of retribution.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Ending the insurgency in Mozambique will require more than just victory on the battlefield. What are the driving forces behind the insurgency, and how is the United States working with the Government of Mozambique and other actors to address those root causes?

*Answer.* There are many factors that fueled the rise of terrorism in Cabo Delgado. Longstanding socio-economic grievances, unmet economic expectations, political, cultural, and geographic isolation from Maputo, negative experiences with security forces, a lack of government services, tribal rivalries, criminal activity, and an influx of intra-Muslim ideological divisions made northern Mozambique susceptible to violent extremist ideologies.

The United States aims to counter ISIS-M and to support the Mozambican Government and people. We share a holistic strategy in four areas: security assistance, strategic communications, socio-economic assistance, and diplomatic engagement. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Mozambique to address the underlying drivers of violent extremism and terrorism by: protecting the civilian population, addressing social and economic inequality and marginalization, and strengthening the transparent provision of public services, while upholding the core values of respect for human rights, good governance, and democratic participation.

*Question.* Rwandan troops were deployed to Mozambique as part of a bilateral agreement. What are Rwanda's goals and motivations for this deployment, and what implications does the deployment have for the SADC mission?

*Answer.* President Nyusi requested security assistance from Rwanda, and its Government responded; their combined efforts, together with SADC forces have resulted in the capturing of key towns, bases, leaders, and strongholds—providing space for the Government to assess and develop a reconstruction plan for Cabo Delgado. President Kagame has publicly expressed his desire to promote regional security through Rwanda's presence in Mozambique.

*Question.* Apart from the insurgency in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique faces challenges in the areas of governance, the economy, health, and widespread poverty. What is the United States strategy for helping Mozambique address issues in the areas of anti-corruption and good governance in particular? What actions will you take if confirmed to push for greater transparency in the area of debt held by the Government of Mozambique?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government has in the past year launched several anti-corruption activities in Mozambique which support sub-national systems of accountability; reduce teacher absenteeism and medical supply leakage; promote policy reform through support to civil society anti-corruption initiatives, including advocacy for the development of a transparent and accountable sovereign wealth fund; and



strengthen investigative journalism to promote improved economic governance and natural resource management. Corruption is the top governance concern of Mozambicans. If confirmed, I would continue to support credible initiatives that enhance the transparency and accountability of the Government of Mozambique.

*Democracy and Human Rights*

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* I have attended the trials of opposition leaders unjustly accused of crimes and advocated for due process and the rule of law in many of the countries where I have served. Bearing witness in such trials may not change verdicts, but it demonstrates that eyes are watching judicial proceedings. Defense attorneys around the globe often bear the brunt of government efforts to repress their voices, and I have advocated for their ability to represent those accused of crimes.

Whenever counter-accusations about the U.S. surface, I seize the opportunity to make the point that such instances are flagged by a free press and are fair game for debate in the political arena in the United States. I always encourage counterparts to consider allowing and listening to such debate in order to spur greater respect for human rights. To foster more transparent electoral processes and more democratic systems of governance, I am a firm believer in independent election observation efforts, including those of embassies, as well as a role for domestic political party observers.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Mozambique? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Mozambique is still a young, developing democracy with institutions that have difficulty enforcing the law, particularly regarding respect for human rights. Civil society has an influential role, but requires greater capacity and, with the independent media, occasionally faces threats for investigative reporting on sensitive topics. Mozambique has been ruled by a single political party since its independence, and the strongest competing party lost ground in the most recent national elections. Corruption is widespread and impunity for officials remains a serious problem. If confirmed, I plan to support credible initiatives that enhance the Government's transparency and accountability to ensure Mozambique is an anchor of stability, security, and democracy in the region.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Mozambique? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will pursue an integrated approach to northern Mozambique, in coordination with Mozambican institutions and international partners. This approach to creating conditions for sustainable peace will build the capacity of Mozambican security forces, address socioeconomic drivers of violence, such as marginalization, promote respect for human rights, and support improved governance to underserved communities. I look to partner diligently with the Mozambican Government to respond to the needs of its citizens transparently and accountably. If confirmed, I would also serve as the co-Chair of the Contact Group that oversees the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration process that started in 2019 and seeks to establish a durable peace after the devastating civil war. Currently USAID's democracy and governance funding for Mozambique has been prioritized to address governance challenges in the North.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to identify and support reputable Mozambican and international partners who share our commitment to helping Mozambique build an inclusive, responsive, and resilient democracy. I will continue to advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities in our programs and policies.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Mozambique? What steps will

you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* A key function of an embassy is to engage with governments and civil society. Often an embassy can be an effective forum for the exchange of ideas, as I indicated in my testimony, and a forum for debate on global challenges. If confirmed, I will encourage officers in the U.S. Embassy in Maputo to be receptive to listening to the concerns raised by civil society organizations and, if appropriate, helping to seek redress of specific problems on cases with the appropriate interlocutors in the host government. I would also look for synergistic opportunities to cooperate with these groups to advocate for reform, accountability, and respect for human rights. I will continue to advocate for the involvement of disabled persons and organizations in inclusive, civil society-government discussions related to the rights of people with disabilities.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to continue to strengthen the relationships the U.S. Mission has built with democratically-oriented, political opposition figures and parties. I will strive to support the efforts of these figures and parties to develop a more inclusive, political environment throughout Mozambique. If confirmed, I will advocate for the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly for all political actors, including those who do not agree with the Government. If confirmed, I will advocate through public statements, targeted small grants and other programming, and direct engagement with a diverse spectrum of leaders and community members for a political environment that is inclusive of women, youth, people with disabilities, and Mozambicans who might otherwise be marginalized.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Mozambique on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Mozambique?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with media practitioners, like-minded diplomatic missions, civil society, government, and international partners to underscore the importance of an independent, professional, and open media in a free and democratic society. If confirmed, I will seek resources to continue support to both Mozambique's private and state-run media, including professional exchanges, targeted training programs, and seminars to educate journalists and media stakeholders about the importance of the right to free expression.

Mozambican journalists have consistently participated in U.S. Government-sponsored professional exchange programs on investigative reporting, safeguarding freedom of expression, and combating disinformation, and the media's role in strengthening democratic institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to engage in the independent press, as well as prioritize these exchanges and training opportunities.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda by foreign state and non-state actors. If confirmed, I will also commit to working with like-minded partners in Mozambique to do the same.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Mozambique on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* The United States has a long and strong tradition of supporting the rights of workers to exercise freedom of association, including to form and join independent trade unions. If confirmed, I will ensure that I and others in the embassy engage with unions, relevant government offices, and the private sector to support labor rights. If confirmed, I will also mobilize U.S. Government policies, programs, and trade agreements to empower workers in all sectors to organize, successfully bargain with their employers, and improve working conditions.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Mozambique, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Promoting respect for human rights and democracy is a priority for the U.S. Mission in Mozambique. If confirmed, I will strive to defend respect for the

human rights and dignity of all persons in Mozambique, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Mozambique?

*Answer.* There have been no reports of bias-motivated attacks on LGBTQI+ people in Mozambique in recent years, but discrimination exists. The Government of Mozambique has not acted on the request for registration by the Association for the Defense of Sexual Minorities (LAMBDA), Mozambique's main LGBTQI+ organization, which has been pending since 2008. Despite its lack of registration, LAMBDA has partnered with diplomatic missions, including the U.S. Embassy, and government agencies, such as the Ministry of Health, to combat stigma and raise awareness about LGBTQI+ rights.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Mozambique?

*Answer.* Promoting respect for human rights and democracy is a priority for the mission in Mozambique. The U.S. Mission has worked with the Association for the Defense of Sexual Minorities (LAMBDA), Mozambique's main LGBTQI+ organization, as well as potential partners from government, civil society, and the diplomatic community, to raise awareness of LGBTQI+ issues and combat HIV/AIDS stigma. If confirmed, I would support the LGBTQI+ community, including by raising the Pride flag on International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia and encouraging key grants to local organizations.

#### *Congressional Consultations*

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Mozambique.

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit, in coordination with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs, to respond promptly to all appropriate requests for briefings and for information by this committee.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

*Question.* Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* If confirmed as Chief of Mission, there would be no higher priority for me than the health, safety, and security of our personnel and family members serving overseas. This commitment extends to the handling of anomalous health incidents. These incidents and any threats to health and safety must be taken seriously. If confirmed, I will make sure that the entire Embassy community is aware of what to do should a potential incident affect them, their colleagues, or their family members.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would underscore that U.S. Government personnel and family members should immediately alert the Mission's health and security professionals at Post if they note any onset of unexplained medical symptoms to receive prompt access to health care. At the same time, I would reiterate that there is no stigma associated with reporting, and that every report will be taken seriously by our health and security professionals and the leadership of the Department.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will regularly meet with medical and RSO staff to ensure I understand the full scope of threats against U.S. personnel and their family members and that all safety protocols are being carefully followed.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* What is your assessment of current U.S. policy toward Mozambique?

Answer. The United States is Mozambique's largest bilateral donor, with nearly \$523 million allocated last year, and much of it focused on health. I anticipate that the United States will want to increase support of reform and transparency mechanisms, particularly in the lead-up to elections in 2023 and 2024. Education and health are key priorities for Mozambicans, who believe these sectors where the United States engages are drivers of economic growth and prosperity. The recent consolidation of Mozambican efforts in 2021 to combat ISIS-Mozambique, offers opportunities to spur continued investment in both resources and institutions. If confirmed, I plan to enhance our engagement to ensure Mozambique is an anchor of stability, security, prosperity, and democracy in the region.

*Question.* Do you feel the U.S. is adequately engaged given the various threats and challenges the situation in Mozambique poses to the region?

Answer. I believe that the United States correctly assessed the seriousness of the threats posed by ISIS-M to Mozambique, as well as to the region. We have also seen the Mozambican Government acknowledge the root causes of violence and fragility, in the form of its new Strategy for Resilience and Integrated Development in the North. This strategy prioritizes peacebuilding, social cohesion, community-government dialogue, fighting corruption, ensuring access to inclusive government services, and fostering economic recovery in the North. If confirmed, I would work with government and civil society to restore ties, rebuild damaged infrastructure, and invest in the human capital in affected regions.

*Question.* What adjustments, if any, do you feel are necessary for U.S. engagement with the region?

Answer. If confirmed, I would endeavor to remain in close contact with my counterparts, particularly those in capitals where regional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC), are situated. Beyond the combined military operations that many of Mozambique's regional partners and allies have conducted over recent months, there will be a need for an acceleration of discussions about reconstruction and governance in areas affected by terrorism and violent extremism. SADC could also play a larger role in taking on regional challenges such as illicit trafficking networks, conservation of southern African biodiversity, and the promotion and respect for human rights.

*Question.* What is your perspective on the deployment of Rwandan and Southern African Development Community (SADC) forces to Mozambique to assist in the containment of the insurgency in Northern Mozambique?

Answer. We support SADC's goals of promoting regional cooperation and integration, economic growth, socio-economic development, and durable peace and security among its member states. SADC's support through the organization's deployment of a four-country, Standby Force, whose mission was recently extended through January 2022, could help stabilize northern Mozambique and the region. Rwandan forces, with Mozambican forces, have played an important role in reversing ISIS-M's gains. I believe that these positive strides have created a window of opportunity to consolidate gains with the necessary steps needed to regain the trust of local communities in their security forces and in their government institutions.

*Question.* As U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique, if confirmed, how will you engage the Government of Mozambique on key democratic reforms in order to support sustainable peace?

Answer. If confirmed, I will pursue an integrated approach to northern Mozambique, in coordination with Mozambican institutions and international partners. This approach to creating conditions for sustainable peace will build the capacity of Mozambican security forces, address socioeconomic drivers of violence, promote respect for human rights, and support improved governance to underserved communities. I would also serve as the co-Chair of the Contact Group that oversees the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration process that seeks to establish a durable peace after the devastating civil war. Currently USAID's democracy and governance funding for Mozambique has been prioritized to address governance challenges in the North.

*Question.* What challenges do you foresee as Mozambique moves toward 2024 elections with President Nyusi term limited?

*Answer.* Polling confirms the strong preference of Mozambicans for democracy with regular, open, and honest electoral processes resulting in free and fair elections. The Constitutional Court of Mozambique acknowledged there were irregularities in the 2019 elections but concluded that they did not substantially alter the outcome. Those irregularities included violence and intimidation in the pre-election period and systemic issues during the election. If confirmed, I will work with key stakeholders, including the Mozambican Government, civil society, and the National Election Commission so they can ensure peaceful pre-election periods and lay the groundwork for free and fair district elections in 2023 and presidential and provincial elections in 2024.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

*Answer.* Actions by a president in power to change the laws to allow him or her to remain in office extralegally pose an inherent threat to any democracy's health. A healthy democracy abides both by the will of its people and the underlying legal foundations upon which it rests. This requires the active participation of all citizens to safeguard democracy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you respond to Mozambique doing something like extending the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

*Answer.* Mozambique's strong democratic tradition includes term limits that are respected by presidents, the political parties, and a strong majority of the electorate. I expect this respect for constitutional limits will continue. If confirmed, I will promote democratic values and seek to strengthen democratic institutions.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

*Answer.* I have advocated for and supported independent international election observations missions in many locations where I have served overseas. Mozambique's elections are regularly observed by external teams from the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, the European Union, and the Commonwealth. In 2019, Embassy officers supplemented the international election observation teams. Mozambique welcomes and supports these missions and would likely be amenable to additional electoral observation if the conditions warrant such a mission.

*Question.* Would you support such U.S. funded, independent international election observation methods for Mozambique's next general election?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I would support independent international election observation missions and encourage the relevant institutions and parties in Mozambique to welcome them as well.

*Question.* How can the United States best use the tools it has to hold Mozambique officials accountable for corrupt behavior?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government has in the past year launched several anti-corruption activities in Mozambique which support sub-national systems of accountability; reduce teacher absenteeism and medical supply leakage; promote policy reform through support to civil society anti-corruption initiatives, including advocacy for the development of a transparent and accountable sovereign wealth fund; and strengthen investigative journalism to promote improved economic governance and natural resource management. Corruption is the top governance concern of Mozambicans. If confirmed, I would support credible initiatives that enhance the transparency and accountability of the Government of Mozambique.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you go about using the tools the U.S. has to hold Mozambican officials accountable for corrupt behavior?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government has in the past year launched several anti-corruption activities in Mozambique which support sub-national systems of accountability; reduce teacher absenteeism and medical supply leakage; promote policy reform through support to civil society anti-corruption initiatives, including advocacy for the development of a transparent and accountable sovereign wealth fund; and strengthen investigative journalism to promote improved economic governance and natural resource management. Corruption is the top governance concern of Mozambicans. If confirmed, I would support credible initiatives that enhance the transparency and accountability of the Government of Mozambique.

*Question.* How can the United States best support Mozambique in curbing the corrupt behavior of those companies and government officials of malign foreign actors like China that feed on corrupt governments and business environments?

*Answer.* The United States is the biggest investor in the human capital of the people of Mozambique through our health and education programs and we are increasing investments in Mozambican infrastructure through various interagency programs and USAID projects. For those parts of the Mozambican society that want to support good governance, the United States' Foreign Corrupt Practices Act stands out as a gold standard for private sector conduct and a selling point for American business. If confirmed, I will help demonstrate that our Government and business policies and practices are respectful of human rights and the environment, transparent, and responsive to Mozambique's needs.

*Question.* Should the United States build on its existing defense and security cooperation with Mozambique?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will take stock of our developing defense and security cooperation with a view to assessing its effectiveness and the latest requirements of our partners.

*Question.* Where are the opportunities and the risks if the United States does build on its existing defense and security cooperation with Mozambique?

*Answer.* ISIS-affiliated violence and brutality are a grave threat to Mozambique and the region. U.S. security assistance incorporates programming to promote respect for human rights, protection of civilians, and engagement with civil society and local communities. Consistent with the Leahy laws, the U.S. Government provides assistance only to Mozambican security force units that are fully vetted and where there is not credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale in Embassy Maputo?

*Answer.* My understanding is that the move of the Embassy team to a new chancery building only several weeks ago represents a big boost for morale. The new embassy compound brings together the entire U.S. Mission in Mozambique (with the exception of Peace Corps) under one roof, including USAID, CDC, and the American Cultural Center to facilitate a more cohesive, secure, and productive work environment.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to ask members of the Embassy team and their families for their specific suggestions on how we can improve morale. I firmly believe in listening to concerns and addressing them as promptly and concretely as possible.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision?

*Answer.* All U.S. Embassies are now embarking on a process of reviewing Integrated Country Strategies. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing their work and contributing to it by providing Chief of Mission priorities that can knit together our goals. Thereafter, my practice is to regularly review where we are as a mission and to reiterate our mission regularly at town halls and other fora.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I strive to be a servant leader, offering what I can to my team to help us achieve our mission goals. I am a fair and democratic leader interested in eliciting the contributions of each member of my team. What I can offer my team is a commitment to make timely and well-considered decisions that advance our goals while safeguarding our team. I firmly believe that I—and all members of my team—must respect the dignity of each person on the team. That fundamental requirement allows teams to stay cohesive even in the face of challenges.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No, I cannot think of an occasion when berating subordinates is either appropriate or effective. That said, constructive, honest, and timely feedback on performance is an imperative of good supervision that I strive to uphold.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure as Chief of Mission in Rwanda?

*Answer.* Regular communication is essential during times of crisis, especially during pandemics such as COVID-19 or Ebola. To ensure that communication is bi-directional, I regularly surveyed our staff and their families on their morale. During virtual town halls, we always provide a mechanism for eliciting anonymous feedback and questions. Humility in the position of ambassador is critical to gaining the trust and respect of a team, and I believe this lesson also applies to diplomatic engagement. My efforts to learn and communicate in Rwanda's one national language has proven to be an incredibly valuable tool that demonstrates my respect for Rwandans.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* This is the most critical relationship within an Embassy. Not only must the DCM be trusted by the Chief of Mission but empowered to represent him/her and assume his/her responsibilities on many occasions. Frequent communication, both formal and informal, is necessary. If confirmed, I would strive to be open to constructive feedback from my DCM and to look for opportunities for the DCM to lead and learn.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* The DCM has multiple responsibilities within an embassy. Among the most important role that she has is the chairperson of the Emergency Action Committee, the interagency body that is essential in formulating recommendations to me as the Chief of Mission. As the "Chief Operating Officer," she also has a responsibility for seeing that management controls are in place across our operations and programs. As morale-booster and the direct supervisor of many section heads, she has another critical role to play in recruiting a diverse team and sustaining staff on the job—and in addressing any problematic relationships that could impact teamwork.

*Question.* How should the chief of mission lead a post with multiple U.S. Government agencies present?

*Answer.* A successful COM must step outside his/her Department of State persona and strive to understand the priorities and personalities of other agencies represented at post (or in the region). Listening and participating in the activities, such as staff meetings, can be a good way to learn directly from the employees of those agencies. If confirmed, I will demonstrate curiosity and interest in other agencies: going on USAID and USDA project site visits; participating in PEPFAR programmatic reviews, joining promotion ceremonies with the Marine Security guards or other DOD personnel, meeting Peace Corps volunteers in rural areas, and soliciting CDC briefings on infectious disease.

*Question.* In your experience, how important are interagency relationships within a post?

*Answer.* Interagency relationships are critical to accomplishing mission goals. In my experience, forming interagency working groups focused on Integrated Country Strategy goals can feed into more effective Country Team discussions and decisions. Often, the Front Office (COM and DCM) leaders are those who have the broadest interagency perspective at post, so I believe that it is essential to create opportunities for interaction, both formally and informally. Interagency, in-country travel with the COM can be one effective way to do this.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you handle interagency disagreement within Embassy Maputo?

*Answer.* Hearing out all sides in an interagency disagreement is critical to establishing a sense of fairness from the Front Office. If a leader has fostered occasions for celebrating interagency accomplishments, then that experience can be tapped to find a way forward in the case of disagreements. For example, the PEPFAR program, which is quintessentially interagency in make-up, often generates disagreements over budgeting priorities or geographies (or functions) where different agencies have the lead. Collectively coming together to celebrate team victories—such as reaching epidemic control of HIV/AIDS—can help each agency and its staff feel like they are playing an important part in achieving goals.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide subordinates with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

Answer. Yes, timely and constructive feedback on performance is imperative. An ambassador must be intentional in providing encouragement of excellent performance immediately after it is observed to be most impactful.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

Answer. If confirmed, I will undertake and encourage active supervision of performance. Counseling sessions over the course of an evaluation period are critical to this end and must be structured. I use these sessions both with my direct reports and with those whose performance I review each year, so they hear directly from me on how I see their performance, as well as their areas for development. In turn, I seek feedback from them on whether my own supervision is effective and how I can improve as a leader.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

Answer. U.S. Ambassadors must lead by example in order to encourage other colleagues to get outside the embassy walls. One way to do so is by traveling to sites where we or our partners work. Another is to request other officers to accompany me to events where they might meet useful contacts or share a unique experience in the host country. If officers sense that their absence from their embassy office occasions even a hint of disapproval from a senior leader, then they and others will not venture far from the embassy walls. If confirmed, I would avoid sending this sort of signal and encourage the development of broad and diverse embassy contacts.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

Answer. Learning local language(s) is critical to developing access to local populations. If confirmed, I would aim to lead by example—demonstrating both my willingness to speak the national and local languages and allocating time to continue my study. Doing so with the Kinyarwanda language in Rwanda provided critical opportunities for me to get to know Rwandans better and to make me and our diplomatic mission more accessible to those who do not speak English well.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Mozambique?

Answer. The strong U.S.-Mozambique bilateral relationship facilitates a positive public diplomacy environment. Young Mozambicans largely hold positive views of the United States and are eager to apply to study in the United States. The Mozambican Government and people are increasingly receptive to our policy issues and initiatives. Independent press continues to publish in Mozambique despite incidents of intimidation and threats against some journalists. If confirmed, I would urge the Mozambican Government to preserve press freedom and investigate harassment against journalists. My impression is that Mozambicans are accessible and interested in exchanging ideas with Americans, including diplomats at the U.S. Embassy.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face in Mozambique?

Answer. The challenges include capacity issues such as an organization's ability to qualify for and implement grants on behalf of the U.S. Government; few established civil society organizations, which restricts our ability to offer diverse programming; and a nascent, independent press corps. However, journalists and emerging leaders are eager to gain additional training and experiences through USG exchange programs. COVID-19 has severely impacted the Mission's ability to conduct in person exchanges, training, and other outreach, and poor internet connectivity throughout the country make virtual programming challenging.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?



Answer. The Embassy's Public Diplomacy Section balances these occasionally differing objectives; generally, there is little appetite overseas for any messaging content that appears "canned" or copied or even retweeted or reposted in the case of social media. Local language content is more readily read and considered by foreign audiences. If confirmed, I would encourage our Public Diplomacy teams to translate our messages considering cultural norms and local context in order to reach broader audiences.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

Answer. If confirmed as Chief of Mission, there would be no higher priority for me than the health, safety, and security of our personnel and family members serving overseas. This commitment extends to the handling of anomalous health incidents. If confirmed, I will make sure that the entire Embassy community is aware of what to do should a potential incident affect them, their colleagues, or their family members.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Mozambique personnel?

Answer. If confirmed, I would underscore that U.S. Government personnel and family members should immediately alert the Mission's health and security professionals at Post if they note any onset of unexplained medical symptoms. At the same time, I would reiterate that there is no stigma associated with reporting, and that every report will be taken seriously by our health and security professionals and the leadership of the Department.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively.

- In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Mozambique and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The U.S. Mission in Maputo works closely with like-minded European partners to support Mozambique's democracy by strengthening democratic institutions and coordinating engagement with the Government, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders. Our unified message with our partners must be that further efforts to combat corruption will improve the investment climate, advance shared goals of fiscal transparency, and counter money laundering and illicit financing. If confirmed, I will work through the U.S. interagency, multilateral financial institutions, and like-minded partners to support private sector growth in Mozambique, encourage good local governance practices, and promote U.S. business opportunities.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Mozambique remained on Tier 2 due to overall increasing efforts, but prosecuted fewer trafficking cases, convicted fewer traffickers, and did not proactively identify trafficking victims aside from criminal referrals.

- How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize our work to combat human trafficking, and I will consistently communicate the importance of combatting human trafficking through private exchanges and public diplomacy. If confirmed, I will encourage the Government of Mozambique to finalize its draft, national referral mechanism for trafficking victims. This will help community-level officials' efforts to identify victims of trafficking. Similarly, I will urge the government to finalize the implementing regulations for trafficking victims and witness protection. Both of these recommendations would enable a more victim-centered law enforcement approach to trafficking.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, religious intolerance and subsequent violence in Mozambique is a growing concern for the Embassy as well as Congress.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country and work to end religiously motivated violence?

Answer. Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor religious freedom in Mozambique. Northern Mozambique became susceptible to violence undergirded by extremist ideologies spread by disaffected youth. If confirmed, I would undertake an assessment of these factors to see which drivers of violent extremism can be addressed with policy solutions. I will also commit to working with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious freedom, addressing any religious freedom concerns, and further strengthening tolerance and respect among and for members of religious communities in Mozambique.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Mozambique was identified as having committed and baring witness to severe human rights abuses. Impunity remains a large problem.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to lead the Embassy's advocacy efforts as I engage the Government of Mozambique to address concerns detailed in the 2020 Human Rights Report.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

Answer. A key function of an embassy is to engage with governments and civil society. Often an embassy can be an effective forum for the exchange of ideas, as I indicated in my testimony, and a forum for debate on global challenges. If confirmed, I will encourage officers in the U.S. Embassy in Maputo to be receptive to listening to the concerns raised by civil society organizations and, if appropriate, helping to seek redress of specific problems on cases with the appropriate interlocutors in the host government. I would also look for synergistic opportunities to cooperate with these groups to advocate for reform, accountability, and respect for human rights.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO PETER D. HAAS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Human Rights*

*Question.* Attacks against religious minorities in Bangladesh are increasing. In recent days, at the end of the Hindu holiday of Durga Puja, press reports indicate more than two dozen homes of Hindu families were burned and at least two people were killed following a posting on social media perceived as insulting to Islam. What can the U.S. do to ensure the Government, which sometimes fans the flames of communal tensions, does to both quiet the violence and ensure accountability?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the recent violent attacks on Hindu temples and businesses in Bangladesh during the Durga Puja celebrations. There is no justification for attacks on religious minorities or violently disrupting sacred celebrations. Freedom of religion or belief is a human right. If confirmed, I intend to work with colleagues at Embassy Dhaka, in the Office of International Religious Freedom, and within the Department to advocate for the protection of all vulnerable communities, including religious minority groups in Bangladesh, through engagement with government officials and members of civil society. If confirmed, I will remain in contact with members of all religious faiths and ensure that the annual State Department International Religious Freedom Report accurately documents restrictions on religious freedom in Bangladesh.

*Question.* Extrajudicial killings by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) have spiked since the Government of Bangladesh began its "war on drugs" in the months ahead of the December 2018 elections. Last year, Sen. Young and I sent a bipartisan letter with eight of our other colleagues urging the Trump administration to impose sanctions on senior RAB commanders. Do you support imposing sanctions on senior commanders of Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), which has reportedly killed more than 400 people extrajudicially since 2015? Do I have your commitment to advocate within the department for a process to consider sanctions against Benazir Ahmed, the chief of police and former head of RAB?

Answer. The extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture committed by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) are of deep concern. I understand the United States does not provide security assistance to the RAB and that all Bangladeshi security forces units receiving assistance, including training, are vetted according to applicable laws including the Leahy law. If confirmed, I commit to consulting with Congress on the use of applicable authorities, including sanctions and visa ineligibilities, in order to advance our human rights interests and promote accountability for those responsible for human rights abuses and violations within the RAB. Conducting a thorough investigation of Benazir Ahmed's involvement in human rights abuses and violations aligns with the United States' commitment to human rights and accountability. If confirmed, I commit to supporting a thorough investigation of allegations against Benazir Ahmed's involvement with human rights abuses. I further commit to leveraging all applicable accountability tools to hold accountable those who abuse and violate human rights.

#### *Labor*

*Question.* Last year, this committee released a report that found workers in Bangladeshi garment factories faced increased intimidation, threats, and violence if they were involved in labor activism. Meanwhile, other workers in Bangladesh still face unsafe work conditions. Do I have your commitment to make support for labor rights a priority at the Embassy in Dhaka? Do you commit to engage with me and my staff on these issues throughout your tenure? Do you support the deployment of a dedicated labor attaché at the Embassy?

Answer. I am concerned about the status of labor rights, especially as it relates to freedom of association and workplace safety in Bangladesh. All workers should feel safe in their place of work and have available mechanisms to report and push back against labor abuses, including retaliation against workers for forming and joining unions of their choosing. If confirmed, I commit to making support for labor rights a priority at Embassy Dhaka and commit to working closely with you, your staff, and Congress on these issues during my tenure. I will ensure my team works to improve the environment for unions, supports worker empowerment, urges accountability for abuses against workers, and promotes freedom of association among workers across and between sectors, as well as continues to raise concerns about labor rights and abuses against employees at the highest levels of the Government of Bangladesh. The Department of Labor is already in the process of adding a labor attaché at Embassy Dhaka, and if confirmed, I commit to ensuring that this process proceeds quickly.

*Question.* How is State measuring Bangladesh's progress on labor rights in the aftermath of the 2013 Rana Plaza disaster and the July 2021 fire? Is the administration considering restoration of Dhaka's access to the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)? Under what circumstances or conditions would it do so?

Answer. Since the horrific building collapse at Rana Plaza in 2013, the United States Government has worked with partners across the international community, major industries, and Bangladeshi authorities to advocate for and enable improvements in factory safety, which included the establishment of new agreements by major international brands to enforce safety standards across factories. While these changes are encouraging, much more needs to be done to institutionalize safety standards across Bangladesh's major industries, as evidenced by the tragic Hashem Foods fire in July 2021. The Department of State works closely with the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and the Department of Labor to monitor Bangladesh's progress meeting internationally recognized labor rights, especially workplace safety, freedom of association, and collective bargaining. I commit, if confirmed, to upholding the position that restoring Bangladesh's GSP benefits must be contingent upon strengthening labor rights and workplace safety, as well as improving the overall business and civil society operational environment.

#### *Attack on Ambassador Bernicat*

*Question.* In August 2018, armed persons attacked a vehicle carrying U.S. Ambassador Marcia Bernicat after she met with civil society activists in November 2018. Congress still does not have a clear understanding of exactly what happened. Your safety as ambassador is of paramount concern to me. What is being done to bring the culprits—who have already been publicly identified—to justice? Will you bring this issue up with the Government, if confirmed?

Answer. The Department is closely following proceedings against nine individuals accused of attacking Ambassador Marcia Bernicat's motorcade with bricks. Charges were officially filed and accepted by a court in March 2021. If confirmed, I will work with my team in Dhaka and the Government of Bangladesh to ensure full account-

ability for this act. Moreover, if confirmed, the health and safety of those supporting the mission and their families will be my highest priority.

*Question.* How do you think the U.S. can use its leverage on trade, development and security assistance to advance the protection of human rights, including of Rohingya? Further, how can the U.S. utilize economic cooperation to ensure that Bangladesh will improve or develop clear social and environmental policies and practices which are inclusive and nondiscriminatory of all communities, including Rohingya?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support President Biden's commitment to place human rights at the center of our foreign policy. That includes looking at all the tools the United States has to incentivize Bangladesh to take actions that advance the human rights of its people, particularly related to reversing democratic backsliding and holding perpetrators accountable for human rights abuses. Our humanitarian and development assistance also plays an essential role in easing tensions between Rohingya refugees and host communities. The United States is the largest single-country destination for Bangladeshi exports, and our economic partnership with Bangladesh can support our broader foreign policy goals in the areas of human rights and sustainable development. If confirmed, I will utilize the tools that the United States has available—including infrastructure credentialing programs like the Blue Dot Network—to ensure that U.S. economic cooperation with Bangladesh has a central focus on inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and transparent financing.

#### *Humanitarian*

*Question.* The protection environment in the Rohingya refugee camps continues to deteriorate. This has been heightened even more following Mohib Ullah's assassination.

- How do you plan to work with UNHCR and the Government of Bangladesh to ensure the root causes of insecurity, such as impunity for criminal and militant actors, are recognized and that protection needs are adequately and expeditiously addressed?
- How will you press the Bangladeshi Government to prioritize security and protection of Rohingya activists and all Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar while avoiding over securitization of the camps?
- What should the United States do to urge the Bangladeshi Government to guarantee the protection and rights of Rohingya in Bhasan Char?

*Answer.* Like you, I was deeply saddened and disturbed by the murder of Mohib Ullah. If confirmed, I commit to pressing the Government of Bangladesh to improve the safety of Rohingya refugees by addressing the root causes of insecurity in the camps in Cox's Bazar and ensuring those who commit crimes or abuses are held accountable. I will also continue to advocate for unhindered humanitarian access for protection activities in the camps, especially for the most vulnerable Rohingya refugees, and expanded freedom of movement for Rohingya in the camps. Regarding Bhasan Char, I plan to work with my team to continue to encourage dialogue between the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. on safe living conditions, freedom of movement, and adequate protection for Rohingya on the island. I will work closely with colleagues across the Department and interagency to ensure that U.S.-funded programming takes these security, human rights, and protection considerations for Rohingya into account and work with donor nations and U.N. agencies to advocate for government actions when necessary.

*Question.* How can the United States promote and support rights-respecting, sustainable solutions for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, particularly in light of the February coup in Burma?

*Answer.* The February 1 military coup d'état and horrific violence perpetrated by the military regime in Burma have closed the door for the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees to Burma in the near future. The military leaders who launched the coup are many of the same people responsible for atrocities against Rohingya. If confirmed, I commit to continue working closely with the U.S. Mission to the U.N., the U.N.'s Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, and the Missions of other likeminded countries to promote justice and accountability for the Rohingya crisis, including at the U.N. Security Council. A durable solution to the Rohingya crisis will require the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees to Burma, when conditions allow. A return to Burma for Rohingya would require addressing the root causes of their displacement and violence against them.

*Question.* How can the U.S., as by far the largest donor to the humanitarian response, engage constructively with Government of Bangladesh counterparts to ensure Rohingya fundamental rights are protected, including basic security and access to education, and that Rohingya are consulted in the process?

*Answer.* The United States is the largest contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, having provided more than \$1.5 billion to affected communities in Bangladesh, Burma, and elsewhere in the region since August 2017. USG assistance supports U.N. and NGO programming for education, livelihood opportunities, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, prevention and response to gender-based violence, and other activities that are critical to ensuring Rohingya rights and security. Accountability to affected populations, which ensures that refugee participation and feedback are a part of every step of the process, is an essential part of all USG humanitarian assistance for the Rohingya refugee response. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that the United States Government continues to support the Rohingya crisis response, including in consultation with Rohingya to determine their security and protection needs.

*Question.* COVID restrictions have largely been lifted in the camps but limitations in programming and bureaucratic restrictions for implementers remain, especially for education and livelihood activities. If confirmed, how will you work with the Government of Bangladesh and U.N. Agencies to push for consistent, unhindered access to the camps for humanitarian actors, access to protection services for refugees, and expanded education and livelihood opportunities?

*Answer.* As the largest contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, the United States has a major role to play in advocating for unhindered access to the camps for humanitarian actors to improve access to services, including education, vocational and skills trainings, and other livelihood opportunities for Rohingya refugees. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with the Government of Bangladesh to reduce bureaucratic barriers to U.N. and NGO operations and ensure that security measures such as fencing do not impede life-saving activities, including protection and disaster prevention and response.

*Question.* The MoU recently signed between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR allows for livelihoods and formal education on Bhasan Char, activities that Bangladesh has been very resistant to allow in the camps in Cox's Bazar. How will you work with Bangladesh and U.N. agencies to ensure there isn't a further increase in restrictions in Cox's Bazar as a means to compel Rohingya to relocate to Bhasan Char and to encourage a parity of services between the two?

*Answer.* The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that the United States will not accept any double standards in conditions, protections, and services for Rohingya refugees between Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. If confirmed, I will work with the international community, other donors, and UNHCR to press the Government of Bangladesh not to curtail livelihoods and education programs for Rohingya in the camps in Cox's Bazar or further restrict refugee rights in order to pressure refugees to relocate to Bhasan Char. As for the feasibility of services on the island, I look forward to reviewing UNHCR's assessment and operations plan.

*Question.* Following the MoU recently signed between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR, there are still questions on measures that will be taken to ensure voluntariness of relocation to Bhasan Char. There is substantial evidence that prior relocations involved coercion and false promises. How do you think the U.S. can work to ensure informed consent of Rohingya prior to further relocations?

*Answer.* The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocations of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char must be safe, informed, and voluntary. Refugees should also be permitted to move freely between the island and Cox's Bazar. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the Department and interagency to urge the Government of Bangladesh to uphold humanitarian principles. The Department welcomes the Government of Bangladesh signing an MoU with the U.N. establishing a framework of cooperation on U.N. engagement on Bhasan Char. The Department also supports UNHCR's request that the Government of Bangladesh allow the U.N. to conduct an assessment of the island prior to resuming relocations. If confirmed, I will work with my team to continue to encourage dialogue between the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. on safe living conditions and adequate protection for Rohingya on Bhasan Char. Any U.S. Government funding for operations on Bhasan Char would have to be conditioned on a demonstrated commitment to a principled humanitarian response, including voluntary relocations and freedom of movement between the island and Cox's Bazar.

I am committed to working with Congress as we continue to assess whether these conditions can be met.

*Question.* While the MoU guarantees freedom of movement on Bhasan Char, there is no mechanism for enabling Rohingya to return to Cox's Bazar. Hundreds of Rohingya have attempted to flee the island, with some dying in boat accidents and others detained and returned to the island against their will, underscoring Bangladesh's narrow view of "voluntariness." If confirmed, how will you work to address these issues?

*Answer.* The Department is following closely the relocation of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char and has made it clear that such relocations must be safe, informed, and voluntary. Refugees should also be permitted to move freely on Bhasan Char as well as to and from Cox's Bazar. The Department welcomes the Government of Bangladesh's agreement to sign an MoU with the U.N. establishing a framework of cooperation on U.N. engagement on Bhasan Char. The MoU ensures the stay of refugees on Bhasan Char is voluntary and permits refugees' freedom of movement including to and from the island on a needs basis. If confirmed, I will work with UNHCR and the international community to ensure that the Government of Bangladesh upholds these principles in practice, which includes allowing Rohingya refugees to return to Cox's Bazar in a timely manner should they find their stay on Bhasan Char untenable.

*Question.* Rohingya are seeking accountability and justice for the crimes committed against them, including genocide and crimes against humanity; Bangladesh has largely been supportive of these efforts. The United States is yet to make a genocide determination though we know from Secretary Blinken's comments that a determination process is ongoing. What accountability measures do you believe would be appropriate for the United States to take in response to the atrocities against the Rohingya? If confirmed, how would you support such measures?

*Answer.* The violence against Rohingya is truly horrifying. As Secretary Blinken has said, the State Department is committed to reviewing this issue and taking steps necessary to address these atrocities and make sure they never happen again. One aspect of that review is considering the question of genocide determination. If confirmed, I commit to supporting this process and exploring other methods to seek accountability and justice for these crimes.

#### *Regional Diplomacy*

*Question.* The Rohingya crisis and military coup in Burma have cross-border dimensions and far-reaching regional implications. If confirmed, how will you work with regional governments to promote constructive engagement with issues of concern to both Bangladesh and the U.S.? How will you work with your counterparts in Dhaka to improve collective engagement on shared interests, including on the Rohingya?

*Answer.* The impacts of the Rohingya crisis are felt throughout the region. If confirmed, I will coordinate with U.S. embassies in neighboring countries to highlight the importance of sharing their responsibilities by rescuing and allowing safe disembarkation and reception of Rohingya refugees in their waters and on the high seas, including by providing shelter, healthcare services, protection against abuses, and access to UNHCR to assess their protection claims. I also plan to regularly meet with other donor nations, U.N. agencies, NGOs, and the Government of Bangladesh to coordinate on Rohingya issues.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

*Question.* Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* I am also deeply troubled by potential anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and family members. Serving one's country overseas should not come at the cost of one's health. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel, and must be taken extremely seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Mission Dhaka staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that all reported potential anomalous health incidents are given serious attention and reported swiftly through the appropriate channels. I will also ensure that staff who are affected by these incidents receive prompt access to the treatment, support, and medical care that they need.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at Embassy Dhaka to discuss past reported anomalous health incidents so that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Mission Dhaka staff and ensure that all protocols regarding anomalous health incidents are followed appropriately.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO PETER D. HAAS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Bangladesh remained on Tier 2 for ongoing improving effort, including increasing prosecutions, but declining convictions as well as forced labor and sex trafficking of Rohingya, among other pressing issues. How will you work with the Bangladeshi Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* The exploitation of human beings through trafficking and sexual exploitation is a horrific crime. The Government of Bangladesh remained on Tier 2 because it does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking; however, it is making efforts to do so. Nevertheless, trafficking in persons remains a persistent challenge in the country, including in Rohingya refugee camps, and refugee communities are vulnerable to forced labor, sex trafficking, and other serious abuses. If confirmed, I commit to pressing the Government of Bangladesh to continue its efforts to prevent, protect, and prosecute human trafficking. I will also work with the Government of Bangladesh to urge that trafficking survivors receive shelter, psychosocial care, and justice through the appropriate governmental mechanisms.

*Question.* Please describe your planned engagement with the office of the Ambassador at Large to combat and monitor trafficking in persons, given the high rates of forced labor and sex trafficking of Rohingya refugees.

*Answer.* If confirmed, my team at Embassy Dhaka and I will work collaboratively with the Office of the Ambassador-at-Large to Combat and Monitor Trafficking-In-Persons (J/TIP) to accurately depict the situation in Bangladesh in the annual Trafficking-In-Persons Report. I will also coordinate with J/TIP, USAID, and other inter-agency partners to implement programs that support victims of trafficking and work to expand livelihood opportunities to prevent trafficking in the first place.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, the U.S. Embassy is described as having robust, routine engagement to foster a climate of religious tolerance and consistently encouraging the Bangladesh Government to respect the rights of religious minorities. Obviously, this is an ongoing issue that will require your consistent engagement, if confirmed. What is your assessment of this particular issue and, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Bangladesh is the third-largest Muslim majority country in the world. It is also home to members of Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, and other faiths. Its constitution commits the Government to maintaining secularism, a commitment the Prime Minister reiterated after the horrible violence against Hindus during this year's Durga Puja celebration. These tragic events show that there is still much to be done to maintain a secular, tolerant society. If confirmed, Embassy Dhaka and I will work with colleagues in the Office of International Religious Freedom led by the Ambassador-at-Large, and elsewhere within the Department to advocate for the protection of all vulnerable communities, including religious minority groups in Bangladesh, through engagement with government officials and members of civil society.

If confirmed, Embassy Dhaka and I will remain in contact with members of various religious faiths to publicly demonstrate the U.S. Government's support for religious freedom and ensure that the annual State Department International Religious Freedom Report accurately documents restrictions or progress on religious freedom in Bangladesh. If confirmed, my team and I will coordinate with USAID and the Office of International Religious Freedom to find ways to use foreign assistance to bolster religious freedom and promote harmonious inter-communal relations.

*Question.* There have been increased security incidents inside of the refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar, including a recent targeted killing of a Rohingya leader. How do you plan on engaging with the Bangladeshi Government to address security concerns and ensure that justice is served?

*Answer.* I recognize the challenges and responsibilities that Bangladesh is facing in hosting approximately 900,000 Rohingya refugees. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Government of Bangladesh, the international community, and other donors to find a durable solution to the crisis.

As the international community works towards a durable solution, we should urge that Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar be protected and have safe and humane living conditions. If confirmed, I commit to pressing the Government of Bangladesh to improve the safety of refugees residing in the camps in Cox's Bazar. I will note the importance of addressing the root causes of insecurity in the camps and ensuring that those who commit crimes (to include individuals from the security forces) and abuses are held accountable in accordance with the law. I will also encourage the Government of Bangladesh to provide freedom of movement for Rohingya and permit increased access to livelihood and educational opportunities to reduce refugees' vulnerability to labor and sexual exploitation.

*Question.* The Digital Security Act (DSA) in Bangladesh is another repressive step to stifle freedom of expression, particularly online.

- Do you believe that "internet shutdowns" are a threat to human rights?

*Answer.* The internet is a lifeline to information as well as a platform for people to exercise their human right to freedom of expression. Governments that use "internet shutdowns" to stifle freedom of expression and the media, including criticisms of the Government and alternative political viewpoints, are contravening the universal right to freedom of expression. Freedom of expression is vital for a healthy democracy. Members of the media, civil society organizations, and opposing political parties should be able peacefully to express their views and advocate for policy change without fearing retribution. An accessible internet is an important conduit for free expression.

*Question.* Do you believe that people should be able to freely express themselves online without fear of authoritarian creep into their privacy?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that people should be able to freely express themselves online without fear of persecution or retribution from their Government.

*Question.* How will you engage with the host government on this important issue?

*Answer.* bring the law into compliance with Bangladesh's international obligations on human rights. Amending or repealing the Digital Security Act will allow the people of Bangladesh to exercise their right to freedom of expression; that right includes peacefully criticizing their Government and presenting alternative political viewpoints and restoring a healthy and functioning civil society space in Bangladesh. Additionally, I will continue to urge government authorities to provide a fair trial and safe detention guarantees to those already charged, arrested, or detained under the law. If confirmed, I commit to addressing the anti-democratic, speech-suppressing effects of the Digital Security Act, when they arise.

*Question.* How can you work with functional and regional bureaus in the Department on internet freedom, especially as more programs are formed to bolster freedom of expression within civil society in country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor as well as the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs to ensure that U.S. Government programming highlights the importance of internet freedom, freedom of expression, and the centrality of both to a healthy, vibrant civil society.

*Question.* This law is being used to harass and detain journalists in an already hostile environment to their profession. How will you work to improve conditions for the press in Bangladesh?



Answer. I share your concerns about the growing application of various laws to intimidate journalists, such as in the case of investigative journalist Rozina Islam who was arrested and charged under the Official Secrets Act. A free press is vital to a government that is accountable to its people and to a healthy, public debate about the future of a country. If confirmed, I will work with like-minded nations to sound an alarm about potential abuses of power that could stifle the work of journalists. I will also coordinate within the Department and with USAID to execute programs to train journalists and offer exchange opportunities to build the capacity of investigative journalists in Bangladesh.

*Question.* As conditions in Burma continue to deteriorate, Bangladesh has graciously hosted close to 1 million Rohingya refugees. Yet, the Government shut off their internet for almost a year, denied children formal access to education, and built barbed wire fences around the camps. It has been reported that refugees in the camps are also extremely vulnerable to trafficking, forced labor, and other horrific crimes. Please describe your engagement to encourage additional protection for Rohingya refugees.

Answer. I recognize the challenges and responsibilities that the Rohingya refugee crisis has placed on the Government and people, especially the host community, of Bangladesh. The United States is the largest contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, having provided more than \$1.5 billion to affected communities in Bangladesh, Burma, and elsewhere in the region since August 2017. USG assistance supports U.N. and NGO programming for case management, education, livelihood opportunities, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, prevention and response to gender-based violence, and other activities that are critical to protecting Rohingya rights and ensuring their security. If confirmed, I will continue to press the Government of Bangladesh to permit Rohingya increased access to livelihood and educational opportunities and expanded freedom of movement inside Bangladesh. I will request that security measures such as fencing do not impede life-saving activities, including protection and disaster prevention and response. I will also work closely with colleagues across the Department and inter-agency, so that protection continues to be at the core of U.S.-funded programming for Rohingya refugees.

*Question.* Over the last two years, the Government of Bangladesh placed gradual numbers of Rohingya on a silt island in the Bay of Bengal, Bhasan Char, under the premise it was “temporary.” The Government denied access to NGOs and the U.N. for protected visits, and refugees reported abuse by government authorities. Now that Bangladesh and UNHCR have cemented a Memorandum of Understanding about protection of the populations on the island, it is imperative that the United States, as well as other donors, have visibility into the operations both on the island and in the mainland camps.

- Do you commit, if confirmed, to briefing congress about the ongoing Bhasan Char agreement and any changes to U.S. policy towards resettlement on Bhasan Char?

Answer. If confirmed, I will commit to communicating with Congress about ongoing developments related to the Rohingya humanitarian crisis in Bangladesh. I will ensure that Embassy Dhaka’s reporting on Bhasan Char agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding with the U.N. are accurate, timely, and communicated to Washington quickly.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to encourage the Government of Bangladesh to reconsider sending Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char?

Answer. The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocations of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char must be safe, informed, and voluntary. Refugees should also be permitted to move freely between the island and Cox’s Bazar. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the Department and interagency to urge the Government of Bangladesh to uphold these humanitarian principles. The Department welcomes the Government of Bangladesh signing an MOU with the U.N. establishing a framework of cooperation on U.N. engagement on Bhasan Char. The Department also supports UNHCR’s request that the Government of Bangladesh allow the U.N. to conduct an assessment of the island prior to resuming relocations. If confirmed, I will work with my team at Embassy Dhaka to continue to encourage dialogue between the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. on safe living conditions and adequate protection for Rohingya on Bhasan Char. Any U.S. Government funding for operations on Bhasan Char would have to be conditioned on a demonstrated commitment to a principled humanitarian re-

sponse, including voluntary relocations and freedom of movement between the island and Cox's Bazar.

*Question.* Please explain your plan of engagement with the Bangladesh Government about the plight of the Rohingya people and the necessity of protection and adequate resources for them.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will coordinate within the U.S. Government to provide protection and assistance and develop durable solutions for Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi host communities. I understand that since August 2017, the U.S. Government has provided more than \$1.5 billion to affected communities in Bangladesh, which supports life-saving humanitarian assistance to Rohingya refugees across all sectors of the response, including education, emergency telecommunications, food security, health, logistics, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene. The assistance also supports programs to improve disaster preparedness and bolster access to education and livelihoods for Rohingya and host communities. This helps safeguard Rohingya refugees until their voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return to Burma when conditions allow. I will also continue to press the Government of Bangladesh to allow unhindered access to the camps for humanitarian actors to improve protection and access to services, including educational, vocational and skills training, and other livelihood opportunities for Rohingya refugees.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO PETER D. HAAS BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* Rohingyas are seeking accountability and justice for the crimes committed against them, including genocide and crimes against humanity; Bangladesh has largely been supportive of these efforts. The United States is yet to make a genocide determination though we know from Secretary Blinken's comments that a determination process is ongoing. What accountability measures do you believe would be appropriate for the United States to take in response to the atrocities against the Rohingyas? If confirmed, how would you support such measures?

*Answer.* The violence committed against Rohingyas is truly horrifying. As Secretary Blinken has said, the State Department is committed to reviewing this issue and taking steps necessary to address these atrocities and make sure they never happen again. One aspect of that review is considering the question of genocide determination. If confirmed, I commit to supporting this process and exploring other methods to seek accountability and justice for these crimes.

*Question.* While I recognize and appreciate the Government of Bangladesh's generosity for taking in nearly one million Rohingya refugees, prospects for repatriation in the near-term appear slim and conditions continue to deteriorate in Cox's Bazar. Recognizing the difficult position Bangladesh is in, how will you nonetheless encourage your counterparts in the Bangladesh Government to take a more constructive approach to the growing humanitarian and security challenges in Cox's Bazar if you are confirmed? What, in your view, are the key elements that must be addressed?

*Answer.* I recognize the challenges and responsibilities that Bangladesh is facing in hosting approximately 900,000 Rohingya refugees. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Government of Bangladesh, the international community, and other donors to find a durable solution to the crisis. We thank and recognize the Government of Bangladesh for hosting Rohingya refugees and urge Bangladesh to attend to Rohingyas' protection as much as possible.

As the international community works towards a durable solution, we should ensure that Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar are protected and have safe and humane living conditions. If confirmed, I commit to pressing the Government of Bangladesh to improve the safety of refugees residing in the camps in Cox's Bazar by addressing the root causes of insecurity in the camps and ensuring those who commit crimes and abuses are held accountable. I will also press Bangladesh to permit Rohingyas increased access to livelihood and educational opportunities to reduce refugees' vulnerability to labor and sexual exploitation. Improving the relations between Rohingya refugees and host communities through humanitarian and development programming and protecting civil society in Cox's Bazar are also key items I will look to address.

*Question.* COVID restrictions have largely been lifted in the camps but limitations in programming and bureaucratic restrictions for implementers remain, especially for education and livelihood activities. If confirmed, how will you work with the Government of Bangladesh and U.N. Agencies to push for consistent, unhindered access

to the camps for humanitarian actors, access to protection services for refugees, and expanded education and livelihood opportunities?

*Answer.* As the largest contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, the United States has a major role to play in advocating for unhindered access to the camps for humanitarian actors to improve access to services, including educational, vocational and skills training, and other livelihood opportunities for Rohingya refugees. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with the Government of Bangladesh to reduce bureaucratic barriers to U.N. and NGO operations and ensure that security measures such as fencing do not impede life-saving activities, including protection and disaster prevention and response.

*Question.* The MoU recently signed between the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR) allows for livelihoods and formal education on Bhasan Char, activities that Bangladesh has been very resistant to allow in the camps in Cox's Bazar. How will you work with Bangladesh and U.N. agencies to ensure there isn't a further increase in restrictions in Cox's Bazar as a means to compel Rohingya to relocate to Bhasan Char and to encourage a parity of services between the two?

*Answer.* The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that the United States will not accept any double standards in conditions, protections, and services for Rohingya refugees between Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. If confirmed, I will work with the international community, other donors, and UNHCR to press the Government of Bangladesh not to curtail livelihoods and educational programs for Rohingya in the camps in Cox's Bazar or further restrict refugee rights in order to pressure refugees to relocate to Bhasan Char. As for the feasibility of services on the island, I look forward to reviewing UNHCR's assessment and operations plan.

*Question.* Following the MoU recently signed between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR, there are still questions on measures that will be taken to ensure that relocation to Bhasan Char is voluntary and ensure freedom of movement for those who choose to relocate there. There is substantial evidence that prior relocations involved coercion and false promises. How do you think the U.S. can work to ensure informed consent of Rohingya prior to further relocations? Further, while the MoU guarantees freedom of movement on Bhasan Char, there is no mechanism for enabling Rohingya to return to Cox's Bazar. Hundreds of Rohingya have attempted to flee the island, with some dying in boat accidents and others detained and returned to the island against their will, underscoring Bangladesh's narrow view of "voluntariness." If confirmed, how will you work to address these issues?

*Answer.* The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocations of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char must be safe, informed, and voluntary. Refugees should also be permitted to move freely between the island and Cox's Bazar. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the Department and interagency to urge the Government of Bangladesh to uphold these humanitarian principles. The Department welcomes the Government of Bangladesh signing an MOU with the U.N. establishing a framework of cooperation on U.N. engagement on Bhasan Char. The Department also supports UNHCR's request that the Government of Bangladesh allow the U.N. to conduct an assessment of the island prior to resuming relocations. If confirmed, I will work with my team at Embassy Dhaka to continue to encourage dialogue between the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. on safe living conditions and adequate protection for Rohingya on Bhasan Char. Any U.S. Government funding for operations on Bhasan Char would have to be conditioned on a demonstrated commitment to a principled humanitarian response, including voluntary relocations and freedom of movement between the island and Cox's Bazar. I am committed to working with Congress as we continue to assess whether these conditions can be met.

*Question.* How will you work with the U.S. Mission to the U.N. to ensure the Rohingya crisis is on the agenda of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC), including issues related to accountability, and increase the political price for China to block any meaningful UNSC action?

*Answer.* The United States is stronger when it works with partners. If confirmed, I commit to continue working closely with the U.S. Mission to the U.N., the U.N.'s Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, and the Missions of other likeminded countries to promote justice and accountability for the Rohingya crisis, including at the U.N. Security Council. A durable solution to the Rohingya crisis will require the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees to Burma, when conditions allow. A return to Burma for the Rohingya would

require addressing the root causes of their displacement and violence against them. Many of those who led the February military coup in Burma are also the same individuals largely responsible for the atrocities against Rohingya. Working together with partners in the U.N. will ensure that this issue does not go unaddressed due to China's role on the UNSC and will underline to the PRC that the international community's norms include treating refugees humanely and that the international community has a duty to protect refugees.

*Question.* The Rohingya crisis and military coup in Burma have cross-border dimensions and far-reaching regional implications. If confirmed, how will you work with regional governments to promote constructive engagement with issues of concern to both Bangladesh and the U.S.?

*Answer.* The impacts of the Rohingya crisis are felt throughout the region. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the U.S. embassies in Bangladesh's neighboring countries to highlight the importance of Bangladesh's neighbors sharing their responsibilities to protect the most vulnerable of human beings, by rescuing and allowing safe disembarkation and reception of Rohingya refugees in their waters and on the high seas, including by providing shelter, healthcare services, and access to UNHCR to assess their protection claims.

*Question.* Bangladesh has vocally called for developed countries to meet their \$100 billion annual pledge for climate finance. How important is it that the United States lead by example through its climate finance investments to help move Bangladesh towards a carbon free future?

*Answer.* Bangladesh is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and it is vitally important that the United States leads by example to help Bangladesh's move towards a carbon-free future. President Biden has announced his intent to work with Congress to increase the United States' international climate financing, including an increase in adaptation support to fully six-fold from its peak under President Obama—to \$3 billion. If confirmed, I commit to working diligently to support Embassy Dhaka's continuing work to ensure that U.S. climate finance and assistance supports Bangladesh's climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, as well as its efforts to deploy renewable energy technology.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO PETER D. HAAS BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* As the U.S. and Bangladesh both look to increase opportunities to expand their trade and commercial relationship bilaterally, how do you intend to balance economic policy and human rights concerns?

*Answer.* As the eighth most populous country in the world coupled with dynamic economic growth, Bangladesh presents tremendous opportunity for U.S. investment and economic collaboration. However, there are also worrying trends in Bangladesh's human rights record, especially related to crackdowns on freedom of expression and the press. If confirmed, I will continue to press Bangladesh to uphold democratic principles and respect human rights, while seeking a stronger economic partnership with Bangladesh. For example, one way our economic partnership can support human rights is to work with the Government of Bangladesh on improving worker rights, which would improve the country's business environment and attract more U.S. investment.

*Question.* How do you think the U.S. can use its leverage on trade, development and security assistance to advance the protection of human rights, including of Rohingya? Further, how can the U.S. utilize economic cooperation to ensure that Bangladesh will improve or develop clear social and environmental policies and practices which are inclusive and nondiscriminatory of all communities, including Rohingya?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support President Biden's commitment to place human rights at the center of our foreign policy. That includes looking at all the tools the United States has to incentivize Bangladesh to take actions that advance the human rights of its people, particularly related to reversing democratic backsliding and holding perpetrators accountable for human rights abuses. Our humanitarian and development assistance also plays an essential role in easing tensions between Rohingya refugees and host communities. The United States is the largest single-country destination for Bangladeshi exports, and our economic partnership with Bangladesh can support our broader foreign policy goals in the areas of human rights and sustainable development. If confirmed, I will utilize the tools that the

United States has available—including infrastructure credentialing programs like the Blue Dot Network—to ensure that U.S. economic cooperation with Bangladesh has a central focus on inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and transparent financing.

*Question.* How can the US, as by far the largest donor to the humanitarian response, engage constructively with Government of Bangladesh counterparts to ensure Rohingya fundamental rights are protected, including basic security and access to education, and that Rohingya are consulted in the process?

*Answer.* The United States is the largest contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, having provided more than \$1.5 billion to affected communities in Bangladesh, Burma, and elsewhere in the region since August 2017. USG assistance supports U.N. and NGO programming for education, livelihood opportunities, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, prevention and response to gender-based violence, and other activities that are critical to ensuring Rohingya rights and security. Accountability to affected populations, which ensures that refugee participation and feedback are a part of every step of the process, is an essential part of all USG humanitarian assistance for the Rohingya refugee response. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that the United States Government continues to support the Rohingya crisis response, including in consultation with Rohingya to determine their security and protection needs.

*Question.* While we recognize and appreciate the Government of Bangladesh's generosity for taking in nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees, prospects for repatriation in the near-term appear slim and conditions continue to deteriorate in Cox's Bazar. Recognizing the difficult position Bangladesh is in, how will you nonetheless encourage your counterparts in the Bangladesh Government to take a more constructive approach to the crisis if you are confirmed? What, in your view, are the elements of such an approach?

*Answer.* I recognize the challenges and responsibilities that Bangladesh is facing in hosting approximately 900,000 Rohingya refugees. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Government of Bangladesh, the international community, and other donors to find a durable solution to the crisis. We thank and recognize the Government of Bangladesh for hosting Rohingya refugees and urge Bangladesh to attend to Rohingyas' protection as much as possible.

But while the international community works towards a durable solution, ensuring that Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar are protected and have safe and humane living conditions is paramount. If confirmed, I commit to pressing the Government of Bangladesh to improve the safety of refugees residing in the camps in Cox's Bazar by addressing the root causes of insecurity in the camps and ensuring those who commit crimes and abuses are held accountable. I will also press Bangladesh to permit Rohingya increased access to livelihood and educational opportunities in order to reduce refugees' vulnerability to labor and sexual exploitation. Improving the relations between Rohingya refugees and host communities through humanitarian and development programming and protecting civil society in Cox's Bazar are also key items I will address.

*Question.* The protection environment in the camps continues to deteriorate. This has been heightened even more following Mohibullah's assassination. How do you plan to work with UNHCR and the Government of Bangladesh to ensure the root causes of insecurity, such as impunity for criminal and militant actors, are recognized and that protection needs are adequately and expeditiously addressed?

*Answer.* The Department was deeply saddened and disturbed by the murder of Mohib Ullah. If confirmed, I commit to pressing the Government of Bangladesh to improve the safety of Rohingya refugees by addressing the root causes of insecurity in the camps in Cox's Bazar and ensuring those who commit crimes or abuses are held accountable. I will also continue to advocate for expanded humanitarian access for protection activities in the camps, especially for the most vulnerable Rohingya refugees. I will work closely with colleagues across the Department and interagency to ensure that U.S.-funded programming takes these considerations into account and work with donor nations and U.N. agencies to advocate for government actions when necessary.

*Question.* COVID restrictions have largely been lifted in the camps but limitations in programming and bureaucratic restrictions for implementers remain, especially for education and livelihood activities. If confirmed, how will you work with the Government of Bangladesh and U.N. Agencies to push for consistent, unhindered access to the camps for humanitarian actors, access to protection services for refugees, and expanded education and livelihood opportunities?

*Answer.* As the largest contributor of humanitarian assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, the United States has a major role to play in advocating for unhindered access to the camps for humanitarian actors to improve access to services, including education, vocational and skills trainings, and other livelihood opportunities for Rohingya refugees. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with the Government of Bangladesh to reduce bureaucratic barriers to U.N. and NGO operations and ensure that security measures such as fencing do not impede life-saving activities, including protection and disaster prevention and response.

*Question.* The MoU recently signed between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR allows for livelihoods and formal education on Bhasan Char, activities that Bangladesh has been very resistant to allow in the camps in Cox's Bazar. How will you work with Bangladesh and U.N. agencies to ensure there isn't a further increase in restrictions in Cox's Bazar as a means to compel Rohingya to relocate to Bhasan Char and to encourage a parity of services between the two?

*Answer.* The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that the United States will not accept any double standards in conditions, protections, and services for Rohingya refugees between Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. If confirmed, I will work with the international community, other donors, and UNHCR to press the Government of Bangladesh not to curtail livelihoods and education programs for Rohingya in the camps in Cox's Bazar or further restrict refugee rights in order to pressure refugees to relocate to Bhasan Char. As for the feasibility of services on the island, I look forward to reviewing UNHCR's assessment and operations plan.

*Question.* Following the MoU recently signed between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR, there are still questions on measures that will be taken to ensure voluntariness of relocation to Bhasan Char. There is substantial evidence that prior relocations involved coercion and false promises. How do you think the U.S. can work to ensure informed consent of Rohingya prior to further relocations? Further, while the MoU guarantees freedom of movement on Bhasan Char, there is no mechanism for enabling Rohingya to return to Cox's Bazar. Hundreds of Rohingya have attempted to flee the island, with some dying in boat accidents and others detained and returned to the island against their will, underscoring Bangladesh's narrow view of "voluntariness." If confirmed, how will you work to address these issues?

*Answer.* The Department has made it clear to the Government of Bangladesh that any relocations of Rohingya refugees to Bhasan Char must be safe, informed, and voluntary. Refugees should also be permitted to move freely between the island and Cox's Bazar. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the Department and interagency to urge the Government of Bangladesh to uphold these humanitarian principles. The Department welcomes the Government of Bangladesh signing an MOU with the U.N. establishing a framework of cooperation on U.N. engagement on Bhasan Char. The Department also supports UNHCR's request that the Government of Bangladesh allow the U.N. to conduct an assessment of the island prior to resuming relocations. If confirmed, I will work with my team to continue to encourage dialogue between the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. on safe living conditions and adequate protection for Rohingya on Bhasan Char. Any U.S. Government funding for operations on Bhasan Char would have to be conditioned on a demonstrated commitment to a principled humanitarian response, including voluntary relocations and freedom of movement between the island and Cox's Bazar. I am committed to working with Congress as we continue to assess whether these conditions can be met.

*Question.* How will you work with your counterparts in Dhaka to improve collective engagement on shared interests, including on the Rohingya?

*Answer.* One of our nation's greatest strengths is our network of allies and partners. If confirmed, I will work closely with both our traditional and emerging partners in the Indo-Pacific. For instance, I look forward to coordinating with G7 nations on infrastructure through the Build Back Better World Partnership, and to working with Quad nations and Bangladesh itself on public health and climate adaptation. I also plan to regularly meet with other donor nations, U.N. agencies, NGOs, and the Government of Bangladesh to coordinate on Rohingya issues.

*Question.* How will you work with the U.S. Mission to the U.N. to ensure the Rohingya crisis is on the agenda of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC), including issues related to accountability, and increase the political price for China to block any meaningful UNSC action?

*Answer.* The United States is stronger when it works with partners. If confirmed, I commit to continue working closely with the U.S. Mission to the U.N., the U.N.'s Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, and the Missions of other likeminded countries to promote justice and accountability for the Rohingya crisis, including at the U.N. Security Council. A durable solution to the Rohingya crisis will require the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees to Burma, when conditions allow. A return to Burma for the Rohingya would require addressing the root causes of their displacement and violence against them. Many of those who led the February military coup in Burma are also the same individuals largely responsible for the atrocities against Rohingya. Working together with partners in the U.N. will ensure that this issue does not go unaddressed due to China's role on the UNSC and will underline to the PRC that the international community's norms include treating refugees humanely and that the international community has a duty to protect refugees.

*Question.* The Rohingya crisis and military coup in Burma have cross-border dimensions and far-reaching regional implications. If confirmed, how will you work with regional governments to promote constructive engagement with issues of concern to both Bangladesh and the U.S.?

*Answer.* The impacts of the Rohingya crisis are felt throughout the region. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the U.S. embassies in Bangladesh's neighboring countries to highlight the importance of Bangladesh's neighbors sharing their responsibilities to protect the most vulnerable of human beings by rescuing and allowing safe disembarkation and reception of Rohingya refugees in their waters and on the high seas, including by providing shelter, healthcare services, and access to UNHCR to assess their protection claims.

*Question.* Rohingya are seeking accountability and justice for the crimes committed against them, including genocide and crimes against humanity; Bangladesh has largely been supportive of these efforts. The United States is yet to make a genocide determination though we know from Secretary Blinken's comments that a determination process is ongoing. What accountability measures do you believe would be appropriate for the United States to take in response to the atrocities against the Rohingya? If confirmed, how would you support such measures?

*Answer.* The violence against Rohingya is truly horrifying. As Secretary Blinken has said, the State Department is committed to reviewing this issue and taking steps necessary to address these atrocities and make sure they never happen again. One aspect of that review is considering the question of genocide determination. If confirmed, I commit to supporting this process and exploring other methods to seek accountability and justice for these crimes.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO JULIE CHUNG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* What do you think the role of the United States is in emphasizing accountability for past and ongoing human rights violations by the Sri Lankan military? What do you think the U.S. role is in assuring that security forces are not primarily deployed in regions primarily inhabited by Tamil and Muslim populations? Do you commit to engaging closely with this committee on any new developments with respect to security assistance in Sri Lanka?

*Answer.* The Biden administration has centered human rights in our foreign policy. Human rights abusers have enjoyed impunity in Sri Lanka, and in some cases have received support from the Sri Lankan Government. If confirmed, I will continue to seek a commitment from the Sri Lankan Government to credibly address longstanding human rights abuses, including by holding abusers to account, ending the over-deployment of security forces in regions primarily inhabited by minority groups, and finding a long-term resolution of ethnic and religious tensions in Sri Lanka. Additionally, I will use available U.S. tools to promote accountability, including, as applicable and appropriate, Section 7031(c) visa restrictions and/or Global Magnitsky sanctions to advance our human rights goals. The State Department and I commit to engaging closely with the committee on new developments with respect to security assistance to Sri Lanka.

*Question.* In 2015, the United States led a resolution in the U.N. Human Rights Council co-sponsored by Sri Lanka to provide transitional justice following the armed conflict, which ended in 2009. After minimal progress, Sri Lanka withdrew from this resolution and the commitments made. The U.S. supported a March 2021

U.N. Human Rights Resolution on Sri Lanka, mandating the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights collect and preserve evidence of serious violations of international law that occurred in Sri Lanka and report on opportunities for accountability for these crimes. How can the United States best support the UNHRC process in Geneva and more broadly promote international accountability for reconciliation, accountability, and human rights in Sri Lanka?

*Answer.* The Department remains committed to using the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and other multilateral fora to press the Government of Sri Lanka to credibly address its longstanding human rights abuses. Our co-sponsoring of Resolution 46/1 is a testament to our commitment to promoting democratic values, human rights, justice, and accountability measures in Sri Lanka. The United States will rejoin the Sri Lanka core group in the UNHRC at the earliest opportunity to continue our work with international partners to promote human rights and accountability in Sri Lanka. The long-term social stability, peace, and prosperity for all Sri Lankans can best be ensured by credibly pursuing justice, accountability, and reconciliation as outlined in the UNHRC resolutions on Sri Lanka. If confirmed, I will continue to press Sri Lanka to engage meaningfully with the UNHRC and to make good on its own commitments to its people as well as to the Council to redress human rights abuses and pursue reconciliation.

*Question.* In March 2021, Sri Lanka expanded the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) with a new regulation, which was highly criticized by human rights organizations, U.N. Special Rapporteurs and a European Parliament resolution. Since its enactment in 1978, the PTA has been used disproportionately against Tamil populations and, more recently, the island's Muslim population. Do you commit to engaging with the Sri Lankan Government on the PTA and other institutional reforms necessary for the protection of civil society?

*Answer.* The Department has repeatedly made clear to the Sri Lankan Government that the continued use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) is inconsistent with respect for human rights and contrary to the Sri Lankan Government's pledges to amend the act. The PTA offers detainees no right to due process, and many of those arrested under the PTA remain in detention without charge. Those in detention include more than 300 Muslims arrested after the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings, 70 Tamils held for many years for alleged links to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during the civil war, and more than 100 Tamils more recently arrested mainly for their posts on social media. The Government's appointment of a Cabinet Sub-Committee charged with reviewing the PTA is a welcome step, but it must lead to aligning Sri Lanka's counterterrorism law with international standards and to the immediate release of many who have been arbitrarily detained. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with the Sri Lankan Government on the PTA and other institutional reforms necessary for the protection of civil society and the promotion of human rights and religious freedom.

*Question.* Sri Lanka has the second-largest number of unresolved enforced disappearance cases in the world. Despite repeated promises from the Government and the establishment of an Office of Missing Persons, a 2020 United Nations Special Rapporteur's report states, "no observable progress has been made on pending cases." For over four years, Tamil families of the disappeared have been conducting continuing protests, in the face of intimidation from the Sri Lankan state, demanding answers regarding their loved ones. How will U.S. engagement show support for these civil society actors and emphasize accountability and justice regarding enforced disappearances?

*Answer.* The Department remains concerned about the persistent lack of progress by the Sri Lankan Government in addressing missing persons and enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka. Families of the disappeared and other civil society activists who are pressing the Government on this issue have faced violence and intimidation when seeking answers on what happened to their family members and loved ones. The Department continues to seek a commitment from the Sri Lankan Government to credibly address longstanding human rights cases including those of missing and disappeared persons, and to end intimidation against civil society and human rights defenders. If confirmed, I will continue to support Sri Lanka's civil society, including demonstrating our support for the resolution of missing and disappeared persons cases, and advocate for the protection of religious and ethnic minority groups and the strengthening of the country's democratic institutions.

*Question.* Sri Lanka currently faces a severe financial crisis resulting from high levels of debt incurred during and after the armed conflict and exacerbated by corruption and the COVID-19 global pandemic. When considering economic support for Sri Lanka—whether it be through aid, the IMF and/or other multilateral funders,



or connections with private investors and bankers—how will U.S. engagement emphasize the necessary political, economic, and military restructuring requisite for lasting economic stability and sustained peace on the island?

Answer. Sri Lanka is in an unsustainable financial situation and facing imminent debt restructuring and/or default. The Department has urged the Sri Lankan Government to work with the IMF to develop a reform and relief package to place the Government's fiscal stance and debt obligations on a sustainable path. If confirmed, I will seek to further build the capacity of the Sri Lankan Government to meaningfully address corruption, manage financial obligations, and enact policies that support healthy trade and sustainable and inclusive development. I will also seek to use the tools that the United States has available—including the Development Finance Corporation and infrastructure credentialing programs like the Blue Dot Network—to ensure that U.S. economic cooperation with Sri Lanka focuses on inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and transparent financing. Furthermore, the People's Republic of China (PRC) aggressively seeks political, economic, and strategic advantage in Sri Lanka and in many cases enjoys wide public support for its engagement. If confirmed, I will appropriately highlight the detrimental impact of the PRC's activities on Sri Lanka's sovereignty and sustainable development.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. I am also deeply troubled by potential anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and their family members. Serving one's country overseas should not come at the cost of one's health. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel, and must be taken extremely seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Embassy Colombo staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that all reported potential anomalous health incidents are given serious attention and reported swiftly through the appropriate channels. I will also ensure that staff who are affected by these incidents receive prompt access to the treatment, support, and medical care that they need.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at Embassy Colombo to discuss past reported anomalous health incidents so that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Embassy Colombo staff and ensure that all protocols regarding anomalous health incidents are being followed appropriately.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO JULIE CHUNG BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Sri Lanka remained on Tier 2 Watch List after receiving a waiver preventing an automatic downgrade to Tier 3. Given the serious issues the Government is facing in combating human trafficking, how will you work with the Government to boost their prevention, prosecution, and protection efforts so they do not stay on the watch list?

Answer. Trafficking in Persons remains a significant challenge in Sri Lanka and one the Department takes seriously. While we welcomed the Sri Lankan Government issuing and funding a National Action Plan to address trafficking in persons last year, additional progress will be needed to merit an upgrade to Tier 2 and to avoid an automatic downgrade to Tier 3 in 2022. If confirmed, I will stress to the Government the need for tangible progress to address trafficking in persons, as recommended in the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report. These recommendations in-

clude investigating and prosecuting suspected traffickers, increasing efforts to identify victims of trafficking, increasing the availability of victim services, and countering child sex tourism.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Sri Lanka's societal respect for religious freedom and the protection of religious minorities is thin. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Religious freedom is guaranteed under Sri Lanka's constitution, and citizens are often free to practice their beliefs. I am concerned about discrimination, intimidation, and harassment of religious minorities practicing their faith traditions. For example, in March the Government finally reversed a month's long policy of compulsory cremation for COVID-19 victims in contravention of Islamic tenants. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom to highlight how such practices are inconsistent with Sri Lanka's constitution and promote respect for freedom of religion or belief, including as it relates to the protection of houses of worship and other religious sites, especially for members of minority communities.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Sri Lanka was identified as having committed serious human rights issues, including impunity for police who harassed citizens, corruption, arbitrary detention, restrictive NGO laws, and more.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms are key aspects of the administration's foreign policy, including with regard to Sri Lanka. The United States seeks a peaceful, democratic, and inclusive Sri Lanka that respects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons in Sri Lanka and is a reliable partner in addressing global challenges. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government of Sri Lanka to take meaningful steps to advance democratic governance, human rights, equal access to justice, and reconciliation, and to address the concerns of minority communities and civil society. Additionally, I will use available tools to promote accountability for abusers who enjoy impunity in Sri Lanka, including, as applicable and appropriate, Section 7031(c) visa restrictions and/or Global Magnitsky sanctions, to advance our human rights goals.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Sri Lanka was identified as having committed serious human rights issues, including impunity for police who harassed citizens, corruption, arbitrary detention, restrictive NGO laws, and more.

- How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* Civil society has a critical role to play in advancing human rights and democratic governance in Sri Lanka. In order for progress and reforms in Sri Lanka to be resilient in the face of internal and external pressures, civil society groups must be allowed to operate free from monitoring, surveillance, intimidation, harassment, and fear. The Department has continued to urge the Sri Lankan Government to credibly address longstanding human rights cases and respect civil society, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, and human rights defenders. If confirmed, Embassy Colombo and I will continue to support Sri Lanka's civil society, advocating for peaceful organizations to operate without undue governmental restraint, protection for religious and ethnic minority groups, and the strengthening of the country's democratic institutions.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO BRIAN WESLEY SHUKAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* Benin has long been considered a democratic leader in West Africa. Under President Talon however, Benin has experienced significant democratic backsliding. During this year's election, for example, the Government detained several figures within the opposition, including its leader. What steps can the United States take to help Benin reverse this alarming trajectory?

*Answer.* The United States can encourage Benin to resume its traditional role as a positive influence and example in West Africa for democratic governance, the rule of law, and respect for human rights by directly engaging the Beninese Government on these issues, partnering with Benin on regional initiatives for peace and security, and health, and by creating strong economic opportunities for Benin's large and

growing youth population. If confirmed, my focus in Benin will be to promote democratic, inclusive, and transparent governance, respect for human rights, a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade links to the United States, and a partnership with Benin to strengthen regional security and address global threats such as violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

*Question.* Like many states in littoral West Africa, Benin faces the threat of encroaching violent extremism from the Sahel and Nigeria. How is the United States helping Benin address threats from beyond its borders and counter the spread of extremist ideology to populations within the country?

*Answer.* The United States supports Benin's efforts to train rural border police officers and military personnel to prevent criminality and the development of violent extremist ideologies through integration with, and support to, previously marginalized communities in border areas. If confirmed, I will continue Embassy Cotonou's engagement with the Beninese Government on security sector assistance, youth development, and strategic communications. USAID's Littorals Regional Initiative supports local counterparts to withstand the increasing pressures of violent extremist organizations by addressing weak governance, conflict, and weak social cohesion.

*Question.* One could argue there is a tension between providing a government with valuable security assistance while that same government seeks to dismantle democracy. If confirmed, how will you balance the United States' security interests against our goal of spreading and strengthening democracy?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would balance the United States' security interests against our goal of spreading and strengthening democracy by supporting and encouraging Benin to resume the positive influence it once had, and could continue to have, in promoting peaceful democratic governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights while strengthening regional security and addressing global threats such as violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* I have promoted democracy and respect for human rights throughout my 26-year foreign service career. In Sudan, I have worked to support the civilian-led democratic transition, including ensuring that U.S. programs and advocacy advance this objective. In Haiti, I coordinated Mission efforts and worked with international partners to support the completion of long-delayed elections. In Iraq, I led a team that lobbied Iraq's parliament to pass a provincial election law and monitored elections in northern Iraq. And in Ghana, I engaged political activists, government officials, candidates, civil society and religious leaders to promote the democratic process in advance of Ghana's 2008 election and led embassy efforts to combat human trafficking.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Republic of Benin? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* The most pressing challenges to democracy in Benin are increasing restrictions on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, arrests of political prisoners, and laws that undermine electoral competitiveness. Of significant concern is the Government's jailing of political opponents and critics, often on questionable charges, for extended periods of time, and without a public, transparent judicial process. Although President Talon has had significant success combatting low-level corruption and improving infrastructure, rule of law issues and democratic backsliding run counter to U.S. democracy and human rights priorities and discourage the private investments and international commerce that would bring long-lasting prosperity.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Republic of Benin? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will support and encourage Benin to resume its traditional role as a positive influence in promoting peaceful democratic governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights in the region. I would also advance these priorities by promoting regional initiatives for peace and security, supporting the development of a healthier society, and creating economic opportunities for Benin's large

and growing youth population. Potential impediments include corruption and slow bureaucratic processes.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will utilize U.S. Government assistance resources to encourage Benin to resume its traditional role as a positive influence and example in West Africa for democratic governance. In administering such assistance, such as USAID's programs to counter democratic backsliding, promote respect for human rights, and support peacebuilding efforts by local civil society organizations that began implementation in the past year, I would prioritize democratic, inclusive, and transparent governance.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Republic of Benin? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-government organizations in the U.S., and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of the civil society in Benin. If confirmed, I would also seek to strengthen relationships with civil society leaders and human rights advocates in Benin, the U.S., and internationally. Where possible, I will work in partnership with diplomatic counterparts to proactively counter efforts to close the space for NGOs and civil society to operate.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures. To encourage genuine political competition, I will take steps to strengthen existing relationships and build new ones across the political spectrum. I also commit to advocating for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties, if confirmed.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Republic of Benin on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory, or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Republic of Benin?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Benin and actively engaging, with the Embassy team, with the Beninese Government on freedom of expression, including for members of the press. I also commit to addressing government efforts to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory, and other measures.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's engagements with civil society and government counterparts to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Republic of Benin on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to actively engage with the government of Benin on the right of workers to exercise freedom of association, including to form and join independent trade unions, and call out incidents when this right is restricted.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Republic of Benin, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to using my position to promote respect for human rights and the dignity of all people in Benin, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Republic of Benin?

*Answer.* According to the 2020 Department of State Human Rights Report, members of the LGBTQI+ community reported that police tolerated violence against LGBTQI+ persons. Benin's laws do not criminalize consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults. A provision related to public indecency in the penal code, however, may be applied to prosecute same-sex sexual conduct by charging individuals with public indecency or acts against nature.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Republic of Benin?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage the Beninese Government to resume its traditional role as a positive influence and example in West Africa for respect for human rights, including for LGBTQI+ persons, women and girls, persons with disabilities, and persons of every ethnic background, faith, and heritage. I will also work with diplomatic counterparts and allies in civil society to promote respect for the human rights of all in Benin.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Benin?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to ensuring that I fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time I am in Washington for visits or consultations throughout my tenure as Ambassador to Benin.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately. Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to ensuring any reported incident is treated seriously and reported through appropriate channels in a timely manner and that any affected individual promptly receives medical care. Secretary Blinken's number one responsibility as Secretary of State is to protect the men and women representing our country around the world.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously, working through the appropriate channels within the Department, and that any individual who experiences an anomalous health incident, or any other matter that would have an impact on their health and safety, will receive prompt medical attention and care.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO to discuss any past incidents, and to ensuring that all health, safety, and security protocols are followed and implemented. I will also work together with our medical team and the RSO to ensure that Embassy personnel are aware of what to do in the event of a potential anomalous health incident.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO BRIAN WESLEY SHUKAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Benin has experienced significant democratic decline under President Talon. As ambassador, if confirmed, how will you engage the Talon administration, civil society and the opposition on democratic and electoral reforms in an effort to help restore Benin's democratic credentials?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would encourage Benin to resume its traditional role as a positive influence and example in West Africa for democracy, rule of law, and human rights by directly engaging the Beninese Government, civil society, and

other political actors. If confirmed, my focus would be promoting democratic, inclusive, and transparent governance, respect for human rights, a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade linkages to the United States, and a partnership to strengthen regional security and address global threats such as violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

*Question.* Like the rest of Littoral West Africa, Benin faces a growing threat of violent extremism moving south from the Sahel. As ambassador, if confirmed, what is your perspective on the types of investments the U.S. needs to make and/or maintain to reduce Benin's vulnerability?

*Answer.* Engagement on counterterrorism is a bilateral priority and Benin is a strong U.S. partner. If confirmed, I would strengthen our partnership with Benin on counterterrorism operations in the region by supporting continuing counterterrorism and countering-violent extremism assistance. This includes training for border police and military personnel to prevent criminality, and efforts to prevent development of violent extremist ideologies through support for marginalized communities in border areas. I would also continue counterterrorism engagement with the Beninese Government in the areas of security sector assistance, youth development, and strategic communications.

*Question.* Do you believe it is the sign of a healthy democracy when a duly elected government, in consultation with its citizens, extends the term of office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

*Answer.* Every country has the ability to make constitutional changes, which the U.S. supports as long as such changes are made through a consultative and broad process that includes all stakeholders, including civil society and opposition parties. However, constitutional changes designed to favor incumbents or extend terms erode democratic principles.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you respond if Benin were to extend the term of the office of the presidency even if that means it would extend the term of the current President in power?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would advocate for regular, democratic transitions of power, which yield more accountability, stronger institutions, and less corruption.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

*Answer.* Promoting democracy and respect for human rights has long served as the basis of American foreign policy. Election observation can promote public participation, encourage transparency and public confidence in the electoral process, and mitigate the potential for electoral violence. Both U.S. Mission observers and independent observation missions help deter fraud at polling stations and facilitate the collection of critical information on conditions. To ensure real democratic gains, it is important that our elections work not focus solely on Election Day, but also address institutional or conduct problems in the lead up to elections.

*Question.* Would you support a U.S. funded, independent international election observation mission for Benin's next general election?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would carefully consider how U.S. support to observation efforts can contribute to free and fair elections, and transparent electoral processes in Benin.

*Question.* How can the United States best use the tools it has to hold Benin officials accountable for corrupt behavior?

*Answer.* Corruption is a significant challenge in Benin. President Talon has described endemic corruption as one of the country's biggest problems. The United States can best use the tools it has to hold Beninese officials accountable for corrupt behavior by directly engaging the Beninese Government, promoting internationally recognized standards, and reinforcing the important role played by civil society, the media, and the business community.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your approach in using the tools it has to hold Benin officials accountable for corrupt behavior?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would enlist the full resources of the Department of State's anticorruption teams and other U.S. Government resources to support these efforts, including continuing USAID's support to the National Anti-Corruption Authority to implement an anti-corruption action plan designed to elevate awareness of the perils and price of corruption.

*Question.* How can the United States best support Benin in curbing the corrupt behavior of those companies and government officials of malign foreign actors like China that feed on corrupt governments and business environments?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the Embassy could best support Benin in curbing corrupt behavior of those companies and government officials of malign foreign actors like the PRC that feed on corrupt governments and business environments by prioritizing anti-corruption; promoting democratic values, including inclusive electoral processes and media freedom; promoting high-quality alternatives to PRC trade and investment such as the African Growth and Opportunities Act and the West African Trade Hub; and providing assistance to Benin in the energy sector through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, health sector through USAID, and the security sector through Department of Defense and Department of State funding.

*Question.* Should the United States build on its existing defense and security cooperation with Benin? Where are the opportunities and the risks?

*Answer.* Benin is a strong partner to the United States for peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel. Our assistance to Benin's armed forces and police supports Benin's participation in peacekeeping and regional security efforts and advances its ability to interdict maritime and transnational organized crime. Our security and military engagement creates opportunities for U.S. law enforcement and service members to integrate respect for human rights and international humanitarian law as core training components and allows Beninese military personnel to attend professionalization training in the United States. If confirmed, I would support building on our existing defense and security cooperation with Benin.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Benin?

*Answer.* My understanding is that morale throughout Mission Benin is strong, motivated by staff's commitment to promoting democratic, inclusive, and transparent governance, promoting respect for human rights, supporting a prosperous and healthy society with closer trade linkages to the United States, and working in partnership with Benin to strengthen regional security and address global threats such as violent extremism and transnational organized crime.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Benin?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would prioritize building a strong team and community. I would support frequent and robust communication with local and U.S. staff, ensuring opportunities to share information and hear concerns. I would ensure that we communicate and put into practice Mission priorities and values, emphasizing the importance of diversity, inclusion, and respect. And as the father of two daughters who attended international schools overseas, I would prioritize ensuring that the educational needs of U.S. Mission families are served as well as possible.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Benin?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would focus on establishing strong communication among all agencies and personnel to ensure a common understanding of Mission priorities and values, and to promote a unified approach to achieving our objectives. Since some Mission offices are represented by non-resident personnel based in neighboring countries, I would also prioritize incorporating those personnel into key discussions.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* As a manager and leader, I want to create an empowered, collaborative, and creative team that is motivated to achieve Mission objectives. I am committed to ensuring a respectful and inclusive workplace, in which everyone's contribution is valued. I prioritize frequent and open communication to ensure that the team understands our vision and values, while maintaining an environment in which personnel at all levels are empowered and able to share information, expertise and suggestions.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* It is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure as the Chief of Mission in Sudan?

**Answer.** This has been an extremely dynamic period in the U.S.-Sudan relationship. I have worked with a new government that took office following the overthrow of Sudan's longtime dictator, dealt with a transformed bilateral relationship following the rescission of Sudan's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, and managed the Embassy team during the COVID pandemic. Engaging with a new and relatively inexperienced government has underscored the importance of clear and coordinated communication, transparency, adaptability, and managing expectations.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with deputy chief of mission?

**Answer.** I have had the opportunity to serve as deputy chief of mission at Embassy Port-au-Prince under two ambassadors, and as consul general in Casablanca. For me, a strong and mutually supportive relationship between the DCM and the chief of mission is critical. I envision a close and collaborative relationship, with the DCM involved in all decisions. This requires a constant open line of communication and trust between the two.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

**Answer.** While the chief of mission has overall leadership and management responsibility at the Embassy, I view the DCM as a key embassy leader and the chief of mission's principal partner and advisor. If confirmed, I would look to the DCM to help ensure strong communication within the embassy community, coordinate an active mentoring program, assist in coordinating interagency activities and programs, promote a culture of respect, inclusion and diversity, and ensure robust and effective management controls.

*Question.* How should the chief of mission lead a post with multiple U.S. Government agencies present?

**Answer.** The Chief of Mission should lead a post with multiple U.S. Government agencies present by establishing strong communication among all agencies and personnel to ensure a common understanding of Mission priorities and values, and to promote a unified approach to achieving post's objectives.

*Question.* In your experience, how important are interagency relationships within a post?

**Answer.** In my experience, interagency relationships within a post are critical to the success of the overall mission. If confirmed, I would promote strong coordination between all offices and agencies at Mission Benin.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you handle interagency disagreement within Embassy Cotonou?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I would handle interagency disagreement within Embassy Cotonou by prioritizing frequent and open communication and ensuring that the Embassy is a respectful and inclusive workplace, in which everyone's contribution is valued. As a manager and leader, I want to create an empowered, collaborative, and creative team that is motivated to achieve Mission objectives.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking. Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

**Answer.** I believe it is important to provide employees with timely, accurate, constructive feedback on their performances to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeed in their roles.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I would support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees to improve performance and reward high achievers.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats stationed in Benin. In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

**Answer.** I agree that it is essential that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, civil society activists, non-government organizations, and fellow foreign diplomats, in addition to ensuring



oversight of projects and programs. In my experience, U.S. diplomats get outside of the embassy walls enough to fully accomplish their mission, although this has been made more challenging by the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would encourage U.S. diplomats in Benin to better access local populations by utilizing all available public diplomacy tools for in-person, virtual, and media engagement. I would also encourage in-country travel and representation outside of the capital.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Benin? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* U.S. public diplomacy in Benin is focused on bolstering support for democratic values among the country's rapidly growing youth population and municipalities beyond the capital, strengthening media institutions and the culture of investigative journalism, and promoting American-style entrepreneurial values among women and other underrepresented groups. The Embassy engages thousands of Beninese youth through its growing network of English Clubs, four American Spaces, and five active exchange program alumni organizations, and reaches hundreds of thousands more Beninese citizens through community radio and social media highlighting the scale and scope of the U.S. commitment to Benin and Africa.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Post has latitude to tailor our public messaging to local issues and concerns. If confirmed, I would ensure that our public diplomacy posture continues to play a key role in promoting our shared values and America's generous financial assistance and support across the range of issues.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel. If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to taking the threat of anomalous health incidents seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Benin personnel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to talking as openly as I can to Mission Benin personnel.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Benin and counter the malign influence of China?

*Answer.* The United States should partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Benin and counter the malign influence of the PRC by promoting shared democratic values, good governance, transparency, anti-corruption efforts, and calling out nondemocratic behavior. If confirmed, I would engage with like-minded partner embassies to encourage a common understanding and approach to these challenges.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Benin remained on Tier 2 due to overall increasing efforts to eliminate trafficking but can improve on convictions of traffickers and assigning proportional sentences. How will you work with the host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Beninese Government to increase knowledge of its anti-human trafficking laws within the judiciary and assign proportional sentences to traffickers by encouraging implementation of Benin's anti-human trafficking laws and 2020-2024 National Action Plan. I will also continue the Embassy's efforts to engage the Beninese Government at all levels to increase awareness of human trafficking and to spur action to counter exploitation by imple-

menting the prioritized recommendations in the U.S. Department of State's annual Trafficking in Persons report.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Benin was identified as having great societal respect for religious freedom. Despite this, there is still work the U.S. Embassy can do to bolster international religious freedom. How will you work with the Ambassador At Large on this issue?

*Answer.* Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department closely monitors the religious freedom situation in Benin. Benin has long been a strong example for ethnic and religious tolerance in an often-turbulent region. If confirmed, I commit to work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious freedom, addressing religious freedom concerns, and further strengthening tolerance and respect among and for members of religious communities in Benin.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Benin was identified as having committed or baring witness to (severe) human rights abuses. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage the Beninese Government to address impunity and hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations and abuses. I will also support and encourage Benin to resume the positive role it once had, and could continue to have, in promoting respect for human rights in the region.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Embassy team to work with our like-minded partners and allies in civil society to improve respect for human rights on the ground by prioritizing programs that work closely with local civil society organizations, including USAID programs to counter democratic backsliding, promote respect for human rights, and support peacebuilding.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
ELIZABETH ANNE NOSEWORTHY FITZSIMMONS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* President Gnassingbé or his father have ruled Togo since 1967. Political opposition often face harassment, detention, and even high-tech surveillance by the Togolese Government. What is the state of democracy in Togo, and what can the United States do to help Togo establish a competitive political system with real protections for opposition voices?

*Answer.* The United States continues to urge the Government of Togo to make greater advancements towards increasing respect for democracy and human rights. In 2019, the Government reformed the constitution to institute a two-round election system and a two-year term limit for presidents, though the presidential term-limit is not retroactive. Togo held local elections last year for the first time in 30 years and engaged in a government-initiated national dialogue with opposition parties to modify the electoral code and constitution and improve the electoral process for upcoming regional elections. The regional elections are the next step in decentralizing the Government and implementing the constitutionally-mandated Senate and Constitutional Court. If confirmed, I will continue to push the Government to increase political space so that the people of Togo can make their voices heard and peacefully express dissent, through the ballot box and through greater respect for human rights and a competitive political system.

*Question.* The Togolese Government has alleged used digital surveillance tools, including from Israeli and Indian firms to monitor opposition and civil society. What role can the United States play in countering digital authoritarianism and what steps would you take if confirmed to confront digital authoritarianism in Togo?

*Answer.* In August 2021, international media cited Togo as the only West African country and one of four sub-Saharan African countries using Pegasus software to monitor internet communications, journalists, opposition parties, Catholic clergy, and political dissidents. The right not to be subject to arbitrary or unlawful interference with one's privacy is a human right, guaranteed in Article 28 of the Togolese Constitution and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which Togo acceded to in 1984. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote transparency and privacy rights, increase access to justice, and strengthen democratic institutions. We will continue to urge the Government of Togo to adhere

to international commitments they made and to make greater advancements towards increasing respect for democracy, and human rights and fundamental freedoms.

*Question.* U.S. relations with Togo have mainly focused on the fight against HIV/AIDS and more recently on security assistance. What areas do you see as opportunities for increased engagement by the United States?

*Answer.* Supporting good governance and democracy in Togo is a key goal of our bilateral relationship in Togo. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government of Togo to make greater advancements towards increasing respect for democracy, and human rights and fundamental freedoms. Recent restrictions on the press following politically motivated arrests, limitations on applications for political gatherings, and suspensions of press outlets have greatly impeded Togolese ability to participate in their democracy. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote political reforms, reinforce democratic institutions, and strengthen electoral institutions and processes to promote free and fair elections. I will also support the freedoms of peaceful assembly and association.

*Question.* What is the COVID-19 situation in Togo right now? Is the United States doing enough to help Togo vaccinate its population?

*Answer.* As of October 18, the Government of Togo has recorded 25,899 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 239 deaths. The Embassy managed over \$1,484,000 in COVID-related programming from AFRICOM, USAID, the State Department, and Embassy Small Grants. Through COVAX, the United States made available 607,230 Pfizer-BioNTech doses to Togo and 4,000 test kits and other equipment through the International Atomic Energy Association.

The PEPFAR program in Togo received \$590,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (APRA) funds to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on PEPFAR implementation in FY 21-22, including infection prevention control measures and training, procurement of PPE for healthcare workers, and laboratory strengthening. If confirmed, I will continue the work of Embassy Lomé to work with the Togolese Government to end the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that the U.S. Government is working with the Togolese Ministry of Health to meet the health needs of the country to end COVID-19.

#### *Democracy & Human Rights*

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* Throughout my career, I have been dedicated to publicly championing democracy and respect for human rights. Many of my overseas tours were in Public Affairs Sections, where I worked directly with media and the public to promote the ideals of democracy and respect for human rights. Direct engagement with youth leaders on issues of democracy, governance, and human rights throughout my career has offered the greatest impact, as those youth leaders emerge as influential figures in government, business, and the media.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Togo? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* Recent restrictions on the press following politically motivated arrests, limitations on applications for political gatherings, and suspensions of press outlets raise concern and certainly present challenges to Togo's democracy. The Government amended the "Bodjona" Law in late 2019 to restrict the time, place, frequency, and application process for demonstrations citing rising terrorist threats. A 2019 modification to the press and communication code increased fines and granted the High Authority for Audiovisuals and Communication (HAAC) more stringent control over the press. The HAAC exercised this additional control more rigorously over the past year. On April 8, 2020, the Government of Togo banned protests and political rallies under the COVID-19 State of Emergency, which now is scheduled to last until September 2022.

Following the 2020 Presidential elections, the Government initiated a six-month national dialogue with opposition parties, the National Consultation between Political Parties (CNAP), to modify the electoral code and constitution and improve the electoral process for upcoming regional elections. Despite boycotts from a few polit-

ical parties, CNAP produced over 50 suggestions for consideration. The Government's willingness to adopt these suggestions is still unclear. Togo's regional elections, the next step in its decentralization process, are necessary for the appointment of the Senate, as regional representatives select two-thirds of Senators.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Togo? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote political reforms, reinforce democratic institutions, and strengthen electoral institutions and processes to promote free and fair elections.

I would support the continued use of available State Department and USAID regional and centrally managed resources to advance democracy and respect for human rights in Togo. The Embassy has leveraged these kinds of resources in the past to support the decentralization process in Togo, support the efforts of Togo's Committee for the Prevention and Fight Against Violent Extremism, and increase women's participation in the political process.

USAID/West Africa's Reacting to Early Warning and Response II program helps address democratic backsliding through a combination of approaches that prevents the spread of COVID-19 infections, fights COVID-19-related misinformation, builds the capacity of women and youth to lead conflict prevention efforts, and promotes social cohesion and community resilience against COVID-19.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would seek to leverage the Government of Togo's strong desire for an MCC Compact to encourage further reforms that improve transparency and reduce corruption. In 2019, MCC signed a Threshold Program with Togo to increase competition and private sector participation in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services market and to improve agricultural land tenure and management. Both of these areas will be critical to driving economic growth and reducing poverty in the country. If confirmed, I will explore all USAID, small grants, and other available U.S. funding to support and prioritize democracy and governance activities to focus on efforts to increase political pluralism and end limitations of freedom of assembly and expression.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Togo? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meet with and listen to all civil society and political actors in Togo who support strengthening Togo's democracy. I would build on Embassy efforts to urge the Government to lift undue restrictions on the press and journalists and allow for freedom of peaceful assembly. I would also continue to encourage the Government to take seriously issues of impunity to build trust between the Government and its people, and a concrete way the Government can build that trust is to allow NGOs and civil society true freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to continue and strengthen the relationships our mission has built with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. I will strive to support the efforts of these figures and parties to develop a more inclusive political environment in Togo, including their government-initiated dialogue with opposition parties to support regional elections. I will urge the Government to respect the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly for all political actors, even those who do not agree with the Government. Through public statements, small grants and other programming, and direct engagements, I will advocate for a political environment that is inclusive of women, youth, minorities, and Togolese who might otherwise be marginalized.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Togo on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Togo?

*Answer.* Recent restrictions on the press following politically motivated arrests, limitations on applications for political gatherings, and suspensions of press outlets raise concern. If confirmed, I would, along with the rest of my Embassy team, prioritize work with the Government of Togo to end restrictions on media outlets and reporters and to remind them that freedom of expression, including for members of the press, is key to maintaining a healthy democracy. If confirmed, I will commit to meeting regularly with independent and local press outlets in Togo as visible sign of support for press freedom.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will build on the Embassy team's great work and programs to combat disinformation and propaganda perpetuated by foreign and non-state actors. A well-informed citizenry is required for a functioning democracy, which is why the Embassy provides programs to educate journalists about the dangers of disinformation and publicly refutes dangerous disinformation, a recent example being the disinformation circulated on the efficacy and safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

*Question.* Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Togo on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* The Togolese constitution provides that workers may form and join unions and bargain collectively. Togolese labor law also prohibits forced labor, child labor, and discrimination in the workplace; and outlines a minimum wage, occupational safety and health, and hours of work protections. The Government has demonstrated on several occasions its willingness to negotiate with labor groups. At the same time, concerns regarding government enforcement of worker rights protections, including on child labor and forced labor, remain. If confirmed, my team and I will encourage the Government of Togo to support the rights of organized labor groups which are protected in by law.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Togo, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to using the position of the U.S. Ambassador to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Togo, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. Through collaboration with various Togolese NGOs, the Embassy supports programming that promotes the rights and representation of women and LGBTQI+ persons in the Togolese economy and politics and increases public-private partnerships to encourage citizen participation and local governance. We will not compromise on these important American, and frankly global, ideals.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Togo?

*Answer.* Togolese law prohibits "acts against nature committed with an individual of one's sex," widely understood as a reference to same-sex sexual activity. The law provides that a person convicted of engaging in consensual same-sex sexual activity may be sentenced to one to three years' imprisonment and a substantial fine, but it is rarely enforced. The law forbids promotion of immorality, which is understood to include promotion of same-sex activities. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons face societal discrimination in employment, housing, and access to education and health care. Existing antidiscrimination law does not apply to LGBTQI+ persons. No law allows transgender persons to change gender markers on government-issued identity documents.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Togo?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to engaging with LGBTQI+ people in Togo on the best ways the U.S. Government work to end the discrimination LGBTQI+ persons face in Togo. I will listen whole-heartedly to their concerns, take their lead, and develop a collaborative approach to ending discrimination against members of the LGBTQI+ community. If confirmed, I will work with like-minded diplomatic partners and strengthen civil society advocacy to fully support and advance the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons. Members of Togo's LGBTQI+ community can be

assured that promoting respect for human rights for all individuals, with no exception or caveat, is a U.S. foreign policy priority.

*Congressional Consultations*

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Togo?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit, in coordination with the State Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs, to respond promptly to all appropriate requests for briefings and for information by this committee. Congress has an important role to play not only in foreign policy legislation but also during the implementation process. Our foreign policy is stronger when the two branches of government coordinate, and I would look forward to strengthening the coordination between our two branches.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, absolutely. As Secretary Blinken has said, his number one responsibility as Secretary of State is to protect the men and women representing our country around the world. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring any reported incident is treated seriously and reported through appropriate channels in a timely manner and that any affected individual promptly receives medical care.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will commit to treating each case seriously and working through the appropriate channels within the Department. Any individual who experiences an anomalous health incident or any other matter that would have an impact on their health and safety will receive prompt medical attention and care.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will hold regular meetings with medical staff and the RSO on any past incidents to ensure that all health, safety, and security protocols are followed and implemented at Embassy Lomé. If confirmed, I will work together with our medical team and the RSO to make sure that the entire Embassy community is aware of what to do should a potential incident affect them, their colleagues, or their family members.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO  
ELIZABETH ANNE NOSEWORTHY FITZSIMMONS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Given your background in public diplomacy, how will you balance public diplomacy and quiet diplomacy in working with the Togolese Government?

*Answer.* Understanding how to balance public messaging and quiet diplomacy is vital to achieving U.S. goals. If confirmed, I would build on Embassy Lomé's use of quiet diplomacy to urge the Government to make democratic reforms. I would also continue to encourage the Government to take seriously issues of impunity to build trust between the Government and its people. I would also support, if confirmed, increasing engagement through our Public Diplomacy programs that give youth, journalists, and opposition leaders a voice to allow us to promote the ideals of democracy and respect for human rights for the Togolese people.

*Question.* How do you view the U.S. role in supporting positive democratic and institutional reforms in Togo?

*Answer.* Supporting positive democratic and institutional reforms in Togo is a top policy priority for the United States. If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Government of Togo, political parties, civil society organizations, and other diplomatic missions to promote political reforms, reinforce democratic institutions, and strengthen electoral institutions and processes to promote free and fair elections.

I would support the continued use of available State Department and USAID regional and centrally managed resources to advance democracy and respect for human rights in Togo. The Embassy has leveraged these kinds of resources in the past to support the decentralization process in Togo, support the efforts of Togo's Committee for the Prevention and Fight Against Violent Extremism, and increase women's participation in the political process.

*Question.* As U.S. Ambassador, if confirmed, how will you engage the Gnassingbé administration and opposition figures in supporting positive democratic and institutional reforms?

*Answer.* Following the 2020 Presidential elections, the Government of Togo initiated a six-month national dialogue with opposition parties, the National Consultation between Political Parties (CNAP), to modify the electoral code and constitution and improve the electoral process for upcoming regional elections. Despite boycotts from a few political parties, CNAP produced over 50 suggestions for consideration. The Government's willingness to adopt these suggestions is still unclear. If confirmed as U.S. Ambassador, I will encourage both the Gnassingbé Government and opposition figures to continue to build upon the CNAP and enact the necessary reforms to strengthen democracy and political pluralism in Togo.

*Question.* The U.S. mission in Togo is a relatively small, and Togo commands significantly less attention from Washington than many of its close neighbors, including Nigeria, Ghana, Niger and Burkina Faso.

- As Chief of Mission, if confirmed, how will you operate in such a post to manage the staff and lead U.S. policy on the ground?

*Answer.* My experience as both Deputy Assistant Secretary and Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs provided me ample opportunity to understand how to work with my interagency colleagues in Washington to best support our missions overseas. If confirmed, I will partner with the team at Embassy Lomé to ensure their ideas about how to achieve policy successes in a resource-constrained environment are heard and leverage my knowledge of Washington to acquire the appropriate resources and attention from Washington to achieve the U.S.G. mission goals in Togo.

*Question.* What is your view on political dynasties and long-serving rulers who, like in the case of Togo, manipulate constitutional and electoral processes to give the façade of democratic legitimacy?

*Answer.* We continue to urge the Government of Togo to make greater advancements towards increasing respect for democracy, and human rights and fundamental freedoms. One such needed change is greater political pluralism. In 2019, the Government reformed the constitution to institute a two-round election system and a two-year term limit for presidents, though the presidential term-limit is not retroactive. Togo held local elections last year for the first time in 30 years and engaged in a government-initiated national dialogue with opposition parties to modify the electoral code and constitution and improve the electoral process for upcoming regional elections. The regional elections are the next step in decentralizing the Government and increasing political pluralism. If confirmed, I will continue to push the Government to increase political space so that the people of Togo can make their voices heard and peacefully express dissent through the ballot box and through greater respect for human rights and political pluralism.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you address the issue of political dynasties and long-serving rules as U.S. Ambassador, particularly in light of broader regional trends?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would continue our work with all stakeholders in ensuring that Togo's political system remains fair and transparent and that the Togolese people are heard and given an opportunity to choose their political leaders. I will promote democratic values and seek to strengthen democratic institutions, including through electoral processes that have credibility and integrity in representing the will of the people of Togo.

I understand our Embassy in Lomé and the MCC have continually reminded the Togolese Government that MCC compact assistance is predicated on a clear, demonstrated commitment to MCC's eligibility criteria, as well as successful implementation of its Threshold Program. If confirmed, I will continue to use this and other programs as an incentive toward making political reforms in Togo.

*Question.* Can you provide your view on supporting U.S. funded, independent international election observation missions?

Answer. Election observation can promote public participation, encourage transparency and public confidence in the electoral process, and mitigate the potential for electoral violence. Both U.S. Mission observers and independent observation missions help deter fraud at polling stations and facilitate the flow of information during elections. To promote real democratic gains, it is important that our election work looks beyond election day and addresses problems in the lead up to elections.

*Question.* Would you support a U.S. funded independent international election observation mission for Togo's next general election?

Answer. If confirmed, I would identify ways the U.S. could support international observation efforts to contribute to free and fair elections and transparent electoral processes in Togo. International observers from ECOWAS and the African Union judged the Presidential elections held in 2020 to be generally free and fair and international consensus is that President Gnassingbé won the election. Nevertheless, the level of distrust between Togo's major political factions remains exceptionally high. An overly centralized executive with political power concentrated in the ruling party inhibits broad-based participatory democracy. In addition, the Government expelled National Democratic Institute staff and pulled the credentials of their local partner days before the 2020 presidential election, limiting efforts to increase electoral transparency and build confidence in the electoral process.

*Question.* How can the United States best use existing tools to hold Togolese officials accountable for corrupt behavior?

Answer. The United States supports efforts to counter corruption throughout the world. Some of the best tools that the U.S. Government has at its disposal are those that include benchmarks on corruption reduction, such as MCC Threshold and Compact programs. If confirmed, I would utilize all available U.S. assistance tools and programs to combat government corruption in Togo and prioritize programs that help the U.S. and Togo achieve those goals.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your approach in using the tools at the U.S.'s disposal to hold Togolese officials accountable for corrupt behavior?

Answer. Combatting corruption in Togo is essential to promote economic opportunities and inclusive development for all Togolese and to increase government trust and accountability. If confirmed, I would seek to leverage the Government of Togo's strong desire for a MCC Compact to encourage further reforms that improve transparency and reduce corruption. In 2019, MCC signed a Threshold Program with Togo to increase competition and private sector participation in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services market and to improve agricultural land tenure and management. Both of these areas will be critical to driving economic growth and reducing poverty in the country, but that will only happen if corruption is reduced.

*Question.* Many U.S. missions have been under enormous stress over the last few years, in large part due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale in Embassy Lomé?

Answer. Embassy Lomé is a small mission in a region facing growing challenges. I understand that Mission Togo's morale is good, particularly for a post of its size in a difficult environment, and that many officers choose to extend their tour in Togo for a third year. To me, that speaks volumes about the team and the environment that Embassy leadership has fostered in the country and, if confirmed, I will endeavor to build upon that foundation and ensure that morale remains good.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale?

Answer. If confirmed, maintaining morale of the team at Embassy Lomé will be of utmost importance to me. I intend to work closely with my staff, understand their concerns, make improvements where those can be undertaken at post, and communicate those concerns which cannot be addressed at post back to Department leadership for action. I will seek to support all employees and their families to create an inclusive and welcoming culture where individuals are safe and can achieve professional and personal goals. Our foreign service family members contribute directly to mission morale, and if confirmed, I will ensure that those family members are also supported and happy by seeking to work with the Office of Overseas schools in an effort to improve schooling options in Togo so that more families can consider service at Embassy Lomé. I will work to ensure that eligible family members who wish to work in the mission find meaningful employment in Embassy Lomé.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision?



*Answer.* If confirmed, I will lead regular discussions with all agencies to establish and review goals and develop strategies and tactics to achieve common objectives. If confirmed, I intend to ensure that all employees working in Embassy Lomé, whether they are locally employed staff, eligible family members, or U.S. direct hires, feel supported and heard in their work. I would maintain an open office policy and welcome the contributions and ideas of those working in our mission. Throughout my career, I valued and encouraged a diverse and inclusive work environment, and if confirmed, I intend to bring that same spirit to Embassy Lomé.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I am an inclusive leader and manager and if confirmed will encourage every member of the team to contribute - this is particularly important in an environment like Togo in which the Embassy team is small and relatively less experienced and the policy challenges are complex, varied, and growing. I am constantly seeking to innovate and learn in my own professional life, and I strive to create a culture of creativity, diversity, and inclusion so that all members of the team are valued, and their voices are heard. I think these are particularly important leadership traits in a small Embassy like Lomé, where innovative ideas and diverse perspectives will help the team leverage our relatively modest resources to achieve significant results.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* Absolutely not. It is neither acceptable nor productive to berate anyone in a professional setting. If confirmed, I will not tolerate abusive behavior at Embassy Lomé and I will seek to lead by example, praising in public, constructively correcting in private when necessary, and being open to dissent and constructive feedback from the team.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* The Department of State provides a list of suitable Deputy Chief of Mission candidates for a Chief of Mission to select when those positions become open. If confirmed, I will select a DCM who compliments my skills, experience, and knowledge and we will work as a true team to ensure the U.S. Mission in Togo is best placed to advance U.S. interests.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to entrust my Deputy Chief of Mission with the responsibilities akin to those of a Chief Operating Officer, modeling the function of the Embassy Front Office on the effective organization of the Bureau of African Affairs in which the Assistant Secretary functions as Chief Executive Officer and the Principal Deputy as COO. While both the DCM and I will have responsibility for coaching and mentoring the Embassy Team, if confirmed, I will also ask the DCM to play the primary role in ensuring the career development of the first and second tour officers on the Embassy team. And I will be open to any ideas that the DCM has about functions in which he/she is particularly interested or where he/she has particular strengths.

*Question.* How should the chief of mission lead a post with multiple U.S. Government agencies present?

*Answer.* Incorporating voices from all government agencies is the best way to capitalize on the knowledge, experience, and perspective they bring to Embassy Lomé. If confirmed, I will lead regular discussions with all agencies to establish and review goals and develop strategies and tactics to achieve common objectives. I will hold regular meetings with all U.S. Government agencies represented at the mission and with our regional colleagues based at other Embassies in West Africa.

*Question.* In your experience, how important are interagency relationships within a post?

*Answer.* In my experience, creating strong interagency relationships is extremely important for achieving U.S. priorities and goals at out missions overseas. In my previous Foreign Service assignments, I have relied on and fostered a close, productive relationship with my interagency colleagues, and I intend to do the same, if confirmed, as the next U.S. Ambassador to Togo.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you handle interagency disagreement within Embassy Lomé?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will regularly hold meetings with the interagency and incorporate interagency colleagues into the mission country team. I will encourage my staff to work closely as a team to resolve any disagreements, and I will make sure that each member on the team feels like their input and perspective is valid and important - we all work for the same U.S. Government.

*Question.* In order to create and continue employee excellence at the Department, accurate and direct employee evaluation reports (EERs) for Foreign Service Officers are imperative, though often lacking.

- Do you believe that it is important to provide subordinates with accurate, constructive feedback on their performance in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes. Our duty as leaders is to provide accurate and constructive feedback to our subordinates and to reward them for a job well done.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes. I view that as a duty for any manager of people, and if confirmed I commit to provide clear, accurate, timely, and direct feedback to my team.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* In my experience, it is imperative that U.S. diplomats leave their office space on a regular basis and meet not only with government leaders but also with businesspeople, members of civil society, influencers, and change-makers in the country in which they work to fully understand the local context and in order to be able to provide the most effective advice to decision makers in the inter-agency. If confirmed, I will encourage my staff to work outside Embassy walls to achieve our foreign policy goals and will mentor those members of the team who need more experience in this area, while also modeling regular constructive outreach to all elements of Togolese society. I am a public diplomacy officer, and throughout my career I have valued, both personally and professionally, the relationships I have fostered outside the office to achieve U.S. goals.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, and as health and safety conditions permit, I will encourage U.S. diplomats to engage actively, broadly and in-person with local populations. Until then, we will maintain active engagement through virtual media. If confirmed, I intend to regularly visit people throughout Togo and use those visits to facilitate contacts for other U.S. diplomats.

COVID-19 has physical interactions and poor telecommunications infrastructure makes virtual interactions difficult. However, nearly all Mission personnel have been vaccinated and the number of vaccinated Togolese is also increasing. This should slowly improve our ability to access more people locally.

Once the COVID-19 situation is sufficiently improved we intend to fully re-engage with all our stakeholders throughout the country in-person. Once we achieve a healthy threshold of vaccinated people, we plan to return to hosting more representational events as they have historically been well received, especially our Fourth of July celebrations. A resumption in issuing tourist and business visas will also increase our interaction as it will raise interest in the United States.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in Togo?

*Answer.* Although the constitution provides for freedom of expression and freedom of the press, the Government restricted these rights. The law imposes penalties on journalists deemed to have committed "serious errors" as defined in the media code.

Independent media are active and express a wide variety of views, many highly critical of the Government. Authorities sometimes attempt to influence the press through illicit means, for example, by giving "year-end gifts" to encourage positive media coverage or by applying libel and slander laws to restrict public discussion and retaliate against journalists.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face in Togo?

Answer. Recent restrictions on the press following politically motivated arrests, limitations on applications for political gatherings, and suspensions of press outlets raise concern and also makes our public diplomacy work in Togo challenging. If confirmed, I would, along with the rest of my Embassy team, engage the Government of Togo to end restrictions on media outlets and reporters and to remind them that freedom of the press is key to maintaining a healthy democracy. If confirmed, I will commit to meeting regularly with independent and local press outlets in Togo as visible sign of support for freedom of the press and of expression. COVID-19 restrictions have made it more difficult to reach out to the Togolese public. If confirmed, I fully intend to in-person engagement with the Togolese public as health and safety indicators allow.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. The Embassy's Public Affairs Office does a good job balancing these occasionally differing objectives. The Mission's strategic planning working group meets monthly to discuss important policy objectives and to decide how to best deliver messaging to the public. As a Mission, we focus most of our messaging on our priority policy goals and objectives including on democracy and governance, peace and security, trade and economic growth, and development. However, we also deliver messaging on Washington's policy priorities. Most public messaging is delivered via our social media platforms, but also via traditional media including radio, television, and newspaper interviews, which is dominated by state media. If confirmed, I will also use my past experience at the Bureau of African Affairs Deputy Assistant Secretary of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs to achieve the correct balance in our public diplomacy messaging.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Togo personnel?

Answer. Yes, I commit to transparent communication with Mission Togo personnel as it relates to AHI and any other matters that would have an impact on the health and safety of Mission Togo personnel and their families.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively.

- In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Togo and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. The United States and our European partners share an interest in supporting Togo's efforts for financial transparency, respect for human rights, respect for freedom of expression, and efforts to counter corruption. We are concerned about the PRC's influence on these areas in Togo. Working with like-minded partners, like the EU, is critical to advancing U.S. foreign policy goals in Togo. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU mission in Lome as well as with diplomats from our European and other like-minded partners to ensure that Togo's democratic institutions can counter malign influence in the country.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Togo remained at Tier 2 due to lack of a lack of convictions of traffickers and identifying fewer victims. How will you work with host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. The Government of Togo, with support of the U.S. Embassy, has taken steps to increase its anti-trafficking efforts. Past State Department-funded workshops trained magistrates, police officers, and customs officials on the trafficking provisions of the 2015 penal code. In addition, U.S. funding supported a local NGO to train social workers and journalists and conduct an awareness raising campaign. Following this, the Government of Togo established a formal partnership with Plan

International in support of a regional program targeting TIP and illegal immigration.

If confirmed, I will continue to urge the Government of Togo to increase its efforts to combat TIP, including finalizing and adopting the pending decree to create a Trafficking in Persons Inter-ministerial Committee, increasing accessibility to shelters for victims, and drafting and resourcing a national action plan that incorporates adult victims and increases coordination with NGOs, neighboring countries, and regional organizations.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Togo was identified as tolerant of religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to continue to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* The Togolese constitution specifies the state is secular and enshrines the right of all individuals to exercise their religious beliefs, consistent with the nation's laws. Relations among members of religions in Togo are generally amicable. Occasional disputes among members of religious groups were related to noise caused by religious celebrations, or competition for parishioners among churches. Members of different faiths regularly invite one another to their respective ceremonies. Inter-marriage between persons of different religions is common.

If confirmed, I commit to work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to strengthen Togo's efforts to foster an environment that respects religious freedom and plurality. I would continue the U.S. Embassy's programs to reach out to all religious groups in Togo in conjunction with the office of the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. If confirmed, I would also support peace and tolerance courses and programming that counters violent extremism alongside key Muslim leaders.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Togo was identified as having significant human rights issues, including unlawful or arbitrary killings by security forces, political prisoners, restrictions on free speech and on the internet, violence against women, and more.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* The United States is deeply concerned about allegations of human rights violations and abuses, violence against civilians, arbitrary arrests and killing by security forces, political prisoners, and undue restrictions on freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly in Togo. We have called on the Government of Togo to respect the human rights of individuals in Togo, notably freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly, both publicly and privately, and to ensure that all those arrested are afforded fair trial guarantees. If confirmed, I will continue to speak out for democratic pluralism and respect for human rights.

If confirmed, I would build on Embassy efforts to urge the Government to increase the transparency of the electoral process, lift undue restrictions on the press and journalists, and allow for freedom of peaceful assembly. I would also continue to encourage the Government to take seriously issues of impunity to build trust between the Government and its people.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will meet with and listen to all civil society and political actors in Togo who support strengthening Togo's democracy. I would build on Embassy efforts to urge the Government to lift punitive restrictions on civil society organizations and allow for freedom of peaceful assembly and speech by Togolese who hold views in opposition to the ruling party. I would also continue to encourage the Government to take seriously issues of impunity to build trust between the Government and its people and a concrete way the Government can build that trust is to allow NGOs and civil society true freedom of peaceful assembly and association. As health and safety allows, my team and I will meet in-person with civil society leaders throughout Togo to hear and support their voices.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DAVID R. GILMOUR BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*Question.* What are the main challenges faced by U.S. firms operating in Equatorial Guinea and how would you seek to promote opportunities for U.S. firms if confirmed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will represent the interests of U.S. companies with the Government, including with the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Planning. I will also ensure that Embassy Malabo continues to maintain strong relationships with local offices of U.S. companies and prioritize the protection of U.S. investments and interests. Natural resource-driven economies like that of Equatorial Guinea face liquidity problems when the price of the export commodity falls dramatically; such developments also directly affect the efficiency and profitability of U.S. firms in the hydrocarbon sector. Non-oil and gas companies in Equatorial Guinea have also faced a variety of obstacles in conducting business, which is reflected in Equatorial Guinea's low ranking on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. If confirmed, I will emphasize to Equatoguinean officials how damaging these obstacles, including non-payment of debts to U.S. investors, as well as apparent political influence or favoritism in commercial dealings, are to Equatorial Guinea's ability to attract and maintain foreign investment.

*Question.* What impact has corruption had on economic development, and what steps will you take if confirmed to address the issue of corruption?

*Answer.* It is telling that the World Bank classifies Equatorial Guinea as an upper middle-income country, yet 75 percent of the population lives in poverty. The oil and gas boom that began in the early 1990s did allow the Government to undertake some important infrastructure projects such as a high-quality road network, yet the country has not built a new public school throughout President Obiang's 42 years in office. If confirmed, I will utilize a measured and strategic approach by urging the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to adopt good governance practices, including increased transparency and accountability, more effectively implement its international anticorruption obligations and commitments, and invest more in its people, particularly in education and health. Equatorial Guinea recently passed a new anti-corruption law, and if confirmed, I will work to build on that and obtain real commitments from the Government to counter the corruption that threatens the Equatoguinean people's security, economic opportunity, and development. I will also continue to work with interagency partners to consider all available tools that promote accountability and combat corruption.

*Question.* China is a player in Equatorial Guinea and involved in construction, business, and maritime activities. How would you assess the level of Chinese influence and how should the U.S. work to counter it?

*Answer.* I understand that Equatorial Guinea's political and economic situation has created opportunities for exploitation by the PRC and other countries. If confirmed, I will build on ongoing collaboration among all relevant U.S. Government entities to ensure our efforts remain aligned and complementary. Moreover, while U.S. oil and gas companies have been the cornerstone of Equatorial Guinea's economic development for the past three decades, hydrocarbons are a limited resource and Equatorial Guinea needs to diversify its economy to promote further growth. Unfortunately, potential foreign investors from other sectors are rightly wary about the current investment climate, including contract sanctity and a politicized judicial system. The Government of Equatorial Guinea will need to address such issues if it wants to encourage increased foreign investment from reliable, transparent partners.

*Question.* What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

*Answer.* As Ambassador in Togo, I used a combination of personal diplomacy and a forceful critical statement from Washington to persuade the Government to cease the use of vigilantes who harassed and beat opposition demonstrators during a period of high political tension in 2017. I persuaded the Government to restore internet service that was shut down following mass demonstrations. I urged senior officials to compromise with the opposition on setting ground rules for demonstrations that restored freedom of assembly. In Chad, I joined with other likeminded chiefs of mission to convince the transitional government to allow peaceful public demonstrations, something which had not been permitted for many years. Throughout my career, I have worked with and supported journalists in countries with limited

freedom of expression. As a public diplomacy officer, I administered training and exchange programs for human rights defenders and civil society activists.

*Question.* What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in the Equatorial Guinea? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

*Answer.* The State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report on Equatorial Guinea notes many significant issues of concern, including reports of excessive use of force by security forces; disregard for the rule of law; undue restrictions on freedom of expression including for members of the press; restrictions on peaceful assembly; and widespread official corruption—all of which negatively affect democracy and democratic development. While Equatorial Guinea is officially a multiparty democracy with a constitution that guarantees certain rights to its citizens, opposition parties have significantly fewer resources and less capacity than the president's political party, and the same person has been in power for 42 years. Opposition parties have not achieved political goals, and therefore have no track record with the public. There is no independent electoral commission and thus no accountability process before, during or after elections. Press freedom is slowly emerging, but journalists are censored or self-censor, and journalistic capacity is low. If confirmed, I will raise these important concerns with the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, in addition to fostering and expanding the Embassy's own engagement with civil society, the political opposition, and media representatives.

*Question.* What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in the Equatorial Guinea? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

*Answer.* Human rights and democratic governance are central priorities for our engagements with Equatorial Guinea. If confirmed, I will raise human rights concerns with the Government of Equatorial Guinea, especially emphasizing how those concerns intersect our other areas of cooperation, such as fiscal transparency, economic diversification, anticorruption, trafficking in persons, and maritime security. I will also continue to use cultural exchanges, journalist trainings, democracy and good governance grants, and capacity building resources to expand and strengthen the Embassy's network of local partners and voices, who are critical in advocating for and implementing meaningful change in a society. We need to recognize, however, that the changes we and so many Equatoguineans seek will not happen overnight. While I would hope that the timeline for such changes will not be truly "generational," it may be wise to adopt an incrementalistic approach that embodies the philosophy of "First, Do No Harm," lest we endanger the very people we seek to assist. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss our approach with you and your colleagues in greater depth.

*Question.* How will you utilize U.S. Government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

*Answer.* From FY2018 to FY2020, the United States has provided multiple grants totaling \$725,000 through Africa Regional Democracy Fund to strengthen civil society capacity and advocate for democracy and transparency in governance. The United States has also been able to increase cultural and educational cooperation due to Equatorial Guinea's upgrade from Tier 3 in the TIP Report, including exchange programs such as the Fulbright Program. USAID has minimal programming in Equatorial Guinea and provided \$150,000 in humanitarian assistance in response to the March 2021 Bata explosions. USAID will also disburse a COVID-19 rapid deployment award with WHO and UNICEF as implementing partners. If confirmed, I will continue to support all this important work.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in the Equatorial Guinea? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to meeting with members of civil society, human rights, and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and local human rights NGOs, and civil society in the Equatorial Guinea. I will be clear in messaging that if the Government of Equatorial Guinea demonstrates interest and

takes concrete steps to improve democratic governance and respect for human rights—including transparent and inclusive regulations to allow civil society organizations to register and operate—we could potentially discuss other ways to improve the bilateral relationship.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. I will also advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties. Political parties are only one part of the equation, however. The Government of Equatorial Guinea must continue to address important issues like corruption, transparency, the lack of a robust civil society, the lack of access to justice for all, and the lack of respect for human rights. Without concerted attention to improving these systemic challenges, democratic development will still fall short. Continued engagement on democracy and human rights issues will help strengthen democratic institutions and encourage inclusion of all elements of society in decision-making.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with the Equatorial Guinea on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in the Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I commit to building on and expanding Embassy Malabo's strong relationships with journalists and members of civil society to increase their professional capacity in order to build public trust, dispel myths and disinformation, and work to hold the Government accountable.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I am committed to engaging with civil society members and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country. If confirmed, I will continue Embassy Malabo's efforts to build journalists' capabilities, professionalism, and public trust as an important part of countering disinformation.

*Question.* Will you and your Embassy teams actively engage with the Equatorial Guinea on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will commit to actively engage with the Equatoguinean Government—specifically the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Protection—on the right of labor groups to organize and call out incidents when the Government or other actors restricts that right.

*Question.* Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in the Equatorial Guinea, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

*Answer.* Yes. I commit to using my position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Equatorial Guinea, no matter their gender identity, expression or sexual orientation. As I did during my service in Togo as Ambassador, I will work with colleagues across the U.S. interagency to promote and protect the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons in Equatorial Guinea, working in close partnership with local civil society. Understanding that, as in all operating environments, the U.S. Embassy should do no harm. I will support civil society voices in Equatorial Guinea to strengthen their ability to advocate for the human rights of all persons. I will use all the tools at my disposal, including Embassy Malabo's convening power to bring together key actors from the Government, civil society, private sector and international community to discuss issues affecting LGBTQI+ persons.

*Question.* What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in the Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* No laws exist in Equatorial Guinea expressly criminalizing same-sex sexual conduct, but neither do they prohibit discrimination, and members of the Equatoguinean LGBTQI+ community are challenged by societal stigmatization and discrimination. Some LGBTQI+ individuals were removed from government jobs or

academic positions because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. The Equatoguinean Government has made no effort to combat this or investigate abuses. The Government has stated such sexual orientations and gender identities are inconsistent with cultural beliefs.

*Question.* What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in the Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* Promoting respect for human rights and democracy is a priority for our mission in Equatorial Guinea. As part of that effort, Embassy Malabo has developed a positive and productive relationship with local LGBTQI+ organization Somos Parte del Mundo, and has funded this group and others to help foster a more inclusive environment for LGBTQI+ citizens of Equatorial Guinea. If confirmed, I will ensure our Embassy continues promoting and protecting the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons in partnership with civil society working against discrimination and stigmatization.

*Question.* Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to the Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* Yes. I commit fully to briefing Congress consistently and openly during my tenure as Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea, if I am confirmed.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, these incidents and any threats to the health and safety of U.S. personnel must be taken seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. As Secretary Blinken has said, his number one responsibility as Secretary of State is to protect the men and women representing our country around the world. If confirmed, I commit to ensuring any reported incident is treated seriously and reported through appropriate channels in a timely manner and that any affected individual promptly receives medical care.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed I will regularly meet with medical and RSO staff to ensure I understand the full scope of threats against U.S. personnel and that all safety protocols are being carefully followed.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. DAVID R. GILMOUR BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Despite the many challenges faced in U.S. relations with Equatorial Guinea, it is also an important destination for U.S. investment, particularly in the oil and gas sector. How will you support American investors as U.S. Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea, if confirmed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will represent the interests of U.S. companies with the Government, including with the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Planning. I will also ensure that Embassy Malabo continues to maintain strong relationships with local offices of U.S. companies and prioritize the improvement of the investment climate for U.S. companies invested in Equatorial Guinea.

*Question.* Equatorial Guinea has harbored former Gambian President Yahya Jammeh since his ouster at the ballot box in 2016. How will you engage with Equatorial Guinea on issues of accountability for President Jammeh?



**Answer.** Yahya Jammeh and his wife live in Equatorial Guinea at the invitation of the Equatoguinean Government. The Gambian Government has not requested Jammeh's extradition to date. Equatorial Guinea and The Gambia should resolve this issue bilaterally. If confirmed, I will encourage the Equatoguinean Government to continue to discuss this issue with their Gambian counterparts.

*Question.* What is your view on political dynasties and long-serving rulers who, like in the case of Equatorial Guinea, manipulate constitutional and electoral processes to give the façade of democratic legitimacy? If confirmed, how will you address this issue as U.S. Ambassador, particularly in light of broader regional trends?

**Answer.** The promotion of human rights, democracy, and good governance is a key U.S. objective in Equatorial Guinea and, if confirmed, I will ensure that my team and I remain focused on these issues. As Ambassador to Togo and more recently as Chargé d'Affaires in Chad, I am familiar with countries in which sons succeeded their fathers as either the actual or de facto head of state, and while we do not currently face that situation in Equatorial Guinea, it is true that the president's son is serving as vice president and that he is widely rumored to be his father's most likely successor. It is more important, I believe, to focus not on the "who" becomes Equatorial Guinea's next leader but on the "how." Equatorial Guinea is scheduled to hold legislative elections in 2022 and presidential elections in 2023. If confirmed, I will lead Embassy Malabo's engagement with like-minded diplomatic missions and the full range of Equatoguinean officials and citizens to promote free, fair, and transparent electoral processes.

*Question.* How can the United States best use the tools it has to hold Equatorial Guinea officials accountable for corrupt behavior? If confirmed, what would be your approach in using those tools?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will utilize a measured and strategic approach by urging the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea to adopt democratic governance practices, including increased transparency and accountability, more effectively implement its international anticorruption obligations and commitments, and invest more in its people, particularly in education and health. Equatorial Guinea recently passed a new anti-corruption law, and if confirmed, I will work to build on that and obtain real commitments from the Government to counter the corruption that threatens the Equatoguinean people's security, economic opportunity, and development. If confirmed, I will continue to work with interagency partners to consider all available tools to promote accountability and combat impunity in Equatorial Guinea.

*Question.* How can the United States best engage Equatorial Guinea to curb the corrupt behavior of those companies and government officials of malign foreign actors like China that feed on corrupt governments and business environments?

**Answer.** I understand that Equatorial Guinea's political and economic situation has created opportunities for Beijing and other competitors to exploit. If confirmed, I will build on ongoing collaboration among all relevant U.S. Government entities to ensure our efforts remain aligned and complementary. Moreover, while U.S. oil and gas companies have been the cornerstone of Equatorial Guinea's economic development for the past three decades, hydrocarbons are a limited resource and Equatorial Guinea needs to diversify its economy to promote further growth. Unfortunately, potential foreign investors from other sectors are rightly wary about the current investment climate, including contract sanctity and a politicized judicial system, and thus the Government of Equatorial Guinea will need to address such issues if it wants to encourage increased foreign investment from reliable, transparent partners.

*Question.* Should the United States build on its existing defense and security cooperation with Equatorial Guinea? Where are the opportunities and the risks?

**Answer.** The United States is committed to support Equatorial Guinea in facing security challenges in the maritime domain. After nearly a decade of inactivity, the United States has taken a deliberate, cautious approach to our military reengagement, focusing on confidence building activities to assess host nation buy-in and absorptive capacity. Our long-term partnerships within the region are vital for addressing immediate threats from piracy and building capacity to ensure long-term security and stability in the region. Maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea region is an important U.S. interest. We recognize the threat posed by piracy to maritime security in the region and to the significant U.S. oil sector investments there. The United States works actively with Gulf of Guinea countries to increase their capacity to address a range of maritime security threats and to improve maritime security cooperation among the states of the region.

*Question.* What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* According to what I have been told, morale overall is quite good despite some real challenges. The mission is small and tightly-knit, an attribute that is fostered by the fact that most U.S. personnel including the Chief of Mission and DCM reside on the same compound. Local staff have also showed great resilience and dedication to duty despite COVID-19's heavy toll on Embassy Malabo, with many members of our community having lost loved ones. Infrastructural challenges like telecommunications, healthcare, and food availability are very real, for both U.S. and local personnel. The Embassy has adapted to this new environment, with staff building stronger ties with each other as they rely on one another more than they did prior to the pandemic. Isolation and travel times to/from the United States also have the potential to affect our staff's well-being. Our mission in Malabo continues to prioritize Embassy morale through tools such as regular town halls, which provide a platform for staff to connect with leadership and for speakers to discuss resilience and coping mechanisms. As the COVID-19 situation evolves, we would also hope to return to the past practice of sponsoring well-attended athletic, cultural, and social events for community members and their families.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale at Mission Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the safety and security of the Embassy community will be of primary importance. I will seek to support American employees and their families to create an inclusive and welcoming culture where individuals are safe and can achieve professional and personal goals. The welfare of our local Equatoguinean and third-country staff members is also of great importance to me, and I commit to meeting regularly with the local staff committee in a spirit of open and constructive dialogue.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision at Mission Equatorial Guinea?

*Answer.* Having led small missions in the past, I am cognizant of the particular challenges such missions face regarding resources and workload. If confirmed, I will lead regular discussions with all agencies, including those whose representatives covering Equatorial Guinea are resident in neighboring countries, to establish and review goals and develop strategies and tactics to achieve common objectives. If confirmed, I will engage all employees and stakeholders to conceive and articulate clearly what we will do, and how we will do it despite our size and resource limitations. As appropriate and necessary, I will work with the Department to identify resource gaps and seek ways to address those when possible. If confirmed, I will also create a culture of inclusion in which all employees' contributions are valued.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I aspire to create a leadership culture in which all are encouraged to contribute, create, and grow. If confirmed, I would like to create the ideal workplace in which people achieve shared objectives while respecting and valuing everyone's contributions. This requires from leadership and employees a recognition of individuals' strengths and areas of development, and a respect for shared values, inclusion, and our institutions.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I do not believe there is an acceptable place for 'berating' subordinates, either in public or in private.

*Question.* What lessons have you learned from your tenure leading Embassy N'Djamena?

*Answer.* My tenure in N'Djamena as Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., reinforced lessons I had learned serving in other isolated hardship posts, notably that the Chief of Mission must pay close and continuing attention to the morale and welfare of the Embassy staff. N'Djamena is a challenging and historically difficult post to staff. Staff members face security threats, physical and mental health hazards, isolation, and loneliness. The chief of mission must ensure that employees and families have safe and acceptable housing, and that Embassy services for employees are efficiently delivered to maintain quality of life. In a high-threat environment such as N'Djamena, the chief of mission must devote extra attention to assuring the physical safety of employees and family members. Equally important for the chief of mission is to clearly communicate the nature of the Embassy's mission and strategic direction so that employees and family members understand how their work and presence in

such an isolated and difficult place serves the national security interests of the United States.

*Question.* How will your management style and approach differ from Embassy Malabo?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I anticipate applying the same management and leadership practices I used as Chief of Mission in Togo and Chad, to ensure a happy, healthy and highly productive Embassy staff.

*Question.* How do you envision your leadership relationship with the deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I expect to collaborate closely with the deputy chief of mission to conceive goals, then implement and oversee tactics and activities to achieve those goals. If confirmed, I will work with the deputy chief of mission to articulate and maintain high ethical standards and create a culture of inclusion and respect. I believe deputy chiefs of mission are most effective, productive, and valued when they are permitted to work with independence, while understanding that the chief of mission is ultimately responsible in all ways for the work of the Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ask the deputy chief of mission to lead our mission-wide efforts to train, develop, and empower our small but dedicated staff to serve effectively in a challenging environment while promoting U.S. interests. I will also ask the deputy chief of mission to lead recruitment efforts for our Foreign Service positions and work with other agencies to ensure that their personnel covering Equatorial Guinea are fully integrated into Embassy Malabo's policy formulation and implementation. If confirmed, I will collaborate closely with the deputy chief of mission on policy implementation, engagement with the Government of Equatorial Guinea, and outreach to key groups-particularly youth-through traditional and social media. The deputy chief of mission at any mission must be able to stand in for the Ambassador as needed and potentially on short notice; if confirmed, I will ensure that my deputy chief of mission has the knowledge, skills, and awareness to stand in for me with confidence.

*Question.* Do you believe that it is important to provide employees with accurate, constructive feedback on their performances in order to encourage improvement and reward those who most succeeded in their roles?

*Answer.* Yes I do.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you support and encourage clear, accurate, and direct feedback to employees in order to improve performance and reward high achievers?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* In your experience, do U.S. diplomats get outside of our Embassy walls enough to accomplish fully their missions?

*Answer.* The most effective U.S. diplomats are those who actively engage broadly with people throughout all parts of society in the country to which they are assigned. During normal times (i.e., outside the context of COVID-19), our U.S. Mission community was actively involved in external engagement with our Government, civil society, and media partners and members of the international community throughout the country. This has continued even during the pandemic although on a more limited basis to ensure everyone's health, safety, and security, which are paramount responsibilities of all posts' leadership. If confirmed, I will ensure Embassy Malabo continues to engage externally in a manner commensurate with the local context at any given time, including by traveling to the continental portion of Equatorial Guinea and the distant island of Annobon to ensure we are getting the most complete understanding we can of what is going on in the country beyond the capital.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve the ability of U.S. diplomats to better access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, and as health and safety conditions permit, I will encourage U.S. diplomats to engage actively, broadly and in-person with local populations. Until then, we will maintain active engagement through virtual media. If confirmed, I intend to regularly visit people throughout Equatorial Guinea and use those visits to facilitate contacts for the rest of my team.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Equatorial Guinea? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face there?

*Answer.* The Equatoguinean public is generally receptive to U.S. Government programs and messaging on our policy priorities, and access to less expensive data plans has steadily increased the number of social media users following Embassy accounts. However, the combination of an underfunded education system, the low capacity of civil society and media professionals, and the GREG's conflation of all civil society actors as connected to the political opposition poses real challenges to engagement. Our civil society and journalist interlocutors are hungry for training and skill-building and have participated without incident in bi-monthly trainings provided by the public affairs section, with additional trainings on the horizon that have been tailored to participants' demands and needs. COVID-19 limited the Mission's ability to conduct in-person exchanges and outreach for much of the pandemic, but since June 2021 we have been able to safely conduct in-person trainings at the Embassy with virtual speakers to mitigate participants' connectivity issues and create an esprit-de-corps for those involved.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* I understand the Embassy's strategic planning working group meets regularly to discuss important policy objectives and to decide how to best deliver messaging to the public. If confirmed, I will focus most of our messaging on our priority policy goals and objectives including democracy and governance, anticorruption, antitrafficking in persons, regional security, and strengthening the economy. Most public messaging is delivered via our influential social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, but also via traditional media including radio, television, and newspaper interviews, which is dominated by state media. Two emerging independent digital platforms have entered the media space with the goal of providing news that Equatoguinean citizens can trust; Embassy Malabo is working closely with both of these outlets via training and support ahead of the legislative elections in 2022 and presidential elections in 2023.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Equatorial Guinea personnel?

*Answer.* Yes, I commit to transparent communication with Mission Malabo personnel as it relates to AHI and any other matters that would have an impact on the health and safety of Mission Malabo personnel and their families.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively. In what ways should the United States partner with European countries to build on likeminded interests in Equatorial Guinea and counter the malign influence of China?

*Answer.* The United States and our European partners share an interest in promoting financial transparency, respect for human rights, respect for freedom of expression, and efforts to counter corruption in Equatorial Guinea. We are concerned about the PRC's influence in Equatorial Guinea, including in the areas listed in your question. If confirmed, I would continue to work with European and other likeminded nations and the Government of Equatorial Guinea to strengthen Equatorial Guinea's resilience to external influence that exacerbates domestic problems. If confirmed, I will work with our partners that have influence with the Government to highlight the advantages to Equatorial Guinea of cooperation with U.S., European, and likeminded countries on areas of common strategic interest including in the economic and security realms. This may at times include speaking up against the PRC's malign actions and attempts to undermine the international rules-based system and/or advocating for Equatoguinean support of U.S. positions in the UN system.

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Equatorial Guinea remained on Tier 2 Watch List due to an overall lack of increasing efforts to eliminate trafficking, like never convicting a trafficker under its 2004 law, government complicity, and a lack of identifying victims. How will you work with host government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* The Embassy regularly engages the Equatoguinean Government on this issue, including by focusing on the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report's prioritized recommendations to adopt a whole of government approach, as well as measures to proactively identify and provide assistance to trafficking victims. If confirmed, I will continue to press for additional progress in the year ahead.

*Question.* Because Equatorial Guinea remained on the Trafficking in Persons Report Tier 2 Watch List for a second year, they are at risk of being automatically downgraded if they remain on the Watch List in 2022. Please explain what steps you believe the Government can take to significantly improve efforts to combat human trafficking in country during the remainder of this reporting period.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Equatoguinean Government to address the recommendations included in the 2021 Trafficking in Persons report. I will work to foster good relationships with the Government to encourage progress in key areas, including drafting and implementing an updated National Action Plan. I will also work with the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to address how else the United States can best help Equatorial Guinea to continue to improve its anti-TIP efforts.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Equatorial Guinea was identified as having societal respect for religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Ambassador At Large to continue to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Religious freedom is a U.S. foreign policy priority, and the Department continues to closely monitor religious freedom in Equatorial Guinea. If confirmed, I commit to working with civil society and the Equatorial Guinea Government to ensure all citizens enjoy freedom of religion and worship as stated in the Constitution. If confirmed, I commit to also work with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Congress to emphasize the importance of religious freedom, addressing any religious freedom concerns, and further strengthening tolerance and respect among and for members of religious communities in Equatorial Guinea.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Equatorial Guinea was identified as having committed and bearing witness to severe human rights issues.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* Human rights are a central priority for the U.S. Government's engagements with Equatorial Guinea. If confirmed, I will raise human rights concerns with the Government of Equatorial Guinea, especially emphasizing how those concerns intersect our other areas of cooperation, such as fiscal transparency, economic diversification, anticorruption, trafficking in persons, and maritime security. I will also continue to work with Embassy and Department programs such as cultural exchanges, journalist trainings, democracy and good governance grants, and capacity building resources to expand and strengthen the Embassy's network of local partners and voices, who are critical in advocating for and implementing meaningful change in a society.

*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* The promotion of human rights is of the highest priority in our relations with Equatorial Guinea. If confirmed, I will continue to strengthen and expand the relationships we have built in this space. I will continue to advance opportunities to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations and amplify their voices, encourage the Government to collaborate productively with these organizations for the betterment of Equatorial Guinea, while respecting the local operating context and adhering to the fundamental principle of "First, Do No Harm." In this vein, I will work to ensure that we coordinate our efforts with other diplomatic missions.

---

## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., by video-conference, Hon. Tim Kaine presiding.

Present: Senators Kaine [presiding], Shaheen, Markey, Van Hollen, Romney, and Young.

Also Present: Senators Baldwin, Graham, and Hickenlooper.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator KAINE. Good morning to everyone. I see my ranking member for this nominations hearing, Senator Romney, on the line. I think we will go ahead and get started.

This meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is here to consider four important nominees to be ambassadors to countries that are good allies of the United States: Thomas Barrett to be Ambassador to Luxembourg, Jamie Harpootlian to be Ambassador to Slovenia, Scott Miller to be Ambassador to Switzerland and Lichtenstein, and Erik Ramanathan of Massachusetts to be Ambassador to Sweden.

I want to congratulate each of you on your nominations to these important posts. I know a couple of you pretty well.

Mayor Barrett, it is really good to see you, in particular, and I want to thank you for your willingness to serve and also the willingness of your families to have you serve. This is a family challenge and a family sacrifice and also a family opportunity.

I have four distinguished Senate colleagues who will each introduce one of the nominees: Senators Baldwin, Graham, Hickenlooper, and Markey. We are going to turn to my colleagues first for these introductions before proceeding to open remarks, my opening remarks and Senator Romney's, and then to opening statements from the nominees.

If I could ask Senator Baldwin to begin and introduce Thomas Barrett.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY BALDWIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN**

Senator BALDWIN. Thank you, Chairman Kaine. I am really honored to join you today to introduce Tom Barrett as you consider his nomination as United States Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Tom Barrett learned our strong Wisconsin work ethic as a young man, working his way through college as a parts worker, dock man, and as a factory worker at Harley-Davidson in Milwaukee.

He received a BA Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Wisconsin Madison and a JD with honors from the University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison. After law school, he clerked for the Honorable Robert W. Warren, who was nominated by President Nixon to the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, based in Milwaukee.

With a deep commitment to public service, Tom has committed his life to working as a public servant, serving in the Wisconsin State Assembly, the Wisconsin State Senate, and working for five terms as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where I had the pleasure of calling him a colleague.

He served on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, where he was a tireless advocate for job creation and worker training. He also served on the Banking and Financial Services, Government Reform and Oversight, and Judiciary Committees.

Serving as mayor of Milwaukee since 2004, he has worked hard on economic development efforts, bringing billions of dollars in private investment across the city and working to create jobs and grow our economy.

In addition to spearheading multiple clean green initiatives in the city to clean up rivers, parks, and brownfields, he has led the Great Lakes mayors in both Canada and the United States as chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

Tom Barrett's long career of public service at the state and federal level, combined with years of hands-on business and management experience as mayor, demonstrate that he is well qualified to represent the United States of America as Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

I really thank you for giving me the opportunity to join you here today. I have known Mayor Barrett for many years, both as a colleague and a friend, and I strongly support his nomination and respectfully ask the committee to support his nomination as well.

Thank you.

Senator KAINE. Thank you so much, Senator Baldwin.

Next, Senator Graham will introduce Ms. Harpootlian.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSEY GRAHAM,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member. It is my pleasure to introduce to you Jamie Harpootlian from South Carolina.

Slovenia is a very important NATO ally. I was there not long ago. It is a beautiful place and a very dicey region. You want to send your best and I think Jamie was a great choice by President Biden. She is a graduate of Mary Baldwin College, which should go a long way with the chairman here.

[Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. She did really well there and went to Tulane Law School and graduated with distinction. She volunteered to be a hearing officer for the Department of Justice for the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund. She is well known in South Carolina legal cir-

cles and practiced in federal court and has a really great reputation in our state as a problem solver.

I just think President Biden did the country a great service by nominating Jamie to this important posting. She has the skill set, I think, to represent our country in a very honorable and effective way in a region where America's voice is important.

Russia is up to no good all over that part of the world, and with Jamie there, she will keep an eye on the Russians and be a good ally to our friends in Slovenia. I completely wholeheartedly support her and I know that she has the support of people all over my state. She will do a great job for us.

Jamie, congratulations, and hope you get through this thing quickly and I will come see you.

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. Thank you.

Senator KAINE. Thank you so much, Senator Graham.

Next, if Senator Hickenlooper is on, he will introduce Mr. Miller. Do I see Senator Hickenlooper?

[No response.]

Senator KAINE. I do not, so what I will do is I will go to Senator Markey. Senator Markey is going to introduce Mr. Ramanathan.

Ed, please unmute.

Senator MARKEY. Can you hear me now?

Okay. Beautiful. Thank you, Tim.

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. It is my pleasure to introduce Erik Ramanathan to be our next ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden.

Erik grew up in western New York, the son of public school teachers, and while New York is Erik's native home, Massachusetts is where he studied and spent much of his professional life and is his adopted home.

Erik, his husband, Ranesh, and their son, Christopher, live on Heard Pond, one of our state's treasured national wildlife refuges outside of Boston. He is also a graduate of Harvard Law School.

Some years after graduating he returned to Cambridge to run Harvard Center for the Legal Profession, whose mission is to help lawyers and instructors realize their full potential in their respective professions.

After building a career as a life sciences attorney, Erik transitioned to the nonprofit sector, where for more than a decade he has served as the chair of the national public health services nonprofit, Heluna Health, and under Erik's leadership Heluna has grown to help our nation's frontline hospital workers in the battle against the dual opioid and COVID-19 pandemics.

His commitment to helping those in need will serve him well as he embarks upon this important role representing the United States. Our friendship with Sweden dates back to the first Swedish immigrants who arrived in Delaware in the middle part of the 17th century.

Sweden was one of the first countries to recognize U.S. independence in 1783 and it has been a steady partner in advancing our common interests and values. Ingrained in Sweden's foreign policy is a commitment to equality, sustainable development, and human



rights, all issues that Erik has championed in his professional career and public service.

Sweden was one of the first countries in the world to commit to marriage equality, and the Kingdom is second to none in its commitment to gender equality.

As Ambassador, Erik will bring to Stockholm his own lifetime of commitment to fighting for equality, and as the leader of the Board of Immigration Equality, Erik worked to champion the rights of LGBTI asylees.

Erik is on the board of several education and professional development nonprofits in Massachusetts and spends his free time cleaning up the Sudbury and Concord River watersheds, whose beauty have inspired poets and authors alike.

His accomplished career in law, the private sector, public health, and his service to his community make him a great choice to be our next Ambassador to Sweden.

I urge swift confirmation for Erik, an adopted son of the Commonwealth, for this important post.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to testify.

Senator KAINE. Senator Markey, thank you so much.

Senator Hickenlooper has now joined us and he will introduce our fourth nominee, Mr. Miller.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO**

Senator HICKENLOOPER. Great. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to all of you. Good morning, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee.

It is my privilege and my great honor to introduce Scott Miller, who is President Biden's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein.

I have known Scott for almost 20 years and I cannot imagine a better person to be representing our country and negotiating on our behalf than Scott. If approved by this chamber, Scott will be headed to Europe and I think you could argue this will not be a moment too soon.

There is a lot on the agenda in the months and the years ahead: navigating a global pandemic, facilitating an inclusive economic reality, recovery from that pandemic, shoring up the transatlantic relationship to counter an increasingly assertive China, an increasingly assertive Russia, defending democracy amidst the creeping spread of authoritarianism around the world, and addressing the existential threat of climate change at every level.

Fortunately, Switzerland and Liechtenstein are enduring trusted partners on all of these issues as well as many others. They share our commitment to democratic values, the rule of law, free markets. They have similarly vibrant open economies like our own and they have strong bilateral collaboration based on stable political systems.

Together, we have worked on controlling terrorism and cracking down on money laundering, worked to strengthen intellectual property rights, and much more. We have developed a robust economic and trade relationship and created opportunities for our mutual defense.

As the home of several U.N. agencies, not to mention the World Trade Organization, Switzerland, in particular, is synonymous with this type of international collaboration that is so essential to addressing these and other transnational challenges.

These types of forums are important sources for dialogue and many of the shared priorities highlighted today. I trust Scott's ability to be the appropriate voice of the U.S. in all of these rooms. He is the right leader for this moment.

He has dedicated his life to expanding access to the American Dream. He is a national leader for LGBTQ equality. He has worked to boost STEM in K-12 public schools. He has helped provide over 5½ million meals to Coloradans during the pandemic.

He has experience in business but, more importantly, he has experience in life. He is fiercely committed to creating more seats at the table, investing in the success of the next generation. These kinds of efforts are critical to the innovation and dynamism of our country and its influence abroad. Scott again and again has risen to the occasion.

I am confident that Scott will embody these American values of opportunity and equality in Bern. As I said before, I have known him for almost two decades and in terms of dealing with bringing people together, who are, let us say, disagreeing, in violent disagreement, I do not know anybody better than Scott.

He is the kind of person you want navigating complex issues when people have serious disagreements. He has that knack for putting people at ease, focusing on the facts that really matter, and working to a conclusion—a successful conclusion.

I support Scott's nomination to represent the United States in what some people call the Colorado of Europe—that would be Switzerland. I hope this committee will recognize how important his nomination will be and will support it wholeheartedly, and I will reach out to many of you and just have conversations on the side if we can find time.

Thank you very much for your time. I yield back to the chair.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Senator Hickenlooper. Great introductions. The four of you are lucky to have these Senators presenting you to the committee.

I will now offer opening remarks and then that will be followed by Senator Romney's opening remarks. We will then hear from each of the nominees and then we will alternate questions beginning first me, then Senator Romney and then we will alternate by party.

There are a set of votes scheduled at 11:00 a.m., and so just for the nominees, you might see some of us coming and going to make sure we do not miss votes. But let me just, again, congratulate each of the four of you on your nominations.

Representing the U.S. as an Ambassador is a tremendous honor and it is a privilege, and based on your impressive professional backgrounds I know you can do these jobs and do them well.

I also want to congratulate you for an experience that you will have, since none of you are career Foreign Service you are going to have probably for the first time in your lives, which is working in a very in-depth way with America's talented Foreign Service officers.

As a member of this committee, I travel around the world and I am always just struck by the tremendous talent and patriotism of those that we have serving us abroad. And so should you be confirmed, that might be the most memorable and impactful part of your job is interacting with these great professionals.

The countries that you represent, several of them, are small but they are mighty. They punch above their weight on the global stage because of strong economies and also entrenched democratic traditions.

Luxembourg was a founder—a founding member of the United Nations and NATO and the EU. Due to the strength of its economy and financial sector, it is a critical partner in economic efforts including efforts to counter money laundering, tax evasion, and terrorism.

Luxembourg has positioned itself to be a leader in many global industries and particularly the commercial space industry, which has significant ties to American companies.

Switzerland provides an invaluable service to global peace and security as a host nation to many U.N. agencies and other international, governmental, and NGO organizations.

We are in the midst of a combined \$7.6 billion deal for Switzerland to purchase F-35 fighter jets and Patriot missiles. Switzerland has a long nonaligned tradition, but it also is a partner in global security efforts, which we appreciate.

The cooperation of neighboring Liechtenstein is also very crucial to this issue of addressing international tax evasion. The combined mission of Switzerland and Liechtenstein is very important.

Slovenia—Slovenia is approaching 20 years as a member of both NATO and the EU. Its economic and democratic gains during that time are a strong demonstration of the value of transatlantic integration and cooperation.

Today, Slovenia is among the major proponents, the greatest proponents, of EU membership for Western Balkans nations, which is a foreign policy objective that the United States shares.

Finally, moving further north to Sweden, Sweden is a leader in holding Russia accountable for aggression in Ukraine and throughout Europe and also a leader in countering Russian disinformation.

Despite not being a NATO member, Sweden has been a very valuable security partner for the United States, an indispensable partner in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The committee looks forward to hearing from each of you today and to asking you questions about the missions that you will undertake, should you be confirmed.

I now turn to the ranking member, Senator Romney, for his opening comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MITT ROMNEY,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM UTAH**

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the introductions made by our colleagues. I particularly appreciate the willingness of the nominees to serve our country in foreign posts, particularly, at such a critical time.

We face a number of challenges, some among friends, deciding how we can collaborate together to be stronger and provide for our respective populations, but some relate to other nations.

Russia, in particular, poses an ongoing threat to Europe and to places around the world. China has set its tentacles into Europe and is intending to become the leader of the world in military and economic terms, and so the work that we anticipate doing together with our friends and allies around the world is of critical importance.

I have more extensive comments I will ask the chairman to include in the record. But with that introduction, we will be happy to turn to your statements and our respective questions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Romney. We will now move to opening statements and I would like to do the opening statements in this order—first, Mayor Barrett, then Ms. Harpootlian, then Mr. Miller, finally, Mr. Ramanathan, and then we will begin with questions.

Mayor Barrett, we will begin with you.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. THOMAS BARRETT OF WISCONSIN,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG**

Mr. BARRETT. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

I also want to give a big shout out to my friend, Senator Baldwin, for her generous introduction and all the work she does for the people of the state of Wisconsin.

I am truly humbled and honored by the trust and confidence the President and Secretary of State have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this committee and the Congress to advance U.S. interests and priorities in Luxembourg.

I am here today as a direct result of the love and support of my family. My wife, Kris, who just retired from teaching grade school, has been my best friend and partner for over 30 years. Together, we are blessed with four children, Tom, Annie, Erin, and Kate. All of them are in their 20s. Each of them is a remarkable young adult.

Growing up in Milwaukee, I was also blessed to have parents who set the example of how to be caring and responsible. My dad was a navigator in World War Two and taught my brother, sisters, and me the importance of being responsible.

My mother lost her first husband during the Battle of the Bulge, and then met our father. She taught us resilience and caring.

I have committed my life to public service. I have had the good fortune and honor to serve as an elected official for over 36 years, first as a state legislator, next as a member of Congress for 10 years, and currently as mayor of the city of Milwaukee for the past 17 years.

I am especially proud that my home state of Wisconsin is also the home of many people of Luxembourg descent. In fact, it is the

home of the Luxembourg American Cultural Center, just a short drive from Milwaukee.

The United States-Luxembourg relationship is strong, based on our shared history, our values and mutual interest, our strategic alliance and our economic ties.

Luxembourg, as you mentioned, Mr. Chair, is a charter member of NATO and one of the founding members of the EU. It has also hosted numerous monuments to the American liberators after both world wars and is the final resting place for over 5,000 American service members, including General George Patton.

As a premier financial capital in Europe, Luxembourg is one of the U.S. economy's largest sources and destinations for investment. If confirmed, my number-one priority will be the safety and security of U.S. citizens abroad. There are approximately 3,100 U.S. citizens who reside in Luxembourg and 30,000 U.S. citizens who visit annually.

I also pledge to maintain the safety and security of our mission in Luxembourg. Luxembourg is a small country that is home to one of the largest financial centers in the Euro zone and, remarkably, the second largest investment fund center in the world, behind only the United States.

Luxembourg is a world leader in green and sustainable finance. It is home to the world's first and largest green exchange for debt instruments. It is also home to the EU Investment Bank, which is the lending arm of the European Union.

As mayor of Milwaukee, I have chaired the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and have worked to create green solutions to clean up rivers, parks, and brownfields. That is important because it is imperative that we work at all levels of government, domestically and internationally, to support President Biden's efforts to combat global climate change.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Luxembourg on this important issue. I will work with Luxembourg to address this challenge in areas where it has a competitive advantage, such as sustainable finance. Luxembourg is also a pioneer and an important player in space and one of the original signatories of NASA's Artemis Accords in October 2020.

In 2019, the United States and Luxembourg signed a groundbreaking agreement on space. If confirmed, I will continue to expand our civil, commercial, and defense cooperation in space.

Luxembourg is in the heart of Europe, both psychologically and geographically, and I should note the size of its population is very close to that of Milwaukee. It is home to 10 EU institutions and offices, including the European Court of Justice. It has produced three EU Commission presidents and it is a strong voice for institution building and rulemaking in the European Union.

President Biden has emphasized the importance of our transatlantic relations and working with those who share our values. If confirmed, I will be honored to work with Luxembourg to advance our shared priorities and U.S. interests in Luxembourg.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Barrett follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS BARRETT

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee as U.S. Ambassador to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. I am truly humbled and honored by the trust and confidence the President and Secretary of State have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with this committee and the Congress to advance U.S. interests and priorities in Luxembourg.

I am here today as a direct result of the love and support of my family. My wife Kris, who just retired from teaching grade school, has been my best friend and partner for over 30 years. Together, we are blessed with four children: Tom, Annie, Erin, and Kate. All of them are in their twenties. Each of them is a remarkable young adult.

Growing up in Milwaukee, I was also blessed to have parents who set the example of how to be caring and responsible. My dad was a navigator in World War II and taught my brother, sisters, and me the importance of being responsible. My mother lost her first husband during the Battle of the Bulge and then met our father. She taught us resilience and caring.

I have committed my life to public service. I have had the good fortune and honor to serve as an elected official for over thirty-six years; first as a state legislator, next as a member of Congress for ten years, and currently as Mayor of Milwaukee, for the past seventeen years.

I am especially proud that my home state of Wisconsin is also the home of many people of Luxembourg descent. In fact, it is the home of the Luxembourg American Cultural Center, just a short drive from Milwaukee.

The United States-Luxembourg relationship is strong, based on our shared history and values, mutual interests, strategic alliance, and economic ties. Luxembourg is a charter member of NATO and one of the founding members of the EU. It is also host to numerous monuments to the American liberators after both World Wars, and it is the final resting place for over 5,000 American service members, including General George Patton. As a premier financial capital in Europe, Luxembourg is one of the U.S. economy's largest sources and destinations for investment.

If confirmed, my number one priority will be the safety and security of U.S. citizens abroad. There are approximately 3,100 U.S. citizens who reside in Luxembourg and 30,000 who visit annually. I also pledge to maintain the safety and security of members of our mission in Luxembourg.

Luxembourg is a small country that is home to one of the largest financial centers in the Eurozone and, remarkably, the second largest investment fund center in the world, behind only the United States. Luxembourg is a world leader in green and sustainable finance. It is home to the world's first and largest "green exchange" for debt instruments. It is also home to the EU Investment Bank, which is the lending arm of the European Union.

As Mayor of Milwaukee, I have chaired the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Cities Initiative and have worked to create green solutions to clean up rivers, parks, and brownfields. That is important because it is imperative that we work at all levels of government, domestically and internationally, to support President Biden's efforts to combat global climate change. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Luxembourg on this important issue. I will work with Luxembourg to address this challenge in areas where it has a competitive advantage, such as sustainable finance.

Luxembourg is also a pioneer and an important player in space, and one of the original signatories of NASA's Artemis Accords in October 2020. In 2019, the United States and Luxembourg signed a groundbreaking agreement on Space. If confirmed, I will continue to expand our civil, commercial and defense cooperation in space.

Luxembourg is in the heart of Europe both psychologically and geographically—and, I should note, the size of its population is very close to that of Milwaukee. It is home to ten EU institutions and offices, including the European Court of Justice; it has produced three EU Commission presidents; and it is a strong voice for institution building and rulemaking in the European Union.

President Biden has emphasized the importance of our Transatlantic relations and working with those who share our values. If confirmed, I will be honored to work with Luxembourg to advance our shared priorities and U.S. interests in Luxembourg.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer your questions.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.  
Ms. Harpootlian?

**STATEMENT OF JAMIE L. HARPOOTLIAN OF SOUTH CAROLINA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. Chairman Kaine and Ranking Member Romney and distinguished members, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me and I would also like to thank Senator Graham for his very generous remarks today.

I would also like to take a moment to thank my husband, Richard Harpootlian, who has given me his constant support in this endeavor, and I would like to remember my parents, Charles and Margaret Lindler, who taught me by example to value public service.

My father was a United States naval aviator who served in World War Two, Korea, and Vietnam, while my mother served in naval communications during World War Two. Later at home, she raised two daughters in Dad's absence—well, extended absences overseas.

This past Friday, we laid Dad to rest at Arlington Cemetery. I would like to express my gratitude to the United States Government for providing a tremendously meaningful ceremony and resting place to honor its veterans.

Our country has provided me rewarding opportunities for public service in my own career as an attorney, working in the federal judicial system, serving as a court-appointed special master in complex litigation, and serving the Department of Justice pro bono as a hearing officer for the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund.

In each role, I made pivotal decisions and managed conflicting positions and personalities. I learned that respect for the opinions of others and treating all people with dignity are essential for reaching consensus.

Bringing people with divergent views together is necessary for progress, and overarching all, building and upholding trust is vital for success. If confirmed, I hope to use these skills to successfully advance U.S. interests and values in Slovenia.

Slovenia and the United States have strong military, economic, educational, and cultural ties. Slovenia embraces transatlantic cooperation and shares our commitment to safeguarding democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and free and fair elections.

Slovenia has made impressive contributions to a broad range of regional and global efforts to bolster stability, security, and peace. It has proven itself to be a strong and cooperative partner with the United States, a stalwart NATO ally, a leader in the EU, and a reliable partner in the U.N. and multilateral organizations.

Slovenia contributes troops to almost every NATO mission across the globe. It participates in numerous EU and U.N. missions. This year, Slovenia committed to increase defense spending by 780 million euros through 2026, a significant step toward meeting its NATO Wales pledge commitment.

It holds the EU Council presidency until the end of this year, where its focus is EU-NATO coordination, economic resilience and recovery, and stability in the Western Balkans for EU accession.

To confront the security challenges of Russia and the People's Republic of China, strategic investments in Central Europe's energy transport and digital infrastructure, Slovenia shares our goals for strategic nuclear energy cooperation, protecting 5G communications networks, developing alternative infrastructure and renewable energy sources, and adopting a foreign direct investment screening mechanism.

Slovenia welcomed the United States returned to the Paris Agreement and the Biden-Harris administration's reengagement on global climate change, and Slovenia has one of Europe's fastest growing economies with projected GDP growth of approximately 4½ percent in 2021 and 2022.

If confirmed, my top priority will be the safety and well being of U.S. citizens in Slovenia. I will work to strengthen our bilateral relationship with Slovenia using all the diplomatic tools available to me to build relationships, deepen understanding of the United States, and to counter disinformation.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure Slovenia's strong commitment to stability and security around the world remains steadfast, including its efforts toward Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans and to meeting its NATO defense spending commitments and capability targets, and I will look forward to working with our Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry, to support Slovenia's actions on climate. We are stronger in confronting challenges when we work cooperatively with our allies.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Harpootlian follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMIE L. HARPOOTLIAN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia.

I would like to acknowledge that I am joined today by my husband, Richard Harpootlian, who has given me his unwavering love and support in this endeavor. Dick has been a fearless public servant and passionate advocate for fairness and justice throughout his life. I am proud of his lifelong efforts to right wrongs and be a force for good in the world.

I also would like to remember my parents who taught me by example to value public service. My father was a United States Naval Aviator who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, while my mother served in naval communications during World War II and later at home raising two daughters in her husband's extended absences overseas.

Our country has provided me rewarding opportunities for public service in my own career as an attorney—working in the federal judicial system, serving as a court-appointed special master in complex litigation, and serving the Department of Justice pro bono as a hearing officer for the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund. In each role, I made pivotal decisions and managed conflicting positions and personalities. I learned that respect for the opinions of others and treating all people with dignity are essential for reaching consensus. Bringing people with divergent views together is necessary for progress. And overarching all, building and upholding trust is vital for success. If confirmed, I hope to use these skills to successfully advance U.S. interests and values in Slovenia.

Slovenia and the United States have strong military, economic, educational, and cultural ties. Slovenia embraces transatlantic cooperation and shares our commitment to safeguarding democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and free and fair elections.

Slovenia is a Central European country with a population of two million that has made impressive contributions to a broad range of regional and global efforts to bolster stability, security, and peace. It has proven itself to be a strong and cooperative



partner with the United States, a stalwart NATO Ally, a leader in the EU, and a reliable partner in the UN and multilateral organizations.

Slovenia contributes troops to almost every NATO mission across the globe. It participates in numerous EU and UN missions. This year, Slovenia committed to increasing defense spending by 780 million euros through 2026; a significant step toward meeting its NATO Wales Pledge commitment to spend at least 2 percent of its GDP on defense by 2026. It holds the EU Council presidency until the end of this year, through which it is emphasizing EU-NATO coordination, supporting economic resilience and recovery, and working to bolster stability in the Western Balkans for EU accession. And it participates in several successful bilateral programs with the United States to support strong military relationships.

To confront the security challenges of Russian and People's Republic of China (PRC) strategic investments in Central Europe's energy, transport, and digital infrastructure, Slovenia shares our goals for strategic nuclear energy cooperation, protecting 5G communications networks, developing alternative infrastructure and renewable energy sources, and adopting a foreign direct investment screening mechanism.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure Slovenia's strong commitment to stability and security around the world remains steadfast, including its efforts toward Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans, and to meeting its NATO defense spending commitments and fulfilling NATO Capability Targets.

Slovenia welcomed the United States' return to the Paris Agreement and the Biden-Harris administration's reengagement on global climate change. One of the top priorities of the Slovenian EU Council presidency is advocating for reduction of greenhouse gases by at least 55 percent by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality in 2050. If confirmed, I will work with our Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry to support Slovenia's actions on climate.

Slovenia has one of Europe's fastest growing economies with projected GDP growth of approximately 4.5 percent in 2021 and 2022. Positive economic factors include a well-educated, multilingual workforce, and technical expertise.

If confirmed, my top priority will be the safety and well-being of U.S. citizens in Slovenia. I will work to strengthen our bilateral relationship using all the diplomatic tools available to me to build relationships, deepen understanding of the United States, and to counter disinformation. And I will foster our shared vision of democracy. We are stronger in confronting challenges when we work cooperatively with our allies.

It would be the greatest honor of my life to serve in this capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Ms. Harpootlian, and we will next hear from Mr. Miller.

You need to unmute, Mr. Miller.

**STATEMENT OF SCOTT MILLER OF COLORADO, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN**

Mr. MILLER. That is about right.

[Laughter.]

Senator KAINE. You will not be the last either.

Mr. MILLER. Apologies. Thank you, Chairman Kaine, and thank you, Ranking Member Romney. I would also like to thank my dear friend, Senator Hickenlooper, for his introduction. You are not only an exceptional friend, but you were a terrific mayor and governor, and I am so proud to call you my Senator.

To each member of the committee, please accept my gratitude for the privilege of speaking with you today as the President's nominee

to be the next United States Ambassador to both the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein.

I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in my ability to serve in this role, and will work on behalf of our great country and to represent the interests of the American people.

If I am privileged enough to do so with the confidence of this committee, it would be the greatest honor of my life. I would like to thank my entire family, and while he will not enjoy me singling him out, I am so proud to be joined today by my husband, Tim Gill, albeit virtually.

He is no doubt wincing right now as he is watching as he enjoys attention and praise about as much as a root canal. But without Tim's love and support and without his tireless work on behalf of LGBTQ people everywhere, I would not be sitting in front of this committee today.

A lifetime of experience has prepared me for this moment. I worked as a banker at UBS and a management consultant at Accenture. I also joined my husband, Tim, as co-chair of the Gill Foundation, where together and with so many others we have advocated for the full equality of all Americans.

In our home state, we have devoted considerable resources and effort to enhance the lives of our fellow Coloradans through STEM education, public broadcasting, and programs to fight food insecurity.

Over the course of my career in finance, philanthropy, and civil rights advocacy, I have learned the importance of nurturing friendships and building coalitions, and to view those with whom I may disagree with today as future friends and partners tomorrow.

If confirmed, I vigorously look forward to applying this principle to America's relationships with Switzerland and Liechtenstein to the benefit of all three.

To that end, I would like to outline four policy priorities that will guide my work as U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein, if confirmed.

My top priority will be ensuring the safety and well being of Americans in Switzerland and Liechtenstein as well as the broader mission community.

Two, to deepen ties and cooperation through the lens and application of our core values, including support for democracy, respect for universal human rights, and the promotion of peace and security.

Three, to increase support for the United States and our policies through active engagement with both host governments and civil society, as well as through educational, cultural, and people-to-people ties and exchanges.

Four, to grow our already strong economic and commercial relationship to advance America's competitive advantage in both countries. I believe we have untapped potential to gain greater access for American products to the Swiss and Liechtenstein markets. If confirmed, I would work hard to realize that potential.

I would like to take a moment to say that growing up as a shy kid on the Western Slope of the great state of Colorado, being in this remarkable place today would have been impossible to imag-

ine. Indeed, that young boy too often felt, as many LGBTQ kids often do, that there was no place for him.

I am here today thanks to countless heroic Americans who dedicated their lives to ensuring that someone like me could grow up to enjoy all the promises and responsibilities of this wonderful country, and I want to pledge to this committee and to the American people that, if confirmed, the security and vital national interests of the United States and its citizens would be my priority.

I would work tirelessly to further deepen and enhance our bilateral relationships with Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and I will look for every opportunity to increase trade, foster development, and promote cultural exchanges and understanding between our nations.

I would pursue all this work shoulder to shoulder with the remarkable and very talented U.S. Foreign Service officers and local Embassy staff in Bern, who have already done so much to advocate on behalf of the United States and who could not be praised enough for their dedication and public service, and, if confirmed, I would proudly serve the United States with integrity, humility and compassion.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and all the members of the committee, I thank you so much for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT MILLER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am grateful for the privilege of speaking with you today as the President's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to both the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein.

I am grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in my ability to serve in this role and to work on behalf of our great country and to represent the interests of the American people. If confirmed by this committee, serving as Ambassador would be the greatest honor of my life.

He won't enjoy me singling him out, but I am so proud to be joined today by my husband, Tim Gill. I would not be here without his support.

A lifetime of experience has prepared me for this moment. I worked as a banker and as a management consultant. I also joined my husband Tim as co-chair of the Gill Foundation where, together and with so many others, we have advocated for the full equality of all Americans. In our home state, we have devoted considerable effort to enhance the lives of our fellow Coloradans through STEM education, public broadcasting, and programs to fight food insecurity.

I'd like to take a moment to say that growing up as a shy kid on the Western Slope of the great state of Colorado, being in this remarkable place today would have been impossible to imagine. Indeed, that young boy too often felt, as many LGBTQ kids too often do, that there was no place for him.

Over the course of my career, I've learned the importance of nurturing friendships and building coalitions—and to view those with whom I may disagree today as future friends and partners tomorrow. If confirmed, I look forward to vigorously applying this principle to America's relationships with Switzerland and Liechtenstein, to the benefit of all three.

To that end, I'd like to outline four policy priorities that will guide my work as U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein, if confirmed:

- My top priority will be ensuring the safety and well-being of Americans in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, as well as of our broader mission community.
- Two, to deepen ties and cooperation through the lens and application of our core values, including: support for democracy, respect for universal human rights, and the promotion of peace and security.

- Three, to increase support for the United States and our policies through active engagement with both host governments and civil society, as well as through educational, cultural, and people-to-people ties and exchanges.
- Four, to grow our already strong economic and commercial relationship to advance America's competitive advantage in both countries. I believe we have untapped potential to gain greater access for American products to the Swiss and Liechtenstein markets. If confirmed, I will work hard to realize that potential.

I am here today thanks to countless heroic Americans who dedicated their lives to ensuring that someone like me could grow up to enjoy all the promises and responsibilities of this wonderful country.

I want to pledge to this committee and to the American people that, if confirmed, the security and vital national interests of the United States and its citizens would be my highest priority. I would work tirelessly to further deepen and enhance our bilateral relationships with Switzerland and Liechtenstein. And I would look for every opportunity to increase trade, foster development, and promote cultural exchanges and understanding between our nations.

I would pursue all this work shoulder to shoulder with the remarkable and talented U.S. Foreign Service officers and local Embassy staff in Bern, who have already done so much to advocate on behalf of the United States, and who cannot be praised enough for their dedication and public service.

If confirmed, I look forward to proudly serving the United States with integrity, humility, and compassion.

Mr. Chairman, ranking member and all the members of the Committee—I thank you so much for the opportunity to testify today.

I am happy to answer any questions you have.

Senator Kaine. Thank you so much, Mr. Miller.

And Mr. Ramanathan, please, your opening comments.

**STATEMENT OF ERIK D. RAMANATHAN OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN**

Mr. RAMANATHAN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you, and thank you to Senator Markey for that kind introduction and for his service.

I am honored to be the nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Sweden, and I thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me. Endless gratitude goes to my husband of more than 30 years, Ranesh Ramanathan, the love of my life and constant companion on life's journey, whose kindness, humor, and devotion in the face of the countless challenges we have navigated are unparalleled, and to my 16-year-old Chris, who inspires me every day with fresh perspective and boundless potential, and who drives me to want to make our country and the world we share a better place for future generations.

With Chris' future in mind, I made the decision 15 years ago to pivot from a successful private sector career in law and life sciences to a portfolio of service roles where I felt I could have a larger-scale impact.

Combining my fire-tested corporate and legal experience with lessons learned fighting for the civil rights and well being of the LGBTQ and HIV-positive communities, I reckoned that I could be an effective leader bringing stakeholders from disparate backgrounds together in pursuit of bigger missions.

Collaborative service became my compass as I built an academic platform at Harvard Law and took on a constellation of nonprofit

leadership roles, culminating in a decade leading the board of Heluna Health.

With perseverance, Heluna grew tenfold larger and transformed into a true catalyst to meet the public health and community resilience challenges facing tens of millions of Americans, including the direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am deeply proud of the diverse and talented team of professionals who join together every day to make this life-changing work possible.

If confirmed, I plan to apply and foster a similarly vigorous service ethic, creative and collaborative mindset, and seriousness of purpose to expanding and deepening our historic close friendship and like-minded partnership with Sweden.

The relationship in diplomacy between our people both bilaterally and on the global stage can have a tremendously positive impact on our shared prosperity over the course of decades to come.

I look forward to continuing to listen and learn from many stakeholders and, if confirmed, I see three core priorities at the outset.

First, enhancing bilateral and regional security efforts. If confirmed, my foremost priority will always be the safety and security of Americans in Sweden, including personnel and family members of Embassy Stockholm.

But our shared security interests extend further. As a NATO-enhanced opportunities partner, Sweden has made robust contributions on the international stage.

If confirmed, I look forward to building on this history and on our bilateral statement of intent to support interoperability and coordination as Sweden increases investments in its defense and security infrastructure and capabilities.

Second, growing and deepening bilateral economic ties. The U.S. and Sweden are two of the world's leading innovators, with robust business and technology ecosystems deeply intertwined with academic, civil society, and government collaboration.

As both nations recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we should focus not only on reopening for business but also on unlocking new sources of job opportunity and mutual prosperity, such as joint pursuit of green technologies.

Increasing bilateral exports and job-creating foreign direct investment in the U.S. can contribute to economic prosperity in both nations while providing a stronger and more secure counterbalance to trade and investment with partners who may seek to compromise intellectual property or sensitive infrastructure.

Third, collaborating to address key existential challenges of our time on the global stage. Not only is Sweden a strong partner in foreign policy, but it is also an ideal collaborator in many unprecedented challenges facing the world, most notably fighting climate change, combating COVID-19 and preventing future pandemics, promoting democracy, protecting human rights, and safeguarding the rules-based international order.

If confirmed, I eagerly await working with the talented team at Embassy Stockholm to build on their successes and advance these shared goals together. I look forward to partnering with Congress to further U.S. priorities in Sweden, and I enthusiastically await

hearing from people across Sweden, sharing our ideas and deepening people-to-people ties as we strive toward a better tomorrow.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ramanathan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIK D. RAMANATHAN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you. I am honored to be the nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Sweden, and I thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

Endless gratitude goes to my husband of more than 30 years, Ranesh Ramanathan, the love of my life and constant companion on life's journey, whose kindness, humor, and devotion in the face of the countless challenges we've navigated are unparalleled. And to my 16-year-old, Chris, who inspires me every day with fresh perspective and boundless potential, and who drives me to want to make our country and the world we share a better place for future generations.

With Chris' future in mind, I made the decision 15 years ago to pivot from a successful private sector career in law and life sciences to a portfolio of service roles where I felt I could have a larger-scale impact. Combining my fire-tested corporate and legal experience with lessons learned fighting for the civil rights and well-being of the LGBTQ and HIV+ communities, I reckoned that I could be an effective leader bringing stakeholders from disparate backgrounds together in pursuit of bigger missions.

Collaborative service became my compass as I built an academic platform at Harvard Law and took on a constellation of nonprofit leadership roles, culminating in a decade leading the board of Heluna Health. With perseverance, Heluna grew tenfold larger and transformed into a true catalyst to meet the public health and community resilience challenges facing tens of millions of Americans, including the direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am deeply proud of the diverse and talented team of professionals who join together every day to make this life-changing work possible.

If confirmed, I plan to apply and foster a similarly vigorous service ethic, creative and collaborative mindset, and seriousness of purpose to expanding and deepening our historic close friendship and like-minded partnership with Sweden.

The relationship and diplomacy between our people—both bilaterally and on the global stage—can have a tremendously positive impact on our shared prosperity over the course of decades to come. I look forward to continuing to listen and learn from many stakeholders and if confirmed, I see three core priorities at the outset:

- First, enhancing bilateral and regional security efforts. If confirmed, my foremost priority will always be the safety and security of Americans in Sweden, including personnel and family members of Embassy Stockholm. But our shared security interests extend further. As a NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner, Sweden has made robust contributions on the international stage. If confirmed, I look forward to building on this history and on our bilateral Statement of Intent to support interoperability and coordination as Sweden increases its investments in its defense and security infrastructure and capabilities.
- Second, growing and deepening bilateral economic ties. The U.S. and Sweden are two of the world's leading innovators, with robust business and technology ecosystems deeply intertwined with academic, civil society, and government collaboration. As both nations recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we should focus not only on reopening for business but also unlocking new sources of job opportunity and mutual prosperity such as joint pursuit of green technologies. Increasing bilateral exports and job-creating foreign direct investment in the U.S. can contribute to economic prosperity in both nations, while providing a stronger and more secure counterbalance to trade and investment with partners who may seek to compromise intellectual property or sensitive infrastructure.
- Third, collaborating to address key existential challenges of our time on the global stage. Not only is Sweden a strong partner in foreign policy, but it is also an ideal collaborator in many unprecedented challenges facing the world, most notably fighting climate change, combating COVID-19 and preventing future pandemics, promoting democracy, protecting human rights, and safeguarding the rules-based international order. Among other efforts, Sweden has pledged over \$500 million for global vaccine equity. Sweden is a respected leader in combating climate change and pledged to double its climate aid to over \$1.8 billion

by 2025. If confirmed, I look forward to strengthening our partnership with Sweden to address these global challenges.

If confirmed, I eagerly await working with the talented team at Embassy Stockholm to build on their successes and advance these shared goals, together. I look forward to partnering with Congress to further U.S. priorities in Sweden. And I enthusiastically await hearing from people across Sweden, sharing our ideas, and deepening people-to-people ties as we strive toward a better tomorrow.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator Kaine. Thank you very much for all of your opening testimonies. Before we begin precise questions about the countries and your missions, should you be confirmed, I do have a set of standard questions that I want to ask to all the nominees, so if the four of you could all unmute yourself.

These are questions that enable the committee to stress the importance that we place on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch to this oversight committee, and we ask these because they give you an idea of what we will expect from you. I would ask each of you on the following questions to provide just a yes or no answer.

First, do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator Kaine. Second, do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator Kaine. Third, do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator Kaine. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and our designated staff?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator Kaine. Thank you for those answers. Let me begin now with Mayor Barrett.

Mr. Mayor, you talked briefly about the fact that Luxembourg is positioning itself well to be a center of the commercial space industry. This is a particular interest in Virginia because more rockets are shot out of Wallops Island than out of either Florida or California, and both NASA and commercial space is a growing industry sector here.

Talk to us a little bit about the U.S.-Luxembourg cooperative agreement of 2019, and should you be confirmed what you might do to try to enhance our cooperation on commercial space activities.

Mr. Barrett. Thank you very much for that question, Mr. Chairman, and if confirmed, I will continue the strong relationship that we have developed with Luxembourg. Luxembourg and the United States have been working closely together and you mentioned the accord that we reached with them.

There is the Artemis Accord, which, obviously, creates a mechanism for us to return to the moon. There is the efforts to do what we can with them or independently on space exploration.

And I think both of those, as well as some of the work that we have been doing with them on satellites, for example—the investment they are making in satellites, which goes towards their defense spending goal—I think all of those position us in a very, very good way to continue to work together.

I think that there is a strong foundation there and, again, if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I want to continue that relationship and make it even stronger.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mr. Miller, Switzerland has this long-standing commitment to neutrality but it does contribute to NATO missions in Kosovo and other U.N. and EU security operations.

How do you evaluate Swiss contributions to international security and what might you do to encourage them consistent with their own domestic traditions to take an even more forward leaning role?

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think we know that Switzerland is clear-eyed when it comes to their approach in dealing with other nations and what they are doing around the world, and that they have a keen interest in making sure to address any threat to the international order.

Both Switzerland and Liechtenstein are committed allies. I am very lucky, if confirmed, to step into this role of having not only a partner in these missions but to be able to have the high-level discussions that we are able to have with both Switzerland and Liechtenstein and in our work, broadly, in Europe.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

Ms. Harpootlian, you talked in your opening testimony about Slovenia's commitment to greater defense investment. They have one of the lowest levels of investment in terms of GDP percentage of NATO allies.

They have indicated a desire to ramp up that investment. Does that defense modernization plan present opportunities for the United States and U.S. companies?

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. Thank you for the question, Senator, and I appreciate the opportunity to address it.

Slovenia—this past year they have increased their defense spending by €780 million and that is a significant increase from any of the prior years. I feel as if we are making progress in the right direction.

If I am confirmed, I will continue to push Slovenia to meeting those goals. Right now, they are scheduled for 2026 to meet the 2 percent guidelines and that includes NATO capability targets and force modernization.

Senator KAINE. I would encourage you. I am glad to see them make those commitments. There may well be opportunities for U.S. companies and others to be involved in helping Slovenia reach those goals and I know you will focus on those.

Finally, to Mr. Ramanathan, Sweden has been a very strong partner in countering Russian aggression and one area that they particularly focused on is trying to counter disinformation. This is an area where we have had challenges here. We are a robust First Amendment society and that sometimes means that a lot of disinformation crowds up all of our inboxes.



What is Sweden doing that we might emulate or how could we and Sweden partner together on anti-disinformation efforts?

Mr. RAMANATHAN. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

Sweden takes a very clear-eyed view on disinformation—particularly from Russia. There has been increased malign activity relating to disinformation and misinformation campaigns. They have a whole of government approach to combating disinformation, and we coordinate with Sweden on monitoring and pushing back on those kind of campaigns.

If confirmed, I look forward continuing to collaborate on monitoring and pushing back on disinformation campaigns, and also on using public diplomacy and interacting with media, both traditional and social media, and in-person conversations, of course, with the people of Sweden to ensure that our messages and priorities are clear and that that too can be a way of pushing back on disinformation.

Senator KAINE. Thank you for that answer.

Senator Romney?

Senator ROMNEY. Mayor Barrett, a number of us were concerned as we saw that Luxembourg signed on to the Belt and Road Initiative that China has been promoting throughout the world, and I am interested in your perspective, if you have that at this stage, about what the status of that is in Luxembourg and what you think our objectives might be with regards to communicating with Luxembourg on that topic and perhaps encouraging them to take a course which is less favorable to China.

Mr. BARRETT. Senator Romney, thank you for that question, and I hope I got the gist of it. My terminology is a little sketchy right now.

But it sounded like you were asking about the Belt and Road Initiative and the fact that Luxembourg has signed on to it, which it has, in fact, one of the few Western European countries that has done so.

Luxembourg prides itself on having good relations—investment relations—with many countries throughout the world and that, I think, is one of the factors that led it to signing this.

At the same time, obviously, as a key member of the European Union it recognizes that it is working with its neighbors. I think we are also fortunate that because of our strong historic ties, our economic ties, our community of interests in terms of democracy, that that provides a checkpoint, if you will, and we will make sure that we will continue to work but—with Luxembourg.

And if I am confirmed, I, certainly, plan to work with Luxembourg to make sure that they understand, which I am very confident that they do, the challenges that come from that Chinese initiative.

Again, I think that because of our historic ties, I think that that puts us in a good place. But it is something that, if confirmed, I am very, very sensitive to and mindful of the challenges that it presents.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mayor. I apologize if you could not hear me but your response was spot on to the question I asked. I appreciate that.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you.

Senator ROMNEY. Ms. Harpootlian, I am interested in your perspective on how the people of Slovenia and the leadership of Slovenia looks at Russia when they think Russia's objectives might be in the Balkans. What type of commitment do you think we can make to supporting the independence of the Balkans from Russia influence?

But I guess the beginning of that question is do you have a sense of how the leadership in Slovenia and the people of Slovenia consider Russia objectives, what they consider them to be with regards to the Balkans?

You are muted. I am sorry.

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. Thank you for the question, Senator, and I am happy to address it. I, first, want to point out that Slovenia is a very strong NATO ally and it shares our democratic values and interests.

Slovenia's heart is in the West and that is something to—it is important to remember that when we are talking about Russia and China engagement.

The fact is that Russia and Slovenia do have an active economic relationship and they have cultural ties and diplomatic ties, and they have engaged in high-level visits.

But Slovenia is very aware of issues regarding destabilization and, in particular, the fact that by virtue of geology and existing infrastructure Russia provides virtually all of Slovenia's natural gas.

In response to that, Slovenia and the United States have been working together. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on civil nuclear cooperation for clean and safe nuclear energy.

Slovenia is very interested in developing a second nuclear reactor and the U.S. is interested in competing for providing the technology on that. The U.S. also supports Slovenia in an initiative called the Three Seas Initiative and that is designed to develop infrastructure on north-south access, which would compete with the old Soviet east-west infrastructure lines. All of these are steps that Slovenia is taking to create independence from Russia influence in the country.

I hope that answered your question.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I think my time is up. I will turn back to you and I will get a chance to continue with the others in the next round.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Senator Romney.

Senator Shaheen is next.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Chairman, and congratulations to each of the nominees, and thank you for your willingness to serve the country at this critical time.

My first question is, really, for each of you, and I have been following very closely for a number of years now the impact of what is known as Havana syndrome or anomalous health incidents on American personnel around the world and, sadly, we have now seen attacks against personnel on all continents except Antarctica.

Obviously, the State Department personnel are one of the main targets of these attacks. I want to ask each of you—because I understand that the State Department includes a briefing on AHIs as

part of the ambassadorial seminar program that you are required to attend.

I want to to ask each of you if, if confirmed, you will commit to attending the ambassadorial seminar on AHIs and seek a classified briefing with the State Department once you are confirmed.

If I could just have everyone respond either positively or negatively to that.

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. That was a good leading question. You all passed with flying colors.

Ms. Harpootlian, I want to start with you on another issue because I think Slovenia—I chair the European Affairs Subcommittee of Foreign Relations, and I think Slovenia is a beautiful country and of all of the countries in the Balkans that made up the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia has done probably the best job, at least it has been the most successful in integrating with the West and the EU.

But I fear now that we are beginning to see some backsliding in Slovenia, and there are recent developments that may curtail the full and free operation of an independent media and civil society there.

Can you talk about how you will approach this issue with Bratislava and how you will connect what might happen there with that backsliding to the potential for Russia and China to make inroads in Slovenia?

I am sorry. I think you are still on mute.

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. I am so sorry. My apologies. Thank you for the question.

Senator SHAHEEN. That is—we have all been going through a whole year and a half of being on mute, so we understand.

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. There are a lot of issues that you have presented in your question that are very important. I think that, first and foremost, Slovenia embraces transatlantic cooperation. Democratic values are the foundation of our transatlantic alliance with Slovenia.

In Slovenia, there are multiple parties. It is a multi-party system with a well entrenched system of checks and balances. It is unlikely that in Slovenia you would ever have one party taking control. Right now, there are nine parties sitting in Parliament.

You mentioned Bratislava. But in Ljubljana, I think that the focus is wanting to be a good member of NATO, a good member of the EU where, as you are well aware, Slovenia currently holds the EU Council presidency, and it is working toward accession of the Western Balkan states into the EU, which, if that happens, they have certain thresholds for the Copenhagen criteria in order to demonstrate that they are a stable democracy, that they have freedom of the press, they respect human rights, and Slovenia is working very hard on those issues and pushing for the EU accession.

It will not happen anytime soon. But by striving to create stable democracies in those countries, I think that we are going to combat the issues that you have raised.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, and thank you for correcting my misspeaking on Bratislava rather than Ljubljana.

[Laughter.]

Ms. HARPOOTLIAN. But, if confirmed, I will support Slovenia in its efforts to support democracy throughout the region and I look forward to having the opportunity to do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I know I am almost out of time. But I would really like to ask Mr. Ramanathan a question about Sweden because, as we know, competition in the Arctic is becoming even more critical today and we are seeing increasing incursions by Russia into the Arctic.

And so what I would like to know is, if confirmed, Mr. Ramanathan, how you will engage not just in Sweden but within the State Department and with ambassadors for the other Arctic nations about the role of the United States and how we can cooperate with our allies in the Arctic.

Mr. RAMANATHAN. Of course, Sweden, like the United States, is an Arctic nation and we are represented together on the Arctic Council, which is the premier forum for governance around Arctic—issues ranging from environment, sustainable development of the Arctic, scientific research, and so forth.

You also referred to military buildups by Russia. Obviously, the Arctic Council does not include security matters and those are left to sovereigns.

But we do have a strong relationship with Sweden on the defense and security front and, if confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with Sweden on our continued efforts towards interoperability and coordination, defense activities under both our bilateral agreements as well as their NATO-enhanced opportunities partner status, and addressing these issues, going forward.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KAINE. Absolutely. Unless—I think Senator Young was next in the queue, but I am not sure he is currently signed on. Senator Young, are you with us?

[No response.]

Senator KAINE. If not, Senator Van Hollen, you are up next.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to all of you on your nominations.

Mr. Miller, a couple of questions about Swiss practices when it comes to banking and bank secrecy and other issues.

As you know, Switzerland is the world's largest offshore financial center, managing about a quarter of global cross-border assets, which is, of course, an astounding number.

Over the years, issues regarding bank secrecy and taxation have become irritants in U.S.-Swiss relations. How would you assess Switzerland's current compliance with the U.S. Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act and the OECD automatic exchange of information agreement?

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Senator, and it is good to see you again.

My background in finance and, in particular, working at UBS has given me a front row seat to this particular topic. I was lucky enough to work for UBS for a decade many years ago, but many of the—this particular topic popped up while there.

And what I would like to say is, unfortunately, there were incidents of the past of us not being able to get the information that

we wanted as it related to U.S. citizens and their banking in Switzerland.

I do believe, through a series of actions by the Department of Justice and continued negotiations by Treasury, that we do have greater confidence and insight into the foreign—into FATCA. I am trying to not use acronyms, but this is the Government.

But I do believe we are—we feel very confident in our dealings with Switzerland as it relates to the banks and I know banks there are anxious to switch from a Tier—they are currently a Tier Two model where banks report directly to the United States to switching to a model, a Tier One, that would allow the Swiss Government to do the reporting and, in turn, would allow reciprocal information to go from the U.S. to Switzerland as well.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Got it. I appreciate that.

As you know, one of top priorities of this administration has been to prevent a race to the bottom when it comes to corporate taxation in developed countries, and one of the great success stories, of course, has been the President and Secretary Yellen's ability to get the G-20 to adopt the idea of a 15 percent minimum global corporate tax rate.

I saw Switzerland did sign on in July. But as you well know, the local cantons there have lots of power within Switzerland. How do you assess—how are you going to, if confirmed, use your influence to make sure that Switzerland moves to comply with the goal?

Mr. MILLER. Again, thank you, Senator.

Again, thanks to the efforts not just of this administration but also the previous administrations, the conversations that we have had with Switzerland of reducing their dependence and reliance on using reduced corporate taxes has started to diminish and Switzerland, as you did point out, did sign on the guidelines of the international taxation OECD of committing to the 15 percent global tax rate.

And, if confirmed, I think the most important part of this job is for me to communicate with my interlocutors the importance of a level playing field and that would be, as you pointed out, with each canton because of their decentralized government.

But I think that is a skill that I have and I look forward to those conversations.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. I appreciate that. I think we need to work quickly in this area.

Mayor Barrett, congratulations. Good to see you, and I have a question—a similar question with a little different twist, but related to Luxembourg.

How responsive has Luxembourg been, in your opinion, to U.S. and international concerns about money laundering and tax evasion? Luxembourg is often named as one of those tax havens. Can you just comment on that, briefly?

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you for the question, Senator. It is great to see you.

I, certainly, think it has made progress in the last eight years and I am pleased to see the progress that it has made. Also, as you noted in your previous conversation about the G-20 and the minimum tax rate has agreed to that as well, which I think is an important step.

But I think it is important to note that the Financial Action Task Force, which is the international watch dog that periodically goes to the countries to make sure there is no money laundering or illegal money, will be in Luxembourg this month, actually, and I intend, if I am confirmed, to look very carefully at what the Financial Action Task Force recommendations are and then work with the Luxembourg Government to make sure those become a reality.

But I think it has made progress and I think that that is something we should recognize and applaud and give positive reinforcement to.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Appreciate it. And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KAINE. Absolutely. I do not believe there are additional Senators on.

Senator Romney, you indicated you had other questions. I will go back to you. I will have some additional questions after you unless we have other senators who join.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just a couple of comments. As we talk about international tax rates we do not know exactly what is going to happen here, of course, but I do think there is a difference between leaders coming together over a social event and drinks and meetings and saying, hey, let us all agree to a 15 percent international tax rate and that actually becoming the law, having passed by their—being passed by their respective parliaments and congresses and so forth. I think there is a big gap between that.

I would not want to see a circumstance where we, in our nation, took action, which would then not be matched by other nations and put our enterprises at a competitive disadvantage. Depending on what we do here, it will be important to make sure that other nations follow through as well.

Let me turn to Mr. Miller with regards to our relationships in Switzerland, obviously, a nation which is given to high standards of human rights historically, a nation which considers itself to be a leader on various social issues, and I wonder how they square that with a relatively friendly relationship with China, China carrying out genocide.

I mean, in this day and age for a nation to be carrying out genocide is really inexplicable and I wonder whether the Swiss are going to be able to continue to look away from the reality of what is happening in China and whether you might be able to help them understand that their interests really lie in becoming closer and closer with those nations which honor the same types of values they have long said they espouse.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Senator Romney.

As you aptly point out, how we approach China, our greatest competitor, is a focus that all of us, if we are lucky enough to be confirmed, will have to address.

The good news for me in a potential, if confirmed, relationship with Switzerland is that Switzerland does already have in a long-standing meeting and dialogue that they have had with People's Republic of China, starting since 1991.

Unfortunately, due to COVID, many of these conversations have been postponed. But also I would like to point out that Switzerland

did come out and join the criticism of the situation in Xinjiang and also the Uighurs—the situation that is, obviously, happening with the Uighurs.

I do hope that Switzerland will be proactive in reestablishing that conversation, that annual conversation, to make sure that they understand that China is doing these practices, and I think that it is also incumbent upon the Swiss Government to be proactive in having a dialogue with the companies based in Switzerland to make sure that they understand also the risks of doing business in China.

I am fully aware of, and I think we all are, on this, as we testified today, the threat that China poses is significant and we must work with all of our interlocutors on making sure in our meetings that they understand that, despite needing the economic relations, perhaps, with the People's Republic that it is also still okay to criticize them and hold them accountable and to make sure that we are pushing them to do better every day.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Miller.

Mr. Ramanathan, Sweden has shown a lot of backbone relative to, perhaps, other countries in the world as it relates to Russia and to China, for that matter, and China has retaliated against a number of Swedish businesses, Ericsson among others.

Do you have a sense of whether there is backsliding on the part of the leadership or the business community in Sweden? Meaning, are the backbones still strong and how can we encourage them to continue to have the kind of strength they have had in the past? Because we may need to step in and show them that if they are punished by one side they could be more rewarded by the other.

Mr. RAMANATHAN. Thank you for the question.

And my sense is that the backbone of Sweden is strong, indeed. While they are a trading nation reliant on trade for half of their GDP, they understand and are clear-eyed about what that means with respect to China, the need to protect sensitive infrastructure, intellectual property, and the like.

You mentioned 5G and Ericsson. Obviously, they—as you may be aware, the administrative courts in Sweden have upheld Swedish regulations banning Huawei and ZTE from Sweden's own 5G build out, which I think sends an important signal about the continued focus on protecting sensitive infrastructure.

Obviously, Ericsson has also invested, opening a new \$134 million plant in Texas working on 5G equipment and other investments in the United States on that front, and we have been a good partner of Ericsson's.

I think these are indications that things are very, very strong. But, if confirmed, I look forward to continuing that close dialogue and continuing to ensure that we are creative and collaborative in ways that we find to ensure our mutual security and prosperity.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Ramanathan.

Mr. Chairman, I turn back to you. I have asked the questions I came with.

[Laughter.]

Senator KAINE. Excellent. Thank you, Senator Romney.

And there is no other members on the call who have not asked questions in the first round. I will ask a couple more questions, and

then if no one else joins we will adjourn. There are votes now on the floor. But I have a question, first, for Mr. Miller.

I was intrigued when Switzerland made the decision to buy a \$5.5 billion contract to buy F-35s from the United States because there were less expensive offers on the table, both from Boeing and a French manufacturer, and then also a Spanish—a Spain-Italy-U.K.-Germany conglomerate. But the Swiss made the decision to go with the more expensive U.S. technology.

And I just was wondering, as somebody who is not an expert on Swiss politics, I was wondering if you might explain that to me. I think that is a heartening sign but I am curious how I should interpret that.

Mr. MILLER. I am not fully familiar to the sensitive negotiations as it relates to the sale of United States defense equipment. But what I can attest to is to American greatness and our exceptional military aircraft and ground to base—ground to air base missile defense.

And I think Switzerland, again, wanting to strengthen our very, very strong bilateral relationship with the United States as a replacement to the F-18 aircraft that they have used for many years, see this as a familiar relationship and a known quantity as they look to replace their strategic air defense capabilities.

I would love nothing more once I am fully briefed on the sensitive background of this to follow up with you. But I, again, am really heartened by this and I think, obviously, that the Swiss Government made a fantastic decision and I look forward to helping complete that deal, if confirmed.

Senator KAINE. I think it is interesting. It probably has something to do, I would imagine, just intuiting also with the interoperability of the F-35 as a platform that many nations that are allied with the United States are now embracing, and a desire not only to have a capacity but to have a capacity that is interoperable is probably one of the reasons. But I would love to know more about that.

And finally, Mr. Ramanathan, one more question for you that is also just something I want to understand, not being an expert on Swedish politics. Sweden has been an absolute global leader in acceptance and permanent resettlement of refugees from Syria, from Iraq, from Afghanistan.

There are proposals on the table in Sweden that would significantly curtail this. How do you assess kind of the current Swedish dynamic regarding this long-standing tradition of being welcoming to refugees from places of danger and violence in the world?

Mr. RAMANATHAN. Thank you, Senator, for that question. The Swedes have been a very welcoming country to asylees over the years and current UNHCR quota refugees. They take about 5,000 refugees per year and recently announced that because they were unable to take 5,000 refugees in 2020 because of COVID pandemic issues that they will actually add the deficit to what they are doing this year and will take about 6,400 refugees and asylees.

And Sweden has, of course, been a close partner in Afghanistan and otherwise, and they have taken over 650 asylees from Afghanistan as one part of that commitment.



I expect—if confirmed, I will look forward to continuing a close dialogue about asylee and refugee issues and about human rights in general.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Ramanathan.

If there are no more questions for the witnesses, and I believe there is no additional senators who have joined, the record for the hearing is going to remain open until the close of business tomorrow, Wednesday, November 3rd.

Please ensure that questions for the record are submitted no later than the close of business tomorrow if you are a member of this committee, and I would encourage the nominees, if there are questions submitted, please try to answer fully and expeditiously so that the committee can consider your nominations as soon as possible.

Thanks again to all the nominees for your willingness to serve. Congratulations on being nominated.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:17 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

### Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. THOMAS BARRETT BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would take every report of an anomalous health incident very seriously, and do all in my power to investigate, protect those affected, and respond. I believe these incidents pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel. I would share information on the latest updates and how our Mission would respond should such a case arise.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to take every report of an anomalous health incident very seriously, and do all in my power to investigate, protect those affected, and respond quickly. I would make sure affected individuals are treated promptly.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I absolutely commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss past reported incidents and ensure all protocols are being followed. The health and security of Mission personnel would be my top priority.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. THOMAS BARRETT BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 State Department Trafficking in Persons report, Luxembourg remained on Tier 1 due to its sustained efforts to combat human trafficking, but during the last reporting period, courts issued more lenient sentences which undermined trafficking efforts.

- If confirmed, how will you engage with the Government of Luxembourg on this issue?

*Answer.* Luxembourg continues to take trafficking in persons issues seriously and has been a steadfast partner in coordinating on the issue with the United States. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Luxembourg authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Luxembourg Government. I will urge the Government of Luxembourg to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report, including the issue of lenient sentences for convicted human traffickers.

*Question.* In the 2020 reporting period, the 2020 State Department Report on International Religious Freedom indicated that Anti-Semitism incidents increased from 2019 from 47 to 64.

- If confirmed, what steps can you take to address this issue?

*Answer.* Luxembourg takes religious freedom seriously and is committed to countering anti-Semitism. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism and other U.S. officials to engage with government authorities, civil society, and religious actors to encourage cooperation and take further steps to combat and condemn all manifestations of anti-Semitism, particularly in light of the global rise in anti-Semitism.

*Question.* How will you engage with civil society and the Government to promote better societal respect for all religious minorities?

*Answer.* to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including for members of religious minority groups. As I understand, the U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg enjoys strong and longstanding relationships with religious leaders and civil society organizations supporting the rights of members of minority groups and advocating for access to justice for vulnerable communities. I would also work closely with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom and other U.S. officials to promote the freedom of religion or belief for all.

*Question.* According to the 2020 State Department Human Rights Report, there were no significant human rights abuses reported in Luxembourg. However, there is always work to be done.

- If confirmed, how will you work with the Government and civil society to bolster human rights in the country?

*Answer.* Luxembourg is a key partner in promoting human rights, including efforts to promote them globally. If confirmed, I will continue to foster and encourage Luxembourg's positive track record in the area of human rights promotion, including Luxembourg's efforts to responsibly apportion development assistance in a manner that encourages respect for human rights and dignity.

*Question.* What do you consider to be the top human rights priority?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will look to prioritize human rights in all their forms and encourage the Government of Luxembourg to continue to be a key partner for the United States in this regard. I believe that the top human rights priority is respect for others. With respect as our core value, we can work to include that in all our actions as a nation and as individuals.

*Question.* Mission Luxembourg has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Luxembourg?

*Answer.* Luxembourg and all of Europe was hit hard by COVID. Travel and other restrictions, heightened uncertainty, health concerns, and family obligations have been stressful for Mission Luxembourg officers and their families. If confirmed, I pledge to work with my team to address concerns and strengthen morale in the Mission.

*Question.* Mission Luxembourg has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Luxembourg?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make clear that the safety and morale of the Mission is of paramount importance to me. I appreciate the wealth of talent and experience of the current team and will ensure that they know that I will do everything I can to take care of them and their families. If confirmed, when I arrive, I will hold a Town Hall to seek input from all members of the Mission. I will also work with my management team to see how we can work together to address ongoing concerns

from employees in the Mission and create an environment where people feel safe and can thrive. I will meet regularly with all sections of the Mission to share my appreciation for the invaluable work and contributions they make and listen to their concerns.

*Management: A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission*

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Luxembourg?

*Answer.* As Mayor of Milwaukee since 2004, I have worked hard to create a unified administration where communication, cooperation and coordination are paramount. I understand that motivating people and providing resources to accomplish our goals are key to success. If confirmed, I will work with my country team to establish clear goals and empower my staff to reach them.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I work hard to create a team approach. I appreciate and seek input from all members of my team. I also understand that, as team leader, I am ultimately responsible for my team's actions and decisions.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* As a long time public servant, I understand how to work with limited resources and other career public servants. If confirmed, I believe as a team we will be able to use what resources we have to accomplish targeted goals.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new Chiefs of Mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes, I do believe that it is important to integrate myself into the Embassy operations and culture. If confirmed, I intend to proactively support and participate in activities set up by the Mission for Mission employees and families. I will maintain the smooth operation of the Embassy by following the established regulations and protocols. I am looking forward to becoming a part of the Mission family.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No, I do not believe it is constructive to berate subordinates in public or private. If there are issues, I will address them professionally and constructively.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to have an excellent, professional relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to support the Deputy Chief of Mission's role in the day-to-day management of the Mission and as my key advisor.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens. Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to encourage officers to meet with contacts as the COVID situation allows, and to travel around the country to meet a diverse range of Luxembourgers. As mayor, I understand and embrace the value of people-to-people exchanges, and I intend to promote U.S. policies by supporting the Mission's public diplomacy programming.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Luxembourg? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* The media environment in Luxembourg is professional, modern, respectful, multi-lingual, and mildly partisan. If confirmed, I will work with the public diplomacy section to raise the profile of U.S. priorities, such as in space cooperation, economic ties, and climate challenges. As the population ages, traditional support from those who recall the U.S. liberation of Europe have less salience. I will work

with my public diplomacy section to build closer ties with the youth in Luxembourg, so they too understand the important role the United States played in the history of Luxembourg.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with my public diplomacy section to tailor messages on policy priorities with the realities on the ground. I will work with my team to communicate with Main State and make sure that our messaging resonates with Luxembourgers. I will also encourage creative ways of sharing our message to appeal to targeted audiences.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* I have received an unclassified briefing on the anomalous health incidents, and have followed the issue in the news. If confirmed, I commit to receiving additional, classified briefings on the incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed I will maintain detailed records of the incident and share it with the State Department and others to contribute to the investigation.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will take every measure to keep our staff safe and secure and would take any report of an anomalous health incident very seriously. I will do my best to ensure those affected receive the attention they deserve, that incidents are investigated fully, and that we work with the appropriate offices and agencies to ensure required reporting, investigation, potential countermeasures, and provision of medical care. I would share what information I can with my team and the mission community-remaining cognizant of people's medical privacy.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO JAMIE L. HARPOOTLIAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* This is a sensitive ongoing investigation and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. I understand there is a major interagency effort to investigate what is causing the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports anomalous health incidents receives immediate and appropriate attention and care, and I consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a possible health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and, of course, to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy teams. I also consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO JAMIE L. HARPOOTLIAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 State Department Trafficking in Persons report, Slovenia remained on Tier 1 for fully meeting the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking. The Government also convicted more traffickers and adopted a national anti-trafficking plan.

- If confirmed, how will you continue to engage with the Government on this issue to capitalize on the success of their trafficking efforts?

Answer. Slovenia continues to take trafficking in persons issues seriously and is a steadfast partner in coordinating on the issue with the United States. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Slovenian authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Slovenian Government. I will urge the Slovenian Government to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report. Specifically, I will encourage the Government of Slovenia to increase efforts to identify victims among vulnerable groups, ensure all victims have access to services, and increase efforts to identify victims of labor trafficking.

*Question.* How can you work with regional Ambassadors to use Slovenia as a model for other surrounding countries not on Tier 1 but aspiring to be?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with regional Ambassadors to highlight best practices in Slovenia to other surrounding countries not on Tier 1. For example, NGOs in Slovenia noted continued strong cooperation with police on the identification of sex trafficking victims, as police continued to invite NGO care-providers to police interactions with commercial sex establishments to assist in victim identification. The United States encourages all governments to pursue strong cooperation between civil society and law enforcement to identify trafficking victims and to provide assistance.

*Question.* According to the 2020 State Department Report on International Religious Freedom, Slovenia lacks general respect for religious freedom with noted Anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim incidents in the reporting period.

- Please describe your plan of engagement, if confirmed, with the host government and civil society to increase societal respect for religious freedom.

Answer. Slovenia's constitution provides for freedom of religion or belief; other laws and policies contribute to the generally free practice of religion in Slovenia. There were, however, occasional reports of societal abuses or discrimination, including incidents of anti-Muslim hatred in 2020. If confirmed, I look forward to working together with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, as well as the Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, to bolster societal respect for the freedom of religion or belief and the rights of members of religious minority groups.

*Question.* In the 2020 State Department Human Rights Report, Slovenia was identified as having significant human rights abuses, including threats of violence against journalists. Ending this threat and impunity for violence against journalists remains a challenge globally.

- If confirmed, how will you work with the Government and civil society to bolster human rights in country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations to help us assess human rights issues, develop programs, and advocate for stronger policies

and reforms. The U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana enjoys strong and longstanding relationships with civil society on human rights and democracy issues. Civil society has played an important role in promoting accountability of elected leaders, driving meaningful reform, supporting the rights of members of minority groups and access to justice for vulnerable communities, and strengthening independent media.

*Question.* What do you consider to be the top human rights priority?

Answer. Media freedom is essential to a free and democratic society. Slovenia has an open media environment, yet some government actors have called into question the integrity of media outlets and launched verbal attacks on journalists. The Government also has withheld financial support required by law to the national press agency. Friends should be able to discuss difficult topics with each other, and this is an area where we have to engage with the Slovenian Government. If confirmed, I will have these conversations to emphasize the importance of media freedom.

*Question.* How can you work with the Government to improve their efforts to protect journalists?

Answer. Media freedom is fundamental to a free and democratic society. If confirmed, I will emphasize the importance of media freedom and urge the Government of Slovenia to strongly condemn and, if appropriate, thoroughly investigate such threats and any violence against journalists. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Embassy continues to track this issue closely and will also prioritize continued outreach to members of the Slovenian press to continue to develop their ability to safely carry out their profession and to promote good governance and anti-corruption objectives through investigative journalism.

#### *Embassy Management*

*Question.* Mission Slovenia has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Slovenia?

Answer. Slovenia has enforced strict national lockdowns. The American and local employees at Embassy Ljubljana have dealt with significant challenges posed by COVID-19. I am grateful for their service, despite the difficulties. If confirmed, I will prioritize listening to, and supporting, Embassy employees, including the Deputy Chief of Mission, to better understand the impact of the pandemic on the mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Slovenia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure that we create an atmosphere in which our staff knows that they can bring serious issues to us and know that they are being heard at the highest level. I will do personal outreach to the staff when I arrive at Post and will ensure that everyone in the Mission understands that my highest priority is the safety and security of the team. If confirmed, I will promote training and professional development, and ensure that all staff members are aware of the employee and family support resources that the Department offers to assist employees.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Slovenia?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to establish a strong team with a clear understanding of our goals and objectives, maintain open and transparent communications throughout the Mission by sharing information, and seek ways to support and ensure the safety and community of the Mission—both American and local staff. I will treat the team with respect and professionalism and give them the tools they need to do their jobs. I believe that all members of U.S. Embassy Ljubljana are one team working for the good of the U.S.-Slovenia relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people, and, if confirmed, my goal will be to have everyone inspired to work in that direction.

#### *Management: A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I have a collaborative management style. I believe in sharing information and empowering my team, being open to ideas and suggestions from throughout the mission, and providing clear guidance and decisions as needed to lead. If confirmed, I will regularly engage with members of my team and always seek to create a space for open dialogue, creativity, and diversity of thought.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* As I understand it, the State Department continuously reviews its priorities, organization, and staffing relevant to the needs of each mission. If confirmed, my commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. If necessary, I would advocate for additional resources to carry out our mission.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Ljubljana and to schedule opportunities for regular coordination and planning of Embassy operations. I also will create opportunities for more informal meetings and events with members from across the Embassy community, so that I have a strong awareness of community concerns and the state of Embassy morale.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I do not believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I hope to establish a high constructive relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission, who will be my trusted partner, confidante, and alter ego in managing and leading the Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to having a close working relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). The DCM must be fully engaged and informed about all aspects of policy and Mission management should the Deputy need to step in to lead. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my DCM once I arrive in Ljubljana to collaboratively work through the best division of labor in managing the Mission.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would lead by example to demonstrate the importance of getting outside of our Embassy. Access to and engagement with local contacts and populations is an important part of our work overseas. If confirmed, I look forward to participating in public outreach with all parts of society, including students, non-governmental organizations, academics, scientists, and the media, and will encourage the diplomats of Embassy Ljubljana to do the same.

*Public Diplomacy: An Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts*

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Slovenia? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* In Slovenia, as throughout the world, COVID-19 has affected in-person public diplomacy programming. Recently announced new travel rules, once implemented, should alleviate the perceived imbalance in measures that make travel to the United States restrictive for Slovenes. U.S. public diplomacy programming supports Mission goals through student and scholarly exchanges, media engagement, educational outreach, speaker series, support for culture and the arts, and entrepreneurship, bilateral trade and investment ties. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with the Slovenian public to increase dialogue about a range of issues and build support for our policies.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Public Diplomacy Section to closely coordinate the efforts of Washington and Ljubljana-based public diplomacy professionals to ensure that there is a unified approach to highlighting the key U.S. mes-

sages and policies in Slovenia and around the world. The Public Diplomacy Section engages on a variety of different social media platforms to deliver tailored messages on U.S. foreign policy priorities, promote Embassy activities and events, provide information on security, voting, and other topics to U.S. citizens, and communicate with the Slovenian public.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* I have already received an overview at the unclassified level on potential anomalous health incidents reported by U.S. Government personnel in regions around the world. If confirmed, I look forward to receiving an in-depth briefing on the incidents before I depart for my post. Protecting the health and safety of members of my team is my very highest priority.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* As the Department does, I consider the safety and health of our employees and their family members as my top priority. If confirmed, I will vigorously and diligently support the Department's established reporting and care protocols for possible anomalous health incidents.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* I am deeply troubled by potential anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and their family members. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel and must be taken extremely seriously. If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Embassy Ljubljana staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with the Embassy community to discuss these issues. If confirmed, I also commit to meeting with the RSO and medical staff to ensure that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Embassy Ljubljana staff in case any potential anomalous health incidents are reported.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT MILLER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes. This is a sensitive ongoing investigation and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. I understand a major interagency effort is investigating what is causing the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports anomalous health incidents receives immediate and appropriate attention and care, and I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.



*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a possible health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and, of course, to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy teams. I will also consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT MILLER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 State Department Trafficking in Persons report, Switzerland remained on Tier 2 due to ongoing lacking efforts by the Government to hold traffickers accountable, fund victim services, and without legal safeguards to protect victims.

- Please explain, in detail, how you plan to engage with the Swiss Government, if confirmed.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work with the Deputy Chief of Mission and Country Team to develop and implement both a short and long-term strategy of engagement with government officials, business leaders, and civil society in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. If confirmed, I would work with my Country Team to prioritize engagement with Swiss and Liechtenstein Government officials and entities based on policy needs and priorities. If confirmed, I would also more closely consider engagement with Swiss and Liechtenstein Government entities and officials who may seek greater U.S. Government interaction.

*Question.* Please explain why you believe the Swiss Government has not made serious and sustained efforts to combat trafficking in persons.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure Swiss and Liechtenstein interlocutors understand the United States is committed to combating trafficking in persons in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and beyond. While the Swiss Government is making significant efforts to address this issue, lenient sentencing, resulting in 60 percent of traffickers receiving fully suspended sentences or fines, undercut efforts to hold traffickers accountable. The Government did not report the number of trafficking investigations for the third year in a row, reported fewer convictions, and continued to lack sufficiently disaggregated data on trafficking. For the third consecutive year, the Government decreased victim identification and remained without a national standardized identification and referral mechanism.

*Question.* According to the 2020 State Department Report on International Religious Freedom, Anti-Semitic incidents in Switzerland were in the hundreds but on the decline from previous reporting periods.

- How can you use regional ambassadors and the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to emulate other successful regional programs in Switzerland?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to promote universal respect for freedom of religion or belief in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. I will also work with both the Office of International Religious Freedom and the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to ensure the Embassy recommends, develops, and implements policies and programs to combat discrimination and promote tolerance. I will also engage with various religious communities across Switzerland and Liechtenstein to better understand where challenges remain and raise these challenges with the Governments of both countries. Finally, if confirmed, I will seek to promote inter-religious dialogue among religious groups in Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

*Question.* Please describe your plan of engagement, if confirmed, with civil society to increase societal respect for religious freedom.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations, religious minorities, and government entities to assess and increase societal respect for religious freedom, develop programs, and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms.

*Question.* In the 2020 State Department Human Rights Report, Switzerland was identified as having no significant human rights abuses. However, there is always work to be done.

- If confirmed, how can you promote religious freedom and tolerance with federal and cantonal government officials?

*Answer.* Switzerland's constitution guarantees freedom of faith and conscience, and the penal code prohibits discrimination against any religion or its members. Switzerland also has an independent judicial system capable of holding accountable those who commit hate-based crimes. If confirmed, I will work closely with federal and cantonal government officials—as well as civil society and religious minorities—to promote religious freedom and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms. If confirmed, I will also work with my team to ensure we leverage a whole-of-government approach in engagement with federal and sub-national officials, such as initiatives focused on promotion of interfaith tolerance by cantonal officials and local procedures.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with the Government and civil society to bolster human rights in country?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations and government entities to assess and bolster human rights and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms. If confirmed, I will work with my team to ensure we leverage the whole-of-government and U.S. subject matter experts to develop engagement and reporting strategies that effectively bolster human rights in Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

*Question.* What do you consider to be the top human rights priority?

*Answer.* The protection of fundamental human rights was a foundation stone in the establishment of the United States over 200 years ago. Since then, a central goal of U.S. foreign policy has been the promotion of respect for human rights, as embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Partnering with Switzerland and Liechtenstein on supporting democracy around the world not only promotes such fundamental American values as religious freedom and worker rights, but also helps create a more secure, stable, and prosperous global arena in which the United States can advance its national interests. If confirmed, I would commit to deepening cooperation with my host governments on promoting respect for human rights wherever they are under threat.

#### *Embassy Management*

*Question.* Mission Switzerland and Mission Liechtenstein have been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Switzerland and Mission Liechtenstein?

*Answer.* Like most overseas Posts, Embassy Bern has endured strict host nation mitigation measures and varying conditions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, American and local employees at Embassy Bern have dealt with significant challenges posed by COVID-19. Beyond the pandemic, Embassy Bern has a lean staffing pattern across multiple sections. I am grateful for their service, despite these difficulties. If confirmed, I will prioritize meeting with and supporting Embassy employees, including the Deputy Chief of Mission, to understand the impact of the pandemic and lean-staffing patterns on the mission. If confirmed, I will advocate for more resources for Embassy Bern as appropriate to ensure our staffing aligns with mission priorities and needs.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Switzerland and Mission Liechtenstein?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize meeting with and supporting Embassy employees, including the Deputy Chief of Mission, to understand the impact of the pandemic and lean-staffing patterns on the mission. If confirmed, I will advocate for more resources for Embassy Bern as appropriate to ensure our staffing aligns with mission priorities and needs. I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure we create an atmosphere in which our staff knows that they can bring serious issues to us and know that they are being heard at the highest level. I will do personal

outreach to the staff when I arrive at Post and will ensure that everyone in the Mission understands that my highest priority is the safety, security, and resiliency of the team. If confirmed, I will promote work/life balance, training, and professional development, and ensure that all staff members are aware of the employee and family support resources that the Department offers to assist employees.

*Management: A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission*

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Switzerland and Mission Liechtenstein?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission and Country Team to ensure our mission priorities and plans incorporate input and suggestions from diverse stakeholders, are well-known, and are communicated effectively through venues like Town Halls and Country Team meetings. I would consider it a priority to ensure the mission and vision is unified and clear to all under my authority.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* Management is a critical responsibility for any chief of mission. If confirmed, I want Americans and local staff under my leadership to feel heard, respected, and engaged; and I plan to set the tone by my example, which includes being considerate, communicative, consistent, and calm. I would also seek to develop and grow new leaders through mentorship and appropriately challenging tasks and roles. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Council on Inclusion and Diversity to adopt and model best practices. I would be available and present for my entire team. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure my team maintains a healthy work-life balance while ensuring the mission is complete.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would seek to advance mission policies and priorities shoulder-to-shoulder with the remarkable and talented U.S. Foreign Service officers and local Embassy staff in Bern, who have already done so much to advocate on behalf of the United States, and who cannot be praised enough for their dedication and public service. I understand the State Department continuously reviews its priorities, organization, and staffing relevant to the needs of each mission. If confirmed, my commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. If necessary, I would work with my Deputy Chief of Mission and Country Team to advocate for additional resources to carry out our mission.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new Chiefs of Mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Bern and to schedule opportunities for regular coordination and planning of Embassy operations. I will also create opportunities for more informal meetings and events with members from across the Embassy community, so that I have a strong awareness of community concerns and the state of Embassy morale.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I do not believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I hope to establish a positive relationship where my Deputy Chief of Mission will be my trusted partner, confidante, and alter ego in managing and leading the Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Chief of Mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to having a close working relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). The DCM must be fully engaged on and informed about all aspects of policy and Mission management should the Deputy need to step in to lead. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my DCM to collaboratively work through the best division of labor in managing the Mission.

*Public Diplomacy: An Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts*

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. If confirmed, I will encourage all parts of the mission to engage regularly with the widest possible range of the local population, across the entire country, while always working to ensure the safety and security of everyone on our team.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Switzerland? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* COVID-19 has affected in-person public diplomacy programming in Switzerland, as it has everywhere. Recently announced new travel rules, once implemented, should help alleviate increased skepticism about the perceived imbalance between measures that make travel to the United States restrictive for the Swiss. U.S. public diplomacy programming supports Mission goals through student and scholarly exchanges; media engagement; educational outreach; speaker series; support for culture and the arts; and entrepreneurship, bilateral trade and investment ties. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with the Swiss public to increase dialogue about a range of issues and build support for our policies.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the Public Diplomacy Section to closely coordinate the efforts of Washington and Bern-based public diplomacy professionals to ensure that there is a unified approach to highlighting the key U.S. messages and policies in Switzerland and around the world. The Public Diplomacy Section engages on a variety of different social media platforms to deliver tailored messages on U.S. foreign policy priorities; promote Embassy activities and events; provide information on security, voting, and other topics of interest to U.S. citizens; and communicate with the Swiss public.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* I have received an overview at the unclassified level on potential anomalous health incidents reported by U.S. Government personnel in regions around the world. If confirmed, I look forward to receiving an in-depth briefing on the incidents before I depart for my post.

*Answer.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* As the Department does, I consider the safety and health of our employees and their family members as my top priority. If confirmed, I will energetically support the Department's established reporting and care protocols for possible anomalous health incidents.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* I am deeply troubled by potential anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel and their family members. I agree that such incidents may pose a threat to the wellbeing of U.S. personnel and must be taken extremely seriously. If confirmed, the health, safety, and security of Embassy Bern staff, their family members, and all those supporting the Mission will be my highest priority. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with the Embassy community to discuss

these issues. If confirmed, I also commit to meeting with the Regional Security Officer and medical staff to ensure that I am most prepared to protect the safety of Embassy Bern staff in case any potential anomalous health incidents are reported.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT MILLER BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

*F-35 Sale*

*Question.* Earlier this year, Swiss voters approved in a referendum a \$5.5 billion deal for Switzerland to purchase Lockheed Martin F-35s as its next-generation fighter jet, along with a \$2.1 billion agreement to buy Patriot surface-to-air missiles from Raytheon. The Swiss Government chose the F-35s over competing bids from Boeing, Dassault (France), and a Germany-Spain-Italy-UK conglomerate. The decision followed an analysis from the Swiss Federal Council assessing that the F-35 offered the highest overall benefit at the lowest overall cost—costing around \$2 billion less than the next lowest bidder.

- The Swiss Government and Swiss voters clearly recognized the value of the F-35. And the F-35 offers capabilities over and above the economic considerations. How do you assess Switzerland's decision to buy F-35s from the United States, over options from European competitors? As Ambassador, how will you build on this success?

*Answer.* Switzerland's decision to acquire \$6.5 billion in F-35 fighters will contribute to a lasting, mutually beneficial security and technological partnership for decades to come. The Swiss government conducted a systematic, unbiased, and transparent competition. Not only would Switzerland derive the benefit of the F-35's interoperability capabilities with the United States and allied European nations, but the acquisition would bolster diplomatic and political partnerships with the United States and its European allies. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate energetically for U.S. defense systems, which I believe deepen our bilateral cooperation, provide our partners with the best strategic and fiscal value, and strengthen economic benefits for both of our countries.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ERIK D. RAMANATHAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* I agree these incidents must be taken seriously and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel. I understand a major interagency effort is underway to investigate what is causing the incidents and how the Embassy community can be protected, and this issue remains a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports anomalous health incidents receives immediate and appropriate attention and care, and I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a potential anomalous health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy teams. I consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Embassy community. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and to ensure that all protocols are being followed.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ERIK D. RAMANATHAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Sweden*

*Question.* In the 2021 State Department Trafficking in Persons report, Sweden remained on Tier 1 for continued efforts to eliminate trafficking in persons. However, authorities in Sweden investigated fewer trafficking cases and investigated fewer victims. They also delayed the National Support Program (NSP) for victim assistance.

- If confirmed, how will you engage with the Government of Sweden on this issue?

*Answer.* The Government of Sweden fully meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The Swedish Government continued to demonstrate serious and sustained efforts, considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity. As part of a four-year project, the Government allocated 18 million krona (\$2.2 million) to strengthen labor market regulation compliance efforts and review compliance developments, including efforts to prevent forced labor. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Swedish authorities to advance bilateral cooperation on this issue. I will work to encourage the Swedish Government to increase proactive identification and assistance for victims, particularly among vulnerable groups, and encourage consistent and sufficient funding for victim services.

*Question.* In the 2020 State Department Report on International Religious Freedom, the country report on Sweden indicated several anti-Semitic incidents and one against an 11 year-old Christian boy.

- Please describe your plan of engagement, if confirmed, with the host government and civil society to increase societal respect for religious freedom.

*Answer.* Sweden's constitution protects "the freedom to practice one's religion alone or in the company of others" and prohibits discrimination based on religion. However, anti-Semitism is rising around the world at an alarming rate. Although levels of anti-Semitism are lower in Sweden than in some other parts of Europe, I view any increase in anti-Semitism with serious concern. In October 2021, the Swedish Government hosted foreign leaders, Holocaust survivors, and internationally renowned activists in Malmö for a forum aimed at promoting Holocaust remembrance and combating anti-Semitism. If confirmed, I look forward to building on the important pledges made at the Malmö forum and commit to coordinating with the State Department's Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom to combat anti-Semitism and religious intolerance in all its forms and to promote freedom of religion or belief for all.

*Question.* In the 2020 State Department Human Rights Report, Sweden was identified as having no significant human rights abuses. However, there is always work to be done.

- If confirmed, how will you work with the Government and civil society to bolster human rights in country?

*Answer.* The Swedish Government has undertaken a "Drive for Democracy," which centers democracy and human rights in its foreign policy, including via security cooperation and international development efforts. Since launching its Drive in 2016, Sweden has hosted over 600 "Democracy Talks" at Embassies across the globe, engaging more than 1.7 million people. The Swedish Government also pursues a "feminist foreign policy" approach, which emphasizes the impact of global events on women and children and seeks to include women in conflict resolution, negotiation, and diplomacy. If confirmed, I look forward to building on these efforts and working with the Swedish Government and civil society to promote democracy, human rights, and global norms. The U.S. Embassy in Stockholm has strong relationships with civil society organizations in Sweden, and I commit to working closely with them to advance human rights and promote our shared values.

*Question.* What do you consider to be the top human rights priority?

*Answer.* Sweden's commitment to promoting human rights and gender equality makes it a respected moral leader in international affairs. If confirmed, I particularly look forward to working with the Government of Sweden to combat human rights issues connected to large-scale displacement of refugees, including related issues of persecution, discrimination, human trafficking, and religious intolerance.

#### *Embassy Management*

*Question.* Mission Sweden has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Sweden?

*Answer.* Mission Sweden has faced challenges posed by COVID-19, and I am thankful for their continued service. If confirmed, the health and safety of the personnel and family members of Mission Sweden will be my first priority, and I look forward to working with the talented team of locally employed staff, U.S. Direct Hires, and their families, and ensuring that everyone on my team understands they are valued and has my support.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Sweden?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure everyone on my team is treated professionally, their rights are respected, they are safe and secure, and they have the resources necessary to perform their jobs. We are all one team working for the good of the U.S.-Swedish relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Sweden?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring open and continuous communication throughout the Mission. We are all one team working together to advance the U.S.-Swedish relationship and in the interests of the American people, so I will ensure this collaborative service focus is central to our work. Furthermore, U.S. Embassy Stockholm is committed to a diverse and inclusive workforce that fully represents and supports many different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives to provide a productive workplace for all people from all walks of life. I was pleased to learn the Embassy is staffed with a very diverse workforce with over 25 nationalities represented among our local staff. Diversity makes our Mission strong by bringing different perspectives and enhancing creativity and if confirmed, I look forward to working with the team to maximize innovation and effectiveness.

#### *Management: A Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* The foundation of my management style is focused on service, collaboration, and creativity. We are all public servants and one team working on a common goal—to advance the bilateral relationship between the United States and Sweden and to effectively advocate for the American people. I look forward to meeting people face-to-face, understanding their goals, and ensuring we are all working collaboratively as one team. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Embassy fully represents and supports many different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives to provide a productive and innovative workplace that lifts up the voices of each member of the team.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance top policy priorities for the U.S.-Swedish relationship and the American public. I have long admired the dedication and service to country of career Foreign Service officers, and if confirmed, look forward to working with them and drawing upon their experience and expertise. I value respect, professionalism, and creative thinking and welcome divergent points of view.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture. If confirmed, I intend to meet with the personnel at Embassy Stockholm, including U.S. Direct Hires and locally engaged staff, to fully understand their roles and responsibilities and how I can best support,

guide, and advocate for them. I look forward to working closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission and will rely on the experience and expertise of the talented staff to help determine how I can best integrate into and enhance embassy operations.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No, it is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your Deputy Chief of Mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to a close and productive relationship with the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) centered on trust and collaborative service. I envision the relationship as a partnership: a career official that brings experience and institutional knowledge on whom I can depend on and work closely with to ensure the success of the overall Mission, while still retaining ultimate responsibility and accountability for steering our course.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Chief of Mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to building a foundation of trust and a highly collaborative working relationship with the DCM. If confirmed, I will entrust the DCM with responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Mission and the DCM should keep abreast of policy issues to be able to serve as Chargé d'Affaires in my absence. If confirmed, I plan to consult with the DCM on a range of issues.

#### *Public Diplomacy: An Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts*

*Question.* How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

Answer. I firmly believe it is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of the Embassy to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-governmental organizations, and citizens. If confirmed, I plan to exchange ideas with people from all parts of the country to hear their views and promote our shared goals. I will use both social and traditional media to reach people across Sweden, to directly and indirectly engage with the Swedish public. If confirmed, I will work with the Embassy team to continue leveraging engagements with the media, cultural and educational exchange organizations, and individual interactions to expand the people-to-people bonds that are the foundation of our strong bilateral relationship.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Sweden? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

Answer. The United States has strong academic, cultural, and professional exchanges with the people of Sweden. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge for U.S. diplomats to travel and fully engage face-to-face with host country nationals. As conditions improve, U.S. diplomats have started in-person engagements and programs again. If confirmed, I look forward to utilizing both traditional and social media to engage with the Swedish public, in addition to in-person programs.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

Answer. We are all one team working to advance the bilateral relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people. If confirmed, I will leverage public diplomacy tools to enhance security cooperation, expand economic and trade relations, strengthen Arctic collaboration, and deepen people-to-people ties. I will work to counter adverse influence and mis- and disinformation through engagements with traditional media, communication via social media, institutional outreach and personal interactions, and through a variety of public diplomacy programming. Working with the public diplomacy team, we will tailor our messaging in a way that the Swedish public is most receptive to.

#### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

Answer. I have received a briefing at the unclassified level on the anomalous health incidents that have affected U.S. Government personnel around the world. If confirmed, I commit to seeking full briefings at the appropriate classification lev-



els before my departure to post and learning how I can best protect all Embassy personnel and respond to any future incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the safety and security of the personnel and family members of Embassy Stockholm, and American citizens in Sweden, will always be my first priority. In the event of an anomalous health incident, I commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, share the information with the State Department and other embassies, and ensure open communication to contribute to the investigation.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed, the safety and security of Embassy personnel, their families, and American citizens in Sweden will always be my first priority. This is an issue I take very seriously and is a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. I will ensure that anyone affected receives immediate medical attention and that personnel and family member concerns are heard. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to share information as appropriate and provide care for affected employees and their family members. I understand there is an ongoing interagency investigation to identify the cause, and I am committed to supporting this investigation.

---

## NOMINATIONS

---

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2021

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Young, Barrasso, Cruz, Rounds, and Hagerty.

Also Present: Senator Warner.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. We are here today to consider the nominations for four important positions: Ambassador John Bass to be the Under Secretary for Management, Mr. Scott Nathan to be the chief executive officer for the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, Ambassador Mark Brzezinski to be the Ambassador to Poland, and Mr. Michael Adler to be the Ambassador to Belgium.

Congratulations to all of you on your nominations. I appreciate your willingness and that of your families because we understand families are part of the sacrifice to serve our country in this capacity.

Before I start any comments, I understand that our colleague from Virginia, from the great Commonwealth of Virginia, the former Governor of Virginia, Senator Warner, is here to introduce Mr. Nathan.

Senator Warner?

### **STATEMENT OF HON. MARK R. WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that recognition, and to you and Ranking Member Risch and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to make an introduction.

I know Ambassador Bass a bit, but I know Mark Brzezinski—Ambassador Brzezinski and Michael Adler very well. You have got an extraordinary panel in front of you today.

But we all get called upon sometimes to do these introductions but today is something that is very special to me because I get the chance to introduce and present to the committee somebody who is

a close friend, trusted confidante, and somebody I know who is going to be an excellent choice to lead the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, my friend, Scott Nathan.

I have known Scott for more than 15 years. I first got to know him in my waning days, as you mentioned, when I was—still had a real job, governor, and Scott was introduced to me initially as a like-minded adviser on security issues, having come up in the business world and then transitioned to the public sector.

Scott, I think—and I say this particularly to my friends on the Republican side—brings a very pragmatic outside perspective to the issues of economic diplomacy, trade policy, emerging markets, and international development.

Over the years, I have come to appreciate Scott's wisdom and expertise, and I can tell you he is practical, collaborative, and very independent minded. But I have also gotten to know him as a friend.

I do not want to steal his thunder, but he has got his wife, Laura, and his two kids, Asher and Lia, check behind him. I have got to know them, frankly, since they have been born. But I have seen him and his family on the personal side and this is a—these are good people.

My message to you today is I think the DFC is an incredible valuable tool. Senator Risch and I serve on the Intelligence Committee together and we know the challenges our nation faces as we compete with China and other adversaries in terms of economic development.

I think in Scott you are going to find somebody who is uniquely suited for this job. He comes here with both law and business degrees in hand. He had an extraordinarily impressive career in the private sector for almost two decades.

He worked in the investment business, becoming a very prominent partner on a major fund where he also served as the role of risk management, something I think, again, that is terribly important in this new role with the DFC. He then transitioned to government service, working at both OMB doing policy work and the State Department where he worked in promotion of American economic interests abroad, again, something that I think will serve him well at the DFC.

I know you have got a lot in front of you. I will skip through all these wonderful other descriptions of the important role of the DFC. But I can think of no one that I am prouder to introduce, prouder to present and give more full-fledged endorsement to than my friend, Scott Nathan.

And with that, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for the courtesy of allowing me to go first.

Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Warner, for that glowing introduction of Mr. Nathan. I know that being governor is an exalted status but some of us believe that being a U.S. Senator is a real job as well.

On that note, I will let you go to some other important meeting that I am sure that you have at the Intelligence Committee.

Senator RISCH. Senator Shaheen and I also have ideas on the governorship. At some point in time—

[Laughter.]

Senator SHAHEEN. Yes, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I just realized I am surrounded by former governors. All right.

Ambassador Bass, it is good to see you again before the committee. You have a long and distinguished public service trajectory that I believe will serve you well upon your confirmation to be the Under Secretary of State for Management.

As you well know, Secretary Blinken inherited a damaged and depleted department, as I documented in a committee report last year, "Diplomacy in Crisis." The last administration's repeated assault on State Department personnel, management, and resources were unconscionable and dangerous for long-term U.S. foreign policy interests. Confidence in leadership decayed and key bureaus were gutted.

In fairness, as I have acknowledged before, many institutional, budgetary, and morale problems are also the result of multiple administrations and congressional action and inaction as well. That is why I believe there is now broad bipartisan consensus that critical efforts needed to be taken to address core structural and resource issues that have too long plagued the department.

While I was encouraged to hear Secretary Blinken's speech on State Department modernization in October, I hope you will provide us some more specifics today on how you intend to execute each of the five pillars he outlined, particularly on how you plan to build capacity on critical issues like cyber and technology, climate and global health, and to improve diversity at the department.

Separately, I would like to take a moment to speak about your recent work in Afghanistan, as this committee would also be interested in hearing your views on the evacuation efforts that you helped oversee this past August.

While the State Department performed heroically in that effort, the fact of the matter is that the department and the United States never should have been in the position where that sort of desperate heroism was necessary.

To my mind, and this is directly relevant to the job that you have been nominated for, it speaks to serious shortcomings in the department's planning and contingency response capacity.

I recognize that today's hearing is not a post-mortem on Afghanistan. But I am interested in what lessons you learned from this experience and how you will apply those lessons as the Deputy for Management, if confirmed.

Mr. Nathan, congratulations on your nomination. I appreciate your visit with me yesterday. If confirmed, you will be leading an agency that is without question an important new asset for advancing U.S. economic competitiveness in the global economy, alleviating poverty and improving opportunity, growth, and stability in countries, all of which are incredibly important U.S. foreign policy objectives.

However, during the DFC's brief history there have been many questions raised, from the decision to grant authorities to the DFC to pursue domestic deals under the Defense Production Act to the series of projects in upper middle income countries to over prom-

ising on prospective investments. There is a need for a cultural reset at the DFC.

Yet, the agency has demonstrated its potential, coming into existence at a critical moment for enhancing U.S. development finance policies and programs with a significant potential to be a vehicle to provide support to our friends and allies who are under increasing economic and diplomatic pressure from Beijing.

I look forward to hearing your vision for ensuring the DFC is fulfilling the BUILD Act's mandate to pursue projects that advance clear development outcomes while also taking strategic approaches for advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives.

This includes the importance of addressing the climate crisis, the need to convert the global economy to clean energy, as highlighted during last month's COP26.

Ambassador Brzezinski, welcome back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Your nomination comes at a critical time for Poland, and I must note the United States' steadfast commitment to Poland's security. As you know, Poland is a longtime friend and NATO ally, and nothing will undermine our commitment to supporting Poland and defending NATO's Eastern flank.

The illegitimate Lukashenko regime's use of migrants and hybrid tactics at borders—Poland's border is unacceptable and inhumane. Poland is on the front lines and the United States will always support Poland in defending its territorial integrity and security.

However, while Poland's security is of utmost importance, we must also underscore that NATO is strengthened by our commitment to democratic values and human rights.

To that end, I am deeply concerned by continued attacks on the independence of Poland's judiciary. In Warsaw, it will be your job to urge the Polish government to live up to its commitments as a NATO ally that supports a vibrant judiciary, free press, and rights for all of its citizens, and I am confident you are the right choice to represent the United States in Warsaw.

Finally, Mr. Adler, congratulations on your nomination. I trust that, if confirmed, you will draw from your experience in the private sector to advocate for U.S. interests in Belgium.

As you know, hundreds of U.S. firms are represented in Belgium. In 2020, it was the thirteenth largest recipient of U.S. exports and we appreciate Belgium's support for the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council to further strengthen transatlantic ties.

In addition, we are grateful for Belgium's partnership in the global coalition to defeat ISIS. Belgium is a NATO partner, a leader on human rights and democracy, and I look forward to getting you to Brussels as soon as possible to continue to strengthen our relationship with that important ally.

We look forward to each of your testimonies. Let me turn to the distinguished ranking member, Senator Risch, for his comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, on the nomination of Under Secretary of State for Management, this position is not only responsible for keeping our diplomats safe and embassies functioning properly but also sup-

porting and improving the State Department workforce. It plays a crucial role in helping coordinate State Department operations with this committee.

There are enormous pressures on State Department personnel that need immediate attention. Embassy personnel are being attacked in what State is awkwardly calling anomalous health incidents. All of us, on a bipartisan basis, are very concerned about this situation. We have struggled to get straight answers out of the department on what is going on.

Moreover, in many posts, our diplomats are having trouble getting outside of the embassy walls to meet with the local population, putting a serious strain on their ability to advance vital U.S. national interests. We know Russian, Chinese, and Iranian diplomats do not have these restrictions.

Determining the future of this workforce and how it operates is one of the most important responsibilities of this position and one that could have ramifications for years, if not decades. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these important issues.

On the nomination of CEO of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, the DFC has the potential, the potential, to serve as one of the most influential tools to unleash the power of the private sector, lift countries out of power and counter the predatory state-sponsored development models pursued by strategic competitors.

To that end, the DFC should focus on two core missions. It should promote economic freedom through support for private sector-led growth in developing countries and it should protect economic freedom through investments in sectors of strategic significance to the United States.

Investments in the digital economy, advanced technologies, energy infrastructure, supply chains, and public health are critical in an era of strategic competition with China and to provide alternatives to state-directed investments. Senator Warner's reference to the Intelligence Committee and our work in overseeing these types of matters is important and, certainly, this agency plays a crucial role there.

Last month, I sent a letter to the DFC expressing serious concerns that 18 of the 21 current solar project sourced panels are from China, even after revelations of forced labor in China's solar industry. That situation is unacceptable and unsustainable. If confirmed, I expect you to fix it and make sure DFC's supply chains do not touch forced labor.

Additionally, the agency's keen interest in pursuing deals in wealthy countries is inexplicable. The DFC must shrug off its old OPIC mindset and fully embrace the new agency's dual missions. It must strike a healthier balance between pursuing projects with a greater development focus and those guided by strategic interests.

On the nomination of our Ambassador to Poland, I will associate myself with the remarks of the chairman regarding our commitment to Poland and its security. Poland is under a growing threat from Russia and its proxy, Belarus. I am glad to see a growing U.S. troop presence there. But being an ally requires more than just military cooperation. Values matter.

The Polish Government seems set on consolidating its control over previously free media and to terminating the largest U.S. investment in Poland, Discovery Media's ownership of TVN.

Both decisions are counter to the commitments to human rights and freedom of speech we expect that our allies will maintain. I expect to hear your thoughts on all of these critical issues.

Finally, on the nomination of Ambassador to Belgium, Brussels is home to many European NGOs and international organizations as well as headquarters of the EU and NATO. It is an important post, especially within the context of Brussels' influential position in European politics.

Like in many European countries, China has sought to expand its influence in Belgium by purchasing stakes in important Belgian companies, particularly ports. I would like to hear how you plan to address this growing issue, should you be confirmed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

All right. We will start the testimonies. We will start with Mr. Nathan and just work our way down the dais. We would ask you to summarize your comments in about five minutes or so. Your full statements will be included for the record, without objection, and feel free to introduce any members of your family that are here.

Mr. Nathan?

**STATEMENT OF SCOTT NATHAN OF MASSACHUSETTS, NOMINATED TO BE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CORPORATION**

Mr. NATHAN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for having me here today and for the time you and your staff have spent with me prior to this hearing.

Senator Warner, thank you for your kind introduction and for your friendship over many years.

With me here today are my wife, Laura, and our two children, Asher and Lia. I am grateful for their love today and every day. My parents and my brother are also watching this hearing and I want to acknowledge their role in getting me to this moment.

I am honored to be nominated by President Biden to be the chief executive officer of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. Throughout this confirmation process, I have relied on the input, guidance, and support of the current acting as well as the former leadership of both DFC and its predecessor, OPIC.

I am deeply grateful to Adam Boehler, Ray Washburne, Elizabeth Littlefield, Rob Mosbacher, Jr., David Bohigian, Edward Burrier, and Dev Jagadesan. The value and spirit of these conversations reflect the broad support for this agency.

I also want to thank the fantastic group of hardworking professionals at DFC as well as throughout the interagency, whom I have so far met in preparation for this confirmation process.

This is an exciting and important time for DFC. The agency is less than two years old but the expectations for it are high. DFC was created with bipartisan support and a consensus that it could be an effective tool of U.S. foreign policy.

The needs of the developing world are too great to meet with government resources alone, and DFC can be a catalyst for bringing private capital to worthy projects. By bringing together OPIC and DCA through the BUILD Act, setting a new dual mandate both developmental and strategic, and providing expanded tools and investment targets, Congress has challenged DFC to make a greater impact.

My consultations with members of this committee and staff have been very valuable. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to shape and to continue to grow DFC's capabilities and capacity so that it can properly fulfill the responsibilities it has been given.

DFC mobilizes capital for private sector-led growth in the developing world and provides a clear alternative to state-directed investments by authoritarian governments. DFC's product offering gives developing countries a positive choice reflecting our democratic values for meeting their infrastructure and economic needs.

While investing in private sector companies and projects, DFC can insist on transparency, rule of law, financial sustainability, and high environmental and labor standards. Unlike some of our strategic competitors, we do this with no strings attached.

I believe in the power of the private sector, free markets, and inclusive economic growth to improve lives and bring countries out of poverty.

I entered adulthood right as the Cold War was coming to a close. Just months after I graduated college, the Berlin Wall fell and the world changed dramatically. For the first time, millions in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union tasted freedom and could pursue their own economic liberty.

This sea change profoundly impacted me. I lived in the region during this time of wrenching change and great optimism, and after completing law school and business school, I focused my early career primarily on emerging markets, especially in these economies in transition.

After nearly 20 years in the investment business, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to devote the second chapter of my career to public service in roles at the Department of State and OMB.

At State, I focused on commercial advocacy for U.S. companies, economic diplomacy, and the promotion of entrepreneurship. The challenges facing the developing world can seem overwhelming but the opportunity for DFC to be part of the solution is enormous.

If confirmed, I will draw on my investment, managerial, and government experience to help DFC pursue this mission. I will work hard to make sure the agency has the right strategy, resources, structure, processes, to efficiently and effectively source and analyze investment opportunities and to properly measure and monitor those that make it into the portfolio.

I am so grateful to have been born in this country. I would be proud to, again, have the opportunity to work on behalf of the American people and represent the interests of the United States.

Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nathan follows:]



## PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT NATHAN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for having me here today and for the time you and your staff have spent with me prior to this hearing.

Senator Warner—thank you for that kind introduction and for your friendship over many years. With me here today is my wife Laura and our two children, Asher and Lia. I am grateful for their love and support today and every day. My parents and my brother are also watching this hearing and I want to acknowledge their role in getting me to this moment.

I am honored to be nominated by President Biden to serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation.

Throughout this confirmation process, I have relied on the input, guidance, and support of the current acting, as well as the former leadership of both DFC and its predecessor OPIC. I am deeply grateful to Adam Boehler, Ray Washburne, Elizabeth Littlefield, Robert Mosbacher Jr., David Bohigian, Edward Burrier, and Dev Jagadesan, many of whom are watching today. The value and spirit of these conversations reflect the broad support for this agency. I also want to thank the fantastic group of hard-working professionals at DFC, as well as throughout the inter-agency, whom I so far have met in preparation for this confirmation process.

This is an exciting and important time for DFC. The agency is less than two years old, but the expectations for it are high. DFC was created with bipartisan support and a consensus that it could be an effective tool of U.S. foreign policy. The needs of the developing world are too great to meet with government resources alone and DFC can be a catalyst for bringing private capital to worthy projects. By bringing together OPIC and DCA through the BUILD Act, setting a new dual mandate (both developmental and strategic), and providing expanded tools and investment targets, Congress has challenged DFC to make a greater impact.

My consultations with members of this committee and staff have been very valuable. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to shape and to continue to grow DFC's capabilities and capacity so that it can properly fulfill the responsibilities it has been given. Collaboration with the DFC's interagency partners will also be crucial.

DFC mobilizes capital for private sector-led growth in the developing world and provides a clear alternative to state-directed investments by authoritarian governments. DFC's product offering gives developing countries a positive choice, reflecting our democratic values, for meeting their infrastructure and economic needs. While investing in private sector companies and projects, DFC can insist on transparency, rule of law, financial sustainability, and high environmental and labor standards. Unlike some of our strategic competitors, we do this with no strings attached.

I believe in the power of the private sector, free markets, and inclusive economic growth to improve lives and bring countries out of poverty. I entered adulthood right as the Cold War was coming to a close. Just months after I graduated college, the Berlin Wall fell, and the world changed dramatically. For the first time, millions in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union tasted freedom and could pursue their own economic liberty. This sea change profoundly impacted me. I traveled throughout and lived in the region during this time of wrenching change and great optimism. After completing law school and business school, I focused my early career primarily on emerging markets, especially in these economies in transition.

After nearly twenty years in the investment business, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to devote the second chapter of my career to public service in roles at the Department of State and OMB. At State, I focused on commercial advocacy for U.S. companies, economic diplomacy, and the promotion of entrepreneurship.

The challenges facing the developing world can seem overwhelming. But the opportunity for DFC to be part of the solution is enormous. If confirmed, I will draw on my investment, managerial, and government experience to help DFC pursue this mission. I will work hard to make sure the agency has the right strategy, resources, structure, and processes to efficiently and effectively source and analyze investment opportunities and to properly measure and monitor those that make it into the portfolio.

I am so grateful to have been born in this country. I would be proud to again have the opportunity to work on behalf of the American people and represent the interests of the United States. Thank you for considering my nomination. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Ambassador Bass?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. JOHN R. BASS OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, NOMINATED TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (MANAGEMENT)**

Mr. BASS. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to be Under Secretary of State for Management.

I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the opportunity to, again, serve the nation if I am confirmed.

I am joined today by my wife, Holly, a fellow diplomat who has represented our nation in Afghanistan and five other countries, and I am enduringly grateful for her love and support.

My sister, Kristin, is also with us today, and we are joined in spirit by an extended family that includes the one we are blessed with by birth and marriage and the family we have made through shared service and sacrifice overseas.

I would like to begin this morning by honoring, first, the memory of the Marines, Navy corpsman, and soldier who died while protecting the rest of us, working to evacuate fellow Americans and at-risk Afghans from Kabul in late August. Their loved ones have been and remain in our thoughts and prayers every day.

It has been an honor to serve three previous times as a presidential appointee and I welcome this new opportunity, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, to give back to an institution that I love but one that I and many colleagues have not always liked.

I swore my first oath to support and defend the Constitution in 1988, and since then, the world and the issues and challenges at the center of American diplomacy have changed a great deal.

But how we work at State as representatives of our government and as diplomatic practitioners has not kept pace with the times. The reasons for this are complex. They reflect the choices of multiple administrations on both sides of the aisle.

But the result is an institution that relies too heavily on its dedicated professionals to bridge the gap between what State's infrastructure, technology, and practices enable and what our responsibilities to the nation actually require. And as the President, Secretary Blinken, members of this committee, and many outside observers have underscored, it is past time to remedy that.

If confirmed, I will do everything I can to prepare the State Department to tackle the challenges we will face in the coming years, and concurrently with your support and partnership I will do my best to ensure the women and men of the State Department have the guidance and receive the resources they need today to help our fellow citizens protect the country's interests, promote our prosperity, and uphold our values in 195 countries and nearly 200 international organizations worldwide.

Much of the public attention focuses on our headquarters here in the Capitol and the remarkable work of thousands of talented Civil and Foreign Service professionals serving here.

I believe the department's greatest impact, though, occurs well beyond the Beltway. Patriotic Americans and dedicated local staff in our embassies and consulates, colleagues working in 98 offices

in 31 states across our country, they all serve our nation where it matters most, as demonstrated by their unstinting effort during the pandemic to bring home over 100,000 Americans and other residents, even while we were enduring staffing shortages and draw downs ourselves.

If confirmed, I will work to reinforce our focus on the field and that includes doing everything possible to support and care for colleagues and family suffering from anomalous health incidents even as we work to uncover the cause of those incidents, and it also means managing sensibly threats and risks so our people can engage, persuade, and represent the nation in every environment overseas.

Diplomacy is a contact sport and who we dispatch can matter as much as what they do or what they say, and as Secretary Blinken recently underscored, our diversity as a nation in backgrounds, gender, race, religion, and ethnicity is among our greatest competitive advantages.

We sell ourselves short and undercut our service to all Americans if we fail, if we continue to fail, to capitalize on that strength, and I am committed to expanding efforts to attract talented Americans from all walks of life to join the department's team, to enable them to thrive as representatives of the United States, and to support them throughout a career so that our department truly reflects the richness and diversity of America.

We face significant challenges as a nation and as the oldest Cabinet department, and it will take sustained focus and resources for the department to most effectively advance our interests and help middle and working class Americans prosper in the years ahead.

In my prior appointments, I benefited from close coordination with members of this committee and the wider Congress, and, if confirmed, I intend to work closely with you on these compelling priorities.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear today and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bass follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN R. BASS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee: thank you for this opportunity to appear before you as the President's nominee to be Under Secretary for Management. I want to thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for the opportunity to again serve the nation, if confirmed.

I'm joined today by my wife Holly, a fellow diplomat who has represented our Nation in Afghanistan and five other countries. I am grateful for her love and support. My sister Kristin is with us today. We are joined in spirit by an extended family that includes the one we are blessed with by birth and marriage, and the family we have made, through shared service and sacrifice overseas.

I begin this morning by honoring the memory of the Marines, Navy Corpsman and soldier who died while protecting the rest of us working to evacuate fellow Americans and at-risk Afghans from Kabul. Their loved ones have been in our thoughts and prayers every day.

It has been an honor to serve three previous times as a presidential appointee. I welcome this new opportunity, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate, to give back to an institution that I love—but one that I and many colleagues have not always liked.

I swore my first oath to support and defend the Constitution in 1988. Since then, the world, and the issues and challenges at the center of American diplomacy, have changed a great deal. But how we work at State, as representatives of our government and as diplomatic practitioners, has not kept pace with the times.

The reasons for this are complex. They reflect the choices of multiple administrations on both sides of the aisle. The result is an institution that relies too heavily on its dedicated professionals to bridge the gap between what State's infrastructure, technology and practices enable—and what our responsibilities to the nation actually require. As the President, Secretary Blinken, this committee and many outside observers have observed—it is past time to remedy that.

If confirmed, I will do everything I can to prepare the State Department to tackle the challenges we will face in the coming years. Concurrently, with your support and partnership, I will do my best to ensure the women and men of the Department have the guidance, and receive the resources they need today—to help our fellow citizens, protect the country's interests, promote our prosperity and uphold our values in 195 countries and nearly 200 international organizations worldwide.

Much public attention focuses on State's headquarters here in the capital and the remarkable work of thousands of talented civil and foreign service professionals. I believe the Department's greatest impact, though, occurs well beyond the Beltway. Patriotic Americans and dedicated local staff in our embassies and consulates; colleagues working in 98 offices, in 31 states, across the country—they all serve our nation. The Department's unstinting effort to bring over 100,000 Americans and other residents home during the pandemic, even while reducing our own staff, is a dramatic recent example.

If confirmed, I will work to reinforce our focus on the field. That includes doing everything possible to support and care for colleagues and families suffering from anomalous health incidents, as we work to uncover the cause of these incidents. It also means managing sensibly threats and risk so our people can engage, persuade and represent the nation in every environment overseas.

Diplomacy is a contact sport. Who we dispatch—to help Americans in harm's way, to negotiate with governments and companies, to advance our interests—can matter as much as what they do or say. As Secretary Blinken recently underscored, our diversity as a nation—in backgrounds, gender, race, religion and ethnicity—is among our greatest competitive advantages. We sell ourselves short, and undercut our service to all Americans, if we fail to capitalize on it. I am committed to expanding efforts to attract talented Americans from all walks of life to join the Department's team, enable them to thrive as representatives of the United States and support them throughout their careers, so that we truly reflect America.

We face significant challenges as a nation—and as the oldest cabinet Department. It will take sustained focus and resources for the State Department to most effectively advance our interests and help middle and working-class Americans prosper in the years ahead. In my prior appointments, I benefitted from close coordination with members of this committee and the wider Congress. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with you on these compelling priorities.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you. I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Ambassador Brzezinski?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI OF VIRGINIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. It is an extraordinary honor to be President Biden's nominee to become the next U.S. Ambassador to Poland.

I am accompanied today by my brother, Ian Brzezinski, no stranger to this committee, who served on the Republican staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for a number of years.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to thank the staff of U.S. Embassy Warsaw, U.S. Consulate Krakow, and Consular Agency Poznan for generations of hard work. It is with genuine admiration and respect that I have witnessed their dedication since my first visit to Poland in 1990.

I last appeared before this committee in 2011. I am proud of what I accomplished as U.S. Ambassador to Stockholm. The embassy team advanced Sweden's partnership with NATO, including key counterterrorism goals.

We cemented important partnerships on energy diversification and brokered Volvo's first ever investment in the United States that brought thousands of high-paying manufacturing jobs to South Carolina.

With the Swedes, we embraced the memory of Raoul Wallenberg and the importance of not being indifferent to the Jewish community.

I know Poland well. I am a child of parents cast on America's shores by World War II. My late father, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was born in Warsaw. He lived his first 10 years of life in Przemysl, now located on the border of Poland and Ukraine.

By luck, my grandfather was assigned to be Consul General in Montreal just before Nazi Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Had his family been caught in Warsaw, they likely would have suffered a similar fate of other Polish diplomats under the Nazis—death.

My father did not speak fluent English until he was 15 years old. In our family, the words *Niech zyje Polska*—"Long Live Poland"—and *Jeszcze Polska nie zginela*—"Still Poland is not defeated" meant something. Shared values and the willingness to defend them.

My mother, the sculptor, Emilie Benes, who is watching today, is a refugee from Czechoslovakia. The child of Czech diplomats, she made it to Berkeley, California, in the middle of World War II, her ship attacked by German U-boats on the way from London to the United States. I am here before you today thanks, truly, to the grace of God.

As a Fulbright Scholar, I was assigned between 1991 and 1993 to research and write about Poland's new Constitutional Tribunal. My book, "The Struggle for Constitutionalism in Poland," tells the successful story of Poland's developing constitutional and rule of law institutions after the collapse of communism.

Respect for enduring constitutional arrangements became a central test of the effective operation and growth of free market democracy. It still is, and, if confirmed, I will continue to promote our shared commitments to uphold fundamental freedoms and the rule of law as essential to democracy and central to the U.S.-Polish relationship.

In particular, I will continue to underscore to Polish authorities the importance of an impartial judiciary, independent media, and respect for the human rights of all, including LGBTQI+ persons and members of other minorities.

The U.S. and Poland have a historic friendship. But we must also agree to share responsibilities for humanity's future and the democratic principles of the West.

If confirmed, first and foremost, I will commit myself to the safety and security of everyone working for Mission Poland and to the safety and security of U.S. citizens living, working, and traveling in Poland.

I will also commit to continue and strengthen our security cooperation with our stalwart ally, Poland, where the enduring rota-

tional presence of some 4,500 U.S. troops defends NATO's Eastern flank. I will deepen and broaden the partnership between Poland and the United States to spearhead economic growth in the region, including through the Three Seas Initiative.

If confirmed, I will work with Poland to support the government and people of a peaceful and whole Ukraine as well as the aspirations of the Belarusian people for a democratic Belarus.

I will partner with Poland to promote investment in clean energy, including renewable energy, hydrogen-based energy, and help to bring zero-emission nuclear energy to Poland.

If confirmed, I will commit myself to deepening the U.S. bilateral cooperation and advancing U.S. policy priorities in Poland.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brzezinski follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

It is an extraordinary honor to be President Biden's nominee to become the next U.S. Ambassador to Poland.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to thank the staff of U.S. Embassy Warsaw, U.S. Consulate Krakow, and Consular Agency Poznan for generations of hard work. It is with genuine admiration and respect that I have witnessed their dedication since my first visit to Poland in 1990.

I last appeared before this committee in 2011. I am proud of what I accomplished as U.S. Ambassador in Stockholm. The Embassy team advanced Sweden's partnership with NATO, including key counterterrorism goals. We cemented important partnerships on energy diversification and brokered Volvo's first-ever investment in the United States that brought thousands of high-paying manufacturing jobs to South Carolina. With the Swedes, we embraced the memory of Raoul Wallenberg and "the importance of not being indifferent" to the Jewish community.

I know Poland well. I am a child of parents cast on America's shores by World War II. My late father, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was born in Warsaw. He lived his first ten years in Przemysl, now located on the border of Poland and Ukraine. By luck, my grandfather was assigned to be Consul General in Montreal just before Nazi Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Had his family been caught in Warsaw, they likely would have suffered a similar fate of other Polish diplomats under the Nazis—death.

My father did not speak fluent English until he was 15 years old. In our family, the words "Niech zyje Polska" ["Long Live Poland"] and "Jeszcze Polska nie zginela" ["still Poland is not defeated"] meant something: Shared values and willingness to defend them.

My mother, the sculptor Emilie Benes, who is watching today, is a refugee from Czechoslovakia. The child of Czech diplomats, she made it to Berkeley, California, in the middle of World War II, her ship attacked by German U-boats on the way from London to the United States.

I am here before you today thanks truly to the grace of God.

As a Fulbright Scholar, I was assigned between 1991 and 1993 to research and write about Poland's new Constitutional Tribunal. My book "The Struggle for Constitutionalism in Poland," tells the successful story of Poland developing constitutional and rule of law institutions after the collapse of Communism. Respect for enduring constitutional arrangements became a central test of the effective operation and growth of free market democracy. It still is, and if confirmed, I will continue to promote our shared commitments to uphold fundamental freedoms and the rule of law as essential to democracy and central to the U.S.-Polish relationship. In particular, I will continue to underscore to Polish authorities the importance of an impartial judiciary, independent media, and respect for the human rights of all, including LGBTQI+ persons and members of other minorities.

The U.S. and Poland have an historic friendship, but we must also agree to share responsibilities for humanity's future and the democratic principles of the West.

If confirmed, first and foremost, I will commit myself to the safety and security of everyone working for Mission Poland and to the safety and security of U.S. citizens living, working, and traveling in Poland.

I will also commit to continue and strengthen our security cooperation with our stalwart Ally Poland, where the enduring rotational presence of some 4,500 U.S. troops defends NATO's Eastern Flank. I will deepen and broaden the partnership between Poland and the United States to spearhead economic growth in the region, including through the Three Seas Initiative. If confirmed, I will work with Poland to support the Government and people of a peaceful and whole Ukraine, as well as the aspirations of the Belarusian people for a democratic Belarus. I will partner with Poland to promote investment in clean energy, including renewable energy, hydrogen-based energy, and help to bring zero-emission nuclear energy to Poland.

If confirmed, I will commit myself to deepening U.S. bilateral cooperation and advancing U.S. policy priorities in Poland.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Adler?

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL M. ADLER OF FLORIDA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM**

Mr. ADLER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me to become the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium.

I would like to acknowledge my three children, their spouses, my seven grandchildren. They have all given me unwavering love and support in this endeavor to serve my country.

My commitment to public service is driven by my love of family, who motivate me to make our country and the world a better place for them and for the future. Endless gratitude goes to the love of my life, my wife, Judy, for almost 50 years.

Judy has been my partner and has always been devoted and supportive of the numerous initiatives and causes that I have been involved in and led. Judy made it possible for me to pursue all my business and civic endeavors.

I would also like to recognize Judy's parents, Ellen and Fred Selling, who were both Jewish immigrants and fled Germany from Nazi persecution. After moving to the United States, Fred joined the U.S. Army during World War II and served as a translator. He helped to liberate concentration camps in Germany.

I would also like to remember my parents, who taught me by example the importance of public service, social justice, and community service. Bunny and Sam were proud Americans.

My father, Sam, served as a pilot in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II. He was stationed in the South Pacific. My parents set the groundwork for my community involvement.

With the values they instilled in me, I worked hard to become a leader in important institutions in my community, such as Mount Sinai Medical Center and Florida International University, among other organizations.

This opportunity to serve my country in Europe is a testament to America's democracy and it is a result of the values my family has instilled in me and my efforts to make them proud. My and

Judy's parents serve as my inspiration and they would be so proud to see my family embrace this incredible opportunity.

In this role, I hope to inspire my children and my grandchildren to dedicate their lives and make their community and the world a better place.

First and foremost, if confirmed, I will work with Belgium officials at all levels of government to advance American interests, protect the safety and security of American citizens, and promote American and democratic values. Freedom of speech, freedom of press, and freedom of religion are values that both our countries hold dear.

If confirmed, I will also look forward to working with dedicated FSOs of the department, ensuring their safety and security. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Belgium Government to address collective security concerns.

Working together, we can advance our shared law enforcement and counterterrorism priorities at home and abroad, strengthening the transatlantic bond with NATO and the EU and pursue U.S. interests in NATO.

To that end, I will encourage Belgium to fulfill its Wales Defense Pledge commitments to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense by 2024.

If confirmed, I will work to advance our economic interests in Belgium, where more than 900 American companies support 120,000 jobs. In 2020, our combined bilateral trade was approximately \$72.6 billion.

Belgium is the thirteenth largest U.S. exports and we are Belgium's largest trading partner outside the EU. Belgium is home to the Interuniversity Microelectronics Center, or IMEC, which is other digital technologies.

Belgium is also a key global logistics hub. It plays a leading role in vaccine warehousing and distribution to Europe and the world. If confirmed, I will work with our Commerce Department and our embassy economic experts to strengthen an already robust and successful partnership.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work diligently to lead our mission team and to work closely with all agencies to deepen our historic alliance with the Belgian government and Belgian people.

Let me conclude, again, noting how great an honor it would be to serve in this capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Adler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL M. ADLER

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today. I am deeply grateful to President Biden for the confidence he has placed in me to become the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium.

I would like to acknowledge my three children, their spouses and my seven grandchildren. They have all given me unwavering love and support in this endeavor to serve my country. My commitment to public service is driven by my love of family, who motivate me to make our country and the world a better place for them and for future generations.

Endless gratitude goes to the love of my life, my wife, Judy Adler. For almost 50 years, Judy has been my partner and has always been devoted and supportive of



the numerous initiatives and causes that I have been involved in and led. Judy made it possible for me to pursue all my business and civic aspirations.

I would also like to recognize Judy's parents, Ellen and Fred Selling, who were both Jewish immigrants and fled Germany from Nazi persecution. After moving to the United States, Fred joined the U.S. Army during World War II and served as a translator. He helped to liberate concentration camps in Germany.

I also would like to remember my parents, who taught me by example the importance of public service, social justice, and community service. Bunny and Sam were proud Americans. My father Sam served as a pilot in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II; he was stationed in the South Pacific. My parents set the groundwork for my community involvement. With the values they instilled in me, I worked hard to become a leader in important institutions in my community, such as Mt. Sinai Medical Center and Florida International University, among other organizations.

This opportunity to serve my county in Europe is a testament to America's democracy, and it is a result of the values my family has instilled in me and my efforts to make them proud. My and Judy's parents serve as my inspiration, and they would be so proud to see my family embrace this incredible opportunity. In this role, I hope to inspire my children and my grandchildren to dedicate their lives to making their community and the world a better place.

First and foremost, if confirmed, I will work with Belgian officials at all levels of government to advance American interests, protect the safety and security of American citizens, and promote American and democratic values. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of religion are values that both our countries hold dear. If confirmed, I also look forward to working with the dedicated FSOs of the Department and ensuring their safety and security.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Belgian Government to address collective security concerns. Working together, we can advance our shared law enforcement and counterterrorism priorities at home and abroad, strengthen the Transatlantic bond with NATO and the EU, and pursue U.S. interests in NATO. To that end, I will encourage Belgium to fulfill its Wales Defense Investment Pledge commitments to spend two percent of GDP on defense by 2024.

If confirmed, I will work to advance our economic interests in Belgium, where more than 900 American companies support 120,000 jobs. In 2020, our combined bilateral trade was approximately \$72.6 billion. Belgium is the 13th largest market for U.S. exports, and we are Belgium's largest trading partner outside the EU. Belgium is home to the Interuniversity Microelectronics Center, or IMEC, which is a leading research and development center for cutting-edge semiconductor and other digital technologies. Belgium is also a key global logistics hub; it plays a leading role in vaccine warehousing and distribution to Europe and the world. If confirmed, I will work with our Commerce Department and our Embassy economic experts to strengthen an already robust and successful partnership.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work diligently to lead our mission team and to work closely with all agencies to deepen our historic alliance with the Belgian Government and the Belgian people.

Let me conclude by again noting how great an honor it would be to serve in this capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Thank you all for your testimony. We will start a round of five questions.

Before I recognize myself, let me ask questions on behalf of the committee as a whole. These are questions that we have asked every nominee for every position and I would, simply, ask each of you verbally to respond yes or no to the question.

These questions speak to the importance the committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we will be expecting and seeking from you.

First, do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited? We will just go down the line.

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador Brzezinski, did I hear you say yes?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Thank you.

Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. And, finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses respond in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Thank you. All of the nominees have answered yes to all those questions. Let me start by recognizing myself.

Ambassador Bass, you made a comment during your opening statement that there is a gulf or an opening between that which you—you all who work for the State Department are expected to achieve and that what you are given the tools to achieve. Talk to me a little bit about what that gulf is and how you intend to bridge it.

Mr. BASS. Thank you, Senator.

It has several dimensions. First is staffing shortages where we have not even hired to attrition in recent years so we have got a deficit. We are asking, therefore, people, particularly overseas, to do more than one job or do more than one can reasonably do in a period of time.

Secondly, our technology is way behind. We, essentially, have an analog organization, in many respects, for a digital age. We have not leveraged data expertise in the ways we should.

Thirdly, I do not think we are developing people professionally across their career to be prepared to take on new challenges, particularly interdisciplinary challenges that involve a greater awareness of technology, whether it is cyber and emerging technologies, global health, climate change, you name it.

And thirdly, I think we continue to have too many processes and regulations in place that impede innovation, creativity, and collaboration, and end up with stovepipes and silos of excellence that hinder our ability to mobilize resources to deal with the most pressing challenges we face.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that explanation of what you believe is the gulf and, especially on the third one I totally agree with you. I have been doing this for 30 years. I believe there is too much of an impediment to the type of flow of information, experience, and ability that does not happen. I hope you will make that one of your priorities.

I mentioned in my opening remarks this is not a post-mortem on Afghanistan, but more so what does that say about the department's ability to be prepared in advance? Not that one can fully see everything that would happen in a circumstance like that, but the ability to have that contingency ability, which, from my own perspective, is not quite one of the attributes of the department. What do you see is necessary to do?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I think we really need to focus on a couple of things intently. First and foremost, we need to rethink how we approach crisis management in the digital age when information is more rapidly available, when many people who might care about folks in harm's way, whether they are our own citizens or local nationals, are getting regular updates personally from them in ways that was not the case, for example, 15 years ago when we were taking people out of Lebanon—southern Lebanon in 2006.

We have to create and utilize a wider range of ways and tools to communicate with Americans in harm's way with other people we are trying to support and use that information to more effectively communicate with those who are concerned about those people, including members of this committee and your colleagues in Congress and your staffs.

The second thing I would say is I think we need to relook our organizational model for crisis management, which is pretty effective for short-duration crises that are limited in scope or geography but which wear pretty quickly when we get into week-long endeavors where we are potentially looking for folks to sustain that effort strictly on a volunteer basis.

I think we have got to improve training and resources available so we have got that cohort ready to go when we need it.

The CHAIRMAN. And on specific, as it relates to Afghanistan, I hope we will create a referral process for other government agencies, U.S. citizens, and residents to alert the State Department of Afghans in need of evacuation. Still, my staff has flagged a number of cases over the last several months, many of which remain unresolved. That lack of response or resolution is disturbing.

Can I get a commitment from you that you will take action on these cases working with others—I understand this will not solely be you—in a timely way?

Mr. BASS. If I am confirmed, absolutely, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Nathan, let me go to you. We talked a little bit about the bit of the inherent tension that was created in the DFC between the development needs that are, clearly, the focal point of the agency and then the strategic needs that we have.

Can you talk to me a little bit about how you see managing that inherent tension?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you for the question and thank you very much for the conversation about this subject yesterday.

The BUILD Act laid out a dual mandate for the corporation, both developmental and strategic, but also directed the corporation to focus on the poorest countries in the world.

While focusing on the poorest countries of the world, mobilizing private capital to worthy projects that can help their development, it is also important to think about the strategic foreign policy concerns of the United States.

I believe that good development is good for our national security and can help meet the challenges posed by our strategic competitors.

The CHAIRMAN. As we face the challenge of China we have countries that have stepped to the forefront of challenging China, including countries like Lithuania, and I will hope that we will find

ways when we can to focus on helping countries like that that are meeting the challenge. It is a test for the West, at the end of the day, and the DFC, I think, can play a role in that.

Finally, Ambassador Brzezinski, you, obviously, have a great deal of history here. But I do hope that I can get a commitment from you that if you are confirmed that the questions of democracy and human rights that I feel in Poland, particularly in the judiciary and the question of free press, are issues that you will press with the Polish government, even as we are steadfast in support of their territorial security and their relationship with us as a strong NATO ally.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. If confirmed, Senator, absolutely, and the two things you state are true at the same time. Poland's borders must be secure and democratic growth and renewal should occur in Poland.

And with regard to your point about media freedom, media freedom is a core democratic element and we have been watching closely what has been happening with TVN24 and its license renewal. The law that threatened it in the Polish parliament, the Sejm, has been put on ice, colloquially speaking as they put it, in Warsaw.

But there is another bite at the apple that the regulators could have in February with TVN7, which is the entertainment channel of the TVN Group, and we are encouraged by Polish President Duda's words that he will veto any law that threatens media freedom because media freedom is a core element of a robust democracy.

Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Bass, I am going to start with you. I think I speak for every member of this committee when I say that the health incidents known as Havana syndrome are at the very top of our list of things that need to be addressed.

This is not a partisan issue by any stretch but is of great concern to all of us in Congress, particularly this committee. Have you had anything to do—first of all, I assume you are read in on most of this stuff as far as what is going on on Havana syndrome?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I have not yet had the opportunity to get the full brief on the classified elements because of my status as a nominee.

Senator RISCH. Right. And I would urge you that the very first thing you do after you raise your right hand and take the oath is get into a SCIF and get a briefing on this. There is a lot of people, there is a lot of different agencies, that are working on this. But we sure need a lot better answers than what we have been getting.

I would urge you, when you make your list of things that you want to accomplish, you put this right at the top because this is of critical importance to all of us.

Mr. BASS. Senator, as a three-time chief of mission, my guiding principle was always the concept of duty of care. The well being and lives of everybody serving overseas in my mission was entrusted to me and I took that responsibility very seriously.

And if I am confirmed for this role, I plan to apply that same principle to the entire workforce, particularly our colleagues who are suffering from whatever is causing these incidents, and I think we owe them our very best ability to care for them even while we try to figure out what is going on. And I am going to make sure that the components of the department that report to me directly, that I am responsible for their performance, understand that this is their top priority.

Senator RISCH. I appreciate that.

Moving briefly to the issue of risk, obviously, security measures are very, very important. I am assuming that you—having the background that you have—are familiar with the—complaints is probably too strong a word but the concern of the employees regarding their ability to get out and about because of restrictions from the department. Are you aware of those concerns?

Mr. BASS. Not only aware of them but have experienced them personally at different points in time myself. Yes, Senator.

Senator RISCH. You are probably in a good place to take a review of this and I urge you to give it a review once you get in because we do get that, those of us that travel out and that sort of thing. And I think a good—first of all, we all know you have to have security but you also need a balance, and when you look at the restrictions on our diplomats versus the—our competitors' diplomats there is a wide gap there and we need to catch up to them.

I hope you will do that. I hope you will take a look at that.

Mr. Nathan, I want to talk for a bit about the—about some of the developments. I wrote a letter recently, which I referred to in my opening statement—I assume you heard that—regarding the solar projects and the fact that we are very concerned that we are going to find U.S. taxpayers' money finding their way in the pockets of people that are employing slave labor in China. This is a real concern for us.

Can you have a look at that when you get into the agency and get back to me on that issue?

Mr. NATHAN. Absolutely. Taxpayer money should never be used to support forced labor.

Senator RISCH. I think—I do not think you will get any argument from any member of Congress in that regard. But for some reason, I think this has slipped through the cracks. If you would take a look at it we would really appreciate it.

Mr. Brzezinski, obviously, I think the biggest challenge that the United States faces on a foreign relations field is the challenge from China, and Poland, like every other country, faces that challenge.

Can you give me your thoughts on China's influence in Poland and the direction that is going?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, and thank you and your staff for the Risch report that you did on Chinese malign influence in Europe last year. I not only have studied it closely but in Ambassador School recommend it to every participant to read through, as it provides case studies of the deceptive practices China has been pursuing in Europe to advance its geopolitical role and position.

Senator RISCH. Mr. Chairman, we need this man confirmed immediately.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. With regard—

The CHAIRMAN. Maybe we could talk to Senator Cruz.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BRZEZINSKI [continuing]. With regard to Poland, let me particularly flag the Three Seas Initiative and support of it through the DFC and the importance of that, because if there is a bulwark against broad Chinese expansionism in Central Europe it is that, and I look forward to fulsomely engaging with my embassy team and country team to support the Three Seas Initiative.

But lastly, just anecdotally, reading the Polish press—Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita—cover what Huawei has been doing in Poland, and I have been watching closely the investigation of particular individuals associated with Huawei and look forward to learning more about how we can join with our Polish friends to push back on this challenge.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much. My time is up. But let me just conclude by saying I want to associate myself with the remarks of the chairman regarding human rights issues and the values. Those are—obviously, Poland is a strong, strong ally of ours, will be for a long time, but values matter. They are important to us, and I know you will put that at the top of your ledger also.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all four of you for being willing to serve often, once again, this country abroad. We are deeply appreciative of your commitment to defending the security of this nation.

I know a lot of work goes into preparing for a confirmation hearing like this, but now you will have to get ready to sit and wait because we will move you out of this committee and then you will run into the Republican blockade that exists on ambassadors on the floor of the United States Senate.

I cannot imagine anything more dangerous than not having an ambassador, an incredibly qualified ambassador, in Poland right now as Russia amasses troops on Ukraine's border, as Putin and Lukashenko use migrants to destabilize Poland and Europe. And so I am glad that you are here.

But this is a mounting national security crisis for this country, the fact that we have 85 pending State Department nominees, half of which are before this committee, half of which have cleared the committee and are on the floor.

Ambassador Bass, I wanted to ask you about this because you are an experienced diplomat. You are going to be in charge of overseeing the management of the department.

I just came back from Belfast and London where there is a very complicated, very important negotiation happening around the Northern Ireland Protocol. Could compromise the Good Friday Agreement, something that the United States cares deeply about.

We do not have an ambassador to Dublin. We do not have an ambassador to London. We do not have an ambassador to the EU.

It makes it kind of hard to conduct diplomacy without people in those top posts.

What impact does it have when we have a lack of ambassadors in place in so many key places around the world?

Mr. BASS. Senator, thank you. I think it creates, first and foremost, a degree of uncertainty for host governments and companies and others in that society about whether the person in charge is really speaking on behalf of the nation at the highest levels of our government.

We have got great talented, dedicated professionals serving as charges all around the world. But they are a bit out of position and I think too often people look at them as a temporary solution and, particularly, if they are trying to advance our interests in ways that are uncomfortable or create a clash for the local government.

There is a tendency to want to wait them out. So definitely has an impact on our ability to be effective overseas.

Senator MURPHY. These charges are excellent. But make no mistake, there are countries in which charges cannot get ambassador-level meetings. There is a different level of public diplomacy that can be conducted by a charge than an ambassador. There is just a fundamental difference, no matter how qualified and experienced many of these charges are.

A second question for you, Ambassador Bass, let me first just associate myself with the remarks of the ranking member on this question of pushing our diplomats out beyond the wire.

Both he and I have legislation—complementary legislation—that we hope you will take a look at that could reset the incentives to allow our diplomats to be out there representing America beyond the walls of the embassy.

But I wanted to ask you a specific question around vaccinations for Americans abroad. We have vaccinated our diplomatic employees but we have a lot of Americans living abroad in countries where the host country is not actually vaccinating noncitizens so our citizens living abroad have only the choice to come back to the United States in order to get vaccinated.

Can you commit to being in a conversation with this committee about how we may be able to find at least limited means in certain specific countries to be able to provide access to vaccinations for Americans living abroad?

I know this is a big project and may be beyond the scope of the State Department if we talk about every American living abroad. But there may be a way to target this to those who have no other option than the American government.

Mr. BASS. Senator, I would welcome the opportunity, if confirmed, to work closely with you on this to find ways to ensure that Americans are getting, at a minimum, equal access to vaccines on local economies, from local governments, particularly in the vast majority of cases where our medical professionals, because they are not licensed in those countries, are unable to do that directly. Happy to follow up with you.

Senator MURPHY. And, Mr. Nathan, thanks for our time together. Just a quick word from you on the opportunities to fund energy projects abroad.

We have expanded out the mandate of DFC to allow for energy-financing projects to be done in nondeveloping nations. But as we talk about China and Russia, this is a particular opportunity for the DFC to go out and build renewable energy capability in countries that are desperate to find sources other than petro dictator regimes like Russia.

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you for the time that we spent together and thank you for that question.

Under the European Energy Security and Diversification Act, the corporation is authorized to operate in Europe for energy-related projects and that would be a priority of mine.

Senator MURPHY. Great. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Schatz?

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of you for your willingness to serve and for your sacrifice.

Let me start with you, Mr. Nathan. The United States needs a long-term development finance strategy for the Pacific. DFC has been given a set of new tools to meet the needs of our partners in the Pacific, and I get that not every worthy project will pencil out but we can collaborate with our partners in the Pacific that are also financing projects in the region to do more to support economic growth with less risk to the taxpayer.

Can you talk about where the opportunities are for DFC to use newer financing products, use newer techniques like technical assistance, feasibility studies, to expand our development work in the Pacific?

Mr. NATHAN. Yes. Thanks for the question and for the conversation we had about this subject in preparation for the hearing.

The BUILD Act gave the DFC new tools and expanded authorities. As you mentioned, technical assistance is one of them in order to prepare countries which may not have the enabling environment to accept investment.

We also were given the equity investment tool, which gives much more flexibility and the possibility of going out on the risk spectrum for making investments. The BUILD Act has given DFC tools to make important and impactful investments in the region and elsewhere.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you. Can you talk a little bit about why it is important that DFC step up its commitment on climate-focused development as part of the mission, particularly in the Pacific?

Mr. NATHAN. First and foremost, the climate crisis impacts the developing world and the people who live there greatly, potentially, more than anywhere else in the globe. It is important to find projects that are climate linked, which could include smart agriculture, water systems, in addition to power generation, so that these countries are prepared for dealing with the climate crisis.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Ambassador Brzezinski, we have seen backsliding with the Polish government, particularly on press freedom. Reporters Without Borders has cautioned that the government is pushing for greater



state control of the media by censoring private outlets or forcing to close those who will not comply.

Can you talk about what you will do to elevate press freedom?  
Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you.

First of all, we will speak directly with the Polish government regarding the importance of press freedom and human rights, generally. I mean, I come as an ambassador with a very clear message, America embraces equality, and that will be something that U.S. Embassy Warsaw will absolutely project and has been over the many generations of U.S. ambassadors that have been there before me.

I have been watching with concern what you report, Senator, about democratic backsliding. It is important to stress that Poland's role as a NATO ally is partly about its keeping its commitments, not just militarily but, as Senator Menendez said earlier, about its commitments on values.

There are international commitments for Poland to keep as a NATO member, as an EU member, and as an upcoming chair of the OSCE. And so we will be watching that closely.

And then lastly, there is the self-interest associated with the business angle. Business is attracted to places characterized by legal certainty. Places that are more legally certain attract more business, and that is something that is relevant to both Americans and Poles.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Ambassador Bass, a lot of routine consular services were either cancelled or moved online, and you briefly mentioned this earlier during the hearing but I would like you to flesh out where you think some of the changes that were made that were temporary ought to be made permanent and what other kinds of technologies and processes ought to be explored in order to move the State Department and consular services in particular into the information age.

Mr. BASS. Thanks, Senator.

You know, from my perspective, one of the most important things we do is provide those services to American citizens in issuing passports and facilitating business travel and tourism to the states through visa services.

We have gotten, I think, more agile in identifying where we have excess supply, if you will, capacity to support high-demand embassies. We are now doing quite a bit more remote adjudication.

We are continuing to explore ways to reduce the range of people for whom an in-person appearance is required so that we are only really focusing on interviewing those people who are particularly high risks or for other reasons come to mind like that. And we are looking at—

Senator SCHATZ. Are these permanent changes that are—or do you anticipate these being permanent changes? Are these precipitated in part by the pandemic or was this already underway?

Give me a sense for where we are and, I guess, give me some reassurance that we are not going to snap back to the old way where everyone has to stand in line and wait to get a stamp.

Mr. BASS. These are changes that have come about as adaptations to the limitations due to the pandemic, and we are currently in the process of looking at which of those we can apply as best practices and standardizing them, going forward, and if I am confirmed, very much intent on doing as much of that as we can.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to each of you on your nominations and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you.

Ambassador Bass, I would like to begin with you, and very much appreciated your thoughtful responses on how to make the State Department work better and be worthy of the dedicated personnel who work there.

I was also pleased to hear your mention of AHIs and your commitment to ensuring that people who are affected are taken care of. I know the State Department has made some significant progress in addressing that. That is very much appreciated.

One of the things that I understand the State Department does for new ambassadors is to have briefings and as part of that Ambassador School there is a briefing on AHIs.

Can I ask you, Ambassador Brzezinski, and you, Mr. Adler, if you will attend those briefings and ensure that you are up to date on how the State Department is dealing with Havana syndrome, or AHIs?

Mr. ADLER. Absolutely.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Absolutely.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Brzezinski, you were quite eloquent in talking about Poland's history and the partnership that the United States has had with Poland, and I appreciated that and I think that is why I am so disappointed to see what is happening in Poland now.

And despite assurances that we have been given on things like media freedom, I still have real questions about how Poland is approaching some of these issues, on TVN24, for example.

While they have renewed their license, the Polish regulator is still—my understanding is still contemplating asking the Constitutional Tribunal to review foreign ownership in media and so that would put us back at square one.

I hope that you will be very direct with the leadership of Poland about the importance of media freedom, of values, and why that matters, and their engagement in the EU and in NATO really depends on their continued commitment to the values that they embraced but now seem to be backsliding on.

Can I ask you how you will approach that?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you so much, Senator, for that question.

And yes, it is almost ironic that we find ourselves in our relationship with Poland in the situation that you described, Senator, and when you think about the genesis of post-communist Poland out of Solidarity, what was the newspaper that supported the Solidarity movement? *Gazeta Wyborcza*, which, of course, stands for Election Gazette, one of the free newspapers that emerged out of the Solidarity movement.

The movement was, in part, driven—its essence was about free media and lack of infringement on media freedom and so forth. And so we will be watching closely what the regulator, KRRit—KRRit is what it is called, its acronym—as February approaches, not too far away, when it comes to TVN7, the entertainment dimension or the entertainment piece of the TVN Group and its license renewal.

And we will also be watching for the status of the media law that was put on ice and, again, we were encouraged by President Duda's words that he will veto any law infringing media freedom.

But this is something that we will work on with other friends of Poland's as well to make a unified and common message about values because, indeed, that is part of the international commitments that Poland agreed to when it joined NATO and the EU, and it would be highly ironic of Poland, as chair of the OSCE, and it is the next chair after Sweden—

Senator SHAHEEN. Right.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI.—to infringe media freedom while being the chair of the OSCE. We will be watching closely, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Having said that, I do very much appreciate Poland's willingness to support the opposition figures from Belarus who have moved into Poland looking for a safe haven and, at the same time, I think that has been very important in standing up to Lukashenko and what he is doing in Belarus.

They have not been as helpful, I think, with respect to the migrants who have been used as, really, a weapon by Lukashenko and Putin against the West and against Poland.

Again, what can we do to continue to support Poland in their efforts to house opposition figures and yet make it clear that the treatment of migrants is not helpful in the overall goals that they are trying to achieve?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. It is a great question, and it is important to note that there are almost 1 million Ukrainian refugees who have found their home now in Poland and are assimilating and thriving quite well as an immigrant community in Poland having to flee what is happening in Ukraine, especially around cities like Bratslav and others.

And I completely join you, Senator, in saluting Poland's support of the opposition leaders like Svetlana Tikhanovskaya who are standing up against the Lukashenko regime.

And to just take a step back and think, and just I ask myself who would do what Lukashenko is doing, luring the poorest people of the world to Belarus to march through those dark forests, cold forests near Bialystok and Bialowieza, to be projected across the border? It is stunningly cruel, and we will work together with our friends in Poland and Europe to address that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Hagerty?

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to turn my question to Mr. Nathan. Good morning, Mr. Nathan. Congratulations. It is good to see you here in person.

You know, when we spoke in October, I said that the Development Finance Corporation would play a critical role in advancing

the strategic interest of the United States and this is because the DFC has the mandate and the resources to address critical national security challenges while they catalyze investment and help emerging markets.

As ambassador to Japan, I signed the MOU as representative of the United States to partner with both Japan and Australia to drive economic growth in emerging markets and to provide an alternative to state-directed initiatives.

The DFC should continue to focus on addressing critical national security challenges posed by malign actors such as China and Russia. As part of that effort, the DFC needs to be able to partner with middle and high income countries to counter China.

Mr. Nathan, if you are confirmed, would it help if Congress provided the DFC with more flexible authorities to invest in middle and high income countries which would offer the DFC more tools to enhance national security?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you very much for the question, Senator, and thank you also for the great conversation we had a few months ago. I really appreciate it.

The BUILD Act gave the corporation expanded authorities and expanded tools and, if confirmed, I look forward to helping the corporation take full advantage of those tools to do as you say, to help counter the malign influence of state-directed investments by authoritarian governments. That is a very important objective as laid out in the BUILD Act.

In terms of expanding the operating authorities for the DFC, the European Energy Security and Diversification Act has done that in Europe for energy-related projects, and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to see if there is further expansion that would make sense.

Senator HAGERTY. If you are confirmed, I look forward to working with you as well to see if you need any further flexibility.

You mentioned Europe and energy. I would like to go to another quick question. This is about energy in developing countries. Most developing countries need fossil fuels to keep their economies going, meaning that many cannot yet rely on green energy.

If there is a project that would enhance development to help us compete with China and it reduces emissions but it does involve investment in fossil fuel energy, would you throw it aside just because it involves fossil fuel energy and leave them stuck with their legacy energy sources?

Mr. NATHAN. No, I would not. The DFC is not restricted in terms of what kind of technology choice it makes for energy projects. Access to reliable and sustainable energy is critical for development. In the last year, in 2021, there have been two projects—in Sierra Leone and in Iraqi Kurdistan—that the DFC funded that were gas projects.

Senator HAGERTY. Got it. I—

Mr. NATHAN. These were highly developmental.

Senator HAGERTY. Good. I just want to see us not be theologians about this and be practical and pragmatic about helping these countries because it is possible to reduce their emissions while still getting them to a cleaner point.

Ambassador Bass, I would like to turn my question to you. Secretary Blinken put you in charge of the evacuation effort in Afghanistan to help get American citizens and permanent residents, citizens of allied nations, SIV applicants, and Afghans at risk out. Yet, that evacuation resulted in the death of 13 Americans, including Staff Sergeant Ryan Knauss in my home state of Tennessee. I have a couple of basic questions to ask you about what happened in Afghanistan.

First, Ambassador Bass, do you consider the way that the United States withdrew from Afghanistan a success?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I think those of us on the ground did the best we could with what we had to work with in the time constraints we had. The fact that we are still working to get people out signals we did not have 100 percent success in that period.

But I can assure you that there are thousands of career professionals who have invested parts of their lives in Afghanistan who continue to work in various ways to support the effort in the years ahead.

Senator HAGERTY. I understand. My staff are involved in that, too. How would you grade your own performance as the coordinator for Afghan relocation efforts?

Mr. BASS. As I noted, I did the best I could with what we had to work with on the ground. I am proud of the people we were able to save but I think every day about the people, many of whom I know personally, who are still inside Afghanistan we were not able to reach.

Senator HAGERTY. I would just like to highlight the fact that to this day, though the U.S. Foreign Secretary has resigned to take responsibility for Afghanistan, though the Dutch foreign minister has resigned to take responsibility for Afghanistan, no one yet in this administration has been held accountable for the 2021 withdrawal that resulted in deaths and mayhem and embarrassment to the United States.

General Mark Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, even conceded that Biden's withdrawal from Afghanistan was, and I quote, "a strategic failure."

Ambassador Bass, I understand you were operating under tough circumstances. Indeed, I do. Ultimately, you were responsible for managing the on-the-ground evacuation effort in Afghanistan at the Kabul airport. Instead of being held accountable for your part in the failures of the Afghanistan withdrawal, the Biden administration now wants to promote you.

If confirmed, you will have even more responsibilities and oversee all aspects of management at the State Department. The fact that you are here today highlights the culture and lack of accountability at the State Department.

As the former U.S. ambassador to Japan, I understand firsthand that the State Department lacks a rigorous process to ensure that accountability is at the center of the State Department. This needs to change and it needs to change now.

As the ranking member on the Subcommittee on State Department Management, I am committed to fixing this enduring problem at the State Department in addition to a number of other structural issues.

Ambassador Bass, do you agree that Congress should take a leading role in reforming and modernizing the State Department, even including new legislation?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I, if confirmed, would very much look forward to working with you on key parts of our modernization agenda and on ensuring that we are always respectful of the principle of oversight and we are operating and consistent with that principle.

Senator HAGERTY. That is exactly the commitment I am looking for, that you will commit to work with us and continue to testify in front of the subcommittee, if you are confirmed. I appreciate that commitment.

Mr. BASS. You have it.

Senator HAGERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the senator has expired.

Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to all of you on your nominations. I have had a chance over the years to meet all of you in some capacity or another and I am confident you will all serve our country well in the positions for which you have been nominated and look forward to supporting those nominations.

Ambassador Bass, I think the last time I saw you was in Afghanistan. It was a number of years ago. Thank you for your service there, Turkey, Georgia, other countries, and I am pleased to see you nominated for this position.

I think you would agree, based on your experience, that if we are going to continue to retain and recruit talented Foreign Service officers we need to do everything we can to support their families as they move around the world in service to the country. Would you agree with that basic premise?

Mr. BASS. Absolutely, Senator, and I really appreciate your sustained commitment to supporting our families.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I just want to ask you a couple questions in that regard, because Senator Sullivan and I teamed up a number of years ago to borne the Foreign Service Caucus. The idea was to have a group of senators, bipartisan group, supporting the mission and the families.

And we then introduced the Foreign Service Families Act, and I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member of this committee for supporting that effort, which is now part of a substitute amendment in the NDAA—the National Defense Authorization bill—which we all hope to pass in the coming days.

But we are going to go to conference with the House so I just want to ask you a couple questions. I was overseas visiting one of our embassies recently and a constituent from Maryland came up and told me that their son, their child, could not get into the University of Maryland because of the residency length requirements.

A number of years ago, in order to address that issue with military families who also move around the world Congress passed legislation to make sure that students—kids in military families would be able to get that in-state tuition. Do you agree that that is something that we should extend to Foreign Service families?

Mr. BASS. I do, Senator.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. There is also, as part of that coverage for military families, they are allowed to terminate some of their, for example, cell phone contracts if they are deployed, essentially, on short notice. Do you agree that we should extend that same benefit to Foreign Service families?

Mr. BASS. I think those kinds of practical arrangements would make all the challenges that our families face in moving frequently that much more bearable, so yes.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. And another finding that was reached as part of the State Department Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review—this was a number of years ago now—was it is important to seek opportunities for the spouses of Foreign Service officers because we have many families with two working spouses.

And would you agree that it is important for every mission to look for every opportunity to provide employment to the spouse where appropriate?

Mr. BASS. Absolutely, and not only to look for opportunities within the mission but to ensure that work agreements—bilateral work agreements that are in place, whether they are formal or informal, are being adhered to and that we are creating as many opportunities as we can on the local economy for people as well.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Again, we hope to get this over the finish line, a number of—a little ways still to go.

I do also want to associate myself with the comments of the ranking member and Senator Murphy about allowing our diplomats to get outside the fortress. Obviously, security is important. We recognize that. But it is also very important that Foreign Service officers get to know the country and the people that they are sent on our behalf to represent.

I hope you will work with us on that front, too. I think that is a common consensus among most diplomats and Foreign Service officers.

If I could turn, Mr. Nathan, to you. Congratulations on the nomination, and I chair the Africa Subcommittee. Senator Rounds is the ranking member. We are very focused on trying to increase U.S. investment and development in Africa, both to support African economies and also to help facilitate Maryland—U.S. business investment and jobs here in the United States.

Can you just briefly talk about your strategy with respect to Africa—you mentioned a couple of investments in Sierra Leone, other investments—and anything in particular you are doing on the digital front?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you for the question, Senator.

If I am confirmed, I definitely will be interested in focusing on Africa. The agency in the last year has made investments from vaccine manufacturing in South Africa and Senegal to, as you mentioned, energy investments in the full range of both communications technology, water, sanitation, health-related investments.

Africa is an area of focus for the DFC and I believe in 2021 was the area of the largest investment commitment.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right.

I would just in closing, Mr. Chairman, say that China has five times more investment right now in Africa than we do. We have

a lot of reasons we want to be there and invest. But we have a long way to go to do what I think we should be doing to fully engage.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, and thank you for your leadership on the—our Foreign Service families. Appreciate it.

Senator Barrasso?

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Bass, I want to, first, follow up on some comments by Senator Hagerty. In August, President Biden oversaw a tragic mismanaged withdrawal from Afghanistan. The withdrawal is an epic failure—poor planning, zero strategy.

Instead, this administration had cobbled together a last-minute disorganized plan. People raced to the airport, Americans and allies left behind, and 13 soldiers lost their lives, including Riley McCollum of Wyoming. Tragic. Unnecessary.

You were the coordinator for Afghan relocation efforts. You headed up the State Department's efforts to evacuate American citizens and Afghans. You know of the failures of the withdrawal.

As Senator Hagerty said, nobody has been held accountable. Who at the State Department should be held accountable for the strategic failures and the disorganized plan?

Mr. BASS. Senator, I had a narrow view, if you will, of the evacuation itself. I could see from the perimeter of the airport to the horizon and I can tell you about the heroic work of so many on the ground.

From my perspective, I think it requires a bit more time and distance to understand the whole effort. I was not involved in the effort before August 17th so I cannot speak to the amount of planning that occurred or did not occur.

But I agree with you that it is important for us to undertake a robust lessons learned exercise so that we are better positioned in the future, and as I indicated earlier, I think one of the things we need to do is relook at our crisis management structure and organization and capabilities so we are better prepared for complex crises in the future.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

Mr. Nathan, Senator Van Hollen asked about the African Subcommittee and you said you were interested in focusing on Africa. One of the issues that you mentioned was energy.

Senator Van Hollen mentioned the fact that China is investing five times more in Africa than we are and I am going to focus on that energy component that you just said of which you are interested because I know what China is doing in Africa.

The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation needs to provide financing for energy projects that are most suitable to the needs of developing countries, and I see you were kind of, like, oh my God, this is where he has gone because you know what a bad job is happening right now.

In April, this administration announced the DFC is going to halt all fossil fuel investments by 2030 to achieve a net-zero carbon emissions portfolio by 2040. China is not going to do that.

Also announced that the DFC is going to make one-third of its entire investment commitments to be focused on climate change starting in just two years. Your limitation on CO2 emissions for



new projects is equivalent to one 400-megawatt combined cycle gas plant a year, meaning over the entirety of the life of the future of the world you are only committed to eight natural gas power plants globally, forever. Eight natural gas power plants is not going to end energy poverty in developing countries.

Worldwide, 759 million people are living without electricity. Stable, affordable, reliable electricity is the best way to help developing countries climb out of poverty. China knows it. We know it. This administration needs to understand it.

Traditional energy projects are still the most affordable and still the most reliable. No modern economy will run on only variable renewable power. You are a smart man. You have to understand this.

A country needs continuous abundant energy to run a manufacturing plant, a data center, or a hospital. The things you are talking about doing require lots of energy. Abandoning important energy projects slowly—this is going to slow our effort to reduce poverty and it is going to make China more powerful.

You do not have to take my word for it. Listen to the leaders of another country. Let us talk about Uganda. October 24th, this year, the president of Uganda wrote an opinion editorial in the Wall Street Journal, “Solar and Wind Force Poverty on Africa.” You are forcing poverty on Africa, the policies of this administration.

I ask, Mr. Chairman, this article be submitted for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

Senator BARRASSO. The president of Uganda has said Africa cannot sacrifice its future prosperity for Western climate goals. I could go on and on about this.

I would just say, if confirmed, when you ensure the International Development Finance Corporation promotes an all-of-the-above energy policy or are you going to be handcuffed to a policy that says we are going to let China take over with energy in Africa because we have our heads stuck in the sand?

Mr. NATHAN. Senator, I agree with you that access to reliable sustainable electricity is a critical component of development. I look forward to working with you and the committee to find ways to do that. I believe that it will have great development impact to bring electricity and clean power to the people of the developing world.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time is expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Let me thank all four of you for your willingness to serve.

Ambassador Bass, I am going to follow up on Senator Hagerty’s point. He and I are chair and ranking member on the State Department Subcommittee. And yes, there are lessons to be learned from Afghanistan, lessons learned over four administrations that led to the results that we saw this past month or two.

But one thing is clear. When we look at the training opportunities for State Department personnel, there is major areas of concern in regards to the number of personnel that are available in

order to go through training, the length of the training, the type of the training, et cetera.

We held a hearing in our subcommittee and we were disappointed that we were not able to have a representative from GTM present at that hearing, and I guess my request to you, if confirmed, do you agree to work with our subcommittee and to make sure that representatives of the agencies that are under your responsibility are available to us in order to develop a strategy as to how we can deal with, as we see it, the shortages in training opportunities for State Department personnel?

Mr. BASS. Yes.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that. We want to work together on this, the two of us. We recognize that there is need to take a look at the State Department. It has not been done for a while, and we look forward to, if you are confirmed, working with you to see how we can work Congress with you to provide that type of experience so that we have the people that have the proper training in the key positions rather than as it has been addressed too many times today that is not the case.

Mr. Brzezinski, I want to follow up a little bit on the Poland issue. I was at the Three Seas conference in Bulgaria. I had a chance to have a good conversation with President Duda on several issues.

But I really do think Poland is at a crossroads today. The countries that are under the dominance of the former Soviet Union made great strides, including Poland, in becoming a member of NATO and EU.

But we see the backsliding today, the prime example being Hungary but Poland also is not too far behind in some of the actions that they have taken in regards to the protection of democratic institutions.

I appreciate the fact that you say that it will be high on your list of conversations that you are going to have with the Polish government. But I think it has to be backed up by more than just conversations.

Their observations of support for democratic institutions do not bode well with internationally recognized standards. I would hope that we will be pretty definitive about Poland's future very much linked to its democratic commitments.

And you mentioned the OSCE chair in office. I think that is a really great example that we can use that where Poland should want to display its firm commitments to the OSCE principles when it has the chair in office.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for hosting the hearing you did a few weeks ago with the Helsinki Commission on Poland. That resonated broadly, including in Poland and was covered widely including the statements by the witnesses.

Your point could not be more important, and I just cannot stress enough that Poland's role as a NATO ally and a NATO member and an EU member are linked to the commitments about democratic values and democratic practice.

And if there is a U.S. foreign policy that is characterized by bipartisan consultation and engagement and agreement, it is U.S. policy towards Poland over the decades, and I can just invoke Rich-

ard Lugar and Senator Hank Brown and others who were titans in bringing a fulsome bipartisan approach to the future of Poland.

And your point about democratic backsliding is heard loud and clear, and I look forward to engaging this committee and, hopefully, to welcoming you and members of this committee and members of the Senate to Poland to consult and engage directly with the Poles on this critically important issue.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that.

Mr. Adler, I just really want to put on the record and maybe get a very quick response, Belgium—there are some issues that we have concern. Probably the most is its use of technology and relationship with China companies. We have talked a little bit about China and the impact China is having in regards to American national security interests.

But I would like to get your thoughts as to how you see your role, if confirmed, in dealing with the penetration of China in technology in Belgium.

Mr. ADLER. Thank you, Senator. It is a very important issue.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, IMEC is a major factor in semiconductors. But let me go to the point that you raise. I think what is most important is that we have to respect that Belgium has trade relations that are appropriate.

But at the same time, you just cannot accept trade and investment. What you need to do is make sure that you evaluate, you investigate, you know who you are doing business with and what they are doing. I will have that as an important part of the communications to the Belgium government.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, for this hearing, and thank you to all of today's four nominees for your willingness to serve, to continue to serve.

I have worked with all four of you at different stages in the course of my career here in the Senate and I am greatly encouraged that our President nominated four well-qualified and experienced professionals for these important roles.

Let me turn, if I could, first, to Mr. Nathan, nominee to lead the Development Finance Corporation. Thank you for our conversation about the challenges and opportunities ahead.

I believe you have a perfect background for leading the Development Finance Corporation. I look forward to working with you if you are confirmed.

As someone who has invested in and advised investors in multiple contexts and different projects across different business sectors and geographies, could you just concisely explain why the DFC's equity authority can help drive the transformative development outcomes that many of us who helped craft and support the BUILD Act had in mind when the DFC was created?

Mr. NATHAN. Thank you, Senator, and thanks for the conversation we had in your office yesterday.

Equity authority is an important tool that the BUILD Act gave DFC. It allows—it would allow DFC to go further out on the risk spectrum, open up the aperture of potential projects focused on the

poorest countries where the operating environment can be more difficult. It gives us a seat at the table.

One of the intentions, I understand, behind giving DFC equity authority was to put it on equal footing with other development finance institutions, our allies, and also with multilateral development banks.

Senator COONS. That is exactly right, and I look forward to working with you to remove some of the obstacles that prevent the DFC from using that authority the way it was intended.

We are still in the middle of a pandemic globally. One of the areas that I am hopeful the DFC can make a significant difference is in vaccine production. There has already been some investment, as you referenced, some exploration at least in Senegal and South Africa.

How could the DFC support scaling up vaccine production in the developing world in places like Latin America, Southeast Asia, as well as Africa that could both help us get out of this pandemic and prepare for the next?

Mr. NATHAN. This is an important issue, as you say, not only for the current situation we are in but also preparing the globe for any potential further pandemics. DFC has made investments in the last year in India—a substantial investment—for diversifying vaccine manufacturing capacity, South Africa and Senegal. It is a pattern that, if confirmed, I would be very interested in repeating throughout the developing world.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I look forward to working with you.

If I might, Ambassador Bass, just briefly tell me, if you would, how you would prioritize making sure that our Foreign Service reflects the whole diversity of the United States.

I think it is one of our greatest strengths. How will you improve issues like promotion, attrition, and prioritize diversity in hiring and promotion?

Mr. BASS. Thanks, Senator. It absolutely is one of the key—in many respects, the key challenge we have in front of us today. I think we need to look at the whole effort. We need to question our assumptions about how we hire people, how we evaluate talent and select them.

As the Secretary noted a couple of weeks ago, it is no longer the case that the talented Americans who want a career that involves a significant chunk of their professional lives overseas that their only option or one of a few options is the State Department, and I think we still have a selection process that is geared too much to that assumption.

I think we need to use, creatively, all of the hiring authorities we currently have to broaden that pool that is coming in. I think we need to do a much better job of proactively supporting individuals from underrepresented communities as they take on this career.

I think we need to do a better job of professional development throughout and I think we need to prioritize selecting for advancement people who are not only good diplomats externally facing but who are promoting inclusive leadership and team building and collaboration within the organization.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I see I am out of time. I look forward to working with Ambassador Brzezinski and Mr. Adler in your roles. I am hopeful my colleagues will work quickly to confirm both of you.

I recently led a bipartisan delegation in countries where we do not have an ambassador. It weakens our ability whether to help the Poles stand up to the conduct of Belarus to it is to help our close partners and allies, Belgium, make good decisions in terms of supply chains and investment in partnership. I look forward to working with the chair and ranking member on getting these good folks confirmed.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome. Congratulations to each of the nominees.

Mr. Brzezinski, as I am sure you know, the Senate is going to be debating today sanctions on Vladimir Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline. This committee has long opposed that pipeline with an overwhelming bipartisan majority but that bipartisan commitment has been fractured, but perhaps it has not yet cracked. And I, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, are currently in an intense granular negotiation over how best to proceed.

I have imposed holds on a number of nominees at both the State Department and the Treasury Department in an effort to force the Biden administration to comply with the law and stop the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

My colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle disagree with the use of that leverage to try to stop this disastrous pipeline from going online and, indeed, it appears likely that we are going to be voting both on Senator Risch's sanctions legislation, which I emphatically support, but also what is functionally a side by side from Chairman Menendez that would impose sanctions on Russia if and only if Russia invaded Ukraine.

The reason that is suddenly so important is when Nord Stream 2 goes online, the odds of Russian tanks rolling into Ukraine will have increased dramatically, and my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle know that. They understand that.

It is anticipated that most, if not all, Democrats will vote for these sanctions on Russia after the fact if Russia, in fact, invades Ukraine. Among the sanctions they will vote for are sanctions on Nord Stream 2 after the fact if Russia invades Ukraine.

It strikes me that if it is not in America's interest, if it is not in Europe's interest, if it is not in the world's interest for Russia to invade Ukraine, the way to stop it and the time to stop it is before the fact rather than after the fact by voting for the sanctions that both Democrats and Republicans have supported repeatedly, the sanctions that had worked, that had stopped Nord Stream 2 until President Biden surrendered those bipartisan sanctions in a massively unjustified gift to Vladimir Putin that has now put a target on Ukraine.

The reason Chairman Menendez is introducing these sanctions is because the chairman understands the risk of Ukraine being invaded has increased and increased dramatically because of Biden's surrender to Putin.

But, of course, our Ukrainian allies are not the only ones who are endangered by Nord Stream 2 and by Russian aggression. When the Biden administration struck its deal with Angela Merkel in July, Poland and Ukraine together issued a joint statement saying that the deal, quote, “cannot be considered sufficient to effectively limit the threats created by Nord Stream,” and that calls on the United States and Germany to address the security crisis in the region and that commits that Ukraine and Poland will work together with their allies and partners to oppose Nord Stream 2 until solutions are developed to address the security crisis created by Nord Stream 2.

They further wrote, quote, “This decision has created a political, military, and energy threat for Ukraine and Central Europe while increasing Russia’s potential to destabilize the security situation in Europe, perpetuating divisions among NATO and European Union member states.”

Mr. Brzezinski, if you are confirmed, you will be our country’s ambassador to Poland at a time when they feel that the decisions from President Biden have put their own national security at grave risk and you will be faced with the challenges of understanding and addressing those very real concerns.

First, I would like to ask you, how do you understand the Polish position to be on Nord Stream 2 and do you agree with that position?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, for that very important question.

Energy has been used as a weapon now for years by Vladimir Putin, particularly to try to weaken and intimidate Russia’s neighbors immediately to the west. It is an incredibly important question, and when I appeared before this committee in 2011 in advance of going to Sweden, I made clear that I was against the pipeline at that time. I think it is a bad idea, and I note also that President Biden and Secretary Blinken have said the same thing.

The Polish position, as you intimated, is clear. They are against the pipeline and they are worried about what is happening in the East. Secretary Blinken recently expressed deep appreciation for Poland’s vocal support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity in his phone call with Polish Foreign Minister Rau.

He noted that the United States, Poland, and other allies and partners are united in imposing significant costs on Moscow for its military aggression and malign activities.

Senator CRUZ. Would it be better to prevent that aggression before the fact or after an invasion occurred?

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Absolutely, clearly, before the fact and I think it is important that Secretary Blinken is in Latvia today and yesterday to consult with NATO allies regarding what is happening in the East and what to do next, and then he will go to Stockholm to meet with OSCE partners, in part, on the same topics.

I can tell you, if confirmed, Senator, as Ambassador to Poland that I will be unwavering and deeply committed in support of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and I am going to work with Poland, our ally, and other partners to address Russia’s destabilizing activities in the region.

What Lukashenko has done on the border of eastern Ukraine in those forests in Bialowieza is outrageous, and I will keep you and this committee apprised and consult with this committee and engage with this committee accordingly.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Risch?

Senator RISCH. Very briefly.

Mr. Brzezinski, I want to—I ran out of time and I wanted to touch on one other subject that I think will be helpful for other nominees, as we go forward.

We had a situation where a person who was nominated to be ambassador to the U.N. had given a speech that was regarding China and it was significantly softer than it should have been.

She deeply regretted that. She recanted it here at the hearing. I supported her. I felt it was one step that that she took that did not color everything else that she did, and I still stand by that.

In 2019, you gave a speech at the China Development Forum in Beijing, which I now understand you have some reservations about also, and I wanted to give you the opportunity to clear the record.

But, more importantly, I think it is important that people such as yourself who have a history of dealing so well in foreign relations matters resist in giving these kinds of speeches, and they are unfortunate and then when people come here they have to back-track on it.

I wanted to give you a chance to clear the record on that, if you would, please.

Mr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Senator, for that important question and, again, thank you for the case studies that you and your leadership and your staff pulled together in the Risch report on China's malign activities in Europe that you did last year.

I wish I had read that report before I did that speech. That speech was a family narrative that goes back to my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship and I meant to invoke and draw perspectives and observations from that family narrative.

It was also about hope, misplaced hope, about diplomacy, having—being the answer to the problems that we have with China.

Your report edified me. As I said, I have shared with my fellow students in Ambassador School how important it is and now I feel, personally, it should be required reading. But more—I would also offer this, Senator. I would be happy to continue this conversation in a classified session to offer examples of what I did as ambassador in Stockholm between 2011 and 2015 with regard to the challenges and the threats your report so clearly edifies because I think that you will see that I walk the walk, sir, and will continue to walk the walk, if confirmed, and get a chance to go to Poland and, of course, walking the walk most—among most important policy steps one can take is with the Three Seas Initiative and our support of that through the DFC because that will be an important institution, among others, in terms of pushing back on China's malign influence in Europe.

But, absolutely, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech and to take more into account what had happened in Hong Kong, what had happened vis-a-vis Taiwan and elsewhere.

Senator RISCH. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me just close out this session with a couple of observations for the record because I would be remiss if I did not.

The situation in Afghanistan preceded with the previous administration under President Trump making decisions that, ultimately, led to what I think was an irreversible course.

When you enter into a surrender agreement in which you, ultimately, say to the Taliban, we are going to get out on a date certain, something that my Republican colleagues have railed against in every iteration it has ever taken place, when you reduce the troop level before the new administration comes in to a troop level that cannot sustain security, when you, ultimately, release thousands of Taliban prisoners and give them to the Taliban to augment their fighting capacity, and, for the most part, you say nothing during that time period, it is really hard to understand the lack of concern then and the concern now.

We all agree that we have to find ways to be better about when we have to deal with an emergency. But as much as none of us liked the end result, that result was in the making and there were no voices at that time suggesting that, in fact, that was not a good crisis to move.

Finally, on the question of Nord Stream, it is clear that I have supported sanctions against Nord Stream. I would have liked to have seen sanctions posed on Nord Stream during the totality of the hundreds of miles that were being laid under the Trump administration for which there were no sanctions until the final day of President Trump being in office.

The belief that somehow Nord Stream alone is going to stop the Russians and Putin from, potentially, invading Ukraine is beyond belief. That is why the amendment that I will offer, assuming we move ahead, is the mother of all sanctions on Russia, swift and a whole host of other elements, which, clearly, get to the heart of Putin, his pocket, and his cronies.

And in that regard, to send that clear message now before the Russians make any calibration in terms of taking any offensive action against Ukraine is critically important. It is not an after the fact reality. It is before the fact of what takes place so that the Russians will understand clearly and unequivocally what the consequences will be to them. To me, that is far more powerful.

Now, with that, I was about to close this hearing but I see Senator Markey is coming in and if he wants to get in his questions really quick, we will so observe it.

Senator Markey?

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much.

Wednesday morning in the United States Senate is like the old TV show "Supermarket Sweepstakes." They scheduled four separate hearings simultaneously, all beginning at the same time.

And so I apologize to you, and, Mr. Chairman, I will not take any extended time except to just recommend Scott Nathan as just an exemplary public servant, someone who will make a huge difference. His background in finance, his experience in the public sector, just makes him the perfect person to take on this huge responsibility that the United States has to play in this coming generation.



I did not want to take up any unusual amount of time, Mr. Chairman, other than I just wanted to make that point and to thank everyone else who is here for all of your great willingness to commit to serving our country.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey.

The record of this hearing will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, December 2nd. I would ask our colleagues that questions for the record be submitted no later than that time.

I would urge the nominees to answer the questions expeditiously and fully. Sometimes when nominees are skimpy in their answers or are not substantive in their answers it causes members to not agree to move the nominee forward at a business meeting.

That does not mean we need a treatise. But by the same token, it means be responsive and to do it as quickly as possible. And if that happens, we hope to get your nominations before a business meeting with the cooperation of the ranking member.

With the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:59 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

## Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

### *Equity Investments Fix*

*Question.* The current method DFC Equity Investments are scored for budget purposes assumes a 100 percent loss on all investments, and, therefore, requires a one-to-one dollar offset for those investments. This budget method negatively affects the ability of DFC to fully utilize one of the most promising new tools established in the BUILD Act and consumes scarce foreign assistance resources. Resolving this antiquated budgeting method will require this administration, including you, to provide the leadership to work with Congress to resolve this problem or other programs will be put at risk of a funding shortfall.

- Will you commit to engaging with the Office of Management and Budget, the National Economic Council and the National Security Council on the need to apply a more accurate budgeting method to the DFC's development financing programs?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I would engage with interagency partners including the Office of Management and Budget, the National Economic Council, and the National Security Council in support of present value scoring for equity. Equity investments are an important part of DFC's financial toolkit.

*Question.* How many equity deals has DFC done in the past fiscal year? How many are in the pipeline for FY 2022? How has DFC implemented its approach to equity?

*Answer.* As the nominee, I do not have access to DFC's pipeline. I have asked existing DFC personnel to respond to these questions regarding equity.

### *DFC Response*

In FY 2021, DFC supported twelve projects (10 investment funds and 2 direct equity) valued at \$239 million. In FY 2020, DFC supported six projects (5 investment funds and 1 direct equity) valued at \$120 million. For FY 2022, there are 29 projects (20 investment funds and 9 direct equity) being considered, valued at \$645 million in total.

DFC's approach focuses on addressing the shortfall in equity capital required to address major gaps in critical infrastructure and to support economic growth and job creation in emerging markets. DFC invests in projects that support the development of infrastructure, technology, financial services, and global health, as well as

general economic development. DFC will continue to refine this approach based on its investment experience and developmental outcomes.

#### *2X Women's Initiative.*

*Question.* As the United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) supports efforts around the world so that global prosperity and security is increased, it must ensure that it does not neglect critical populations. If programs aim to use taxpayer dollars in the most efficient way, programs must follow the evidence and ensure that the needs, challenges, insights, and power dynamics of all genders are included in all DFC projects.

- How do you plan to ensure that the DFC fully meets its mandate in the BUILD Act [Sec. 1451 (f)] to “prioritize the reduction of gender gaps and maximize development impact by working to improve women’s economic opportunities” throughout the DFC’s entire portfolio?

*Answer.* I believe that gender investments need to be viewed holistically to address the unique challenges women face globally in accessing financing and unlocking the investment opportunity that results from valuing women as entrepreneurs, leaders, employees, and customers. In my briefings as nominee, I have learned that DFC has hired additional gender experts, who are working to develop a gender strategy and ensure that in supporting transactions proper analysis is considered on how the projects impact women and girls. It is my understanding that DFC has integrated questions into its screening and monitoring questionnaires to assess the gender diversity of each supported project’s ownership, leadership, employees, and customers both at the time of origination and during the life of the DFC investment.

*Question.* Will you commit to disclosing:

- Project-level information on the amount of WEE investment the DFC has made for each project; and
- What amount was mobilized by the private sector; and what the results and learnings are so we can better understand the value of these investments and replicate those investments that have the most impact?

*Answer.* I am committed to increasing public disclosure of project-level data. To accomplish this, I commit to seek resources to further invest in the Corporation’s technological capabilities and re-evaluate current processes to enable greater transparency. I also commit to thoughtfully consider collecting and disclosing additional project-level data from our private sector partners, as well as disclose lessons learned from investments, in a way that does not significantly increase their reporting burden or compromise the trust they put in DFC to protect their confidential business information from competitors.

#### *Advancing Human and Worker Rights*

*Question.* The BUILD Act includes provisions on ensuring that DFC does no harm in terms of human and worker rights, and that the agency’s activities enhance rights-based development.

- What steps will you take to implement this rights mandate?

*Answer.* I am aware of the BUILD Act provisions related to human and worker rights. It is my understanding that DFC reviews all projects for potential impacts to human and worker rights. During such reviews, DFC social impact experts identify potential risks and require commensurate mitigation and management measures for negative impacts to a project’s workforce and/or affected groups or people. The social impact assessment ensures that projects being considered for DFC support and active projects meet Congressionally mandated requirements for respecting human rights, including the rights of workers. If confirmed, I would commit to following this procedure and will continue DFC’s work with other development partners to maintain DFC’s position as a global leader in social policies and procedures.

#### *Office of Accountability*

*Question.* The establishment of the Office of Accountability was an important step for ensuring that the DFC is equipped to address and remediate grievances from communities experiencing unintended social and environmental harms as a result of DFC-financed projects. When harm occurs as a result of DFC’s activities, the Office of Accountability should facilitate the provision of remedy so that affected communities can restore their livelihoods.

- How will the DFC ensure that resources are available to provide remedy?

Answer. An effective, resourced, independent accountability mechanism is critical to ensuring that DFC creates space for feedback on the social and environmental impacts of its projects, and it offers a fair, transparent, and constructive voice for sometimes under-represented or marginalized communities. This consideration is what distinguishes DFC's approach from other investment models that do not value human rights and the protection of the environment. If confirmed, I would support an assessment of the Office of Accountability's current resources to best position it to successfully fulfill its mandate and provide a space for fair and equal representation of all stakeholders involved in DFC's projects.

*Question.* Will the DFC require clients to obtain project finance bonds, insurance, or trust funds in escrow to ensure that reserve funds are available to address adverse environmental and social impacts?

Answer. It is my understanding that DFC's environmental and social policies are aligned with the International Finance Corporation's Performance Standards and the World Bank Group's Environmental, Health and Safety Sector Specific Guidelines ("EHS Guidelines"). If confirmed, I pledge to explore this issue with DFC staff and consult with you on the issue.

#### *Digital Development*

*Question.* COVID-19 has propelled the world into a digital frame which will only deepen for both economic activity and government operations. The digital divide between developing and developed countries is wide and a barrier to progress in low- and lower-middle-income countries. Digital development is referenced in the DFC strategic plan Roadmap for Impact, but the DFC has done little in the digital arena.

- Do you agree that investing in digital technologies and capabilities should be a DFC priority, and how you envision making this happen?

Answer. Yes, I agree that digital technology and capabilities are critical for economic growth and competitiveness, and important for advancing most development sectors including education, financial inclusion, and health among others. If confirmed, I would consult with DFC and interagency experts to determine how the Corporation can best position itself to have a significant development impact in this market.

#### *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Calculations*

*Question.* The DFC accounting for greenhouse gas emissions from projects does not always fully account for lifetime or lifecycle emissions associated with a given project.

- Will you commit to reviewing the GHG emission evaluation methods and consulting with my office on any decisions to revise the accounting process and criteria?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the greenhouse gas emission evaluation methods and will consult with your office on decisions to revise the accounting process and criteria.

#### *Sunshine Act*

*Question.* The DFC has previously declared that the Sunshine Act does not apply to it, which has resulted in a lack of transparency around DFC's decision-making process.

- If confirmed, would you commit to adhering to the Sunshine Act, including posting all board meetings in the Federal Register?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the greenhouse gas emission evaluation methods and will consult with your office on decisions to revise the accounting process and criteria.

#### *Joint Investment for Peace Initiative*

*Question.* The DFC's participation in the Joint Investment for Peace Initiative, as called for in the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act of 2020, is an important and positive step in building up the Palestinian private sector as well as ties between Israeli and Palestinian people and businesses. This is absolutely critical to maintaining space for a negotiated two-state solution.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to prioritize investment in Palestinian small and medium-sized enterprises? What metrics will you use in making those investments?

Answer. As I understand it, the Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA) provides resources and direction to DFC and USAID to support private sector-led

development especially in the Palestinian Territories. If confirmed, I would work to help DFC fulfill its mandate under MEPPA and looks for opportunities to support development projects in the Territories, including alongside key partners. I anticipate that the Corporation will continue to evaluate prospective transactions based on their developmental and strategic impact, commercial viability and the additionality of a possible DFC investment.

*Countering Chinese Influence in the Middle East*

*Question.* China continues to invest in private sector infrastructure across the Middle East and North Africa, potentially in close proximity to U.S. diplomatic and military facilities.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to provide countries in the Middle East and North Africa with an alternative method of financing that does not involve Chinese investment in critical infrastructure? How will those steps be balanced with the DFC's legislative mandate to invest almost exclusively in countries defined by the World Bank as lower-middle or low income?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to devote time and resources to source commercially viable projects in the Middle East and North Africa and will apply the lens of strategic competition to project evaluation. The BUILD Act prioritizes support in lower-middle and low-income countries, while also mandating a role for the DFC in upper-middle income countries consistent with the legislative framework.

*Sustainable Water and Energy Investment in the Middle East*

*Question.* Most of the countries in the Middle East and North Africa face looming and long-term water shortages. At the same time, there is the growing potential for energy cooperation in the region to help address this problem, including with sustainable energy, while also providing energy to both domestic and international markets. The recent agreement between Israel, Jordan and the UAE to exchange solar-powered electricity for desalinated water is one such example, although it did not involve the DFC.

- If confirmed, what further steps will you take to invest in sustainable energy generation and infrastructure, and in the water sector, in the Middle East and North Africa? How will you balance those steps with the DFC's legislative mandate to invest almost exclusively in countries defined by the World Bank as lower-middle or low income?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to explore how the DFC can have an impact on driving access to clean electricity and clean water in the Middle East and North Africa and to source transactions that meet this objective. DFC's Roadmap for Impact currently prioritizes investments in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), as well as investments in energy.

The BUILD Act prioritizes support in lower-middle and low-income countries, while also mandating a role for the DFC in upper-middle income countries consistent with the legislative framework.

*Iraq*

*Question.* Iraq remains largely dependent on Iranian electricity, and U.S. sanctions waivers, despite having ample gas reserves, much of which it flares off as a by-product of oil extraction. In August, 2020, the DFC signed an MOU with the Iraqi Government aimed at strengthening the Iraqi private sector with an investment of \$1 billion over four years.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to counter Iranian influence by investing in Iraq's energy sector to allow it to produce electricity domestically and wean the country off Iranian electricity?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would direct DFC to explore and consider opportunities for investment in Iraq's domestic energy market, which could include investments in power generation. DFC will also counter Iranian influence in Iraq by providing capital to support the development, diversification, and global integration of Iraq's private sector. DFC hopes to identify opportunities for scaling investment in Iraq. It is my understanding that DFC recently hosted a virtual Town Hall with Iraqi companies to educate them about DFC's investment tools and to identify potential new Iraqi projects.

- What is the status of the DFC's investments as outlined in the August 2020 MOU? If confirmed, will you commit to fully implementing that MOU and the investment therein?

Answer. While I do not have access to the status of DFC's investments as outlined in the 2020 MOU, if confirmed, I will look into this matter and consult with Congress on it. I have asked DFC to provide additional information below.

*DFC Response on Status of DFC's Investments as Outlined in the August 2020 MOU*

*Question.* The August 2020 MOU continues to serve as a practical roadmap to facilitate private investment in Iraq. The Government of Iraq is making progress to improve the business climate, and the DFC is actively seeking opportunities for investment. In 2021, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad hosted a virtual town hall for the DFC to brief members of the Iraqi business community on the DFC's products and priorities. The DFC also agreed to invest \$250 million in a natural gas processing facility that will deliver gas to power plants in Iraqi Kurdistan. Additional projects are in various stages of the DFC's screening process, including those that would provide financing to SMEs and other energy-related projects.

- Currently, Iraq is defined by the World Bank as an upper-middle income country. How will you balance those steps with the DFC's legislative mandate to invest almost exclusively in countries defined by the World Bank as lower-middle or low income?

Answer. The BUILD Act laid out a dual mandate for DFC, both developmental and strategic. While focusing on the poorest countries of the world, the BUILD Act also calls for DFC to mobilize capital in UMICs, particularly where it affects the poorest segments of the population. I believe that good development is good for U.S. national security and can help meet the challenges posed by our strategic competitors. In addition, DFC's Roadmap for Impact specifically targets 60 percent of DFC's investments in LICs, LMICs, and fragile states.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Climate*

*Question.* Do you believe that climate is the most important issue facing the United States?

Answer. No. Climate change is one of several pressing issues currently confronting the United States.

*Question.* Do you believe that the DFC should primarily be funding climate-related projects?

Answer. No. DFC should primarily focus on advancing its development and strategic missions as set forth in the BUILD Act. DFC should prioritize projects with the greatest developmental and strategic impacts, across sectors and geographies.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advise any official senior to you to sacrifice other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not allow the DFC to be used as a tool to trade away other U.S. interests to China on climate change?

Answer. Yes.

*Question.* Former Secretary Kerry has said that climate change is a "standalone issue" in U.S.-China relations. But he subsequently said that "life is full of tough choices in the relationship between nations" and that our priority "first and foremost" must be to save this planet. He made these comments in response to an interview question between trade-offs related to climate and human rights. Since then, he has stated that human rights issues in China are "not in his lane."

- What are your views on these comments?

Answer. Human rights are an absolute priority and should not be compromised. I look forward to working with you and your team to address this key priority during my time at DFC.

*Question.* What would your approach be if you were faced with a project related to climate but could cause human rights concerns?

Answer. DFC's policies and procedures should reflect a prioritization of human rights. All DFC projects must adhere to DFC's policies and procedures. Projects that are not able to do so should not be supported by the Corporation.

*Question.* The Secretary of State is responsible for the conduct of foreign policy and exercises authority over the provision of U.S. foreign assistance, including by virtue of his seat on the Board of the DFC.

- What degree of influence, if any, should Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry exercise over the DFC and the projects it chooses to support?

*Answer.* DFC's corporate governance is established in the BUILD Act and implemented through the Board-adopted bylaws. The Secretary of State or his designee is the Chair of the Board of Directors. If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to follow the governance structure and priorities enumerated in the BUILD Act.

*Question.* Do you believe it would be appropriate for Special Envoy Kerry to exercise that influence directly, or via the Secretary of State (by virtue of his position on the Board of the DFC)?

*Answer.* DFC's corporate governance is established in the BUILD Act and codified in its management directives. If confirmed, I will direct the Corporation to follow the governance structure enumerated in the BUILD Act.

#### *Supply Chains*

*Question.* Do you believe that the DFC should support projects that source solar panels from China, despite the knowledge we have about forced labor in China's solar technology supply chains?

*Answer.* Taxpayer funds should never be used to support projects which utilize forced labor. If confirmed, I would direct the Corporation to advance efforts to finance transactions that will help establish alternative supply chains for the solar sector.

*Question.* Do you believe that investing in any projects with supply chain ties to China undermines the strategic competition mandate of the DFC? If not, please explain how doing so supports U.S. national security interests.

*Answer.* DFC should exclude projects that procure goods that undermine U.S. national security interests. Certain PRC-produced goods have no place in the supply chains of DFC-supported projects. For example, under section 889 of the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, DFC is prohibited from supporting projects that procure certain telecommunications equipment from the PRC. DFC should not walk away from involvement in transactions where U.S. involvement enhances our strategic position relative to China.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will prioritize—expeditiously—ensuring that DFC supply chains do not touch forced labor in any way, shape, or form? If confirmed, what will you do in your first 100 days on the job to achieve this objective?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will review DFC's policies and procedures on this issue and work with DFC staff and the interagency to make adjustments, as appropriate. I will ensure that DFC's approach is communicated widely to staff and project applicants, and make sure that there are mechanisms in place to enforce compliance.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ending DFC support for procurements involving Chinese companies, including in the solar industry?

*Answer.* I am committed to advancing DFC's efforts to diversify supply chains, including in the solar sector. If confirmed, I will work to make sure that DFC's approach most effectively supports U.S. national security, and I will evaluate all options for achieving this goal.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to diversify DFC investments in the Indo-Pacific, which are currently heavily focused on India with limited exposure in Southeast Asia?

*Answer.* DFC should look to diversify its portfolio in the Indo-Pacific region including expanding exposure in Southeast Asia. DFC needs to further strengthen relationships with partner development finance institutions in the region and expand its current business development in the region to identify potential new projects. I will look to closely coordinate with USAID missions and other U.S. Embassy personnel in the Indo-Pacific region. I will also look to build on the lessons learned from DFC's four forward deployed officers in Mumbai, Bangkok, Jakarta, and Singapore.

*Question.* Will you prioritize the identification of areas in Thailand where the DFC can still make investments, despite the partial rescinding of Thailand's benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that DFC does not currently consider investments in Thailand due to USTR's determination with respect to workers' rights. If con-

firmed, I will closely monitor the current situation, and if it changes, will consult with USTR and other relevant Departments and agencies so that DFC can source transactions in Thailand.

*Question.* Please describe objectives you would pursue with respect to DFC investment in projects in the following countries:

- Philippines

*Answer.* As one of the region's fastest growing economies and strategically important countries, the Philippines market should be a promising market for DFC. If confirmed, I would look forward to closely working with the interagency and with DFC's experienced staff to identify opportunities for DFC engagement.

- Thailand

*Answer.* It is my understanding that DFC does not currently consider investments in Thailand due to USTR's determination with respect to workers' rights. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the current situation, and if it changes, will consult with USTR and other relevant Departments and agencies so that DFC can source transactions in Thailand.

- Indonesia

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to identify additional opportunities for investments in Indonesia. I would welcome the chance to engage with DFC and interagency experts, both in Washington and Indonesia, to explore these potential opportunities.

- Vietnam

*Answer.* I understand that DFC is currently active in multiple sectors in Vietnam. If confirmed, I would engage with our Southeast Asia team both in Washington and in the region to explore additional opportunities in Vietnam.

- Sri Lanka

*Answer.* I understand that DFC is growing its portfolio in Sri Lanka, particularly in SME and MSME support for women- and minority-owned business, which will be critical to growing its economy that was hit hard by the COVID crisis. If confirmed, I will work with DFC's Indo-Pacific team and our Embassy in Sri Lanka to identify developmental and impactful opportunities in Sri Lanka.

- Eligible Pacific Island Nations

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with regional partners, including Australia and Japan, and the interagency to expand our engagement in the region. It is my understanding DFC is participating in the White House Small and Less Populated Island Economies (SALPIE) initiative and I look forward to participating in this initiative, if confirmed.

*Question.* Under your tenure, will the DFC make investments in Burma while the military junta is still in control of the government?

*Answer.* No, not under current conditions. If confirmed, I would remain engaged with interagency partners and Congress to ensure that DFC's posture in Burma aligns with current U.S. foreign policy.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you improve coordination with other DFIs (especially in Europe and Japan), including on concrete projects where there are opportunities for co-financing?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that this was a goal of the BUILD Act, and I believe that partnerships, both with bilateral development finance institutions (DFIs) as well as multilateral DFIs and other like-minded institutions, are important contributing factors to future DFC success. My understanding is that DFC has partnered this year with other DFIs on vaccine manufacturing investments in Africa. If confirmed, I would continue this work and, more broadly, work to strengthen relationships leading to more sharing of potential project opportunities and further collaborating on due diligence processes.

*Question.* What barriers do you foresee for working with other DFIs in the field

*Answer.* My understanding is that DFC shares a close relationship with DFIs from like-minded countries and is actively participating in co-financing transactions with other DFIs. If confirmed, I would continue to prioritize this collaboration. My understanding is that the challenges to this collaboration include: (1) different due diligence requirements, standards, and processes; (2) different budgetary and approval processes; and (3) different priority sectors and geographies. Nonetheless, DFC has established the position of Director for Collaborative Partnerships within the Office of the Chief Development Officer, whose role is to focus the Corporation

on mitigating and, if possible, overcoming some of these challenges so that we can get more out of these strategic partnerships.

*Question.* What are some ways these barriers can be overcome or mitigated?

*Answer.* My understanding is that DFC can continue to work with other DFIs to map out areas of priority investments, to better understand one another's tools and available resources, and to collaborate on sourcing and potentially share transactions in the pipeline. In addition, DFC can work to identify specific areas of collaboration with like-minded DFIs, particularly as the Corporation works as part of a whole of government approach to develop alternatives around the world to PRC's Belt and Road Initiative.

#### *Energy*

*Question.* The DFC was created by Congress, and we are committed to ensuring that Congressional intent is recognized and upheld. When we created the DFC, it was with the explicit intent that the corporation would pursue an "all of the above strategy" to reduce energy poverty. Multiple Indo-Pacific and African countries have told the committee that they need natural gas to make the transition to cleaner energy sources. Thus far, the Biden administration has signaled that natural gas cooperation with developing countries will not be a priority area, and the DFC has imposed a carbon cap on itself that will prevent it from involvement in natural gas projects in the future.

- Do you believe in the "all of the above" approach to reducing energy poverty? If not, why not?

*Answer.* My understanding is that DFC has not imposed restrictions on specific technologies or energy sources for power projects. If confirmed, I would continue this practice. While the Biden administration has prioritized low or zero emissions technologies, in certain developing markets there may be energy security or energy access considerations that warrant pursuing other technologies.

*Question.* Do you believe that the DFC should be involved in bankable natural gas projects to advance development and address the power needs of the developing world?

*Answer.* DFC has preserved the ability to engage in highly strategic or highly developmental natural gas projects that would enhance energy security and access in the poorest countries, as well as projects that advance U.S. national security interests. Where a natural gas project meets a highly developmental or highly strategic need, is bankable, and helps address energy poverty and energy security needs in a country, I would support DFC exploring supporting such transactions and would work to do so, if confirmed.

*Question.* If so, what will you do inside the administration if confirmed to make this a greater priority?

*Answer.* DFC has preserved the ability to engage in highly strategic or highly developmental natural gas projects that would enhance energy security and access in the poorest countries, as well as projects that advance U.S. national security interests. Where a natural gas project meets a highly developmental or highly strategic need, is bankable, and helps address energy poverty and energy security needs in a country, I would support DFC exploring supporting such transactions and would work to do so, if confirmed.

*Question.* If not, why do you disagree?

*Answer.* DFC has preserved the ability to engage in highly strategic or highly developmental natural gas projects that would enhance energy security and access in the poorest countries, as well as projects that advance U.S. national security interests. Where a natural gas project meets a highly developmental or highly strategic need, is bankable, and helps address energy poverty and energy security needs in a country, I would support DFC exploring supporting such transactions and would work to do so, if confirmed.

*Question.* You have been criticized for being a leader of the League of Conservation Voters while simultaneously leading the Baupost Group, which is heavily invested in BP. How do you reconcile the two?

*Answer.* While I was at Baupost Group during the time the firm purchased shares in BP, I was not directly involved in that investment decision. Like other investment firms regulated by the SEC, Baupost's fiduciary obligation is to serve its investors. My engagement with LCV represented an engagement in my personal capacity unrelated to my role at Baupost.



*Question.* If confirmed, what sectors of strategic significance to the United States would you focus on for DFC investments? Why should these be our priorities?

*Answer.* Before specifically articulating all of the priorities I would want to pursue, if confirmed, I would want to continue briefings and consultations including with Congress and other key stakeholders. DFC should play a leading role in the President's Build Back Better World initiative. The initiative, in partnership with our G7 allies, aims to fill the critical infrastructure gap in low- and lower-middle income countries.

DFC should also focus on vaccine manufacturing and other projects that promote pandemic preparedness. DFC can play a constructive role in helping to address market distortions created by strategic competitors and can present an attractive alternative that reflects U.S. values.

*Question.* Last year, DFC modernized its Environmental and Social Policy and Procedures (ESPP) to enable the support of nuclear power projects. This change enables greater access to reliable nuclear energy to help our allies and partners meet their development, energy security, and clean energy goals. In April, DFC committed to "Net Zero by 2040" and to increase its climate-focused investments, what role do you see for nuclear energy investments to meet these ambitious pledges?

*Answer.* Nuclear energy investments can play a critical role. Given global energy security challenges and the climate crisis, nuclear power should be considered as part of the energy mix.

#### *Inter-agency Cooperation*

*Question.* The DFC is one of many economic tools that the U.S. government can bring to bear to advance national security, foreign policy, and development objectives. Other tools include foreign assistance from the State Department, assistance and capacity-building by USAID, commercial advocacy and other tools in the Department of Commerce, certain Treasury Department programs, support for U.S. exports for infrastructure projects through the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and the Export-Import Bank. It is of significant importance that the interagency coordinate the use of these tools, including when the U.S. Government is made aware of projects. Will you commit to robust participation by the DFC in relevant inter-agency processes, especially on infrastructure, energy, or digital projects that would advance U.S. national security and foreign policy interests?

*Answer.* Yes. I believe interagency coordination is key to DFC's success.

*Question.* Will you commit to cooperating with the Department of State and other relevant agencies on the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network, including the Transaction Advisory Fund?

*Answer.* Yes.

#### FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

#### *Dual Mandate*

*Question.* DFC has a dual mandate: (1) to promote economic growth by unlocking and catalyzing private sector investment in low- to lower-middle income countries; and (2) to promote economic freedom, including by making investments in key sectors and countries that are important to the national security interests of the United States and are otherwise susceptible to the malign development model of strategic competitors, such as Russia and China

- How do you intend to align and balance these two mandates?

*Answer.* The BUILD Act laid out a dual mandate for DFC, both development and strategic. It will be important to balance these initiatives. Consultation will be key. I look forward to working with Congress on this as we seek to advance these two important goals.

*Question.* In your view, in which regions, countries, and sectors should the DFC prioritize investments?

*Answer.* Before specifically articulating all of the priorities I would want to pursue, if confirmed, I would want to continue briefings and consultations including with Congress and other key stakeholders. My initial impression is that DFC could look for opportunities to expand support for projects in Southeast Asia, Western Hemisphere, and sub-Saharan Africa. DFC should play a leading role in the President's Build Back Better World initiative. The initiative, in partnership with our G7 partners, aims to fill the critical infrastructure gap in low- and lower-middle income countries.

DFC should also focus on vaccine manufacturing and other projects that promote pandemic preparedness. DFC can play a constructive role in helping to address market distortions created by strategic competitors and can present an attractive alternative that reflects U.S. values.

*Question.* Under what circumstances, if any, should the DFC invest in high-income countries?

*Answer.* DFC is not authorized to operate in high-income countries (HICs) under the BUILD Act, except that the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019 grants explicit authority to DFC to provide support for energy and related infrastructure projects in Europe—including in HICs. If confirmed, I will direct the agency to comply with these statutory requirements.

*Question.* Under what circumstances, if any, should the DFC invest in sectors that are dominated by China?

*Answer.* If possible, the United States should compete even in sectors dominated by China. The U.S. can provide an alternative model for development, based on high standards, transparency, private sector orientation, and free of corruption. We ultimately prevail on the strength of U.S. values by supporting private sector projects that uphold high social and environmental standards, reinforce good governance, avoid unsustainable debt levels, and contribute to sustainable and broad-based economic growth in the areas we work.

#### *Values*

*Question.* If confirmed, will you uphold all U.S. laws prohibiting the use of U.S. foreign assistance, to include development finance, to support the performance or promotion of abortion and forced sterilization overseas or to advocate for or against the legalization of abortion? What methods will you put in place to ensure compliance?

*Answer.* Yes. It is my understanding that for healthcare-related projects and hospitals, in order to comply with US statute, DFC includes in its financing documents an express prohibition on use of DFC funds in accordance with U.S. law. If confirmed, I would direct that this practice continue and DFC continue to follow all related U.S. laws in its development finance activities.

#### *Equity Scoring*

*Question.* The current method by which OMG scores DFC equity investments for budget purposes assumes a total loss on all investments, and, therefore, requires a one-to-one dollar offset for those investments. This method of budgeting negatively affects the ability of DFC to fully utilize one of the most promising new tools in the BUILD Act.

- Do you commit to working with Congress and the administration to resolve this issue by working to secure a fairer budget scoring method for DFC equity investments?

*Answer.* Yes. As Congress recognized, equity is a key tool to drive development and strategic impact. If confirmed, I would make engaging with Congress and the administration regarding equity scoring a top priority.

#### *Global Health and Biosecurity*

*Question.* Do you think it is appropriate for the DFC to finance certain health technologies and gain-of-function research that may serve a dual-use purpose?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will direct that all projects under consideration for DFC support continue to be evaluated for biosecurity risks, and take steps to enhance biorisk management in DFC investments.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* I was pleased to see the DFC's announcement this summer (July 1) that it will mobilize at least \$12 billion by 2025 as part of its new commitment to invest in businesses that advance gender equity in emerging markets as part of its 2X Women's Initiative.

- If confirmed, how will you work to prioritize not only projects that are specifically directed to advance gender equality—which is important—but also gender lens decision-making as part of all of the DFC's investments?

Answer. It is my understanding that DFC has integrated questions into its screening and monitoring questionnaires to assess the gender diversity of each applicant's and each investee's ownership, leadership, employees, and customers both at the time of origination and during the life of the DFC investment. If confirmed, I would support this wider, gender-lens approach at DFC. Gender investments need to be viewed holistically to address the unique challenges women entrepreneurs face globally in accessing financing.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO SCOTT NATHAN BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

*Question.* The DFC has been tasked with financing companies working hard to address the pandemic. Projects in the program include critical manufacturing, shoring up America's supply chain to better respond to this and future public health emergencies. The importance of this mission is clear, as we have all observed the fragility and foreign dependence of the medical supply chain that Americans depend on. How do you propose to improve the program should it be extended into your tenure? *Answer:* It's my understanding that the Executive Order that established DFC's role in the DPA loan program is set to expire early in 2022. If confirmed, I will work with Corporation staff, as well as the interagency and Congress, to determine what actions are appropriate for DFC to take. This includes if the DPA loan program might be extended, and the Corporation is asked to continue its current role or in supporting the transition of a successor loan program to another agency. To that end, I would look to streamline the interagency review and loan disbursement monitoring processes, and direct that DFC works closely with the White House and Department of Defense, so the DPA loan program continues to support the administration's COVID-19 and pandemic preparedness responses. As part of that effort, however, I would want to make certain that DFC does not divert resources or attention from its principal mission and purposes as laid out by the BUILD Act.

*Question.* The DFC plays an active role in expanding critical healthcare access to the developing world. I applaud the administration for setting a goal to vaccinate 70 percent of the world by next September. However, in order to achieve that, we need to be producing and delivering hundreds of millions of vaccines every single month for the next nine months. How can the DFC advance the goal to vaccinate 70 percent of the world by next September? *Answer:* DFC has undertaken a multifaceted response focused on helping developing countries by expanding manufacturing for vaccines, strengthening health systems, providing liquidity for small- and medium-sized businesses, and providing technical assistance and expertise to businesses responding to critical challenges, including in water and sanitation. By focusing on health-systems projects that are viable on their own commercial merits, the Corporation can help create a global health ecosystem that is self-sustaining and will outlast the immediate crisis. DFC has taken steps such as supporting several projects to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including financing vaccine production in both South Asia and on the African continent, and by providing political risk insurance for some countries participating in the GAVI alliance. These investments are critical to support COVID-19 production but also to build capacity for production of critical medical commodities in the future. If confirmed, I would direct DFC to prioritize investments in global health and health security.

*Question.* Climate change remains the premier global challenge of our generation. President Biden continues to take effective steps to combat this global crisis, and the DFC has the ability to play a prominent role in contributing to these actions. Earlier this year, the DFC announced that 33 percent of its new investments will be applied to net zero carbon investments, along with the creation of the novel position of Chief Climate Officer. Though a step in the right direction, more can be done. What further steps can the DFC take to avoid climate harming actions through its investments?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that mitigating the effects of the climate crisis is one of DFC's goals. This will be an important consideration in balancing investments across the portfolio. I believe this can be done in a manner than advances, rather than competes with, DFC's overall strategic and developmental goals.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*State Department Modernization*

*Question.* As you are aware, in October, Secretary Blinken delivered a speech at the Foreign Service Institute to discuss how he intends to modernize the department—building capacity in critical new areas like cyber and technology, climate, and global health; elevating new voices; building and retaining a more diverse workforce; modernizing the Department’s technology and analytical capabilities; and reinvigorating in-person diplomacy and public engagement.

- How do you intend to prioritize and implement these measures?

*Answer.* As you have noted, Secretary Blinken has laid out an ambitious five-part modernization agenda. If confirmed, my job will be to support the bureaus and offices responsible for executing individual elements within that agenda—ensuring they have the direction, support and resources required to succeed.

In seeking to achieve these ambitious objectives, I would prioritize among the many initiatives based on guidance from the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries; consultations with other senior Department officials; priorities identified by our current workforce; availability of funding; and an assessment of potential constraints posed by existing law and regulation. I would seek to respond rapidly to the needs of the workforce, prioritizing initially initiatives for which the Department already has the necessary authorities to implement changes and funding either is available or not an obstacle.

For those initiatives requiring new authorities and/or significant additional resources, I would plan, in partnership with the Department’s leadership, to work with you and other members of the committee on possible solutions.

*Question.* What is your vision for State Department modernization?

*Answer.* I share the Secretary’s diagnosis of the challenges confronting the State Department today and fully support his vision for modernizing the institution and its organizational culture. Too many of our dedicated professionals love what they do, and remain in government service, despite—not because of—the ways in which the State Department organizes itself and conducts its business.

I believe our most pressing priority is to reassess, and change as warranted, the ways in which we recruit, retain and promote our workforce to ensure they reflect the expectations of contemporary American society, prospective employees and our current team. This is essential to building the diverse, dynamic and empowered workforce we need to sustain the United States’ influence and competitive advantages in today’s world and to address the complex, interdisciplinary challenges that will confront us in the coming decades.

We need to improve the environment in which our dedicated team works, whether domestically or overseas. That entails improving and adapting our physical infrastructure, our information technology and digital communications, our talent management and overall conditions of work. It also entails identifying ways to better manage risk in the many threat environments in which we operate. We also need to improve the Department’s agility—its ability to more rapidly and effectively shift its people and other resources to tackle the highest-priority issues and countries.

If confirmed, I also would concentrate on strengthening a “field-first” orientation within the Department’s organizational culture and business processes, to counteract the tendency to concentrate resources and decision-making authority within the headquarters in Washington.

In all of these initiatives, I intend to consult with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to ensure any changes provide the best possible impact for the nation and for our fellow citizens.

*Question.* What are your top priorities for assuring that the Department has the organization, tools, and resources it needs?

*Answer.* In seeking to implement the Secretary’s modernization agenda, if confirmed, I would prioritize among the many initiatives based on guidance from the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries; consultations with other senior Department officials; priorities identified by our current workforce; availability of funding; and an assessment of potential constraints posed by existing law and regulation. I would also be mindful of the importance of balancing resource allocation to address compelling urgent priorities and to invest in strengthening the institution and building capacity and organizational resilience for future challenges.

I would intend to prioritize improving our capacity to allocate any additional human resources to both strengthen the Department’s capacity to address imme-

diate policy priorities and to build a 'float' of positions that enables us to offer our workforce a wide range of professional development opportunities.

#### *Diversity*

*Question.* I have long said that diversity in the Foreign and Civil Services is not only one of the best ways of representing the United States and our values abroad, but also a national security imperative. Yet the Department continues to struggle to both recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

- How do you plan to hire, retain, and promote a diverse foreign and civil service?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work to ensure the Department does everything possible to recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the richness and diversity of America. I would begin by ensuring the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and her staff have the resources they need to evaluate, and then address, current impediments to retaining and promoting a diverse team. I would support fully ongoing efforts to integrate diversity and inclusion practices strategically into all Department policies, reflecting the Secretary's and administration's priorities. Even as the State Department maintains fair and transparent interviewing and hiring, I believe we need to review our talent evaluation and selection process, given the unparalleled competition we face for the services of individuals who wish to pursue a career in which they spend a significant portion of their professional lives overseas.

I am committed to listening to the workforce and to better addressing its needs, including by using the full range of workplace flexibilities and encouraging a culture of inclusion for all of our employees. We need to invest in professional development and career-long learning across the workforce; strengthen mentoring programs that help individuals succeed and advance; provide actionable feedback on performance; chart career progression; provide more interagency and other detail opportunities; and create viable pathways for those in the Civil Service and Foreign Service as they aspire to advance their careers.

#### *New Cyber Bureau*

*Question.* Secretary Blinken recently announced the creation of a new cyber bureau and technology special envoy. As with any organizational change, the success of these new structures will depend on implementation.

- What steps will you take to ensure that the Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy and the Special Envoy for Critical and Emerging Technology will be successful in achieving their missions?

*Answer.* The planned Bureau of Cyberspace and Digital Policy, and the office of the Special Envoy for Emerging Technology, are key components of the Secretary's agenda to modernizing American diplomacy. This initiative is consistent with recent legislative proposals to both promote and protect cyberspace as a digital platform for global economic development and trade. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department provides the resources required, and uses its full range of hiring and other authorities, to enable these new organizational elements to effectively advance U.S. national interests and diplomacy in these critical policy areas. I commit to full and open engagement with all stakeholders including the Congress, OMB, employees, unions, and all impacted partners throughout the creation and initial operations of these new elements.

#### *Havana Syndrome*

*Question.* I remain concerned that the Department is lagging behind other agencies in providing benefits and caring for individuals affected by Havana Syndrome. I know that Deputy Secretary McKeon and the new head of the health incident task force, Jonathan Moore, will be leading the response, but it will fall to you to ensure that there are sufficient resources, and that bureaus under your leadership—primarily MED and Diplomatic Security—are acting with sufficient urgency.

- Do I have your commitment that you will review the resources allocated for these efforts and that getting to the bottom of these incidents will be a priority for the bureaus you oversee?

*Answer.* Yes. The Secretary of State has security responsibility for all U.S. Government employees on official duty overseas, except those under the command of an area military commander, a responsibility that entails protecting them and their families from a wide range of threats. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of my colleagues in the Department of State. I will review the resources that we have allocated for these efforts, identify additional resources as needed and work to reduce the administrative burdens on those suffering from the effects of these incidents. Anomalous Health Incidents (AHIs)

have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken. As Under Secretary, I would direct those bureaus and offices reporting to me to help the Health Incident Response Task Force achieve its priorities: strengthening the Department's communication with our workforce, providing rapid, thorough care for affected employees and family members; better protecting our work force against these incidents; and strengthening interagency partnerships to find the cause of these AHIs.

#### *Morale/Political Appointees*

*Question.* As you are aware, the Department's workforce endured serious declines in morale under the previous administration. While Secretary Blinken and Deputy Secretary McKeon have made this issue a top priority, I'd like to know what you will do to ensure that the Department's workforce is empowered and trusted to carry out its critical diplomatic work.

- Can you tell us today what concrete steps you will take to rebuild morale?

*Answer.* To fully succeed, the State Department must be more responsive to the needs of the contemporary work force, drawing on lessons and best practices from private industry that are applicable in a global public institution. If confirmed, I would continue to promote and expand workplace flexibilities—including telework and remote work—and stress the importance of caring for oneself and family. Our Employee Consultation Service (ECS) is integral to this effort. I fully support ECS's continued outreach to employees and family members to further reduce barriers to seeking care by increasing knowledge of supports ECS can offer and addressing any misperceptions that this will impose adverse consequences. If confirmed, I would ensure ECS has the resources it needs to permanently support its 24/7 expansion of services.

I also would seek additional ways to promote full use of resources the Department offers to assist employees including FSI workshops and engagements; 24/7 online access to Worklife4U to address personal issues, including mental health; and TalentCare, the single touchpoint for resources for well-being, community, safety, and workplace flexibilities. I would also plan to expand opportunities for professional development across the workforce and promote a culture of career-long learning.

*Question.* What steps will you take to reverse the culture of fear surrounding political reprisal and retribution? And what measures will you take to protect the Department from a future administration that might once again seek to act in such a fashion?

*Answer.* I view my Foreign and Civil Service colleagues with the highest regard. Department employees are free to express their views as part of the Department's policy formulation process without fear of reprisal. Career Civil Service and Foreign Service employees are protected by law from being removed from positions or deferred from promotions or appointments due to their political affiliation. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Department's other senior leaders to ensure these protections are observed and valued throughout the organization. If any Department personnel feel that political reprisal and retribution are taking place, I will highly encourage them to report it to the appropriate authorities, including the Office of the Inspector General. If confirmed, I will ensure that any transgressions are investigated and addressed promptly, including by ensuring the relevant elements of the Department have the personnel and resources needed to meet this standard. I would work to ensure that Congress is fully and currently informed on our ongoing efforts to prevent and punish any political reprisals or retribution. I would also personally reinforce our internal messaging to ensure employees have confidence that the Department will protect them from unlawful retaliation, including by subjecting supervisors to disciplinary action, up to and including separation, if they retaliate against employees.

#### *Afghanistan Evacuation*

*Question.* Americans, including U.S. Government employees, have reported that the State Department has limited communication pathway to successfully report Afghans in need of evacuation or assistance outside of Afghanistan. I have heard from other government agency employees that it is difficult to get through to the State Department and to discuss evacuations or assistance for Afghans overseas because the State Department lacks a transparent process or single point of contact with whom to discuss difficult cases of Afghans seeking assistance.

- Have you created a referral process for other government agencies or U.S. citizens and residents to alert the State Department of Afghans in need of evacuation?

Answer. If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will work at the Department to ensure we put in place a reliable set of mechanisms through which other U.S. Government agencies and private individuals can highlight cases of vulnerable or at-risk Afghans who need our support to depart Afghanistan.

*Question.* Members of my staff have flagged a number of cases over the last several months, many of which remain unresolved. The lack of response or resolution is disturbing. Will you commit that you will take action on these cases in a timely way?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues at the Department to ensure these cases are addressed in a timely way.

*Question.* We understand that a number of active-duty U.S. service members have contacted the State Department for assistance with their immediate family members trapped in Afghanistan. Does the State Department have the ability to coordinate the evacuation of the family members of active-duty U.S. military? Do immediate family members of our active-duty military qualify for SIV status? If not, will you prioritize family member evacuation via charter flights and resettlement to the United States or a third country under other programs?

Answer. The Department of State is working with the DoD and U.S. service members who have alerted us of their immediate relatives in need of relocation assistance. If confirmed, you have my commitment this will continue and, as necessary, be strengthened.

I understand from my Department colleagues that U.S. immigration and other laws dictate who is eligible to derive immigrant status from a U.S. citizen, an LPR, or a SIV principal applicant based on their familial relationship.

The Afghan SIV program does not provide an immigration pathway for family members of active-duty U.S. military members unless they independently qualify under the SIV program. Interested parties can check the Bureau of Consular Affairs' website for more information: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/special-immg-visa-afghans-employed-us-gov.html>. Members of our active-duty military who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents may petition for family-based immigrant visas for their families, visa categories that are different from SIVs. Regardless of the legal pathway—SIV or family-based immigration—any Afghan who is eligible for an immigrant visa may continue to pursue that pathway to immigrate to the U.S.

#### *Processing Afghans at Risk*

*Question.* I understand that consular officers are not involved in P-1 or P-2 processing for Afghans, but that they can make P-1 embassy referrals.

- What guidance have you given to consular officers working overseas on how to assist Afghans—whether P-1, P-2, SIV, or others—who may arrive at the U.S. Embassy seeking help?

Answer. The Department continues to provide U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide with guidance for Afghans seeking help with refugee or visa processing. Personnel representing every part of our missions overseas remain committed to assisting Afghans that are vulnerable or at risk.

The Department continues to expedite SIV applications at every stage of the SIV process, including by transferring cases to other U.S. embassies and consulates around the world where applicants are able to appear. Consular officers at immigrant visa processing posts worldwide have been instructed to accept transfer of any interview-ready Afghan SIV application for processing at their location. To date, more than 17 embassies and consulates have issued SIVs to Afghan applicant since late August. The Department also has concluded an agreement with the Government of Qatar that will enable use of Camp As-Saliyah as a processing location for SIV applicants with Chief of Mission and I-360 petition approval, meaning they have established eligibility for the SIV and are ready to undergo a visa interview. We also continue to expedite processing of SIV applications at stages of the process that are performed in the United States.

*Question.* How are consular officers working with PRM refugee coordinators and Resettlement Support Centers to assist with refugee processing for Afghans? Can they submit parole applications on behalf of SIV and P-2 eligible Afghans?

Answer. With the exception of “following-to-join” for family reunification cases, consular officers are not involved directly with refugee processing. However, personnel representing every part of our missions overseas remain committed to assisting vulnerable and at-risk Afghans and to working with organizations that are seeking to resettle priority groups in the United States or in third countries where they

will be safe. I respectfully refer you to DHS for questions on eligibility or application procedures for parole.

*Question.* Why is the administration not doing remote/virtual processing for P-2 refugee-referred Afghans? Is there a way to break up the process to do some in-country screening and then to give a tentative “green light” on their eligibility before having them flee to a third country?

*Answer.* Neither in-country screening nor processing of Afghans referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is possible since the U.S. Government does not have a physical presence in Afghanistan. As the Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) works through the backlog of referrals, they are emailing Afghans whose referral is complete to confirm their referral. We are able to accept referrals for Afghans who are located in Afghanistan. Currently, we are legally unable, however, to begin processing those referrals until the individual departs Afghanistan.

Once referred individuals depart Afghanistan and reach a third country where processing is possible, PRM will create a case for the individual and assign the case to the relevant Resettlement Support Center (RSC). At that time, processing through the USRAP may begin.

*Question.* What are the P-2 numbers? Number of total referrals (primary applicants and primary applicants and dependents)? Number that have begun processing? Number approved?

*Answer.* As of December 6, PRM has received 12,158 P2 submissions of which 7,912 have been reviewed. Of those reviewed, PRM had enough information to accept 2,189 P2 referrals. We have thus far created cases for 131 families referred to the P2 for which case processing can now begin. We have been contacted by approximately 400 Principal Applicants who have referrals, and we are working to ensure their referrals are completed so their case processing can begin. We estimate 9,500 P2 families will be eligible for processing once their referral is brought to completion and the principal applicant relocates to a third country.

*Question.* What is Consular Affairs doing to expedite the processing of SIV applications? Has the Department surged resources and people to review SIV applications? And at the current level of personnel and resources, what is the expected processing timeline for SIV applications?

*Answer.* The Department continues to expedite SIV applications at every stage of the SIV process, including by transferring cases to other U.S. embassies and consulates around the world where applicants are able to appear. Embassies and consulates in Europe, the Middle East and South Asia have issued SIVs to applicants present in those regions since late August. The Department also has concluded an agreement with the Government of Qatar that will enable use of Camp As-Saliyah as a processing location for SIV applicants with Chief of Mission and I-360 petition approval, meaning they have established eligibility for the SIV and are ready to undergo a visa interview. We also continue to expedite processing of SIV applications at stages of the process that are performed in the United States.

The Department quintupled the size of its COM review team and cross-trained 54 additional personnel at the National Visa Center to continue managing the demand. It also sent additional officers to Kabul to assist with processing before the suspension of operations in August. Processing times vary on a case-by-case basis and have fluctuated throughout 2021 as a result of shifting resources to surge processing capacity. I understand the Department is analyzing data from the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2021 to evaluate the impact of surge staffing on processing times, in order to provide accurate updates to average processing times in the next quarterly report to Congress in January.

#### *Reemployment Opportunities for Afghan Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs)*

*Question.* The U.S. Government acted swiftly in relocating many of the State Department’s foreign service nationals out of Afghanistan to the United States.

- Beyond the housing and integration assistance that the United States is providing via non-governmental organizations, how is the Department supporting those who may be interested in continuing their careers with the State Department?

*Answer.* The Department has provided information to the former Locally Employed Staff from Kabul to find U.S. Government employment opportunities should they wish to continue working with the Department and if their resettlement location allows them to do so. The Department has also identified a number of individ-



uals whose skills are needed immediately and is working on employing them via contract.

*Question.* Who is leading the Department's efforts to rehire its FSNs, either via contracts or as direct hires?

*Answer.* Former Locally Employed Staff from Kabul are eligible to apply for U.S. Government vacant positions, assuming they have received work authorization from the Department of Homeland Security, and they have been provided with the information on how to find these positions. Given that the resettlement agencies in the Washington Metropolitan Area are oversubscribed, the Department's Bureau of Global Talent Management, in coordination with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and the Bureau of Population, Migration and Refugees, is focused on encouraging the Locally Employed Staff to resettle in areas where there are many employment opportunities and where they can receive support.

#### *Fulbright*

*Question.* What actions will the Department take to allow current 2021-2022 Fulbright scholars and other F and J visa holders, like international students and faculty, to remain in the United States after their visas expire? What plans do the Department have for the future of the Fulbright program in Afghanistan?

*Answer.* In 2021, we welcomed the largest cohort to date of degree-seeking Fulbright students (109) at U.S. universities. The Department is committed to supporting these Afghan students' academic success by providing additional monitoring and support. The selection process for FY 2022-2023 Fulbright student program semi-finalists is currently on hold while we address significant safety, logistical, and programmatic constraints.

Regarding the status of students and scholars after the completion of their programs, I would refer you to the Department of Homeland Security.

#### *Civil Service*

*Question.* The structure of the Department's civil service means that civil service employees lack career mobility tracks. This makes career advancement and professional growth extremely difficult.

- What steps do you plan to take to enable civil service employees to grow professionally and to advance in their careers, just as Foreign Service officers can?

*Answer.* If the State Department is to most effectively advance the nation's interests, protect our fellow citizens and promote our values, I believe it needs to assess and value its employees based primarily on their talent and contributions, not the hiring category through which they joined the organization. As Secretary Blinken recently observed, our civil servants comprise some of the State Department's deepest policy and management expertise. I am committed to implementing his direction to increase opportunities and career development for our dedicated professionals in the civil service. Thanks in part to support from you and the committee, the Department was able to secure a 10 percent increase in the number of Senior Executive Service positions, creating new opportunities and pathways for civil servants to advance.

If confirmed, I am committed to listening to the workforce and to better addressing its needs, including investing in their professional development and career-long learning, and strengthening programs that create viable career mobility pathways for those who aspire to reach their full potential. I will support efforts such as developing a mobility float program that promotes and fosters continual employee career growth in a variety of ways and incentivizes bureaus to allow their Civil Service employees to participate in professional development opportunities while simultaneously filling gaps when needed, thereby reducing concerns of hiring managers that their mission goals will go unaddressed.

#### *State Department / USAID Reorganization, Budget, Leadership*

*Question.* Even with the previous administration's reform efforts now dead, there are still a great many legitimate questions concerning the relationship of the State Department and USAID—how they coordinate on policy and implementation, how they are run, and how to balance funding they each require to conduct their operations.

- What are your views on how to improve the relationship between State and USAID?

*Answer.* State and USAID partner to advance the President's priorities in defending democracy, mitigating climate change, and ending COVID-19, in a highly complementary manner. Because the Department's policy priorities drive our resource

and management decisions, if confirmed I commit to coordinating closely with the other members of the Department leadership team and our USAID counterparts to leverage the comparative advantages of each agency. For example, the Department and USAID teams are collaboratively developing a Joint Strategic Plan that will articulate shared goals and objectives for the next four years. If confirmed, I will ensure my team oversees a budget process that accounts for USAID's corporate perspective as we ensure coherence of foreign assistance programs across State and USAID. These strategic planning and budgeting efforts help align foreign policy and development priorities.

One of the characteristics of effective, healthy embassies overseas is a vibrant partnership between the State and USAID components in which each understands the respective strengths and works together to ensure their respective efforts are complementary and mutually reinforcing. If confirmed, I would support efforts to explore whether some of those overseas best practices could be applied more uniformly to the relationship between the two headquarters in Washington.

#### *Embassy Security*

*Question.* I am interested in your views on managing the Department's personnel security needs. For example, there are competing organizations within State that have overlapping areas of responsibility, including Diplomatic Security and Overseas Building Operations.

- How do you plan to de-conflict and align the different demands of different organizations inside the Department to assure the security of the Department's personnel?

*Answer.* The leaders of the State Department have a to protect all of our employees, and their families when overseas, from a wide range of threats and occupational workplace hazards. At the same time, our profession is at times dangerous and may involve service in harm's way. If confirmed, I would seek to improve our ability to balance these two imperatives while ensuring we secure maximum value for those taxpayer resources entrusted to the State Department, particularly with respect to providing our employees overseas and across the United States with secure, accessible, cost-effective work environments.

If confirmed, I would apply core principles of leadership to ensure Department organizations with lead responsibility for security and workplace safety share information; work together to achieve a common set of objectives; identify and resolve disagreements about priorities to the extent possible; and refer those issues on which they cannot reach resolution to me or other Department leaders for decision.

#### *State Department Staffing—DRL and PRM*

*Question.* During the Trump administration, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration were hollowed out, and remain understaffed to this day. These bureaus are critical in implementing President Biden's foreign policy agenda and in responding to ongoing crises, including in Afghanistan.

- What steps are you taking to remove barriers to fully staffing these bureaus as quickly as possible?

*Answer.* In 2021, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) was approved to add 68 new direct-hire positions and worked to quickly staff these positions utilizing all available recruitment mechanisms and hiring authorities. Despite a slow security clearance process, unprecedented Afghanistan refugee resettlement operations and the intense competition for talent, PRM has already filled, or is in the process of filling, 46 of the 68 new positions and is actively working to fill the remaining 22 positions.

In 2017, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) had 30 vacant civil service positions as a result of the hiring freeze, which have all been filled. Since 2017, Congress has increased DRL's administrative funding by 50 percent, which allowed the bureau to fund 21 full-time positions to focus on foreign assistance programs. Most of these positions have now been filled. Continued recruitment remains a high priority for DRL.

If confirmed, I will monitor closely staffing levels and vacancy rates in these and other bureaus who were impacted disproportionately by the 2017 hiring freeze and subsequent decisions regarding allocation of resources.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*State Department Management and Oversight*

*Question.* The State Department has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout the State Department?

*Answer.* The people who serve the nation at the U.S. Department of State are dedicated public servants committed to implementing the policies of our elected government, protecting our country's interests and promoting our values around the world in a wide range of operating environments. Our employees and their families have been buffeted by some policy choices in recent years that proved controversial given our nation's current political environment. The workforce continues to weather the challenges of the pandemic and fulfill its missions but is experiencing pandemic fatigue like the rest of the nation.

Many State Department employees who served in Afghanistan are struggling to come to grips with the Taliban's return to power, even as they support ongoing efforts to keep faith with those Afghans to whom our country has a special commitment. Many employees are frustrated there has not been more progress addressing some longstanding challenges with the Department's infrastructure, internal policies, business processes and workforce demographics.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all the State Department?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, and other senior leaders, to implement the core provisions of the modernization agenda outlined by Secretary Blinken in November 2021:

- building State's expertise and capacity to address cross-cutting issues, especially climate change, global health, economics and multilateral diplomacy;
- supporting the organization, staffing and activation of the new bureau of cyber and digital policy, and office of the special envoy for emerging technologies, thereby turning concepts into organizational realities;
- identifying organizational changes and incentives that encourage more innovation and initiative across the workforce;
- implementing specific measures to build and retain diverse, dynamic, entrepreneurial workforce; and
- promoting changes in organizational culture to reinvigorate in-person diplomacy and engagement, including by implementing sensible changes to the methods used to manage threats and risk across the enterprise.

I believe we also need to be more responsive to the needs of the contemporary workforce, drawing on lessons and best practices from private industry that are applicable in a global public institution. If confirmed, I would continue promoting and expanding workplace flexibilities—including telework and remote work—and stressing the importance of caring for oneself and family. Our Employee Consultation Service (ECS) is integral to this effort. I fully support ECS's continued outreach to employees and family members to further reduce barriers to seeking care by increasing knowledge of support ECS can offer and addressing any misperceptions that this will impose adverse consequences. I would ensure ECS has the resources it needs to permanently support its 24/7 expansion of services.

I also would seek additional ways to promote full use of resources the Department offers to assist employees including FSI workshops and engagements; 24/7 online access to Worklife4U to address personal issues, including mental health; and TalentCare, the single touchpoint for resources for well-being, community, safety, and workplace flexibilities. I would also plan to expand opportunities for professional development across the workforce and promote a culture of career-long learning.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across the State Department?

*Answer.* The President and the Secretary have articulated a clear vision for the Department: the lead foreign affairs agency, responsible for advancing the United States' interests and values through diplomacy, engagement, and assistance. It is a vision that restores diplomacy-and the work of the Department-to the center of our foreign policy. This is a vision all Department employees can embrace. If confirmed, I would partner with other senior leaders and utilize sustained communication, dialogue, and direct engagement to ensure those entrusted with fulfilling the Department's mission understand their unique role in carrying it out and the responsibilities that accompany this privilege.

*Management: A Key Responsibility for State Department Leadership*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I believe strongly in empowering individuals and teams at all levels of an organization to take initiative, solve problems and improve our performance. I prioritize collaboration and emphasize the 'need to share' principle in making information widely available. I concentrate on delegating authority to the greatest extent possible, reserving for myself those decisions and problems that only I, through my rank, position and authorities, can address.

We all make mistakes. I emphasize to my teams that in an organizational culture centered on achievement, people will make mistakes. When mistakes occur, I focus my team's energy on learning from those mistakes and making any adjustments necessary to prevent repeats. I expect my team to share information, contacts and credit with each other and their colleagues across the larger organization. I am accessible to colleagues at all levels of the organization; I try to prioritize engaging personally those colleagues engaged in the tasks that are essential but unheralded to ensure the entire team knows that everyone's contributions are important to our success.

In the three embassies I led and as the Executive Secretary and Director of the Operations Center at State, this philosophy yielded strong, effective teams that were highly productive, positive environments in which people pulled together and looked out for each despite heavy workloads, high stress and, often, acute security threats. If confirmed, I intend to apply the same philosophy to those bureaus and offices within the Department for which the Under Secretary has line authority and to attempt to imbue these qualities into the broader organizational culture.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an executive department setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

Answer. Throughout my thirty-three years as a federal employee, I have contended frequently with staffing shortfalls and uncertainty regarding the scope and timing of funding and other resources. Despite these challenges, I repeatedly have compensated for deficits and found ways to fulfill the mission and achieve core objectives.

In the three embassies I have led as Ambassador, and as the Executive Secretary and Director of the Operations Center at State, I have emphasized the importance of effectively managing uncertainty, focusing on our core mission and identifying top priorities to which we would apply additional resources if they became available.

My leadership and management philosophy yielded strong, effective teams that were highly productive, positive, collaborative environments in which people pulled together and cared for each despite heavy workloads, high stress and frequent uncertainty regarding staffing levels and funding. If confirmed, I intend to apply the same philosophy to those bureaus and offices within the Department for which the Under Secretary has line authority and to attempt to imbue these qualities into the broader organizational culture.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new appointees to integrate themselves into department operations and culture?

Answer. Across my thirty-three-year career in the federal government, I have had the opportunity to work extensively with a wide range of non-career officials, both in embassies overseas and at the State Department headquarters in Washington. The most effective of those political appointees were curious about the institution and organizational culture of the State Department; applied themselves to understanding how government service differed from their prior professional experiences; and adapted to those aspects of the operating environment unique to the federal government and the State Department. Conversely, non-career officials who were ineffective or drew special scrutiny from the inspector general often were those who were least interested in understanding the State Department and the unusual challenges associated with serving the nation overseas.

Many political appointees/non-career officials and ambassadors bring experience and perspective that can help the Department and its dedicated professionals. Virtually all of them want to be successful during their tenure in government. If confirmed, I would encourage non-career officials to learn the basics of State's structure, operations and organizational culture, emphasizing the strong correlation between absorbing this context and successful tenures as ambassadors and senior officials. I would also solicit their views and expertise in tackling some of the core issues on Secretary Blinken's modernization agenda for which there was strong evidence the private sector's methods were more effective than our current approach,

yet still consistent with inherently governmental functions performed by the State Department.

*Question.* If you do believe it is incumbent on appointees to integrate themselves into department operations and culture, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would first solicit views of current non-career officials to assess the effectiveness of the Department's formal and informal orientation efforts, including by assessing to what extent non-career officials were aware, and had utilized, the range of orientation materials and programs available to them. Working with other senior leaders at State, I would ensure all nominees for ambassadorial positions continued to be required to attend the Ambassadorial Seminar organized by the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC) for outbound chiefs of mission.

I also would work closely with officials in Global Talent Management, NFATC and other bureaus in the Department to strengthen our orientation program for political appointees serving in positions at State's headquarters here in Washington. I would intend to focus particularly on non-career officials occupying Deputy Assistant Secretary and equivalent positions in the Department. Individuals appointed to these positions often possess considerable substantive expertise but may lack equivalent experience at the State Department or other national security departments and agencies that hinders their ability to be optimally effective.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No, I do not. "Name and shame" neither improves performance nor strengthens organizational culture. I believe high-achieving organizations develop cultures that acknowledge their team members sometimes make mistakes, despite the best of intentions and effort. Addressing mistakes, deficiencies of performance or other workplace issues always should be done with wider morale and well-being in mind, and in accordance with the Department's regulations and guidelines concerning performance and conduct.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your Deputy Under Secretary?

*Answer.* The position of Deputy Under Secretary for Management was discontinued when an Act of Congress of October 7, 1978, established the permanent position of Under Secretary of State for Management, and I do not intend to reinstate the position. Adding an additional management layer would be counterproductive to my goal of reducing bureaucracy and empowering the workforce, key elements employed by many private sector leaders to retain talent and boost productivity.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your Deputy Under Secretary?

*Answer.* I do not plan to reinstate the Deputy Under Secretary position.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

*Answer.* The Secretary of State has security responsibility for U.S. diplomats on official duty overseas, a responsibility that entails protecting them and their families from a wide range of threats. At the same time, our profession is at times dangerous and often involves serving in harm's way. If confirmed, I would seek to improve our ability to balance these two imperatives. Our national security mission entails diverse types of risk. While our personnel routinely engage with interlocutors and contacts beyond the walls of our embassies, we are committed to doing even more. The Department goes to great lengths to facilitate our nation's diplomacy in challenging places, including high-threat locations, but a combination of current law and policy impairs our ability to most effectively tailor our management of risk to reflect actual threat levels in individual countries. If confirmed, I would welcome opportunities to consult and work closely with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to identify adjustments that would enable us to advance more effectively the country's interests in every country and threat environment.

*Public Diplomacy: An Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts.*

- What is the public diplomacy environment like overall?

**Answer.** The United States confronts complex security, economic, health, social, and climate challenges in a world of rising nationalism and rivalry with authoritarian states. The public diplomacy environment is competitive. Other actors are actively competing for control of the information environment and for the affinities of foreign publics. Our competitors deploy centralized, state-run propaganda and disinformation fueled by the vast expansion of communications through technology and expend unprecedented resources in whole-of-government efforts to gain advantages in the sphere of public opinion and influence.

U.S. public diplomacy has enduring strengths founded on more than 70 years of work to build relationships and partnerships built on transparency and trust with governments, businesses, civil society, leaders, and ordinary citizens in the United States and around the world. Our global public diplomacy footprint—composed of 185 public diplomacy sections in U.S. missions abroad and over 4,000 public diplomacy professionals serving domestically and overseas—design and implement public engagement programs and messaging campaigns to support U.S. policy objectives in local context, help us understand foreign audiences, and design approaches that inform, listen to, and build relationships with them.

*Question.* What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

**Answer.** The Department faces a number of public diplomacy challenges, including rising authoritarianism, competition from rivals who outspend us, disinformation from malign actors, and closed media and communication environments. In addition, the COVID pandemic has impacted travel and consequently in person exchanges and the participation of foreign students in higher education in the United States.

Some provisions in law, enacted with the best of intentions in the aftermath of tragic attacks on embassy facilities and personnel, have reduced public access to our public diplomacy facilities, programs and professionals, constraining the State Department's ability to deliver maximum impact from the taxpayer resources entrusted to us to advance the nation's interests overseas. If confirmed, I would welcome opportunities to consult and work closely with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to identify adjustments that would enable us to advance more effectively the country's interests in every country and threat environment.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus in-country missions when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

**Answer.** The messaging guidance provided by the Department is executed, supported, and refined for foreign audiences by public diplomacy teams in our embassies overseas, in close coordination with their corresponding regional bureaus' public diplomacy offices and the Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA). Our embassies design and implement messaging campaigns to support U.S. policy objectives in local context. Public diplomacy staff at our embassies, as well as monitoring and analyses undertaken by GPA and the Global Engagement Center help us understand foreign audiences and design approaches that inform, listen to, and build relationships with them. Washington-based and overseas public diplomacy staff strive to coordinate mutually reinforcing messaging.

#### *Human Rights and International Organizations*

*Question.* Officers who cover human rights at posts abroad are often singular officers or very small groups of officers responsible for reporting on a large quantity of human rights issues, including informing or drafting reports published by the bureaus of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, the office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons, and the Office of International Religious Freedom.

- What is your assessment of the lack of officers who cover human rights?

**Answer.** I appreciate the committee's sustained attention to human rights, trafficking in persons, and international religious freedom issues, and specifically the number of Department personnel at posts focused on them. The Department constantly strives to improve the quality of the work in these areas, including our reporting. While it is generally true that with additional resources, we could devote more staff to these valuable efforts, the Department is currently using available resources as efficiently as possible to both address country conditions and to produce well-respected reports. I am committed to further consulting with you and the committee on addressing any Department staffing needs.

*Question.* Should posts have more officers monitoring human rights in country?

*Answer.* I appreciate the Ranking Member's attention to human rights and, if confirmed, am committed to further consulting with you and the committee on addressing any of our staffing needs at overseas posts. Secretary Blinken, Deputy Secretary McKeon and others have underscored the importance of improving the State Department's agility, enabling more regular reallocation of our career professionals to address compelling policy priorities. If confirmed, I would ensure those bureaus and offices reporting to me, including Global Talent Management, support fully any future reviews of current overseas staffing distribution or initiatives to adjust staffing in our embassies and consulates overseas.

*Question.* During your time in Afghanistan during the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO), who was responsible for flight clearances to land and depart from Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA)?

*Answer.* I refer you to the Department of Defense for more information about flight clearances at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) during the NEO.

*Question.* When you ceased operational responsibility, was the same person/entity still responsible for flight clearances in and out of HKIA and to the lily pads on U.S. military bases?

*Answer.* I refer you to the Department of Defense for more information about flight clearances at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) or U.S. military bases during the NEO and in the ensuing months.

*Question.* Please describe interactions with the Taliban during the NEO.

*Answer.* During the Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation, the United States communicated with the Taliban in Kabul and Doha on matters of important, temporary, operational U.S. interests, including the departure of U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, local U.S. Government staff and others from Afghanistan. As part of this communication, the Taliban altered their actions in ways that enabled us to evacuate most American citizens and many vulnerable and at-risk Afghans. Subsequent operational, ad hoc communications with Taliban representatives have allowed us to continue to relocate U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents, and Afghans.

*Question.* At what point did the bottleneck become so bad that gaining entry into the airport required passcodes and/or "knowing someone on the inside."

*Answer.* As Secretary Blinken noted in his testimony on September 14, "[T]he situation outside the airport became incredibly chaotic, with thousands of people massing at the airport, massing at the gates of the airport."

My involvement with the evacuation operation began on August 17, so I can only speak to circumstances that occurred on and after that date. By the time I arrived on the ground on August 19, the principal access points were characterized by extreme overcrowding that impeded entry by American citizens and legal residents, foreign nationals of Allied and Partner nationals, and those vulnerable or at-risk Afghans we sought to help depart.

In the ensuing days, numerous factors—threats of suicide attacks by ISIS-K, uneven conduct by Taliban irregulars controlling checkpoints on the approaches to the airport, severe overcrowding and viral information-sharing among Afghans seeking to depart—hampered our ability to develop methods to safely and predictably facilitate entry to the airfield complex for our citizens and other priority groups. State Department professionals and U.S. military counterparts developed new methods on a daily basis, then adjusted those methods multiple times each day to reflect real-time conditions and constraints. This persistent, creative problem-solving enabled us ultimately to evacuate many in priority groups for the United States and for over two dozen Allied and Partner nations.

The men and women with whom I served during the NEO did the best we could with what we had to work with, in the time constraints we faced. I think every day about the people, many of whom I know personally, who are still inside Afghanistan, who we were not able to reach. If confirmed, I intend to continue supporting the many career professionals working in various ways to support the relocation effort, today and in the years ahead.

*Question.* How many American Citizens remain in Afghanistan?

*Answer.* Since August 31, and as of December 1, the Department has directly assisted in the departure of 479 U.S. citizens from Afghanistan. As of December 8, 129 additional U.S. citizens in Afghanistan had requested assistance with departure, and, of those, three were ready to depart. This number fluctuates depending on those who have made their presence in Afghanistan known to the Department; expressed a desire for departure assistance; or returned to Afghanistan and are

again requesting assistance. Most U.S. citizens still in Afghanistan are there because they are not ready to depart.

*Question.* Under your direction, please describe your interactions with Veterans/Veterans Groups/NGOs looking to evacuate Afghans on private charters or other means of evacuation.

*Answer.* Upon my most recent return from Afghanistan, I was asked to establish a team to coordinate relocation efforts across government agencies and with advocacy groups, nonprofit organizations, and others. The team works closely with the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and other partners to facilitate the departure of those who wish to leave Afghanistan, including U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), and vulnerable or at-risk Afghans.

The team I established began communicating and working with veterans advocacy groups in early September. It now coordinates with a self-organized coalition of more than 100 organizations who share our commitment to continuing to facilitate the safe and orderly travel of U.S. citizens, LPRs, and vulnerable or at-risk Afghans.

*Question.* Did the Department offer to provide any resources to these groups to facilitate additional evacuations during the NEO or continued after the end of the NEO?

*Answer.* Other than the ongoing work of our personnel on these issues, the Department of State is not funding privately organized flights from Afghanistan. The Department has funded the cost of certain transportation, including air travel, for U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), and their immediate family members. As of December 1, the Department has assisted directly in the departure of 479 American citizens and 417 Lawful Permanent Residents since the conclusion of the noncombatant evacuation operation on August 30. We will continue our efforts to facilitate the safe and orderly travel of U.S. citizens, LPRs, and our other vulnerable or at-risk Afghan allies.

If confirmed, I would seek to ensure the Department continues to provide information to you and your colleagues about our support for private organizations' efforts, including as necessary in a closed setting.

*Question.* In your view, what is the difference between the Undersecretary of State for Management and the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources? Are these two positions at all duplicative?

*Answer.* The Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources enables the Department to thoughtfully approach issues and resource needs that are cross-cutting, interdisciplinary, and involve substantial coordination with OMB, Congress, and other department and agency leadership. The Undersecretary of State for Management has a mix of operational responsibilities for today's issues and a focus on implementation for longer term planning to ensure proposed improvements to organization, process, and infrastructure are sustainable and applicable to a wide range of operating environments overseas. These positions are complementary and mutually reinforcing, enabling Department leadership to focus on both urgent and important challenges.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO HON. JOHN R. BASS BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

*Question.* There have been numerous reports and many discussions here on the Hill in recent years about the lack of diversity at the State Department. I applaud the creation of the role of a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and look forward to hearing more about the office's work. However, much of the responsibility for not only recruiting and hiring diverse talent, but retaining that talent, falls under the Undersecretary for Management. We have also heard many reports in recent years, about low morale at the State Department, for a variety of reasons.

- What specifically do you think needs to be done to retain diverse talent in the ranks of the State Department, both in the Civil Service and the Foreign Service? What policies and practices need to change, and how can Congress assist?

*Answer.* I am committed to retaining our talent. We must continue to expand our support to employees, including wellness resources, workforce flexibilities, childcare, targeted support for employees and their family members overseas, professional development opportunities, and rewarding career paths. We also must promote a diverse, equitable, inclusive and accessible environment where our employees can thrive. The Secretary recently announced that the Department is establishing a re-



tention team in the Bureau of Global Talent Management to better understand why employees leave, why they stay, and their personal and professional priorities, to build a Department-wide strategic plan focused on retaining our talented staff. I look forward to working with you, other members of the committee and the wider Congress to address these needs and opportunities.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* I agree these incidents must be taken seriously and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel. I understand a major interagency effort is investigating what is causing the incidents and how all U.S. personnel worldwide can be protected, and this issue remains a top priority for Secretary of State Antony Blinken. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to ensure anyone who reports anomalous health incidents receives immediate and appropriate attention and care, and I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Mission Poland community.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any employees or their family members who report a potential anomalous health incident will receive immediate and appropriate attention and care. If confirmed, I will communicate with our workforce to provide care for affected employees and their family members and work together with partners in Washington and the interagency to do what we can to protect against these incidents and to find the cause of what has been afflicting these members of our Embassy teams. I consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Mission Poland community.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will consider it my primary responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Mission Poland community. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and to ensure that all protocols are being followed.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. MARK BRZEZINSKI BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Nord Stream 2*

*Question.* The administration has declared that Nord Stream 2 is a Russian malign influence project and a bad deal for Europe. While it is widely accepted that Ukraine will be most disadvantaged due to its role in the transmission of Russian gas westward, Poland also operates a pipeline connecting Europe to Russian gas supplies.

- If Nord Stream 2 becomes operational, what new challenges will Poland face?

*Answer.* Poland, like the United States, opposes Nord Stream 2 as a harmful Russian geopolitical project that damages European energy security, particularly for Ukraine. Poland will end Gazprom gas contracts by the end of 2022, because it has diversified its energy mix away from Russian sources, including imports of LNG from the United States and other countries and the planned completion in October 2022 of the Polish-owned Baltic Pipe from Norway. The United States also has a strong partnership with Poland to develop nuclear power using U.S. technology and expand the use of other forms of zero-emission renewable energy.

*Question.* While the U.S. and Germany came to an agreement on how to respond should Russia use Nord Stream 2 to weaken Ukraine, what plan is in place should Russia do the same in Poland?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I am committed to work with Poland to advocate for full adherence in letter and in spirit of the pipeline's certification process and compliance with the EU's Third Energy Package, including its requirements for ownership unbundling and third-party access to the pipeline to transit gas from sources other than Russia and Gazprom. These measures, together with Germany's implementation of its commitments under our July 2021 Joint Statement on Support for Ukraine and European Energy Security, reduce the risks an operational NS2 pipeline would pose to European energy security and to the security of Ukraine and frontline NATO and EU countries, such as Poland.

*Question.* How do you believe Poland has interacted with this U.S.-Germany agreement?

*Answer.* Immediately following the conclusion of the agreement, State Department Counselor Derek Chollet traveled to Poland, as well as Ukraine, to consult with our Polish Ally about steps to avoid the worst-case scenarios regarding the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Senior Advisor Amos Hochstein followed up with a trip to the region in September where he met with senior officials in Ukraine, Poland, and Germany to further coordinate our approach on this issue.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. Poland opposes Nord Stream 2, as does the United States. President Duda told Polish press the U.S.-Germany Joint Statement "reduces the security of a large part of Europe, including a number of European Union countries" To address Polish and Ukrainian concerns following the conclusion of the Joint Statement, State Department Counselor Derek Chollet traveled to Warsaw, as well as to Kyiv, to consult with our Polish Ally about steps to avoid the worst-case scenarios regarding the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Senior Advisor Amos Hochstein followed up with a trip to Ukraine, Poland, and Germany in September to further coordinate with senior officials on this issue. Senior Advisor Hochstein continues to engage Allies and partners to address the risks posed by the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project.*

#### *Belarus and the Weaponization of Migrants*

*Question.* Belarus has launched a hybrid attack by pushing thousands of migrants to its borders with its EU neighbors, and most intensely on Poland. This serves two purposes: 1. To put pressure on Poland, and 2. To divide the European Union over how it should approach the crisis.

- How will you work with the Polish Government to help them address the situation and find a domestic solution to the crisis?

*Answer.* The actions by the Lukashenka regime threaten security, sow division, and aim to distract from Russia's activities on the border with Ukraine. I hope the Belarusian authorities will take affirmative steps to resolve the humanitarian crisis that Lukashenka's regime started and alleviate the suffering of the people the Lukashenka regime has victimized. If confirmed, I pledge to continue close cooperation with Poland to support a free, independent, and democratic Belarus, including maintaining contacts with the Belarusian opposition exiled in Poland and strengthening U.S. Embassy grants to several Poland-based media outlets and NGOs that support independent media and democratic values in Belarus.

*Question.* How will you ensure that Poland upholds its international and EU obligations to uphold the rights of migrants?

*Answer.* The regime in Belarus refuses to respect its international obligations and commitments, with respect to its treatment of its own people and undermines the peace and security of Europe. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish Government to ensure it is doing everything it can to secure its borders while seeking to assist and protect the migrants and asylum seekers that Lukashenka has victimized. I will encourage the Polish Government to grant humanitarian organizations access to the border area to provide assistance to the migrants and asylum seekers. I should note that the Belarusian authorities have refused at least three attempts by the Polish Government to provide humanitarian aid to the migrants and asylum seekers on the Belarus side of the border.

*Question.* How will you work with your fellow U.S. diplomats in other EU countries to encourage their governments to work together to find a solution?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts representing the United States in other EU and partner countries on working with our allies and partners to promote freedom, democracy, and rule of law in Belarus, to support the

Belarusian opposition in exile, and to hold the Lukashenka regime accountable for its flagrant violations and abuses of human rights in its treatment of Belarusians.

*Expats and Exiled Opposition in Poland*

*Question.* Many opposition politicians, activists, and journalists have fled Russia and Belarus to escape political persecution, and have formed expat communities in Poland and Lithuania where they continue their work.

- How will you engage with these opposition groups in Poland?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue the frequent engagement that Mission Poland has had with Russian and Belarusian democracy activists since they were forced to flee to Poland.

*Question.* How will you engage with your fellow U.S. diplomats in other expat host countries to help protect the opposition's liberties and support their work against authoritarianism?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterparts representing the United States in other EU and partner countries on working with our allies and partners to promote freedom, democracy, and rule of law in Belarus, to support the Belarusian opposition in exile, and to hold the Lukashenka regime accountable for its flagrant violations of the human rights of Belarusians. I will especially seek to work with my counterparts in Lithuania, Ukraine, and Latvia, where most Belarusians fleeing Lukashenka's repression have gone.

*Question.* What U.S. Government resources will you bring to bear to support the exiled pro-democracy and human rights activists of Russia and Belarus?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government dedicates significant resources to support exiled activists from Russia and Belarus, many of whom reside in Poland. If confirmed, I will ensure that Mission Poland is an active part of U.S. Government-wide efforts to use these resources effectively. This would include Mission Poland personnel engaging with exiled activists and coordinating closely with Department of State and USAID colleagues in Poland and Washington. I would also coordinate with the Government of Poland, and with representatives of like-minded governments, to ensure our support for exiled activists advances our policy goals and the aspirations of those who are fighting for a democratic future for Belarus and Russia.

*Defense Issues*

*Question.* The Polish Government has announced the desire to significantly expand its military capabilities to counter Russian aggression. Poland has indicated it plans to double the size of its military,

- As the Polish military grows in size and power, do you anticipate any issues for Poland maintaining civilian control over the military? What command and control issues exist in the Polish military?

*Answer.* The Polish constitution specifically enjoins the military to observe neutrality in political matters and subjects the military to civilian democratic control. The establishment of civilian democratic control of the armed forces was a key principle of NATO's 1995 Study on Enlargement. Poland observes this constitutional obligation and political responsibility as a NATO Ally. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Poland to strengthen its national security in accordance with these principles and look forward to consulting with members of this committee on this subject.

*Question.* Do you have any concern that such a military expansion will provoke Russia?

*Answer.* Poland, like all sovereign nations, has the obligation to defend its territory and people. As a NATO Ally, Poland develops its Armed Forces in coordination with Allies and the NATO Defense Planning Process. NATO is a defensive Alliance. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Polish Government, colleagues in the Executive Branch, and members of this committee to increase Poland's capacity for individual and collective self-defense.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. No. It is Russia's aggressive policies and military expansion that are provocative, not the measures that its neighbors take to provide for their own defense. Poland, like all sovereign nations, has the obligation to defend its territory and people. As a NATO Ally, Poland develops its Armed Forces in coordination with Allies and the NATO Defense Planning Process. NATO is a defensive Alliance. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Polish Government, colleagues in the Executive Branch, and members of this committee to increase Poland's capacity for individual and collective self-defense, which is consistent with*

*successive administrations' calls for Allies to shoulder more of NATO's military burden.*

#### *Nuclear Threats*

*Question.* The Biden administration has been exploring the idea of establishing a “sole purpose” nuclear policy. Previous administrations have considered changing to a “no first use” policy, but realized international security was more important than ideology. Over time, proponents re-labelled the concept as “sole purpose,” but have been clear that idea is the same in all but name. If this administration abandons nuclear deterrence, and adopts a sole purpose nuclear declaratory policy, it will scare our friends, embolden our adversaries, and damage the very nonproliferation goals it claims to support.

If the United States were to adopt a “sole purpose” nuclear policy:

- What new vulnerabilities and challenges would Poland have to face in revising its national defense strategy?

*Answer.* The Department of Defense is currently leading a Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) that will define U.S. declaratory policy. That review remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. During this review, the Biden administration is conducting extensive, wide-ranging consultations with U.S. allies and partners, including Poland. I understand the concerns expressed among some allies and partners, members of Congress, and experts regarding U.S. adoption of a “no-first-use” or “sole purpose” policy. Those concerns will inform the review process. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Poland to understand how the NPR may impact Poland’s national defense strategy.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. The Department of Defense is currently leading a Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) that will define U.S. declaratory policy. During this review, the Biden administration is conducting extensive consultations with U.S. Allies, including Poland, and the views expressed, including concerns about “no-first-use” or “sole purpose” will weigh heavily in the administration’s decision making. President Biden has called Article 5 a “sacred obligation” and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. The President’s Interim National Security Strategy also makes clear “that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.” While I am not part of the NPR review, I am confident that the final result will ensure that the U.S. will have the capabilities needed to deter aggression and respond if deterrence fails. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Poland to understand how the NPR may impact Poland’s national defense strategy.*

*Question.* How would a change to sole purpose affect Poland’s confidence in the Biden administration’s allegiance to NATO’s Article 5 commitments?

*Answer.* The DoD-led NPR, which will define U.S. declaratory policy, remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. Regardless of the outcome of the NPR, however, President Biden has called Article 5 a “sacred obligation” and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad.

*Question.* How would unilateral reductions in U.S. nuclear forces, regardless of growing threats, assure allies and deter adversaries?

*Answer.* President Biden’s Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, which guides the drafting of the NPR, directed that “we will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.” Whether unilateral or reciprocal, any potential reductions would need to be carried out in a manner consistent with the objective of ensuring the United States sustains a modern, credible, and effective deterrent so long as nuclear weapons exist. I would never support unilateral reductions that endanger U.S. security or weaken U.S. negotiating leverage.

*Question.* What reforms and revisions to its strategy do you anticipate the Polish Armed Forces would make?

*Answer.* The DoD-led NPR, which will define U.S. declaratory policy, remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. During this review, the Biden administration is conducting extensive, wide-ranging consultations with U.S. allies and partners, including Poland. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Poland to understand how the NPR may impact the Polish Armed Forces.

*Question.* How could the U.S. reassure Poland that we can mount an effective of-fense in the case of a conventional attack on its borders?

Answer. The DoD-led NPR, which will define U.S. declaratory policy, remains ongoing. It is therefore premature to speculate on the final outcome. Regardless of the outcome of the NPR, however, President Biden has called Article 5 a “sacred obligation” and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that we are ready to respond to any attack on Poland, be it a conventional military attack or otherwise.

#### *Democratic Backsliding*

*Question.* Poland has been criticized by the EU for failing to uphold standards for judicial reforms as defined by an EU law that was rejected by Poland’s Constitutional Tribunal. They have raised related concerns for the Polish Government’s ability to fight corruption and uphold the rule of law.

- What are your concerns for judicial reforms, corruption, and rule of law in Poland?

Answer. I share the concerns expressed by the administration regarding democratic backsliding in Poland. I welcome Poland’s decision to dismantle the disciplinary chamber for judges as a positive first step toward restoring separation of powers and judicial independence, which are integral to a healthy democracy. If confirmed, I will engage in frank discussions between our governments on these issues and work with all stakeholders in Poland to strengthen the rule of law. I will stress that NATO not only defends our territories, but also our shared democratic values and way of life. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Polish Government to uphold shared democratic values, especially as Poland becomes chair of the OSCE in 2022.

*Question.* How will you engage with the Polish Government to promote reforms for good governance?

Answer. Promoting our shared democratic values is an essential component of U.S.-Polish relations. If confirmed, I will advocate with the Polish Government to promote good governance. We will also leverage the strength of our civil society partnerships and depth of our public diplomacy tools, including social media, to engage with Poles regarding the importance of preserving the shared democratic values that underpin our relationship.

#### *TVN and Discovery*

*Question.* A bill in the Polish parliament proposes a ban on entities outside of the European Economic Area owning majority shares in media companies operating in Poland. The bill was approved by the Sejm, rejected by the Senate, and has now returned to the Sejm for a second vote. While progress has come to a standstill, there is still a serious possibility that the bill will become law. If this happens, U.S.-based company Discovery will be forced to sell its ownership stake in TVN, the most prominent television station that still maintains independence from Polish Government influence.

- The arguments in parliament are as such: the ruling Law and Justice party states this bill is designed to protect Poland from foreign disinformation, however the opposition argues it is an attempt to silence independent media. What is your interpretation of the bill’s purpose?

Answer. Despite the governing coalition’s claims that the bill is intended to prevent Russian and Chinese companies from acquiring Polish media companies, it is clear passage of this bill would erode democratic principles and further shrink the space for media freedom in Poland. If confirmed, I will continue to stress to Poland the importance of upholding shared democratic values, including media freedom, which are vital for the functioning of a democracy.

*Question.* Do you think it is likely that the bill will be passed?

Answer. I hope not. I was pleased the Senate rejected the Sejm’s legislation restricting foreign media ownership. This bill undermines the trust of investors and calls into question Poland’s commitment to democratic principles as it threatens media freedom. A definitive rejection of this bill in the Sejm would reassure foreign investors in Poland, but leaving it unresolved damages investor confidence. I welcome President Duda’s statements in support of freedom of expression, the sanctity of contracts, and the values that underpin our relationship and his promise to veto the bill if it were to reach his desk.

*Question.* If you could broker a compromise between the political parties that both protects independent media and protects Poland from malign influence, what would it look like?

Answer. A free and independent media makes our democracies stronger. Given the current regional challenges, and with Poland assuming the OSCE chairmanship in 2022, I believe it is in Poland's interest to maintain a strong and healthy democracy, a foundational component of U.S.-Polish relations. If confirmed, I will continue cooperation with Poland in promoting peace, prosperity, security, and democratic governance in Central and Eastern Europe while countering malign, outside influences and disinformation. We should work together in the OSCE to promote our democratic values. Media pluralism and freedom make democratic societies resilient against disinformation and malign influence, which are threats all our societies face.

#### *Restitution Law*

*Question.* The Polish parliament has passed bills that end restitution claims for both the Nazi and Communist periods.

- How will you engage with political parties in Poland to encourage the restoration of those rights?

Answer. I regret the passage of a law limiting claims for property restitution for victims of communism and Nazism, including Jewish Holocaust victims. This is a complex issue, and if confirmed, I will support our ongoing engagement with Poland to focus on Holocaust remembrance and education, including the acknowledgement of history. I would also explore ways to achieve a measure of justice for victims and their heirs to properly address that history.

*Question.* Many Americans are affected by the nullification of restitution claims and the end of the possibility to apply for restitution. How do you plan to work to fight for those Americans' and their concerns?

Answer. While I was disappointed by the enactment of the law to limit claims for property restitution for victims of communism and Nazism, including Holocaust victims, if confirmed, I will continue exploring ways to achieve a measure of justice through some form of compensation. This is a complex issue, so I believe it is best to establish a direct dialogue between experts on it. If confirmed, I would like the Polish Government to meet with U.S. experts to discuss new and creative approaches to meeting Poland's Terezin Declaration commitments on compensation.

#### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & HUMAN RIGHTS

#### *Trafficking in Persons*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Poland remained on Tier 2 due to continued inadequate efforts to prevent identification of child trafficking and forced labor victims, among other failures to meet the minimum standards.

- How will you work with Poland's Government and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure Polish interlocutors understand the United States is committed to combating trafficking in persons in Poland and beyond. While the Polish Government is making efforts to address this issue, more needs to be done. If confirmed, I will encourage the Polish Government to increase proactive identification and assistance for victims, particularly among vulnerable groups, and encourage consistent and sufficient funding for victim services. If confirmed, I will lead Mission Poland to develop and implement both short and long-term strategies of engagement with government officials, business leaders, and civil society in Poland.

#### *International Religious Freedom*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, serious religious freedom issues were highlighted in Poland, including anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim and anti-Catholic hate crimes.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office for International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. Increasing societal respect for religious freedom and members of religious minority groups in Poland is important. If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations, religious minority groups, and government entities to develop programs and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms. If confirmed, I will promote inter-religious dialogue among religious groups in Poland. I will work with both the Office of International Religious Freedom and the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism to ensure Mission Poland rec-

ommends, develops, and implements policies and programs to combat discrimination and promote tolerance.

#### *Human Rights*

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, serious human rights abuses in Poland included violence against or threats of violence against members of ethnic minorities.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* U.S. foreign policy has always promoted respect for human rights, as embodied in our Constitution as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations and government entities to assess and bolster human rights and advocate for appropriate policies and reforms to address potential threats of violence against members of ethnic minority groups in Poland. If confirmed, I will underscore to the Polish Government that our bilateral partnership relies on a genuine shared commitment to democratic values and to the protection of human rights for all. And I will support civil society efforts to hold the Government accountable to its international commitments, including through the OSCE as Poland assumes the Chairmanship in 2022.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly support civil society efforts to hold the Government accountable to its international commitments on human rights for all, including through the OSCE as Poland assumes the Chairmanship in 2022. With my Political Section and Public Diplomacy team, I will seek opportunities to support civil society advocacy and to lift up the voices of human rights defenders. If confirmed, I will also underscore to the Polish Government that our bilateral partnership relies on a genuine shared commitment to democratic values and to the protection of human rights for all. We will leverage the strength of our civil society partnerships and the depth of our public diplomacy tools to engage with Poles to promote respect for human rights in Poland as well as throughout the region.

#### INDO-PACIFIC

#### *China*

*Question.* You gave a speech in 2019 at the China Development Forum. I would like to ask you to comment on several statements you made in your speech, specifically whether you still stand by these statements, and if not, how your views have changed. Please respond to each statement separately.

- “[T]oday the Sino-U.S. geopolitical relationship is being reduced to the specific disagreements we have.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021].* When I gave these remarks, I had a considerably more optimistic view of PRC intentions than I do now. I now recognize that the United States can address the PRC challenge by rebuilding our strength at home, and by revitalizing our partnerships and alliances. The U.S. relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*Question.* “The shared strategic determination to agree to disagree meant that a diplomatic accommodation could become a de facto strategic partnership, which it did.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my fam-

ily's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. When I gave these remarks, the relationship with the PRC was at a different point than it is now. My views have evolved as well, based on an on-going pattern of provocative Chinese actions. The strategic environment has changed significantly in recent years, as has the PRC itself. There was once a broad consensus that economic liberalization in the PRC would lead to political liberalization. That has not happened. The PRC has been growing more authoritarian at home and more assertive abroad. Beijing is now challenging our security, prosperity, and values—and the international rules-based order. Our relationship with the PRC is now characterized by strategic competition. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Science & Technology collaboration was key, and brought the U.S. and the Chinese together around the concept of a segmented relationship: Consultative, bilateral as well as normalizing.” While this was true at the outset of normalization, much has changed. What are your views now on the extent to which the United States should engage in technology cooperation with China?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. When I made those earlier remarks, they reflected my earlier view, which has since evolved, that collaboration on science and technology was possible. We must be extremely vigilant toward PRC investment in critical infrastructure or technology that can expose any country to national security risks, as well as data privacy risks. We also should safeguard sensitive technology in research spaces, in order to minimize threats without threatening our own values and strengths of openness and diversity. Our STEM restrictions on student and research visas are carefully targeted and affect less than 2 percent of PRC university students, but help to safeguard national security and data privacy. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Despite the current trade difficulties and the alarming rhetoric associated with it, the U.S.-China relationship is one of “complex interdependence” as an article in “Liaowang” put it, where both sides can compete and consult within the existing international rules.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. These remarks reflected an earlier view I held, including my hope that the PRC would support the international rules-based order and norms. An on-going pattern of Chinese provocations makes clear that this view is not realistic. As U.S. Trade Representative Tai outlined in her October 4 speech, the United States is taking four initial steps to re-align our trade policies towards the PRC. I support the U.S. Government's approach, which includes discussing Beijing's performance under the Phase One Agreement, restarting our targeted tariff exclusions process, raising concerns about Beijing's non-market policies and practices that distort competition, and consulting allies and partners like Poland to set the rules of the road for trade and technology in the 21st century. My focus*



*is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish government to promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to Poland and work to combat the PRC's malign influence in Poland.*

*Question.* “To be sure, in so far as the status quo is concerned, China does seek changes in the international system, but it does so in a patient, prudent and peaceful fashion.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. This statement does not reflect my current view of PRC coercive activities in specific sectors. The PRC is taking deliberate steps in attempts to reshape the United Nations and other multilateral bodies in ways that are inconsistent with the institutions' foundational values and established international norms. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I would make it a priority to work with the Polish Government to oppose efforts that undermine the rules-based international order as I advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Americans who deal with foreign affairs especially appreciate that Chinese strategic thinking about the world has moved away from notions of global class conflict and violent revolution, emphasizing instead China's “peaceful rising” in global influence while seeking a “harmonious world.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. My views on the PRC's role in international organizations has significantly changed since I made this statement. The United States and other democracies share a deep commitment to the international rules, norms, and institutions that promote our security, stability, and prosperity. When the PRC's actions work against these institutions, the United States must adopt a competitive or even adversarial posture toward these actions. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC's malign influence and destabilizing activities while promoting current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to Poland.*

*Question.* “The U.S.-China relationship will either expand or narrow. The whole world—as well as our countries—will benefit if it expands.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. This statement conveyed my previous view of the U.S. relationship with the PRC, a view which has developed and become more nuanced, to include how competition with the PRC is an inevitable component of U.S. foreign policy. I now believe intense competition requires intense diplomacy. That's why President Biden initiated the November 15 meeting with President Xi. These high-level meetings help us to responsibly manage U.S.-PRC competition.*

*President Biden underscored the importance of managing strategic risks. As part of this effort, the two leaders decided to explore talks on arms control and strategic stability. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC's malign influence and destabilizing activities as I promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC.*

*Question.* “There is great potential for the Sino-U.S. relationship to be a comprehensive global partnership that parallels U.S. relations with Europe and Japan, complete with regularly scheduled formal and informal meetings of our top leaders and truly personal in-depth discussions regarding not just our bilateral relations but about the world in general.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. Chinese conduct in recent years make it clear that this view is no longer realistic, although meetings between our top leaders are necessary, common-sense guardrails on the U.S.-PRC relationship to ensure that competition does not veer into unintended conflict. That said, my focus is now on the bilateral relationship between the United States and Poland. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* “Beyond the trade dispute, I worry there is developing in the U.S. an industry around demonizing China, scaring U.S. businesspeople away from normal business engagement.”

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. This statement conveyed my earlier perception of the bilateral relationship, which has evolved in the face of China's increasingly aggressive conduct in the international arena. While I was hopeful about the role business engagement could play in our bilateral relationship with China, I now recognize the importance of being deliberate when we look at areas of competition with the PRC. We are not opposed to fair market cooperation with or competition from PRC companies. We are deliberate in our scrutiny of PRC threats, such as investment in critical infrastructure or technologies that can expose a country to national security risks, data privacy risks]. This vigilance is necessary, and if confirmed, I will work with Poland to help build capacity and resilience in this area. If confirmed, I also will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC's malign influence and destabilizing activities as I promote current U.S. policy regarding the PRC.*

*Question.* In your 2019 China speech, you also said U.S.-PRC consultations regarding India-Pakistan can lead to more effective mediation.

- Given the violence and ongoing skirmishes on the PRC-India border, do you still think the PRC could be a helpful partner in this area?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family's long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family's experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. I made that earlier statement in the context of my hope that we could work with the PRC across different areas of our foreign relations. I do not believe the PRC can play a constructive role in any mediation between India and Pakistan, particularly due to the PRC-India border skirmishes. The administration is working with European allies and partners through NATO and the U.S.-EU Dialogue on China to influence the PRC to make a positive contribution to global and regional security issues. When the United States and allies and partners like Poland can influence Beijing to bolster global and regional security, it is worth pursuing. If confirmed, I will seek to collaborate with the Polish Government to advance current U.S. policy objectives regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.*

*Question.* In your China speech, you say that we can “agree to disagree” and work with China despite our disagreements on Taiwan, human rights, and other things. Yet today the disagreements have veered into fundamentally competitive areas of conflict, such as the PRC’s insistence on Taiwan’s annexation and its goal to become “technologically dominant”. Moreover, through public statements and the insistence of adherence to the “Two Lists”, the Chinese Government has made clear it will not “de-link” areas of cooperation and competition, such as human rights and climate.

- Can we still agree to disagree on issues with China?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. I believe that the U.S. relationship with the PRC will be competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be. Our commitment to Taiwan remains rock-solid and contributes to peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. I would publicly highlight how the PRC’s military, economic, and diplomatic pressure on Taiwan, and coercive actions toward countries that seek to deepen ties with Taiwan, exacerbate tensions and increase concerns about the PRC’s behavior. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed as the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, I will work with the Polish Government to counter the PRC’s malign influence and destabilizing activities while promoting current U.S. policy regarding the PRC.*

*Question.* What risks does doing so present to U.S. national security and national interests?

*Answer.* I made these remarks in 2019 as a private citizen and, as I mentioned in my hearing, I wish I could have read the November 2020 SFRC majority report before I gave that speech. That speech reflected my family’s long history in the Sino-U.S. relationship, and I meant to draw perspectives and observations from my family’s experience. As I stated in the hearing, I would like to amend the narrative I offered in that speech to take more into account what has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and elsewhere. My focus is now on the U.S.-Poland relationship. If confirmed, I will represent and advocate for current U.S. policy regarding the PRC throughout my tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Poland.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. I believe that the United States must pursue its national security priorities, without giving into PRC insistence on linking areas of competition or adversarial interaction without potential areas for cooperation. My focus is on the security relationship between the United States and Poland. If confirmed, I will work with the Government of Poland to build resiliency and tools that will help it stand against PRC attempts at economic and political coercion and linkage of issues that should not be linked.*

*Question.* My understanding is that you accepted an \$18,000 honorarium for this speech, but that you originally only reported \$1,000 on U.S. Government ethics forms.

- Can you confirm that you did accept the \$18,000?

*Answer.* Yes. As described below, information related to the China Development Forum was correctly reported on my OGE 278 Nominee Financial Disclosure Report in accordance with the reporting instructions.

*Question.* Can you confirm you have corrected your ethics forms?

Answer. Information related to the China Development Forum was correctly reported on my OGE 278 Nominee Financial Disclosure Report in accordance with the reporting instruction. As noted above, I spoke at the China Development Forum in 2019. The honorarium for that event was received before 2020, and thus fell outside the reporting period covered by Part 2 of the OGE 278 report. However, Part 4 of the OGE 278 covers a longer period of time, and I accurately disclosed that I had received more than \$5,000 from the China Development Forum within the preceding two calendar years, which reflects the 2019 honorarium. I was subsequently scheduled to provide written remarks for a China Development Forum symposium in 2021, for which I received \$1,000. This honorarium is reflected in Part 2 of my nominee financial disclosure report because it was received during the “reporting period.” I ultimately decided not to participate in the 2021 symposium, and I returned the \$1000 to the entity that sponsored the conference.

*Question.* Do you still believe you should have accepted this honorarium for such a speech?

Answer. I accepted this invitation as a result of my longstanding family narrative with China. I come to this from a family that was educated by the Cold War, and knows about the Rule of Law. A lot of that speech is about hope. I was raised to find a diplomatic way forward, even when the chances are not high. I recognize now that is not the way forward. I have read Senator Risch’s report on China’s malign influence in Europe. I understand China’s malign influence, and the case studies offered in the report are incredibly illuminating. I wish I had read that report before I did the speech in 2019. I took in good faith the honorarium and thought at the time there was a good faith possibility for an opening for the U.S. to re-engage with China diplomatically. I of course do not feel the same way now. China has not demonstrated good faith efforts in engagement with the U.S., and with our transatlantic partners. China has demonstrated a bellicose foreign policy as it related to its neighbors in Southeast Asia, including Taiwan, and has mistreated the Uighurs and other ethnic minorities within China.

*Question.* China today is very different from the China of the 1980s and 1990s—and not just in all the economic growth it has achieved.

- How would you characterize the ways China has changed, and how should those changes affect the ways we and our allies like Poland engage with the Chinese Government?

Answer. The PRC has prospered economically since the 1990s, but its government continues to abuse human rights, particularly of Uighurs, Tibetans, and other ethnic and religious minorities, while denying all the people under its control basic freedoms and democratic rights. The PRC’s predatory lending practices and destabilizing activities place it outside the rule-based international order that maintains global peace and prosperity. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Polish ally, bilaterally and through the European Union and Three Seas Initiative, to counter the PRC’s malign influence in Central Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks.

*Question.* Deng Xiaoping took a very different economic approach than Xi Jinping. Xi is actively pursuing a common prosperity political goal, putting individual wealth, large technology and financial companies, and the global stock market at risk just to maintain the Party’s power over the Chinese economy and push foreign players out of the Chinese market. Externally, the Chinese Government uses its market power to coerce and punish countries that do not adhere to CCP policy. The time of Deng’s “reform and opening” has ended.

- Do you agree that there has been a fundamental shift in China’s economic policy?

Answer. Yes; the PRC is doubling down on an economic model that is fundamentally at odds with the market-based global trading system that enabled China’s economy to grow as it has. The PRC is using that system to gain access to U.S. and global markets without adhering to the rules and norms that enable fair competition, while imposing industrial policies with massive subsidies for its domestic firms that disadvantage foreign businesses in China. The PRC also uses its economic heft to coerce other countries and companies. This is a direct challenge to the United States and our allies, including Poland, and the Biden administration is determined to work with our allies and partners to address these challenges.

*Question.* If so, what risks does this shift present to U.S. businesses, the international financial system, and global supply chains?

**Answer.** I support the Biden administration's effort to realize resilient, diverse, and secure supply chains to ensure our economic prosperity and national security, including by encouraging American companies to diversify their PRC supply chains to create more resilient supply chains that can reduce vulnerabilities to economic coercion. Chief among the concerns is the PRC's use of state-led, non-market interventions, to capture large portions of value chains in sectors crucial to U.S. national and economic security. The PRC has used its dominance of critical sectors as economic leverage to advance its own geopolitical agenda, including numerous cases of economic coercion against trading partners who do not fully support Beijing's policies.

*Question.* What opportunities are there to work with Poland to offset these risks?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Polish ally to counter the PRC's malign influence in Central Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I will support Poland's leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central and Eastern Europe and continue to promote U.S. participation in the Three Seas Initiative to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Question.* China-Poland relations have fluctuated wildly in the past few years, from tentative approaches towards rapprochement, to Poland being one of the most vocal opponents of the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment and expelling Chinese spies on Polish soil.

- How would you characterize Poland-China ties, and how would you engage the Polish Government on its relationship with China?

**Answer.** Poland maintains diplomatic and trade relations with the PRC, but I see Poland as wary of the PRC's malevolent intentions in the region and destabilizing activities globally and critical of the PRC's human rights abuses and disrespect for democratic values and institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Polish Ally to counter the PRC's malign influence in Central Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I will support Poland's leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe and continue to promote U.S. participation in the Three Seas Initiative to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Question.* What would your main messages be in this engagement?

**Answer.** Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I will encourage Poland to continue its leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*Question.* You mentioned you were edified by my report on transatlantic cooperation regarding China. The PRC Government is accelerating its aggressive tactics every day to leverage China's influence in Europe.

- Do you commit to take classified briefings from the relevant national security agencies on the risks China presents to U.S. interests in Europe prior to your departure to Warsaw?

**Answer.** Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit to regular classified and unclassified briefings to stay abreast of this issue?

**Answer.** Yes.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advise any official senior to sacrifice other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

**Answer.** Yes.

### *Regional*

*Question.* Poland is India's largest trade partner and export destination in Central Europe, and as of March 2021, India was the number one country in Asia for Polish investors.

- What role can the U.S. play to help foster Poland's relationships with other U.S. Indo-Pacific allies and partners, such as India?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage Poland to strengthen its relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. The United States supports Poland's growing ties with Indo-Pacific partners, including India. If confirmed, I plan to hold regular consultations with Polish officials and like-minded Ambassadors in Warsaw to further deepen these ties and identify areas for cooperation. This would include meetings with the Indian Ambassador and with Indo-Pacific Quad Ambassadors in Warsaw to discuss our shared commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, which is also inclusive and resilient. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage Poland to strengthen its relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities.*

*Question.* Poland has sought to expand economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific to diversify away from China as well as counter Chinese economic holds in Europe.

- What can the U.S. do to support Poland in its attempts to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage Poland to strengthen its economic relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities. In Europe, if confirmed, I will stress our continued partnership with Poland to counter the PRC's malign influence in Europe, particularly regarding disinformation and telecommunications networks. I also will encourage Poland to continue its leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. If confirmed, I will encourage Poland to strengthen its economic relationships with India and other U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities. I will encourage Poland to continue its leadership of the Three Seas Initiative as a counterweight to the PRC's 16+1 framework in Central Europe to improve the region's connectivity to its natural partners in the West as well as its resilience against disinformation and predatory "investments" from the East. I will encourage the Government of Poland to utilize its investment screening mechanism to safeguard the country from national security and data privacy threats posed by untrusted vendors investing in critical infrastructure and sensitive sectors.*

*Question.* According to recent survey data by European Council on Foreign Relations, the majority of those in Poland support the EU increasing its investment in maritime security in the Indo-Pacific.

- In what areas can Poland be helpful in encouraging more EU security engagement in the region?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage Poland to coordinate and participate as a member of NATO and the EU in activities that promote our common interests in the region and counter PRC destabilizing activities.

*[Additional Information—12/16/2021]. I have been encouraged by recent efforts in Europe to increase their interaction with Indo-Pacific countries on maritime security, and in increasing their presence in the region where consistent with their own security strategies and capabilities. The presence of UK, French, German and Dutch maritime security forces in the region in the past year shows how much Europe is investing in this issue.*

*I do not expect every European nation to deploy to the region, but Poland, as a likeminded partner, can actively support efforts—particularly through assertive public and private messaging—to preserve the rules-based international order, including the primacy of international law in resolving maritime disputes.*

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MICHAEL M. ADLER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents (AHI)). Ensuring the safety and se-

curity of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the inter-agency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL M. ADLER BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the State Department's 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Belgium remained on Tier 1 due to their consistent and effective efforts to stop the scourge of human trafficking. However, there is always room for improvement. How will you work with Belgium's Government and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. Belgium continues to take trafficking in persons issues seriously and has been a steadfast partner in coordinating on the issue with the United States. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Belgian authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the Belgian Government. I will urge the Government of Belgium to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year's Trafficking in Persons Report, including the issue of lenient sentences for convicted human traffickers.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with other regional ambassadors whose host countries are not on Tier 1 to improve regional counter-TIP efforts?

Answer. If confirmed, I will stay in regular contact with U.S. Ambassadors in the region to share best practices on how to ensure host governments are prioritizing the issue of human rights.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 International Religious Freedom report, societal respect for religious freedom wavers with recently reported incidents of violence, threats, harassment, discrimination, and hate speech against Muslims and Jews.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue?

Answer. Incidents of violence, threats, harassment, discrimination, and hate speech against members of any religious group are unacceptable. If confirmed, I will work with both government and civil society interlocutors to ensure that religious freedom and human rights are respected in Belgium.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with the Office for International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Office for International Religious Freedom to monitor incidents against members of religious groups and advocate for religious freedom in Belgium. I would welcome the Ambassador at Large, if confirmed, and other USG officials to visit Belgium to promote religious freedom and human rights.

*Question.* In the State Department's 2020 Human Rights Report, Belgium was reported to have significant human rights abuses to include attacks motivated by anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim sentiment.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to work with the Government of Belgium to keep the issues of human rights and religious freedoms at the forefront of our bilateral agenda. I would call upon the government to hold accountable perpetrators of such attacks. I would also encourage the Belgian Government to continue to take forward community-based initiatives promoting tolerance and inclusivity, including for Muslim and Jewish communities.

*Question.* How will you direct your embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage Embassy Brussels to support outreach to civil society organizations working to improve tolerance, inclusion, and respect for human rights across all sectors of Belgian society.

*Question.* In September, a Rwandan court convicted Belgian citizen and U.S. lawful permanent resident Paul Rusesabagina, who inspired the film "Hotel Rwanda," of terrorism-related charges and sentenced him to 25 years in prison. In August 2021, Mr. Rusesabagina arrived in Rwanda after he was reportedly tricked into boarding a plane in Dubai, where he was arrested and allegedly tortured while in detention. Mr. Rusesabagina's trial, and that of his co-defendants, was marred with serious due process concerns which overshadowed the validity of the guilty verdict. Rwandan authorities continue to allow Belgian and U.S. consular access to Mr. Rusesabagina. However, the level of engagement and pressure on the Rwandan government by the United States and Belgium to free Mr. Rusesabagina varies.

- Do you commit, if confirmed, to following Mr. Rusesabagina's case and the Belgian government's statements and actions related to his detention?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to following Mr. Rusesabagina's case and the Belgian government's statements and actions related to his detention.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to coordinating with State Department officials on United States efforts to cooperate with Belgium on diplomatic strategies focused on Mr. Rusesabagina's release from prison and ultimate return to his family?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to coordinating with State Department officials on Paul Rusesabagina's case.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to being responsive to my office regarding any inquiries made to the State Department regarding Belgium as it relates to Mr. Rusesabagina's case?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to being responsive to your office regarding any inquiries made to the State Department regarding Belgium as it relates to Mr. Rusesabagina's case.

*Question.* Mission Belgium has been under enormous stress over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Belgium?

*Answer.* Belgium and all of Europe has been hit hard by COVID-19. As I understand, travel and other restrictions, heightened uncertainty, health concerns, and family obligations have been stressful for Mission Belgium officers and their families. If confirmed, I pledge to work with my team to address any concerns and proactively support morale-building activities in the Mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Belgium?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make clear that the safety and morale of the Mission is of paramount importance to me. I appreciate the wealth of talent and experience of the Foreign Service and Locally Engaged Staff, and will ensure that they know that I will do everything I can to take care of them and their families. If confirmed, upon arrival, I will hold a Town Hall to seek input from all members of the Mission. I will meet regularly with all sections of the Mission to share my appreciation for the invaluable work and contributions they make and listen to their concerns.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Belgium?

*Answer.* Throughout my career in the private sector, I have worked hard to create a unified administration where communication, cooperation and coordination are



paramount. I understand that motivating people and providing resources to accomplish our goals are key to success. If confirmed, I will work with my Country Team to establish clear goals and empower my staff to reach them.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I work hard to create a team approach. I appreciate and seek input from all members of my team. I also understand that, as team leader, I am ultimately responsible for my team's actions and decisions.

*Question.* How do you believe your management style will translate to an embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce are career employees?

Answer. As a long-time business owner, I understand how to work with limited resources and career public servants. If confirmed, I believe as a team we will be able to use what resources we have to accomplish targeted goals.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture?

Answer. Yes, I do believe that it is important to integrate myself into the Embassy operations and culture.

*Question.* If you do believe it is incumbent on new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into embassy operations and culture, how do you intend to do so?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to proactively support and participate in activities set up by the Mission for Mission employees and families. I will maintain the smooth operation of the Embassy by following the established regulations and protocols. If confirmed, I look forward to becoming a part of the Mission family.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No, I do not believe it is constructive to berate subordinates in public or private. If there are issues, I will address them professionally and constructively.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission? If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to have an excellent, professional relationship with my deputy chief of mission. If confirmed, I will support the deputy chief of mission's role in the day-to-day management of the Mission and as my key advisor.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to encourage officers to meet with contacts as the COVID situation allows, and to travel around the country to meet a diverse range of Belgians. I understand and embrace the value of people-to-people exchanges, and I intend to promote U.S. policies by supporting the Mission's public diplomacy programming.

*Question.* How do you intend to increase the ability of U.S. diplomats to access all local populations?

Answer. While our U.S. diplomats in Brussels have access to virtually all sectors of Belgian society, if confirmed, I intend to continue to instill in members of the Mission community the importance of broadening and diversifying their contacts to form a complete picture of the local situation.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

Answer. I agree. If confirmed, I will prioritize public diplomacy efforts.

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Belgium? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

Answer. The media environment in Belgium is professional, modern, respectful, multi-lingual, and mildly partisan. If confirmed, I will work with the public diplomacy section to raise the profile of U.S. priorities, such as in climate action, countering the actions of malign actors in Europe, and enhancing U.S.-Belgium economic ties. I will work with the public diplomacy section to build closer ties with the youth in Belgium, so they too understand the important role the United States played in the history of Belgium and Western Europe to help ensure our bilateral relationship remains strong into the future.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the public diplomacy section to tailor messages on policy priorities with the realities on the ground. I will work with my team to communicate with Main State and make sure that our messaging resonates with Belgians. I will also encourage creative ways of sharing our message to appeal to targeted audiences.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. government personnel around the world, including at U.S. embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* I have received an unclassified briefing on anomalous health incidents. If confirmed, I commit to receiving additional, classified briefings on the incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I will maintain detailed records of the incident and share them with the State Department and others to contribute to the investigation. I commit to working closely with the leaders of the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF) in Washington, Ambassador Jonathan Moore, and Ambassador Margaret Uyehara to support affected personnel.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will take every measure to keep our staff safe and secure and would take any report of an anomalous health incident very seriously. I will do my best to ensure those affected receive the attention they deserve, that incidents are investigated fully, and that we work with the appropriate offices and agencies to ensure required reporting, investigation, potential countermeasures, and provision of medical care. I would share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and the mission community.

---



## NOMINATIONS

---

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2021 a.m.

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, Booker, Van Hollen, Risch, Rubio, Johnson, Romney, and Rounds.

Also Present: Senators Toomey, Casey, and Padilla.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are here today to consider nominations for three important positions: Mayor Eric Garcetti to be the Ambassador to India, Ambassador Donald Blome to be the Ambassador to Pakistan, and Dr. Amy Gutmann to be the Ambassador to Germany.

Congratulations to the three of you. We appreciate your willingness as well as that of your family to serve the country in this capacity.

We have some of our colleagues here today and we want to recognize them first. I understand that Senators Toomey and Casey will be introducing Dr. Gutmann and Senator Padilla will be introducing Mayor Garcetti.

Let us start with Senator Toomey.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICK J. TOOMEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA**

Senator TOOMEY. Thank you very much, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Thank you for allowing me to briefly introduce Dr. Amy Gutmann and express my strong support for her nomination to be our next U.S. Ambassador to Germany.

Dr. Gutmann, thank you for your willingness to serve in such an important leadership role.

As members of this committee likely know, Dr. Gutmann currently serves as the president of the University of Pennsylvania, and before I highlight just a few of her many accomplishments there, I want to acknowledge a different aspect of Penn's history, which I think is relevant to this hearing.

Penn's founder, Benjamin Franklin, was one of the U.S.' most accomplished diplomats. He skillfully navigated the complicated dynamics of 18th century European politics to promote American ideals and protect our nascent democracy abroad.

Of course, much has changed since then. But some of the diplomatic challenges that Franklin faced remain the same today, including faithfully and ardently defending U.S. interest, even in times of disagreements with our allies while maintaining close relationships.

We face this challenge today in our relationship with one of our most important European allies, Germany. We rely on Germany as a major security and trade partner, especially given its role in the European Union, and amidst increasing global threats to the U.S. and Europe, strong U.S. representation to Germany is critical.

I am confident that Dr. Gutmann will rise to meet these and other challenges facing the U.S. and our European allies.

Dr. Gutmann earned Bachelors and doctorate degrees from Harvard University, a Master's degree from London School of Economics. She subsequently spent over 20 years at Princeton University in a myriad of roles, most recently as university provost.

In 2004, Dr. Gutmann became the eighth president of Penn, a position she still holds today, and during her tenure she dramatically grew Penn's endowment, expanded Penn's commitment to science, technology, and medical innovation, and enhanced the university's engagement in the Philadelphia community, among other things.

Dr. Gutmann is a widely respected expert in subjects ranging from ethics to health care to political philosophy, and she has received countless awards and honors, including being named to Fortune World's 50 Greatest Leaders list in 2018.

Her impact at Penn has been recognized, including by the many Penn students who regard her as a committed and passionate leader. These accomplishments, coupled with her commitment to global leadership and experience in academia in the highest levels, have prepared Dr. Gutmann well for the role of Ambassador.

As I conclude, I also want to note the significance of Dr. Gutmann's nomination in the context of her family's history. Her father fled religious persecution in Nazi Germany in the 1930s, and her family's return to Germany in the form of U.S. Ambassador Amy Gutmann will be an extraordinary moment.

I am confident Dr. Gutmann will approach this next mission with the same ingenuity, tenacity, and dedication as she did over the nearly 20 years she has spent at Penn and I look forward to supporting Dr. Gutmann's nomination and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Senator Casey?

1969

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA**

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thanks very much for this opportunity.

I want to start by thanking you and the committee for this opportunity to talk about Dr. Gutmann. But if I refer to her as Amy throughout some of my remarks, that is because I have known her for the better part of 15 years, know her character, know her commitment, not only to academic excellence and the excellence personified by those who are graduates of Penn but also for the commitment she has made to the city of Philadelphia and our commonwealth, and now on an even bigger stage her commitment to our country by putting herself forward for this kind of public service.

I wanted to start by talking about her tenure at Penn. Since 2004, Amy has served as the longest tenured president of the university. During her 18 years of commitment to the university, the city of Philadelphia, our Commonwealth—and our commonwealth, President Gutmann transformed the university into a more inclusive, a more innovative, and more impactful academic institution.

In 2006, she led the largest fundraising effort in Penn history to support financial aid for students in need. Other initiatives, like the President's Innovation prize and Engagement prize have offered students opportunities to turn their startup and service ideas into reality. She has also focused on the development of the community around the university through programs like Penn Compact 2022 and the Netter Center for Community Partnerships.

As the leader of Philadelphia's largest private employer, Dr. Gutmann has one of the Commonwealth's most powerful economic engines with an estimated total economic impact of \$21.5 billion dollars annually in the region. While leading the university, she has continued to publish cutting-edge scholarship on the intersection of political science, ethics, education, and philosophy.

In 2019, she published her seventeenth book, and she remains one of the top political theorists in the United States.

Outside of her roles at the university, Amy has long supported Philadelphia in the country through a variety of interdisciplinary roles, including as a board member at Vanguard and chair of the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues.

Her many years of leadership at Penn, applied expertise in political science, and commitment to the community prepare her well to be United States Ambassador to Germany and represent U.S. interests with one of our most important allies.

I do not think I have to explain to the members of the committee the importance of this bilateral relationship, especially now. She is prepared to do this job, and I can testify to her character, her commitment to public service, and her willingness at an important time in our nation's history to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Germany.

I want to thank the committee. I want to thank Dr. Gutmann and her family for this commitment to the country.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Casey.

Timing is everything in life, and Senator Padilla has now made it on time to introduce Mayor Garcetti.

1970

**STATEMENT OF HON. ALEX PADILLA,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA**

Senator PADILLA. Thank you, Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch. It is my pleasure to be here to introduce Mayor Eric Garcetti from my home city of Los Angeles and the great state of California as President Biden's nominee for Ambassador to India.

Mayor Garcetti's credentials are impressive. He is a graduate of Columbia University, a Rhodes Scholar, and a 12-year veteran of the United States Navy Reserve. Mayor Garcetti was first elected to the Los Angeles City Council in 2001 where we served together for five years.

In 2006, Mayor Garcetti succeeded me as president of the City Council as I launched my campaign for California State Senate, and in 2013 he was elected to serve as mayor of the city of Los Angeles, the second largest city in America.

In his time as mayor, he has led the city through a number of challenges while leveraging the position to exert influence over regional, national, and international organizations.

He served as chair of L.A. Metro, one of the largest public transit agencies in the country. He is the founder of Climate Mayors, a national bipartisan group of more than 400 mayors adopting the Paris Climate Agreement.

He championed Los Angeles' successful bid to host the 2028 Summer Olympics. Mayor Garcetti also chairs C40 Cities, an international network of the world's largest cities taking action on the climate crisis and he led the organization's expansion in India.

In the past year and a half, he has used that network to spur international collaboration in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and share resources and best practices around the world. His commitment to public service and leadership on issues from climate to human rights will be instrumental to his new role as ambassador to India.

India is a critical partner on the frontlines of many of the world's biggest challenges from COVID to climate change to national security. Our close cooperation will help support global security, fight the climate crisis, and further economic growth.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the committee to support Mayor Garcetti's nomination and I thank you for this opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Padilla, and we know you have other important duties, so when you need to please feel free to excuse yourself.

Let me turn to a few brief remarks on these three nominees.

Mayor Garcetti, we welcome your nomination to this post at a critical time in the U.S.-India relationship. With more than 1.3 billion people and the sixth largest economy in the world, India is a vital strategic partner for the United States.

As a member of the Quad alongside the United States, Japan, and Australia, India is playing a greater role in helping maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific.

In September, the Biden administration hosted the first ever in-person Quad Summit here in Washington. When it comes to the bilateral relationship, there is much to discuss. In particular, the shared threat of climate change and India's growing need for electricity presents an opportunity for deeper cooperation. That is why

I introduced the Prioritizing Clean Energy and Climate Cooperation with India Act that would help advance India's climate goals.

In addition, dealing with the coronavirus must also remain a core element of our bilateral engagement. As you know, India was on the frontlines of the pandemic earlier this year when it faced a devastating surge in new cases.

As we deepen our partnership with New Delhi, there will inevitably be areas of friction, including concerns related to India's purchase of Russian military hardware and reports of democratic backsliding and discrimination against religious minorities.

I expect you to be frank with your Indian counterparts, not just on the areas of cooperation but also on these differences, all of which are bipartisan priorities for this committee.

New Delhi will need to address our concerns if it seeks to deepen our partnership even further. Having you in place in India, Mayor Garcetti, will be critical to advance U.S. interests on these issues and many others.

Ambassador Blome, we welcome your nomination at this particularly challenging moment in the U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relationship. As I told this committee last month, the failure of our mission in Afghanistan was due in no small part to years of Pakistani double dealing.

Islamabad offered safe haven to the Taliban even as its militants targeted and killed U.S. troops. We need to have a serious conversation with the Pakistani Government on the path forward, and I am confident that you will deliver a tough message to them, if confirmed.

Beyond Afghanistan, I remain deeply concerned about the growing strength of extremist groups within Pakistan itself. The Government has created an increasingly permissive environment for extremist groups to operate. Pakistan has also become an increasingly dangerous place for religious minorities and I am eager to hear your views on how to strengthen religious freedom in Pakistan.

However, there are other many important equities in the bilateral relationship, such as curbing nuclear proliferation, managing tensions with India, responding to COVID-19. Your experience in Kabul and other hardship posts will be an asset and I look forward to hearing how you will address these challenges in Islamabad.

Dr. Gutmann, welcome and congratulations on your nomination. Your years of experience as the president of a leading university, your academic experience, and your powerful family history will no doubt serve us well.

The importance of having a Senate-confirmed U.S. ambassador in Berlin cannot be overstated. This is a critical time for the transatlantic relationship and, particularly, for the United States and Germany.

With the new German Government we have an opportunity to build on and renew decades of friendship and cooperation. It is no secret that U.S.-German relations suffered under the last administration. I am confident that upon your confirmation you will help return the relationship to one of respect and to a close strategic partnership.



Germany is also a critical ally in our efforts to deter Russian aggression in Europe and prevent a renewed invasion of Ukraine. As Putin continues to try to bully his way through Europe, we need strong U.S. representation and close coordination with allies to stand up for our partners and reject illegitimate efforts to redraw the map of Europe.

The urgency of these challenges underscores why we need our Embassy in Berlin to have a confirmed ambassador in place immediately, and I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting your nomination and moving it swiftly forward.

Let me turn to the ranking member for his opening.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all of you for a willingness to serve and for your families who will share in the sacrifices you will make.

I want to turn first to the nomination of Ambassador to Germany. We are entering a new chapter in our relationship with Germany. After 16 years, Angela Merkel is no longer—no longer leads the country and we must build a new relationship with Germany's first three-party coalition.

This transition comes at a critical point for the European continent. Most worrisome is the prospect of a Russian invasion of Ukraine. Despite Russia's huge troop presence on Ukraine's borders, Germany and this administration seem dead set on handing Putin another point of leverage and that is Nord Stream 2. It is no secret I and many other members are firmly opposed to this pipeline, and I will continue efforts to see it and Putin's influence in NATO are stopped.

A full-fledged effort across the transatlantic alliance is required to deter Russia. Cooperation with Germany on this front must be a priority.

The United States and Europe must also take on the challenge of the Chinese Communist Party together. If confirmed, cooperating with German counterparts to counter Chinese influence will need to be among our top priorities. Chinese influence is a problem all over the world, and as we are going to see here in a minute, it is a real problem right here in the United States.

It is important this committee understands how, Dr. Gutmann, you will handle these issues, given the history of the close and extensive ties between China and the University of Pennsylvania, the institution you ran and directed during your tenure there and still do.

The U.S. Department of Education Data shows that U Penn has received, roughly, \$86 million—let me say that again, \$86 million—in donations and contracts from sources in China since 2014. It is safe to assume the actual amount is much higher, given that universities are only required to report gifts and contracts over \$250,000.

And, Dr. Gutmann, I want to underscore here that this is not unique to U Penn. This is an issue throughout our higher education system, and we have been drafting and discussing and attempting to pass legislation to address this.

We do not allow cash to flow to our politicians to influence them when they execute their duties of office. It just astounds me that, nonetheless, we look the other way as this cash flows into our higher education system.

You told the committee, our staff, you were not aware of most foreign donations and contracts coming into U Penn and do not have a role in any process related to reporting of foreign donations in contracts to the Department of Education.

I want to explore this during the question and answer period. But I think the American public deserves an explanation not only as to the University of Pennsylvania, but we are going to talk about it in the broader context of all higher education.

We need to understand how and why as president you were not aware of the kinds of donations and contracts coming from authoritarian countries like China.

I understand a university is a large operation. However, as captain of the ship, you are in charge of it. I believe that is the attitude that chiefs of mission need to have as well. Today is your opportunity to clear the air on this and we will give you that opportunity.

I have in front of me the large or just a portion of the large number of these contributions that were made to U Penn and we are going to talk about those when we get to the question and answer period.

On the nomination of Ambassador to India, India is a critical U.S. partner in the Indo-Pacific. U.S.-India defense cooperation today is more robust than it has ever been and the fruits of that were evident in U.S. support during India's border crisis with China last year.

India plays a crucial role in the Indian Ocean region and our strategic competition with China. But we cannot ignore the reality of concerns over India's defense relationship with Russia.

We need to ensure our relationship is healthy and strong for the long term so we work together to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific.

We must also work closely with India on counterterrorism. Our withdrawal from Afghanistan led to big shifts in India's security environment. It is a good thing that we have the nominees for both India and Pakistan on this panel so we can address these issues together and thoroughly.

This is also an opportunity for more economic cooperation with India, especially in technology, health, and energy. We do still have economic irritants to address like lack of intellectual property protections and high tariffs.

India's tariffs remain a key challenge for Idaho agricultural companies. The United States also needs to continue to advocate on human rights issues in India. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these important issues.

On the nomination of ambassador to Pakistan, for more than 20 years the U.S.-Pakistan relationship has been viewed through the lens of the war in Afghanistan. Pakistan has and should continue to play a key role in mitigating the fallout from this administration's catastrophic withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Whether it is humanitarian assistance, human rights, or counterterrorism, it is clear the end of U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan does not signal the end of American interests there.

However, we are also presented with a rare opportunity to reframe a U.S.-Pakistan relationship not solely focused on Afghanistan. For example, as we adopt our relationships with India around competition with China, we must do so with an eye on the balance of power with all players in South and Central Asia.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the nature of U.S.-Pakistan relationship, moving forward.

With that, I will yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch.

All right. We will turn to our nominees now. We would ask you to summarize your statement in about five minutes. Your full statement will be included for the record.

And we will start with Ambassador Blome and work our way down the dais.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. DONALD ARMIN BLOME OF ILLINOIS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN**

Ambassador BLOME. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, honorable members of this committee, thank you for considering my nomination to serve as ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I am grateful to this committee for previously confirming me as Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia.

I would like to start by thanking my family: my wife, Debra, who is here with me today, and my three children, Sarah, Nicholas, and Carl, who could not be here.

Over more than 28 years in the Foreign Service they have served with me and during frequent moves, emergency evacuations, and long periods of separation, and they have also shared with me the honor of serving our country abroad, an honor for which I have always been deeply grateful.

Events in Afghanistan weigh heavily on me, having previously served there as Embassy Kabul's top political officer in 2012 and '13. I worked alongside colleagues in and out of uniform, some of whom gave their lives in the service of our country, some of whom were gravely injured, and many who still bear the invisible wounds of war.

I also engaged with courageous Afghans who put themselves at great risk to build the Afghan state's institutions and stability.

If confirmed, I will prioritize the safe relocation from Afghanistan of any U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, Special Immigrant Visa holders, and other Afghans to whom we have a special responsibility, along with their family members.

Mission Pakistan also plays an important role in encouraging an inclusive Afghan Government that respects and promotes the human rights of all individuals, including women and girls, members of minority groups, and ensuring that Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for international terrorism.

If confirmed, I will press Pakistan to target all terrorist groups without distinction. I will also work with my colleagues to decrease tensions between India and Pakistan. I have been encouraged by the continued ceasefire along the Line of Control.

Strong partnerships with India and Pakistan are not mutually exclusive. We need productive ties with both. Pakistan and India should decide the pace, scope, and character of their bilateral interactions.

I will also promote U.S. commercial interests in Pakistan. I will encourage Pakistan to promote more transparent investments through sustainable financing with a focus on the environmental and social impacts of investment projects.

Pakistan is a partner in the COVID-19 pandemic. In May of 2020, Pakistan donated 100,000 face masks and 25,000 protective suits to the United States to safeguard our health care workers in the early stages of the pandemic.

The United States has, in turn, donated to Pakistan 26.7 million doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines as well as 200 ventilators.

On climate, Pakistan has signed onto the Global Methane Pledge, announced a moratorium on improving new coal-fired power generation, and committed to having renewables provide 60 percent of electricity generation by 2030 and is implementing a 10-billion-tree planting campaign.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will never shy away from defending human rights in Pakistan, particularly freedom of religion and expression. Religious minorities in Pakistan have long faced discrimination, including accusations of blasphemy.

These accusations have undermined the rule of law, threatened mob rule, and deeply damaged Pakistan's international reputation and have led to many deaths.

If confirmed, I will speak out against violations of human rights and religious freedom. Pakistani journalists and members of civil society face kidnappings, assaults, intimidation, and disappearances. I will advocate for expanded protections for freedom of association and assembly, and will meet with civil society partners regularly.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to close by saying we have an important opportunity to renew and strengthen the bilateral relationship with Pakistan and I want to work with this committee and Congress to do so.

Thank you for considering my nomination and I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Blome follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD ARMIN BLOME

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and honorable members of this committee; thank you for considering my nomination to serve as Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I am grateful to this committee for previously confirming me as Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia.

I would like to start by thanking my family, my wife Debra who is here with me today and my three children, Sarah, Nicholas, and Carl, who could not be here. Over more than 28 years in the Foreign Service they have served with me, enduring frequent moves, emergency evacuations, and long periods of separation. They have also shared with me the honor of serving our country abroad, an honor for which I have always been deeply grateful.

The United States' relationship with Pakistan remains extraordinarily consequential for our core interests. Pakistan is pursuing expanded economic linkages with the United States as part of what it calls "geo-economics." We have a shared interest in promoting the role of U.S. business and commercial interests in Pakistan's economy. If confirmed, I will work with Pakistan to resolve market access issues, including concerns with Pakistan's digital economy regulations, intellectual property protections, and contract enforcement. I will encourage Pakistan to promote more transparent investments through sustainable financing, with a focus on the environmental and social impacts of investment projects.

Events in Afghanistan weigh heavily on me, having previously served there as Embassy Kabul's top political officer in 2012 and 2013. I worked alongside colleagues in and out of uniform, some of whom gave their lives in service of our country, some of whom were gravely injured, and many who still bear the invisible wounds of war. I also engaged with courageous Afghans who put themselves at great risk to build the Afghan state's institutions and stability. If confirmed, I will prioritize the safe relocation from Afghanistan of any U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, special immigrant visa applicants, and other Afghans to whom we have a special responsibility, along with their family members. Mission Pakistan also plays an important role on encouraging an inclusive Afghan Government that respects and promotes the human rights of all individuals, including women and girls and members of minority groups, and ensuring that Afghanistan never again becomes a safehaven for international terrorism.

On the critical issue of counterterrorism, if confirmed, I will press Pakistan to target all terrorist groups without distinction. The United States and Pakistan are committed to combatting Al-Qa'ida, ISIS-Khorasan, and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. If confirmed, I also will engage Pakistan on fighting all other groups—including Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed.

The region can ill afford another conflict, especially between nuclear-armed states. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to decrease tensions between India and Pakistan. I have been encouraged by the continued ceasefire along the Line of Control. Strong U.S. bilateral partnerships with India and Pakistan are not mutually exclusive; we need productive ties with both states. Pakistan and India should decide the pace, scope, and character of their bilateral interactions.

Pakistan is a partner in the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis. In May of 2020, Pakistan donated 100,000 facemasks and 25,000 protective suits to the United States to safeguard our healthcare workers in the early stages of the pandemic. The United States has in turn donated to Pakistan 27.6 million doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, as well as 200 ventilators, and 1,200 pulse oximeters. On climate, Pakistan has signed onto the Global Methane Pledge, announced a moratorium on approving new coal-fired power generation, committed to having renewables provide 60 percent of electricity generation by 2030, and is implementing a 10 billion tree planting campaign.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will never shy away from defending human rights in Pakistan, particularly freedom of religion and expression. Religious minorities in Pakistan have long faced societal and legal discrimination, as well as accusations of blasphemy. These accusations have undermined the rule of law, threatened mob rule, deeply damaged Pakistan's international reputation, and led to murderous violence and many deaths. If confirmed, I will speak out against these abuses and violations of human rights and religious freedom. I will urge the Pakistani Government to cease harassment of journalists and members of civil society, who have faced kidnappings, assaults, intimidation, and disappearances, and hold perpetrators of these actions accountable. I will advocate for expanded protections for freedom of association and assembly and will meet with civil society partners regularly.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to close by saying that we have an important opportunity to renew and strengthen the bilateral relationship with Pakistan, and I want to work with this committee and Congress to do so. Thank you for considering my nomination and I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Mayor Garcetti?

1977

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. ERIC M. GARCETTI OF CALIFORNIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND  
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO  
THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you very much, Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, to all members of this committee. I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be Ambassador from the United States to the Republic of India, and let me start by thanking the President and Secretary Blinken for their trust and for this amazing opportunity to serve our nation.

Few nations are more vital to the future of American security and prosperity than India. If confirmed, I look forward to building on the work of my predecessors to elevate our partnership to new heights.

My parents, Gil and Sukey Garcetti, are here today, the children and grandchildren of immigrants from Mexico and Russia, two public servants who first brought me to India as a teenager and who taught me how deeply we are connected to everyone in this world.

Two people not with me today in person are always the best part of my day, my wife, Amy Elaine Wakeland, and our incredible and beautiful daughter, Maya. Amy has devoted her entire life to advocating for women and children, and Maya just turned 10 years old yesterday and is watching this hearing with her mother as she gets ready for school, and I just want to say good luck with your science test today, honey. I love you.

In 1990, I visited India as the guest of Ambassador Bill Clark, who served under President H. W. Bush and who was—whose son was my college roommate. Inspired by this trip, I started studying Hindi and Urdu in college, Indian and cultural religious history, and at that time, U.S.-India ties languished in the shadow of Cold War mistrust.

Annual trade stood at a paltry \$2 billion. Defense trade was zero and military interoperability was nonexistent. The very idea of a U.S.-India strategic partnership would have been deemed laughable.

Today, the fundamental nature of that strategic partnership is firmly ingrained here in Washington and in New Delhi. Twenty years ago, President Biden, when he was chair of this esteemed committee, called for a new and ambitious U.S.-India partnership, and thanks to successive administrations, Democratic and Republican, and the bipartisan work of this committee and Congress, that strong new chapter is upon us.

In September, President Biden hosted Prime Minister Modi and their Australian and Japanese counterparts for the first ever in-person Quad Leaders Summit here in Washington to reinforce cooperation among common challenges from COVID to climate. Most notably, an Indian vaccine manufacturer with support from Quad members will produce 1 billion additional vaccine doses for the world.

If confirmed, I will endeavor to advance our ambitious bilateral partnership united by a shared vision of a free and open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. Even with a pandemic, our bilateral trade this year is expected to break a record and, if confirmed, I intend to champion an ambitious economic partnership with India to re-

duce market barriers, to bolster free trade, and to generate good middle class American jobs.

We all know India is situated in a tough neighborhood. If confirmed, I will extend efforts to strengthen India's capacity to secure its border, to defend its sovereignty, to counter terrorism, and to deter aggression.

We will do that through information sharing, counterterrorism coordination, joint freedom of navigation patrols, and military exercises which I have witnessed personally with my brave Indian counterparts, as well as sales of our best defense technologies in order to fully realize the potential of our major defense partnership.

As an aside, I want to express my condolences to the Indian people and armed forces for the loss of Chief of Defense Staff General Bipin Rawat last week, who was a hero to his nation and a good friend to ours.

If confirmed, I will work to advance partnerships in space, science, and flight as well as other critical and emerging technologies. Senator Padilla mentioned I have chaired C40, which is a global network of mayors from the largest cities of the world to confront global climate change and to share the experience of L.A., which is on track to be fully renewable power by 2035 and, if confirmed, I will work closely with India on a similarly bold approach to promoting green energy through the International Solar Alliance and through the Agenda 2030 Climate and Clean Energy Partnership.

For my friends in India, the bedrock of our relationship are the warm and deep ties between our peoples. They connect our nations and it is embodied best, perhaps, by the 4 million strong Indian-American diaspora, I know, in each of your states strengthens our nation, that serves at the highest level including our vice president, and the nearly 200,000 Indian students and tens of thousands of Indian professionals contribute every single day to the strength of this country.

And, in addition, respect for human rights and strong democratic institutions are key elements of our relationship and values that are enshrined in both of our constitutions and, if confirmed, I will engage regularly and respectfully with the Indian Government on these issues.

Lastly, I acknowledge the weight and honor of responsibility of chief of mission for the welfare of hundreds of U.S. and thousands of locally-employed staff at Embassy Delhi and our four consulates in India, in addition to the 950,000 U.S. citizens who reside in India, and I want to assure this committee there will be no higher priority than their safety and security.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony, and finally, let me say I recognize, I respect, and I relish the role of Congress in advancing our leadership and I cannot wait to regularly engage with you, with your staffs, and with the staff and members of this committee.

If confirmed, I look forward to serving in India as it celebrates 75 years of independence and to shepherding an incredible next chapter in the U.S.-India partnership.

I look forward to your questions.

1979

[The prepared statement of Mr. Garcetti follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIC M. GARCETTI

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the Ambassador of the United States to the Republic of India. I would like to thank President Biden for his trust and for this amazing opportunity to serve our country.

Few nations are more vital to the future of American security and prosperity than India. If confirmed, I look forward to building on the work of my predecessors to elevate our partnership to new heights.

I have committed my life to service—as a teacher, a naval officer, and a public servant.

All of my work reflects values my parents instilled in me at a young age: to be a proud American with a heart for service who is always engaged with the world. My parents, Gil and Sukey Garcetti, are here today; they first brought me to India as a teenager and taught me how deeply we are connected to people everywhere on this planet—no matter where they live, what language they speak, how much money they have, or how they worship God.

Two people not with me in person today are always the best part of my day: my wife Amy Elaine Wakeland, a woman from Indiana whom I met when we were studying together as Rhodes Scholars who never stops fighting for women and children, and Maya, our beautiful and incredible daughter, who just turned 10 years old yesterday. Maya is watching this hearing with her mother as she gets ready for school. Good luck with your science test, sweetie—Daddy loves you and is so proud of you!

In 1992, the year I graduated from college after studying Hindi and Indian cultural and religious history, U.S.-India ties languished in the shadow of Cold War era mistrust. Annual trade stood at a paltry \$2 billion, defense trade was zero, and military interoperability was non-existent. The very idea of a U.S.-India strategic partnership would have been deemed laughable.

Today, the fundamental nature of that strategic partnership is firmly ingrained in both Washington and New Delhi. 20 years ago President Biden—then chairman of this esteemed committee—called for a new and ambitious vision of U.S.-India ties. Thanks to successive administrations—Democratic and Republican—and the bipartisan work of this Congress, that strong new chapter is upon us.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, bilateral trade is expected to reach new heights and if confirmed, I intend to champion an ambitious economic partnership with India that reduces market access barriers and bolsters fair trade and creates good jobs for the American middle class.

India is situated in a tough neighborhood. If confirmed, I intend to double-down on our efforts to strengthen India's capacity to secure its borders, defend its sovereignty, and deter aggression—through information sharing, counterterrorism coordination, joint freedom of navigation patrols and military exercises (which I have participated in as a naval officer alongside my Indian counterparts), and sales of our best defense technologies in order to realize the full potential of our Major Defense Partnership.

As Mayor, I have chaired C40—a global network of mayors from the world's largest cities—to confront global climate change and to share the experience of Los Angeles, which is on track to be powered by 100 percent renewable energy by 2035. If confirmed, I will work closely with India to support a similarly bold approach to promoting green energy through the International Solar Alliance and through the Agenda 2030 Climate and Clean Energy Partnership.

The bedrock of our partnership are the human ties that connect our nations, embodied by the four million strong Indian-American diaspora that strengthens our nation and the nearly two hundred thousand Indian students and tens of thousands of Indian professionals who contribute to our economy.

In addition, respect for human rights and strong democratic institutions are key elements of our strategic partnership and values enshrined in our constitutions, and if confirmed, I will engage closely and regularly with the Indian Government on these issues.

I acknowledge the weight and honor of responsibility as Chief of Mission for the welfare of hundreds of U.S. and thousands of locally employed staff in Embassy New Delhi and our four Consulates in India, in addition to the approximately 950,000 U.S. citizens residing in India. If confirmed, there will be no higher priority for me than the security of our Mission team and of U.S. citizens in India.



Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Risch, thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony. I recognize, respect and relish the role of Congress in advancing our relationship with India and I can't wait to regularly engage with both of you and with all members and their staffs on all matters of mutual concern. If confirmed, I look forward to serving in India as it celebrates 75 years of independence and to shepherding an incredible next chapter in the U.S.-India partnership.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Dr. Gutmann?

**STATEMENT OF DR. AMY GUTMANN OF PENNSYLVANIA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

Dr. GUTMANN. Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I also thank the senators from my home state of Pennsylvania, Senator Casey and Senator Toomey, for their support and friendship.

I would like to introduce my husband of 45 years, Michael W. Doyle, to the committee. His love and his wry wit provide constant sustenance, as do our daughter, Abigail, and son-in-law, Jakub, who regret that they could not be here today.

I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for placing their confidence in the daughter of a Jewish-German refugee and a first-generation college graduate to represent our nation to one of our closest and most important European allies.

It would be my honor and duty, if confirmed, to work closely with this committee and Congress as the United States Ambassador to Germany.

My father's journey to the United States made the most profound impression on me. After fleeing Hitler's Germany and saving the lives of his parents and siblings, Kurt Gutmann found a home in the United States.

He instilled in me what it means to lead as an American. Never forget and always stand up against anti-Semitism, racism, and all forms of bigotry and discrimination. Work to advance freedom and democracy, prosperity and the rule of law, national security, and respect for the dignity of all.

"Democracy does not happen by accident," as President Biden has observed. "We have to defend it, fight for it, strengthen it, renew it."

My professional life and scholarship has been devoted to advancing freedom and democracy. As president of the University of Pennsylvania, the largest private employer in Philadelphia and the second largest in Pennsylvania, I expanded educational opportunities while championing civil dialogue and global diplomacy. Innovation and economic growth have soared, generating thousands of jobs while revolutionizing life-saving patient care.

Most recently, Penn research enabled companies in the United States and Germany to produce vaccines that are saving millions of lives in record time.

If confirmed, I will work to further strengthen our bilateral and multilateral relationships with Germany. I highlight just three key priorities here.

First, I will work closely with Congress and many agencies represented by Mission Germany to maximize the benefits of our bilateral relationship. This includes increasing trade and investment, combating climate change, strengthening global health, resisting weaponized energy flows, and countering corruption, terrorism, and malign influence.

Second, I will engage in robust and inclusive public diplomacy to strengthen the foundations of our bilateral relationship. I will engage younger generations of Germans to discuss the United States' role in helping to rebuild a prosperous, unified, and democratic Germany, a story that is an example to the world.

Third, I will advocate to strengthen our transatlantic alliances and European partnerships, central among them NATO and the EU. Partnership with Germany is essential to deterring Russian plans to take further and more significant aggressive moves against Ukraine and to addressing the challenges to our shared security, prosperity, and values posed by the PRC.

An essential foundation for advancing our national interests will be avidly supporting the health, safety, security, and morale of Mission Germany. Our dedicated, hardworking, and unsurpassed public servants and uniformed personnel deserve no less.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am greatly honored to have been nominated to serve as the United States Ambassador to Germany.

If confirmed, I would be excited to begin work during this key juncture in our relations as a new German Government is stepping onto the global stage. I pledge that I will serve the American people with honor and dignity, and I will work to foster an even stronger alliance between the United States and Germany based on our common interests and shared values.

Thank you so much for your consideration. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Gutmann follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. AMY GUTMANN

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I also want to thank the Senators from my home state of Pennsylvania, Senator Casey and Senator Toomey, for their support and friendship.

I would like to introduce my husband of 45 years, Michael W. Doyle, to the committee. His love and wry wit provide constant sustenance, as do our daughter Abigail and son-in-law Jakub, who regret that they could not be here today.

I am deeply grateful to President Biden and Secretary Blinken for placing their confidence in the daughter of a Jewish German refugee—and a first-generation college graduate—to represent our nation to one of our closest and most important European Allies. More than an honor, it would be my privilege and duty, if confirmed, to work closely with this committee and Congress as the United States Ambassador to Germany.

My father's journey to the United States made the most profound impression on me. After fleeing Hitler's Germany and saving the lives of his parents and siblings, Kurt Gutmann found a home in the United States. He instilled in me what it means to lead as an American. Never forget and always stand up against anti-Semitism, racism, and all forms of hatred, bigotry, and discrimination. Work to advance freedom and democracy, prosperity and the rule of law, national security and respect for the dignity of all. "Democracy doesn't happen by accident," as President Biden has observed. "We have to defend it, fight for it, strengthen it, renew it."

These shared values and interests have formed the foundation of the cooperation between the United States and a democratic Germany for decades.

My professional life has been devoted to advancing freedom and democracy. As President of the University of Pennsylvania, the largest private employer in Philadelphia and the second largest in Pennsylvania, I expanded educational opportunities while championing free speech, civil dialogue, and global diplomacy. Innovation and economic growth have soared, generating thousands of jobs while revolutionizing life-saving patient care. Most recently, Penn research enabled companies in the United States and Germany to produce vaccines based on modified mRNA that are saving millions of lives in record time. My scholarship also has centered on advancing values and interests key to America's global leadership.

If confirmed, I will work to further strengthen our bilateral and multilateral partnerships with Germany. I highlight just three key priorities here.

First, I will work closely with Congress and the many agencies represented by Mission Germany to maximize the benefits of our bilateral relationship. This includes increasing trade and investment, combating climate change, strengthening global health, resisting weaponized energy flows, and countering corruption, terrorism, and malign influence.

Second, I will engage in robust and inclusive public diplomacy to strengthen the foundations of our bilateral relationship. I will engage younger generations of Germans, many with refugee parents like me, to discuss the United States' role in helping to rebuild a prosperous, united, and democratic Germany. That story, rebuilding Germany after the Holocaust to be a champion for democratic principles and human rights, is an example to the world.

Third, I will advocate to strengthen our Transatlantic alliances and European partnerships, central among them NATO and the EU. The stronger and more capable our multilateral partnerships, the more effective we will be in realizing the boundless opportunities in a free and open rule-based order. Partnership with Germany is essential to deterring Russian plans to take further and more significant aggressive moves against Ukraine, and to addressing the challenges to our shared security, prosperity and values posed by the PRC.

An essential foundation for advancing our national interests will be supporting the safety, security, and morale of Mission Germany. This includes the 473 U.S. direct hires, 1,033 family members, and 703 local staff representing nine Cabinet-level and five other independent federal agencies at the Embassy and five consulates, as well as our military service members and all American citizens living in Germany. Whether addressing unexplained health incidents or the physical security of our mission, the health and safety of my team will be my top priority. Our dedicated, hard-working, and unsurpassed public servants and uniformed personnel deserve no less.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, I am greatly honored to have been nominated to serve as United States Ambassador to a country that is such an important partner with ours, and with which I have such a historically meaningful connection. If confirmed, I would be excited to begin work during this key juncture in our relations, as a new German Government is stepping onto the global stage. I pledge that I will serve the American people with honor and dignity, and I will work to foster an even stronger alliance between the United States and Germany based on our common interests and shared values.

Thank you for your consideration. I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you all for your statements. We will turn to a series of five-minute rounds.

Before I begin that, I have a few questions that are on behalf of the committee as a whole that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness by all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you. I would ask each of you to provide verbally a yes or no answer to the following questions.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation while policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. And finally, do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. All of the nominees have responded yes to all questions. The chairman will reserve his time and recognize Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Gutmann, one of my pet peeves is the amount of money that is flowing into institutions of higher education in the United States from China. Most Americans are not aware of this.

I have to tell you, in fact, I worked with the Chairman as we tried to rein this in and we are going to continue to do that, and I want to get your thoughts on this while you are here.

To be honest with you, I was shocked at this number of \$86 million flowing into your institution. I have to tell you, I was also shocked when you indicated you really did not know that much about this. What do you know about that? Do you supervise this at all?

Dr. GUTMANN. Thank you, and please let me put this question into context, first, of your excellent report of November 2020 on transatlantic cooperation on China.

The focus on the PRC's use of American institutions of higher education by having Confucius Institutes at universities to restrict academic freedom, to control faculty hiring, and to threaten our core values is something that I share great concern about.

At a time when Confucius Institutes were proliferating in the United States, I ensured that the University of Pennsylvania did not accept an invitation to have a Confucius Institute—that was in 2009—and have ever since been vigilant against the nefarious influences of the PRC.

Senator RISCH. I think that is to your credit, by the way. I knew that you had declined the invitation to have a Confucius Institute and I think that is really to your credit.

But having said that, the \$86 million is still pretty stunning and I am going to talk about a few of them here when you are done. But go ahead.

Dr. GUTMANN. Thank you for—we are one on this issue. And the second piece of context, which goes directly to your question of the scale of Penn and what I do, as president, take due diligence on, we have 12 schools and six hospitals, and the fundraising over the period you spoke about is over \$5 billion and over my presidency over \$10 billion.

A very small fraction of that comes from China, less—considerably less than 1 percent. What I do make sure of it is—so it is not surprising that I do not know of specific gifts and contracts, most of which are in our Wharton School of Business.

But what I do know and what I make sure of is that no gifts, no contracts, to the University of Pennsylvania, are allowed to threaten academic freedom, are allowed to threaten national secu-

riety. We do no classified research. We get about one gift per three minutes, every few minutes, and one separate different donor every few minutes of every day.

And so it is not surprising that I am not familiar until actually being asked the question by you and your staff of the details of this. I was not familiar with those.

What I am sure of is that the University of Pennsylvania has stood strong against accepting any gifts that would threaten academic freedom, that would threaten national security and, as I said, we do no classified research, and this is aligned also with the concerns expressed in the 2019 staff report by Senators Portman and Carper and the Committee on Homeland Security.

Senator RISCH. Thank so much. I think that is a fair answer, and since it is 1 percent I think that does put it in context for us and that will give us a springboard to go forward here.

I look at these, and I know university presidents. They, certainly, do not deal with the kind of money you do but they look at this list every day to look at those contributions that are coming in and seeing what they can do to advance them some more.

I am surprised you are not at least somewhat more familiar with these. But, I mean, you take things like contributions from the Shanghai Advanced Institute of Finance. I cannot imagine they are giving you money to promote capitalism, but maybe they are.

There is all kinds of these that are anonymous. I mean, million-dollar gifts that says the country of origin is China and it says anonymous, and there is dozens of these on here.

Let me ask you this because my time is up. Do you think if we gave the institutions of higher learning time to extricate their selves from this and to back away from these kinds of influence, particularly when you have a place like China where, clearly, some of this money is coming from slavery? We all know what is going on with the Uighurs and that is money that is being generated, clearly, as a result of slavery.

Do you think that we could wean higher institutions from this cash flow if we gave them time to reconstitute, particularly when, as you noted, it is only 1 percent of what you get? But when you are talking about \$86 million they have got to be getting something for it.

And so it seems to me that we ought to wean the institutions of higher learning from these kind of contributions.

Dr. GUTMANN. Senator, I agree with you that we should make sure that institutions of higher education do not accept gifts from the PRC or any foreign government that would compromise our values.

I should say, for the record, that none of the gifts that the University of Pennsylvania accepted would it accept anonymously. The anonymity is what the Department of Education in its reporting is required by law to do. But every gift under my presidency to the University of Pennsylvania had—was looked at by our legal team and so on and none would be anonymous.

But I do agree with you that we should make sure that institutions of higher education prevent the kind of nefarious influence that the PRC is all too capable of and notorious for.

Senator RISCH. Money always carries influence and that is the difficulty.

My time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank all three of our nominees for their willingness to continue to serve and to serve our nation. We thank you very much and we thank your families because we know this is a family commitment. We thank you for all that.

Senator Risch, I think you know that our concerns about the PRC's impact on our academic centers around the nation has been around the entire country. We have had our issues in Maryland, and I appreciate the fact that we need to continue to put a big spotlight on this, and I do congratulate Dr. Gutmann for her leadership at Penn in this area and in so many areas of integrity.

Senator RISCH. And that issue is bipartisan, Senator. I think we can all agree on that.

Senator CARDIN. No question about it. Yes, it is. No question about it.

Ambassador Blome, I want to start, if I might, in regards to Pakistan. You mentioned during your opening statement concern about human rights. We have found significant challenges on protecting basic human rights. Recent actions taken by the Pakistani Government in regards to restrictions on social media platforms is just the latest of the efforts.

Tell me how you plan to use the tools available, if confirmed, to advance the values of human rights that America stands for in your representation in Pakistan.

Ambassador BLOME. Thank you very much, Senator.

If confirmed to this position, I would, certainly, use my position to speak publicly along with my engagements at senior levels of the Pakistani Government to make clear U.S. Government priorities and values with regards to human rights and personal freedoms.

Beyond that, I think it is also very important to work with local groups and individuals who are often courageously leading these fights on the ground and I would look for ways that we can continue to support those groups and strengthen our support for those groups and those voices to make them more effective in leading the movement for change in Pakistan.

Senator CARDIN. And would you send a clear message that the Embassy is open to those who are standing up to defend human rights within Pakistan to have a friendly venue where they will have attentive ears?

Ambassador BLOME. Absolutely, Senator, I would do that, and it, certainly, would be an open door for such groups.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mayor Garcetti, I want to talk a little bit about India, if I might. India was just downgraded from the annual report by Freedom House from free to partly free. They recently enacted a Citizenship Amendment Act that is very much aimed against the Muslim population within India.

The same question to you, if you could be a little more specific. India is an incredibly important strategic partner of the United

States but the human rights records there are, certainly, anything but the way we would like to see them.

How do you balance our need to work with India as a strategic partner but making advancements on behalf of human rights?

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you very much, Senator. There is no question that the U.S.-India relationship should be underpinned by our common commitment to democracy, to human rights, and to civil society.

It is enshrined in our constitutions—the oldest democracy in the world and the largest democracy in the world—and human rights and defense of democracy is a pillar of our foreign policy.

But to answer specifically, if confirmed, I will actively raise these issues. I will raise them with humility. It is a two-way street on these. But I intend to engage directly with civil society.

There are groups that are actively fighting for the human rights of people on the ground in India that will get direct engagement from me. We know that democracies are complicated—we can look at our own and at India's—but it is a cornerstone of our shared values.

And I just want to say, for me, these will not be afterthoughts. My Master's degree was in human rights and international law. I have fought for human rights on four different continents and it will be a core part of what I will pursue with my Indian counterparts, if confirmed.

Senator CARDIN. I believe the Citizenship Amendment was passed just recently. The way it looks like it is going to be implemented it will be very discriminatory against the Muslim population, which is very, very large.

Do we have your commitment that you will be a voice in regards to any discrimination against minority groups such as the Muslim population within India?

Mr. GARCETTI. Absolutely, Mr. Cardin. Thank you, Senator. And I would not only just bring it up, but it would not be something at the end as an obligation. It will be a core piece of what I will be engaging my Indian counterparts, if confirmed, with.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Congratulations to each of our nominees. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and I know this committee feels the same way.

Mayor Garcetti, I would like to begin with you because I have read with some concern accusations that one of your advisors engaged in a pattern sexual harassment while employed for you and that you did not respond to those allegations in a way that would have stopped the behavior.

And I raise this because I want to give you a chance to respond to those allegations but also because, as we all know, India is an ally, the world's biggest democracy, but it is a democracy where the rights of women and sexual assault and sexual harassment against women has been rampant over the years. They have made some real progress and women are speaking out more, but there is still a great deal of fear and intimidation for women to speak out on issues of harassment.

And so I think it is very important that we model the behavior that we want to see in our allies and so I wanted to give you a chance to respond to those allegations.

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you, Senator, and I deeply appreciate not only the importance of that question, I understand, but I am very grateful for the opportunity to address it as well.

Simply said, Senator, harassment and discrimination have no place in the workplace, no place in our society, and I have zero tolerance for that, and I also know that words are not enough.

We have to take persistent action to support and protect victims and I have dedicated my professional life to doing just that, whether it was in college setting up the National Student Coalition Against Harassment, whether it is as a naval officer adjudicating cases, or as a mayor, where I have broad-backed policies to be able to centralize complaints and to allow folks to anonymously be able to report and seek justice.

In regards to this specific case, I want to say unequivocally that I never witnessed nor was it brought to my attention the behavior that has been alleged, and I also want to assure you if it had been I would have immediately taken action to stop that.

In India, this will be a priority of mine because it has been a priority my entire life. My wife and I have served, and I know Senator Risch's staff has worked closely, for instance, with the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking.

I have on-the-ground experience with standing up law enforcement to go after sexual harassment, sexual assault, civilian teams that roll out on domestic violence and sexual assault calls for police officers to be able to engage and help people extricate themselves.

But I will as ambassador, if confirmed, not have this as one of the issues. It is a core issue of my life and will be if confirmed as ambassador.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. I look forward to your strong stance when you are confirmed.

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Dr. Gutmann, as you are aware, I am sure, the United States and Germany last summer made a joint statement to Ukraine about the importance of taking—of responding to Russia's aggressive behavior in Ukraine and using—taking the opportunity to try to use Nord Stream 2 as a way to use energy to threaten Ukraine and to weaponize energy.

As you are thinking about your role as ambassador, how will you work with Germany, with this new government in Germany, around the Nord Stream 2 issue and around holding Russia accountable for its efforts to weaponize energy?

Dr. GUTMANN. Thank you, Senator, for that important question. I view our opportunity to advance our relationship to Germany as one that is opened up by the new coalition government, Germany being one of our strongest European allies.

I believe Nord Stream 2 is a bad deal—a bad deal for Germany, for Ukraine, terrible for all of Europe and the United States. You have my commitment to focus on a diplomacy that resists all



threats, all human rights violations, especially from Russia and the PRC.

I will call on Germany to meet its 2 percent commitment to NATO. That is an important security measure against Russia. I view the July joint statement as setting not only a commitment and an important floor on our expectations of alliance with our important ally, but it is a floor, not a ceiling, on what we may need to do together.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. I am sure that everyone on this committee would agree with that strong position.

I am out of time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member. Thank you to all three of today's nominees. I have enjoyed working with you in the past and look forward to this next chapter in your service to our nation.

I am thrilled the Biden administration continues to send to the Senate and this committee such well-qualified nominees. I will just note at the outset, I am gravely concerned that for three such important countries we do not have confirmed ambassadors and it is the middle of December.

I will do everything I can to advance your nominations through this committee and the floor, and hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will work with us to achieve that goal.

If I might, Mayor Garcetti, it is great to see you again, and I think your experience leading a global coalition of mayors in combating climate change will serve you well in this new role. Your long experience in foreign relations as well as in leading a critical city of our nation will be important.

Talk to me about how you think we can continue to build on the U.S.-India relationship in terms of public health and how we might strengthen and expand our partnership around vaccine manufacturing while still finding ways to respect American innovation and protect some of the ways in which our inventions or creations, whether it is in copyright, trademark, or elsewhere, could be best protected.

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your friendship and collaboration over the years as well.

I am very excited, if confirmed, about this part of the job. Public health on both sides of the Indo-Pacific are going to be critical and the Quad Leaders Summit, I think, embodied that.

It was not just U.S. and India but also the two other countries that make up the Quad joining together to support the manufacturing capacity of India, to bring a billion more vaccine doses around the world, and vice versa, for us to be able to make sure that we have supply chains that are diversified from a single country.

I think that when it comes to public health we have a very strong record together, whether it is in those supply chains or some of the innovations that we have.

And I would just offer, if confirmed, to my Indian counterparts it is in our mutual interest to co-write rules of law that will allow intellectual property in India, which they develop.

They are not just a country that produces vaccines made elsewhere. They are great innovators in the medical field. They want to protect that intellectual property and we want to as well.

When it comes to emergencies like a COVID pandemic, I think the moves of this administration were the right ones to try to open that up, to try to work with the world community and the private sector to say in crisis moments we can relax those rules in order to save lives.

But for the long term, I think we have great jobs to produce both in India and, most importantly, here in the U.S. from that cooperation.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mayor, and I look forward to even closer U.S.-India ties both in security and strategy, but also in research and economically and in public health.

Dr. Gutmann, it is great to see you again. I recently led a bipartisan delegation to Berlin. We met with Chancellor Scholz and senior members of the Bundestag. I will be interested to see how their foreign policy of this new coalition government differs from the previous.

What do you think might be the challenges in the Bundestag, given the coalition's statement in maintaining consensus on foreign policy, and how do you think we can learn from the ways in which German advanced manufacturing and, in particular, their workforce skilling practices may show the way in the new economic environment that we face post-pandemic?

Dr. GUTMANN. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for leading the CODEL to Germany and other countries at such an important time.

I was heartened to see that Chancellor Scholz mentioned that there is continuity in German foreign policy. That said, I think there is always more to be done and especially in light, as you mentioned, of the challenges of Russian aggression, of Chinese malign influence, Chinese predatory trade practices, Chinese genocide against Xinjiang, against the Uighurs, and its aggressions against Hong Kong, Tibet, and its threats to Taiwan.

So I see this as an opportunity. I think there will be a challenge with the coalition, no doubt. I think we can address that with strong and respectful diplomacy.

On the trade and investment, Germany, as you know, is our third largest source of foreign direct investment and accounts for over 850,000 jobs for Americans and we, in turn, account for about 700,000 jobs in Germany.

Germany has a model of apprenticeship that I believe we could build on in close partnership with Germany. It already exists in the United States in some states and I think we could do more. It is a great alternative for talented hard-working young people for whom four-year college is not the best.

My father actually was apprenticing at the time he had to flee Nazi Germany, but that apprentice program has grown in the Democratic Republic and I think we could learn and work with Germany on it.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much, Dr. Gutmann. Could I ask forbearance for one more question or should I move on?

The CHAIRMAN. Go right ahead.

Senator COONS. Mr. Chairman, briefly, if I might.

Ambassador Blome, you and the mayor will be nearby in a very tough neighborhood. I will just be interested, briefly, in how you believe we can repair the U.S.-Pakistan relationship while also more successfully engaging them in the counterterrorism mission, going forward.

Ambassador BLOME. Thank you, Senator.

I think it is very important that we find ways to work together to address some of these shared challenges that we are going to face on the counterterrorism front now. We have to be clear eyed about the troubled history that we have had on these issues.

But looking ahead, I think Pakistan has a shared interest in ensuring that Afghanistan does not once again become host to terrorist groups and a contributor to regional instability, and I think we have seen some signs recently in terms of Pakistan's willingness to engage with international partners on issues of Afghanistan's future, including in the extended Troika format recently and the upcoming OIC meeting that is going to be dedicated to that question. I will urge them to continue to work together with international partners on a common set of objectives there.

Senator COONS. Thank you—

Ambassador BLOME. And looking a little bit further ahead, I think there is things that we can do on the trade and investment front to grow the U.S.-Pakistani trade and investment relationship in a way that benefits both our countries in a balanced way. I believe there are significant opportunities there that I would look for.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Ambassador. I look forward to working with you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I want to congratulate each of the nominees for the positions. You are all very, very well qualified.

I will begin with you, Ambassador Blome, to just continue the line of thought. In Pakistan, Pakistan, arguably, is China's closest ally in South Asia. How would you see Islamabad balancing ties with the United States and China, particularly as we work more closely together with India on mechanisms like the Quad and the Indo-Pacific?

Ambassador BLOME. Thank you, Senator. I think Pakistan has signaled very clearly an interest in diversifying their relationships. While their relationship with China has been important, recently I think the signal has been very clear that they are interested in a—growing the relationship with the United States, doing business, treating the United States as a key partner for Pakistan's private sector.

We have been Pakistan's largest export market for decades. We enjoy strong people-to-people ties with the people of Pakistan through their diaspora, through civil society, and their stated aspirations of a geoeconomic-driven foreign policy demonstrates their interest in diversifying the relationship beyond Beijing.

If confirmed to this position I would look forward to working on those issues with Pakistan.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Mr. Mayor, great to see you again. Congratulations to you and to your family. I have kind of a similar question not about China but actually about Russia. India and Russia have had a long-standing defense tie. Prior to the passage of the CAATSA sanction law in 2016, India had begun to explore purchase of the S-400 air defense system from Russia. That could trigger CAATSA sanctions. There is an executive waiver possibility within the CAATSA sanctions.

But talk to us a little bit about as we are doing more and more together with India in our military relations, a lot of joint exercises—the Indian military does more joint exercise with the United States than any other nation—what is the potential danger to the U.S.-India mil cooperation that the acquisition of the S-400 system would create?

Mr. GARCETTI. Thank you, Senator, and great to see you as well. I do not want to prejudge the Secretary's decision about sanctions or a waiver, and I do want to tell the Chairman, Ranking Member, all the members, I do fully support the law of the land, the implementation of CAATSA as law here, and part of that is the waiver provision, as you mentioned.

If confirmed, though, I would advocate the following: the continued diversification of India's weapon system, the threats to our own weapon systems if that diversification does not occur because we have to protect our data and our systems, and work towards really growing this major defense partnership.

I think it is one of the great success stories of the last few decades, from zero to \$20 billion in procurement, the intelligence sharing that we have, the interoperability, the exercises, the maritime work that we are doing, and I would seek, as somebody who has served alongside my Indian counterparts, to really deepen those people-to-people relationships in the military, the industrial coordination on that, and just be very clear about what the threats are to our system, especially for new weapon systems in the future that would come from outside the United States or, in this case, Russia.

Senator KAINE. And Mr. Mayor, I walked in right at the end of Senator Cardin's questions but I know he was also asking you questions about human rights and I just want to put an exclamation point on that.

We have a sizable Indian diaspora community in Virginia and many Sikhs and others feel like there is often nationalism or religious division that is sort of pushed at times of internal political challenge and they feel victimized by that, and I hope that is a matter that you will take very, very seriously with this important ally.

Dr. Gutmann, congratulations to you. Senator Coons was covering what I wanted to cover. But just in particular, I just want to make sure that Germany sees the same danger in Russia amassing forces on the Ukraine border as the U.S. does.

We had some meetings earlier, Senator Coons and I, at the Halifax Security Forum with EU officials—they were not from Germany but they were EU officials—and it did not make us feel good. They did not seem to feel that the danger of the Russian troops amassing on the border was as significant as we believe it to be.

Germany believes the Nord Stream pipeline is very, very important. But I would have to believe and expect that they would view an incursion into Ukrainian sovereignty, a further incursion by Russia, as sort of an existential challenge in Europe and I hope that they see that threat as seriously as we do.

Dr. GUTMANN. As do I, Senator, and if confirmed, I will take the good work of this committee and of Congress and the administration's—what I understand the ongoing high-level discussions going on now to Germany and really underscore how important it is to act strongly in alliance against the aggressions of Russia.

Senator KAINE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Van Hollen is with us virtually.

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Van Hollen?

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Can you hear—Mr. Chairman, can you hear me okay?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, I can, loud and clear.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Congratulations to all of you on your nominations.

Dr. Gutmann, as you mentioned in your opening statement and in response to questions, you are going to be representing the United States with a critical NATO ally, Germany, with the new government and at a time where we are witnessing ongoing Russian aggression, especially threats to the sovereignty of Ukraine.

And so I know that you understand the severity of the situation. I hope the Biden administration and Germany will agree that if Russia takes any offensive actions or invades Ukraine there would be an immediate snap back of the Nord Stream 2 sanctions.

Mayor Garcetti, congratulations to you on your nomination. As you know, India is a critical U.S. partner in the Indo-Pacific region. I want to salute the Biden administration's efforts to further expand the Quad relationship and India's role in it, and as been indicated earlier, we are working with India to try to develop vaccines to address the challenges throughout the developing world.

Maryland has a company, Novavax that has teamed up with the Serum Institute of India and have pledged to provide 1.1 billion doses to COVAX to distribute to the neediest places around the world. That is still going through the final hoops of getting accepted, but I am confident that that is going to happen and I look forward to staying in touch with you about that.

Ambassador Blome, thank you for your service over many years in the Foreign Service and your most recent posting in Tunisia. As we discussed when I met you earlier, I have been concerned with the lack of a real strategy from the administration as it relates to Pakistan.

I am interested in your thoughts on how we can more fully engage both economically, politically, and on security issues at the highest levels. Pakistan, as you know, is an important country at any time. It has an especially important role right now with the withdrawal of U.S. and other forces from Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

There are many who exaggerate the amount of influence that Pakistan has over the Taliban. People forget that Pakistan has waged its own bloody war against the Pakistani Taliban—the

TTP—and as you know, Pakistan has not yet recognized the new government in Kabul—the new Taliban Government.

At the same time, clearly, Pakistan has ties to elements of the Taliban and could play a positive role, potentially, going forward with respect to our demands on the new Taliban Government.

Here is the question. What do you think our strategy should be? What role can Pakistan play in furthering our goals, together with others in the international community, with respect to the goals we have set out in Afghanistan and the demands we have placed on the new government there?

Ambassador BLOME. Thank you, Senator, for that question, a very important one.

I think there are opportunities to work with Pakistan on the agenda that we have set out for Afghanistan, and in particular, I think we can identify a number of areas of common ground that we have with Pakistan in trying to achieve a government that is inclusive in nature inside Afghanistan, one that can help avert humanitarian catastrophe inside the country, stabilize the economy, and ensure that Afghanistan does not, again, become a source of terrorist threats to the United States and our allies.

We have set these out in a number of dialogues that we have had recently in international fora with Pakistan, including those hosted in the extended Troika format and in the upcoming OIC.

I think we have established a basis that we can work with Pakistan on those important strategic issues. We have to find a way to make progress on this and work together on these issues.

Beyond that, again, as we discussed in our meeting, Senator, I think we can also look at ways we can build the relationship with Pakistan on other bases that are important, including the trade and investment ties that I mentioned before.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. I would just ask you, if confirmed, to use your influence to arrange a telephone call between President Biden and Prime Minister Kahn. I think this is a self—this is an own goal. This is an unforced error on our part. It would be, I think, an important gesture at this point in time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Rubio?

Senator RUBIO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will not use, hopefully, my whole time. I know we are pending a vote that has already started.

I guess, Ms. Gutmann, I wanted to—I know Senator Risch has already asked about the money the entities—the Chinese entities gave to the university.

And good morning to all of you. Thank you for all your willingness to serve and be here.

I wanted to ask you more specifically about China and Germany. Germany is China's largest European trading partner, and since 2017, I think, China has been Germany's largest trading partner.

And it is concerning because while other governments have been more forward leaning, for example, on the diplomatic boycott of the Olympics and speaking out about the genocide of the Uighurs, Ger-

many has, obviously, been more resistant and I think the commercial links explain why.

What is, generally, your assessment of how the Germans view China on a global scale and what are your plans or thoughts about getting them to become more engaged?

Dr. GUTMANN. Thank you for that very important question, Senator.

My sense is that there has been a balancing in the German Government between its important economic ties with China and its concerns for human rights and democracy and the threats thereof.

If confirmed, I would lean in on this to emphasize our government's position and our society's position that the ongoing genocide in Xinjiang province against the Uighurs, the threats to fair market practices, cybersecurity threats, and I could go on and on, and will, if confirmed, with the German Government pose economic as well as security threats to Germany, to Europe, to the free world and, of course, to the United States.

I see this as an opportunity with the new government, that there is an opening to help build and reset Germans' position. I will very much urge Germany, in concert with this committee, to join us in boycotting the Olympics, to stand down and speak up against Chinese practices in alliance.

It will be to the betterment of German security and, most important to me, if confirmed, to the interests and the values of the United States.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. There are a series of votes going on. There is no other member that I know of seeking recognition at this time. The chair has a series of very significant questions, but he is going to submit it—I am going to submit it for the record.

I would expect substantive answers to my questions. I would hate to be the one holding you up for your business meeting.

This record will remain open until the close of business tomorrow. I would ask members to submit their questions. I would ask the nominees to answer those questions expeditiously and substantively so we can consider your nominations before a business meeting.

With the thanks of the committee, this hearing is adjourned.

Senator RISCH. I would like to have this submitted for the record, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the documents that Senator Risch has asked will be included in the record.

[The information referred to is located at the end of this transcript.]

The CHAIRMAN. And this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:23 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

### **Additional Material Submitted for the Record**

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DONALD ARMIN BLOME BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the re-

sponse of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. The Biden administration is committed to the health, safety, and security of all U.S. Government personnel and family members serving domestically and overseas. This commitment extends to the handling of anomalous health incidents (AHI). As of October 2021, the Department has received reports of AHIs from every region of the globe. If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will work with my colleagues at the Department to address these cases in Mission Pakistan to ensure all employees and their families get any care they need. The safety of our personnel has always been a top priority for the Mission; if confirmed, I will continue to ensure that threats against U.S. personnel are taken seriously.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. The Secretary and all of us at the Department and throughout the U.S. Government take reports of anomalous health incidents very seriously. If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will follow the Department's protocols on reporting and addressing these incidents through the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF).

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will follow the Department's protocols on reporting and addressing these incidents through the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF). I will ensure that this topic be included in briefings I will receive upon arrival at post if confirmed.

*Question.* Pakistan played a double-game throughout the war in Afghanistan, claiming to support U.S. counterterrorism efforts while allowing the Taliban and al-Qaeda to operate on their territory.

- Please assess the relationship between the Pakistani ISI and the Taliban. How will you navigate that relationship as ambassador, given our non-recognition of the Taliban regime in Kabul?

Answer. Pakistan repeatedly called for an inclusive political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, though it has not been willing to take steps that would jeopardize its relationship with the Taliban. The State Department has engaged with the Pakistani Government at senior levels, including Secretary Blinken, Deputy Secretary Sherman, and Special Representative for Afghanistan West, to urge close coordination and alignment with the international community on the way forward in Afghanistan.

If confirmed, I will convey to Pakistan the importance the U.S. administration places on Pakistan's constructive role moving forward. I also will make it clear to Pakistan that a government in Kabul that allows safe passage for those who wish to leave Afghanistan, is inclusive, protects the rights of women and members of minority groups, adheres to its counterterrorism commitments, and ensures humanitarian access would be in the best interests of all countries in the region.

*Question.* Since the fall of Kabul, the Pakistani Government seems increasingly willing to cut deals with domestic, religiously motivated violent extremist groups, such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan.

- What is your assessment of the Pakistani Government's actions since the fall of Kabul when it comes to domestic extremism? Do you believe this is a tactical response to the events in Afghanistan or indicative of a broader shift in how the Government deals with such groups?

Answer. Pakistan has a shared interest in ensuring terrorist organizations operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan do not threaten regional stability. The Government of Pakistan in no way supports the TTP, and in fact our interests align in halting the TTP's activities in the border regions.

Pakistan seeks regional stability and is sensitive to threats from domestic extremists that target the Pakistani state. Pakistan is also concerned about the potential effects that Afghanistan's failed economy could directly have on its neighbors, such as impacts to trade, security, and refugee movements. If confirmed, I will reinforce our shared interest in taking action against the TTP and all other terrorist groups.



*Question.* Pakistan's relationship with China is growing stronger through both economic and security partnerships. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, with Beijing offering more than \$62 billion in loans for energy and infrastructure projects.

- How do you assess the long-term trend of China-Pakistan relations? What do you see as the main areas of growth in that relationship? What are potential points of tension between the two nations?

*Answer.* PRC global lending, including to Pakistan, frequently fails to meet international standards of openness, inclusivity, transparency, and governance. Unsustainably high financial obligations that are at odds with those standards risk undermining Pakistan's economic stability and limit opportunities for Pakistani workers and businesses. China's close ties with Pakistan do not preclude the United States from also having a productive partnership with Pakistan. Pakistan's stated aspirations of a "geo-economic"-driven foreign policy demonstrates its interest in diversifying its relationship beyond Beijing. The United States is a key partner for Pakistan's private sector, and we have been Pakistan's largest export market for decades. The United States enjoys strong people-to-people ties with Pakistan through the diaspora, civil society, educational exchanges, and beyond. If confirmed, I will continue and expand U.S. Government efforts with the Government of Pakistan, civil society, minority populations, and the private sector to promote robust U.S.-Pakistani economic and financial ties that continues to be open, inclusive, and transparent.

*Question.* According to a U.S. Commission on International Freedom (USCIRF) report, Pakistan has the second strictest blasphemy laws in the world, after Iran. Worryingly, there has been a surge in blasphemy cases against religious minorities in recent years. The existence of Pakistan's blasphemy laws have normalized extrajudicial enforcement from violent mobs. In December 2021, a Sri Lankan factory manager was lynched and his body set on fire by a brutal mob in Pakistan over allegations of blasphemy.

- If confirmed, how would you address this troubling trend of violence in Pakistan that is creating an increasingly unsafe environment for religious minorities?

*Answer.* The U.S. Government strongly opposes blasphemy laws and views their very existence as inconsistent with the right to freedom of religion or belief. Pakistan has allowed application of these laws to lead to egregious arrests of those wrongfully accused, and subjected individuals to years of unjust imprisonment and targeted assassinations. These laws are also too often used by individuals as a pretext to justify violence against those whose religion or ethnicity differs from their own or to settle personal grievances.

I am concerned by the pattern of targeted killings against individuals accused of blasphemy and members of Pakistan's Ahmadiyya community, including U.S. citizen Tahir Naseem, who was gunned down in open court in Peshawar while on trial for blasphemy in July 2020 and the mob violence against the Sri Lankan businessman you referenced. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. calls for justice for Mr. Naseem and urge Pakistan to reform its blasphemy laws. I also will advocate for the right of members of religious minority groups to practice their faith free from harassment or threat of violence while enjoying the full protection of the rule of law. If confirmed, I will raise this and other cases forcefully and engage and empower civil society groups advocating for reform to the blasphemy laws.

*Question.* Since 2018, Pakistan has been designated a "Country of Particular Concern" for their gross violations of religious liberty and freedom of belief. However, for the last four years, the State Department's CPC designation on Pakistan has been accompanied with a waiver on congressionally-mandated U.S. sanctions under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

- Do you believe that granting the waiver the last four years has benefited the United States and advanced our interests in the region? Do you think that Pakistan should continue to receive this waiver?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for the rights of everyone to express their religion or belief in a safe and secure environment. The Pakistani Government has taken significant notice of the "Country of Particular Concern" designation, and we continue to engage at senior levels to advance our position. I will work with the Department to assess the utility of the Presidential waiver based on the effect of our advocacy on religious freedoms, if confirmed.

*Question.* In January 2021, Pakistan's Supreme Court released Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh who was responsible for the beheading of American journalist Daniel Pearl. Secretary Blinken called the decision "an affront to terrorism victims every-

where.” Sheikh was previously indicted by a U.S. grand jury for the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl and the 1994 kidnapping of a United States citizen in India.

- Do you unequivocally condemn the release of Pearl’s murderer? What steps has the State Department taken since the decision to secure justice for Pearl’s family, and what steps will you take if you are confirmed?

Answer. Securing justice for Daniel Pearl and his family is and will remain a priority of the U.S. Government. Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his co-conspirators remain under detention as the decision of a Supreme Court panel is being reviewed. If confirmed, I commit to consistently emphasize the importance the United States places on this matter in my engagements with Pakistani leaders and I will urge them to keep detained those responsible for Mr. Pearl’s kidnapping and murder and to pursue a robust review of the judgments that led to their ordered release. Those guilty for this heinous crime must continue to be held accountable.

*Question.* Pakistan remains a Major Non-NATO Ally, which grants it privileged status for increased U.S. assistance and advanced weapon procurement under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act. Since 2001, Pakistan has received over \$34 billion in U.S. assistance, including military assistance, even after the Taliban took Kabul with the public cheerleading of the Pakistani Government.

- Do you think Pakistan should remain a Major Non-NATO Ally with all the benefits afforded to countries on that list?

Answer. Pakistan remains an important partner with shared regional strategic and counterterrorism interests. Pakistan seeks regional stability and has a shared interest in ensuring Afghanistan does not once again become host to terrorist groups with transnational ambitions and that violence and unrest does not spill across from Afghanistan into Pakistan.

If confirmed, I commit to consider all tools at our disposal and regularly engage with Pakistani officials at the highest levels to convey the U.S. expectation that Pakistan must advance a peaceful, stable, and prosperous South Asia. I commit to consulting closely with this committee on any consideration of a change in MNNA status.

*Question.* Pakistan has recently signed agreements with both China and Turkey to co-produce unmanned aerial vehicles. In 2020, Pakistan reportedly purchased the CH-4 from China and in 2021, Pakistan signed an agreement with Turkish Aerospace Industries to produce Anka combat drones.

- Please assess Pakistan’s UAV capabilities and partnerships on UAV technology with both China and Turkey.

Answer. Pakistan has an active defense relationship with PRC and Turkey and, like many other countries, seeks to capitalize on UAV technology to meet its defense and security needs. Pakistan prefers U.S. equipment but has pursued defense relationships with China, Turkey, and other countries in part because the United States has limited its security cooperation with Pakistan. If confirmed, I commit to monitoring Pakistan’s UAV partnerships and keeping this committee informed of pertinent developments in Pakistan’s defense and procurement relationships involving advanced technology.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DONALD ARMIN BLOME BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Pakistan was identified as Tier 2 Watch List for the second year in a row because of a continued lack of overall adequate resources to address trafficking. How will you work with the Pakistan Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. Pakistan’s largest human trafficking problem is bonded labor, particularly in the agriculture and brick-making sectors. Key recommendations in the Department’s 2021 TIP Report included increasing investigations and prosecutions of traffickers, including complicit officials, and increasing efforts to identify and provide sufficient services for trafficking victims. Pakistan has expressed interest in working with the United States to combat human trafficking and has made certain strides in implementing anti-TIP measures. These efforts included finalizing implementation rules for the 2018 Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (PTPA), adopting a new five-year national action plan to combat trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling crimes, and referring more potential trafficking victims for care

than in the previous reporting period. Effective implementation of legislation will be an important indicator of Pakistan's commitment to addressing TIP in the coming years.

If confirmed, I will work closely with government officials and civil society. One group worth highlighting is the Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN), the largest network of U.S. Government exchange program alumni in the world, with 32,000 members, which created an interest group with experts in combatting human trafficking. These respected specialists' voices resonate in their communities and help the U.S. Government not only refine its approach but also amplify and communicate key policy concerns.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Pakistan was identified as having very little societal and governmental respect for religious freedom. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Repression of religious freedom in Pakistan is a multi-faceted problem that manifests itself in many ways, including the harsh enforcement of blasphemy laws and persecution of the Ahmadiyya community. The U.S. Government strongly opposes blasphemy laws and views them as inconsistent with the right to freedom of religion or belief. Pakistan has allowed application of these laws to lead to egregious arrests of those wrongfully accused and subjected individuals to years of unjust imprisonment and targeted assassinations. These laws are also too often used by individuals as a pretext to justify violence against those whose religion or ethnicity differs from their own or to settle personal grievances.

If confirmed, I will continue U.S. calls for justice for the murder of Tahir Naseem, a U.S. citizen gunned down in open court in Peshawar while on trial for blasphemy in July 2020, and urge Pakistan to reform its blasphemy laws. I also will advocate for the rights of members of religious minority groups to practice their faith free from harassment or threat of violence while enjoying the full protection of the rule of law. I will raise this and other cases forcefully and engage civil society groups advocating for reform to the blasphemy laws and religious minority rights.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Pakistan was identified as having committed severe human rights abuses, including arbitrary or unlawful government interference with privacy; serious restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, including violence against journalists, unjustified arrests and disappearances of journalists, censorship, and site blocking; government interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, such as overly restrictive nongovernmental organization laws; severe restrictions of religious freedom, and more.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* Press freedom and freedom of expression are integral to all functioning democracies, and if confirmed, I will advocate that Pakistan cease harassment and censorship of its journalists, reform legislation that stifles freedom of expression, commit to ensuring the physical safety of journalists, and emphasize the importance of a free, independent, and diverse press that does not face intimidation and coercion. I will meet with local press with my public affairs team when appropriate.

Another issue of concern is the lack of accountability for enforced disappearances of political and human rights activists. I will press for the Government to transparently, and in consultation with all stakeholders, reinvigorate its investigations into individual cases of disappearances and hold perpetrators accountable.

*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* Strong civil society organizations provide the opportunity for civic engagement upon which a healthy democracy relies. The U.S. Government currently works closely with Pakistani civil society organizations, and if confirmed, I will seek to continue U.S.-funded programs that support civil society development. I will also urge the Government of Pakistan to ensure space for civil society to operate free of intimidation or harassment. I will seek to strengthen the relationship between civil society organizations and the Government of Pakistan, including by regularly meeting with members of Pakistani civil society and, when appropriate, providing a platform to highlight their work.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with American businesses and social media companies, like Twitter, on the Government's efforts to silence dissent and punish critics on social media?

**Answer.** Freedom of expression is integral to all functioning democracies, and if confirmed, I will advocate that Pakistan cease harassment and censorship of its critics and emphasize the importance of a free, independent, and diverse press and public sphere free from intimidation and coercion. Relatedly, U.S. firms have relayed their concerns about data localization and local presence requirements in the recently enacted Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content Rules 2021 and other measures of the draft Personal Data Protection Bill which could harm their ability to conduct business in Pakistan. We have repeatedly raised these concerns with Pakistani officials. If confirmed, I would advocate for Pakistan to address those issues before finalizing legislation.

**Question.** The Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (MSP) in the IO bureau at the State Department is leading a whole-of-government effort to identify, recruit, and install qualified, independent personnel at the UN, including in elections for specialized bodies like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). There is an American candidate, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who if elected would be the first American and first woman to lead the ITU. She is in a tough race that will require early, consistent engagement across capitals and within the U.N. member states.

If confirmed, do you commit to demarching the Pakistan Government and any other counterparts necessary to communicate our support of Doreen?

**Answer.** Electing Doreen Bogdan-Martin as the next secretary-general of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in September 2022 is a top priority for the United States. With almost three decades of experience at the ITU, she is the most qualified candidate for the job. If confirmed, I will continue to urge Pakistan to support her candidacy and to deepen our two countries' cooperation to advance shared goals on critical telecommunications issues.

**Question.** If confirmed, do you commit to aiding the MSP office in efforts to support U.S. desired candidates within the U.N. system?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with the IO/MSP office and across the broader U.S. interagency as well as with likeminded countries to advance efforts to elect qualified, independent candidates for U.N. bodies, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Human Rights Committee/International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). In consultation with Congress and the Executive Branch, I will strive to advance U.S. priorities across key multilateral bodies and will work with the rest of the international community to meet our shared commitment to promoting respect for democracy and human rights.

**Question.** U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission [Islamabad]?

**Answer.** While Mission personnel have experienced significant hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mission is now over 99 percent vaccinated and has energetically pursued our strategic objectives in Pakistan. I understand morale is high, but this will be an issue I will prioritize if confirmed to this position.

**Question.** How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission [Islamabad]?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I will consult closely with Mission staff to understand the complex challenges of Mission Pakistan. I commit to being a responsive Chief of Mission who puts our people first, and I will work to ensure they have the resources and support they need to do their jobs.

**Question.** How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission [Pakistan]?

**Answer.** If confirmed, I plan to closely align Mission Pakistan's efforts with the President's interim National Security Strategy, National Security Council guidance, State and USAID's Joint Strategic Plan, the SCA Joint Regional Strategy, USAID's Country Development and Cooperation Strategy, and the Mission Pakistan Integrated Country Strategy. I intend to run a mission that puts U.S. interests first, in accordance with U.S. law and overarching strategic regional interests. I will stress in particular coordination across interagency elements on the Country Team to ensure a cooperative environment, mutually reinforcing efforts, and clarity of and adherence to our objectives.

**Question.** Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission.

- How would you describe your management style?

**Answer.** As Ambassador to Tunisia, I use an inclusive, mission-driven approach that prioritizes open communication, a unity of purpose across the Country Team,

and results oriented planning. I consult closely with the White House, Department of State, interagency, and Congress to advance U.S. objectives. I have zero tolerance for misconduct and prioritize mentorship for team members of all ranks and backgrounds. I will fully adhere to the Department's diversity, equity, and inclusion principles.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

Answer. I have led successful results-oriented missions in a variety of environments. Resources will not always be readily available to support mission objectives, and if confirmed, I will carefully evaluate our capabilities and help the team prioritize goals. At the same time, I will strongly advocate for appropriate resources to match important policy objectives.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

Answer. I am proudly a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, and I understand it is critical that Chiefs of Mission integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture. I plan to actively participate in Embassy functions and events, being mindful of morale and mentorship development, including among our locally-hired employees.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. No. Bullying is never acceptable or constructive, and has no place in Embassy Tunis and, if confirmed, it will not be appropriate or acceptable behavior in Embassy Islamabad and constituent posts. I have zero tolerance for berating team members and will take swift disciplinary action if members of my team engage in this behavior.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. The deputy chief of mission is vital leader in all diplomatic missions, playing an important role in every aspect of policy formulation, operations, and management. If confirmed, I will consult closely with and depend heavily on the deputy chief of mission to partner in effective management of the country team and our critical relationship with Pakistani counterparts.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

Answer. The deputy chief of mission (DCM) plays an integral role in leadership of the mission, including leadership of staff and management of operations. I would be comfortable delegating many leadership responsibilities to the DCM, if confirmed, though accountability for the overall performance and well-being of the mission rests with me.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- If confirmed, will you encourage Mission [Islamabad] diplomats to engage in-person with the [Pakistani] people outside of U.S. Embassies and consulates?

Answer. Consistent with security restrictions and COVID-19 protocols, I will encourage Mission Pakistan diplomats to continue and expand engagement with Pakistani contacts outside of our Embassy and consulates, if confirmed.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts.

- What is the public diplomacy environment like in [Pakistan]? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

Answer. Public diplomacy supports our national interests and furthers mission objectives to create a more resilient Pakistan by countering misinformation and extremist messaging, supporting a free media, building human capacity and economic growth through exchanges and outreach, and creating a nationwide network of alumni and partners invested in the future of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. Pakistan presents one of the most difficult public diplomacy environments for the United States worldwide, due to an unpredictable security environment, difficulties in obtaining Pakistani Government approval to access large parts of the country, negative perceptions of U.S. policy, and persistent media restrictions.

Additionally, the suspension of U.S. security assistance in 2018, tensions with India, and strong Pakistani Government and public support for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) present unique public messaging and diplomacy challenges on how to demonstrate continued U.S. commitment to the Pakistani people. If confirmed, I am committed to support an extensive range of exchanges, media outreach, grant programs, and broader public engagements.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* The messaging guidance provided by the Department is executed, supported, and refined for foreign audiences by public diplomacy teams in our Embassies overseas, in close coordination with their corresponding regional bureaus' public diplomacy offices and the Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA). If confirmed, I will support our public diplomacy officers in their crafting of messaging campaigns and subsequent delivery to Pakistani audiences with maximum effect in the local context. Public diplomacy officers at our Embassies and in Washington, as well as monitoring and analyses undertaken by GPA and the Global Engagement Center, help us understand foreign audiences and design approaches that inform, listen to, and build relationships with them. Effective communication between the mission and Washington, as well as with the Government and people of Pakistan will be among my top priorities.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Yes. Secretary Blinken is committed to the health, safety, and security of Department personnel and family members serving domestically and overseas. This commitment extends to the handling of anomalous health incidents (AHI). As of October 2021, the Department has received reports of AHIs from every region of the globe. If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will work with my colleagues at the Department to address these cases in Mission Pakistan, to mitigate effects, if possible, and to ensure all employees and their families get any care they need.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission [Pakistan] personnel?

*Answer.* If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will communicate effectively with my colleagues at Mission Pakistan. My door will remain open and I look forward to convening town halls and other events to demonstrate I value input and concerns of the team.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* As the current Chief of Mission to Tunisia, I have already received briefings on the anomalous health incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other Embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will follow the Department's protocols on reporting and addressing these incidents through the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF).

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* The Secretary and all of us at the Department and throughout the U.S. Government take reports of anomalous health incidents of our colleagues very seriously. We are committed to ensuring that employees and their families get any care they need. I also commit to sharing information with team members so they and their families might make decisions based on the threat that best suit their needs and well-being.

*Question.* Many of us are deeply concerned with the counterterror implications of the Biden administration's withdrawal from Afghanistan. According to open-source estimates, the Islamic State will be in a position to conduct external attacks in just 6 months—Al-Qaeda in two short years. What role should Afghanistan's neighbors play in protecting vital U.S. CT interests?

*Answer.* Pakistan seeks regional stability and has a shared interest in ensuring Afghanistan does not once again become host to terrorist groups with transnational ambitions. Pakistan is also concerned about the potential effects that Afghanistan's failed economy could directly have on its neighbors, such as impacts to trade, security, and refugee movements.

Pakistan has publicly emphasized the importance of the Taliban adhering to its commitments not to allow Afghanistan to become a safe haven for terrorists to launch attacks against the United States and our allies. If confirmed, I intend to work actively with the Pakistani Government to ensure it plays a constructive role in monitoring and mitigating the threat of terrorist activity emanating from Afghanistan. I also will urge the Pakistani Government to hold the Taliban accountable in preventing terrorist groups, such as al-Qaeda and ISIS-K, from using Afghanistan as a base for external operations that could threaten the United States or our allies.

*Question.* Faced with a rising China, the U.S. and India have significantly expanded strategic cooperation in recent years. While necessary, this cooperation may impact the balance of power in South Asia. In light of the existing nuclear programs maintained by both India and Pakistan, any mismatch—whether it be perceived or otherwise—in the balance of power has significant implications for U.S. national security interests. If confirmed, what steps would you take to maintain stability in the South Asia region and mitigate a balance of power contest between India and Pakistan?

*Answer.* The Department remains concerned by the growth of nuclear and missile capabilities in Asia. Pakistan has a shared interest in avoiding a costly arms race with its neighbors. If confirmed, I will urge the Pakistani Government to exercise restraint regarding its weapons capabilities. I also will work with my counterpart in Mission India to urge all parties to maintain peace and stability, including along the Line of Control, and refrain from actions or statements that could impact regional stability. I also will support a security assistance posture in which all proposals continue to be rigorously vetted to ensure they enhance our national security and foreign policy objectives, including contributing to regional stability.

*Question.* Despite attempts to make inroads into Pakistan, Chinese investments have yet to yield the promised returns for Pakistan. Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is on the decline and there is reportedly growing frustration inside Pakistan about the cost of Chinese projects. In recent months, projects under CPEC have stalled over reported disagreements between Pakistan and China. This presents a potential opportunity for the US. How would you characterize China's relationship with Pakistan? Are there tools at our disposal we can use to prevent Chinese predatory practices in Pakistan? Should the US provide technical assistance to Pakistan to safeguard against predatory deals with China?

*Answer.* CPEC is Beijing's single largest project in the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), largely made of loans by PRC state-owned banks. Pakistan and the PRC remain politically and institutionally committed to CPEC, and Pakistani leaders from across the political spectrum continue to characterize it as vital to Pakistan's economic growth and prosperity. The Pakistani public has supported the long-standing relations with the PRC, with minor exceptions, such as Baloch separatists opposed to CPEC projects in their region.

Pakistan and the PRC have strong bilateral political ties dating back to the 1960s, with the PRC typically backing Pakistani positions in U.N. bodies and attempts to insulate it from punitive actions. Pakistan, in return, tends to behave reciprocally; for example, Pakistan avoids criticism of the PRC's human rights abuses including genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, which it dismisses as an internal matter.

PRC global lending, including to Pakistan, however, frequently fails to meet international standards of openness, inclusivity, transparency, and governance.

Unsustainably high financial obligations that are at odds with those standards risk undermining Pakistan's economic stability and limit opportunities for Pakistani workers and businesses, and underscore potential dissonance in the Pakistan-PRC economic relationship.

Pakistan's strong ties with China do not preclude the United States from also having a productive partnership with Pakistan. Pakistan's stated aspirations of a "geo-economic"-driven foreign policy demonstrates its interest in diversifying its relationship beyond Beijing. The United States is a key partner for Pakistan's private sector, and we have been Pakistan's largest export market for decades. The United States enjoys strong people-to-people ties with Pakistan through the diaspora, civil society, educational exchanges, and beyond. Expanding upon these ties will be a key priority for me if I am confirmed.

In our assistance in Pakistan, the United States emphasizes that our approach to development underscores the importance of economic independence and sustainable development, as well as quality and transparent investments. If confirmed, I stand ready to work with Pakistan on the next chapter of its infrastructure development.

*Question.* Many contend that Pakistan prioritizes counterterrorism inside of its own borders over countering violent extremism. What programs would you pursue to encourage Pakistan to counter violent extremism?

*Answer.* The USAID Mission in Pakistan prioritizes countering violent extremism as part of its development objective to promote inter-religious tolerance and create peaceful communities in key areas within Pakistan, namely areas bordering Afghanistan, Karachi, Northern Sindh, and Southern Punjab. Our public affairs section also implements a range of programming preventing and countering violent extremism throughout Pakistan. If confirmed, I plan to support programming that encourages Pakistan to prevent and counter violent extremism in addition to U.S. efforts that are focused on the threat of counterterrorism.

*Question.* Despite the end of the military mission in Afghanistan, the United States has vital national security interests there to include counterterrorism, preventing a humanitarian catastrophe and the continued evacuation of Americans and at-risk Afghans. What role does Pakistan play or should play in each of these areas? Please provide an answer for each.

*Answer.* Pakistan has a shared interest in ensuring Afghanistan does not become a safe haven for terrorist groups to launch attacks from or create conflict that spills over into Pakistan or neighboring countries. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with Pakistani officials in any way that supports our core counterterrorism objectives in the region. Pakistan is also deeply concerned about preventing further economic instability and humanitarian need in Afghanistan. Hosting and inviting the United States as an observer to the December Organization of Islamic Cooperation ministerial, for example, demonstrates Pakistan's desire to work with the U.S. and international stakeholders to address the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

The Pakistani Government has convened multiple meetings, including through the Troika Plus format, to work with regional and international stakeholders to chart a way forward in Afghanistan. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Pakistani Government on our mutual interests to prevent further violence and stabilize the Afghan economy, as well as mitigate the human cost of the further humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Pakistan has been helpful in supporting the evacuation and relocation of U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, special immigrant visa applicants, and other Afghans to whom the United States has a special commitment. If confirmed, I will seek to continue that cooperation.

*Question.* What leverage does Pakistan have with the Taliban?

*Answer.* Pakistan repeatedly called for an inclusive political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, though it has stopped short of taking steps that would jeopardize its longstanding relationship with the Taliban. The State Department has engaged with the Pakistani Government at senior levels, including Secretary Blinken, Deputy Secretary Sherman, and Special Representative for Afghanistan West, to urge close coordination and alignment with the international community on the way forward in Afghanistan.

If confirmed, I will convey to Pakistan the importance the U.S. administration places on Pakistan's constructive role moving forward. I also will make it clear to Pakistan that a government in Kabul that allows safe passage for those who wish to leave Afghanistan, is inclusive, protects the rights of women and members of minority groups, adheres to its counterterrorism commitments, and ensures humanitarian access would be in the best interests of all countries in the region.



*Question.* Pakistan, fearing for a humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan on its border, continues to advocate for increased humanitarian assistance and foreign assistance to Afghanistan. What is the practical level of assistance the United States should provide to Afghanistan? What restrictions should accompany U.S. assistance?

*Answer.* I remain deeply concerned by the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. The United States should direct assistance to independent organizations, such as U.N. agencies and NGOs, to directly help Afghan people in need. None of our humanitarian assistance is directed to sanctioned individuals and entities.

Since mid-August, the United States has announced more than \$208 million in additional humanitarian assistance for the people of Afghanistan. This funding brings our humanitarian assistance inside Afghanistan and in the region to nearly \$474 million in Fiscal Year 2021.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DONALD ARMIN BLOME BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* The United States has maintained a high level of cooperation with the Pakistani Government and military in order to ensure our ability to supply the American and allied forces in Afghanistan. We maintained this cooperation even as Pakistan has grown closer to Chinese Communist Party in recent years. Now that the U.S. no longer has a mission in Afghanistan to support, I believe it is valid to question whether we should continue this cooperation.

- How do you envision the future of U.S.-Pakistani security relations moving forward?

*Answer.* The United States and Pakistan have a shared interest in regional stability, including ensuring Afghanistan does not once again become host to terrorist groups. If confirmed, I will ensure that any security cooperation with Pakistan enhances our national security and foreign policy objectives. I will make sure that engagement with Pakistan is focused on supporting a partnership aimed at combatting mutual threats in line with specific administration priorities. Those priorities include counterterrorism, border security, and maritime cooperation, and in the short-term, securing continued assistance in evacuating American citizens and others at risk from Afghanistan.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you advocate for limiting security assistance to the Pakistani military? If not, why?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will ensure that any security assistance proposals considered for Pakistan continue to be rigorously vetted to ensure they enhance our national security and further specific foreign policy objectives.

*Question.* As a major partner in China's Belt and Road Initiative, Pakistan has increasingly moved into China's sphere of influence. Bilateral trade between Pakistan and China hit "record levels" in 2021. Lijian Zhao, spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry even praised Pakistan's declining to participate in the President's democracy summit last week.

- Should the U.S.-Pakistan relationship adjust to account for Pakistan's increasingly warm relations with the Chinese Communist Party? If so, what role will you play in this adjustment, if confirmed?

*Answer.* China's close ties with Pakistan do not preclude the United States from also having a productive partnership with Pakistan, in furtherance of U.S. national security and strategic regional goals. The Pakistani people have an interest in working with and growing Pakistan's long-standing relationship with the United States. The United States is a key partner for Pakistan's private sector, and we have been Pakistan's largest export market for decades. We have partnered with Pakistan in the energy sector for over 60 years. The United States enjoys strong people-to-people ties with Pakistan through the diaspora, civil society, educational exchanges, and beyond. Strong cooperation in fighting COVID-19 in Pakistan is grounded in a health relationship that dates back decades. Additionally, Pakistan's stated aspirations of a "geo-economic" driven foreign policy demonstrates its interest in diversifying its relationship beyond Beijing. If confirmed, I will stand strongly in support of strengthening democratic institutions in Pakistan. I will also continue U.S. support for civil society development, focused on boosting democratic resilience and increasing media literacy, while partnering with the Pakistani Government in addressing pressing regional security and political concerns.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you advocate for de-listing Pakistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) given that they continue to build relations with our most significant global competitor? If not, why not?

*Answer.* Pakistan remains an important partner with shared strategic interests. Pakistan seeks regional stability and has a shared interest in ensuring Afghanistan does not once again become host to terrorist groups with transnational ambitions.

If confirmed, I commit to consider all tools at our disposal and regularly engage with Pakistani officials at the highest levels to convey the U.S. expectation that Pakistan must advance a peaceful, stable, and prosperous South Asia. I commit to consulting closely with this committee on any consideration of a change in MNNA status.

*Question.* Last week, the Taliban's Pakistan affiliate, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), announced that it is ending its ceasefire with the Pakistani Government and will resume attacks against Pakistani civilians.

- What is your assessment of the TTP's ability to carry out renewed attacks on the Pakistani military and civilians?

*Answer.* The Pakistani people have suffered at the hands of terrorists, including the TTP. TTP cells began to conduct attacks killing Pakistani security officers immediately after the TTP announced the end of the ceasefire with the Government of Pakistan. Our interests align with the Pakistani Government's in degrading the TTP's ability to conduct attacks inside or outside Pakistan. Pakistan has acted against terrorist groups like the TTP that it considers a threat to its own interests, but the threat of further attacks remains present.

If confirmed, I will reinforce our shared interest with the Pakistani Government in taking action against the TTP and all other terrorist groups.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you do in response to a TTP attack that killed or injured Americans living in Pakistan?

*Answer.* The protection of U.S. citizens overseas is among the highest priorities of the U.S. Department of State and our Embassies and consulates abroad. If confirmed, I will work to support the Pakistani Government in taking action against the TTP and other terrorist groups while ensuring the perpetrators of any attacks against American interests or citizens are brought to justice.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. DONALD ARMIN BLOME BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Some in Pakistan have been longtime supporters of the Taliban, and we understand Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency is helping support the Taliban. What is your assessment of Pakistan's relationship with the Taliban?

*Answer.* Pakistan has not formally recognized the so-called "caretaker government" that the Taliban announced on September 7 and has publicly stated it would not unilaterally do so without consultations with other countries. Prior to the Taliban's takeover of Kabul, Pakistan repeatedly called for a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan, and since August 15, Pakistan has continued to stress the need for an inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan and has pressed the Taliban leadership to assure education and employment rights for women and girls. Pakistan has, however, clearly sought to maintain its longstanding relationship with the Taliban and has not taken steps that would jeopardize that relationship. Pakistan moreover is among the strongest voices arguing for direct engagement of the Taliban on humanitarian issues to avert a major crisis in Afghanistan this winter.

If confirmed, I would continue to urge Pakistan to stay aligned with the international community on the way forward in Afghanistan. Pakistan seeks regional stability and desire to work with the United States to ensure transnational terrorist groups do not receive harbor in or otherwise operate from Afghan territory.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you engage with the Government of Pakistan on the issue of Afghanistan and the Taliban in particular?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will make it clear to Pakistan that it is in the best interests of all countries in the region that leadership in Kabul must: allow safe passage for those who wish to leave Afghanistan, include minorities; protect the rights of women and members of minority groups; adhere to counterterrorism commitments; and ensure humanitarian access. Senior Pakistani officials have continued to stress the need for an inclusive political settlement and the protection of women's educational and employment rights in Afghanistan.

The State Department has engaged with the Pakistani Government at senior levels to urge close coordination and alignment with the international community on the way forward in Afghanistan.

*Question.* What do you see are the consequences of Pakistan's direct support to the Taliban for U.S. development and security assistance with Pakistan?

*Answer.* The United States has substantially reduced civilian assistance to Pakistan and is focused on results-oriented bilateral cooperation. I would seek to employ targeted civilian assistance to Pakistan to advance U.S. interests and national security objectives, including countering PRC influence, increasing trade and investment, strengthening governance, promoting human rights, and combatting the COVID-19 pandemic and other critical health threats.

If confirmed, I will ensure that any security assistance considered for Pakistan advances our national security and foreign policy objectives. I will make sure that security assistance to Pakistan is focused on partnering to help combat mutual threats in line with specific administration priorities. This includes counterterrorism, border security, and maritime cooperation.

*Question.* What is your assessment of the potential for further conflict in the Kashmir region or elsewhere between India and Pakistan? What should the United States do to reduce this potential?

*Answer.* The potential for armed conflict between Pakistan and India is a serious risk. Many previous Indo-Pak crises have been sparked by terrorist attacks, and terrorist groups remain active in the region. If confirmed, I will urge Pakistan to uphold the Indian-Pakistani commitment in February 2021 to observe all agreements pertaining to a ceasefire on the Line of Control. I also will work with my counterpart in Mission India to urge all parties to maintain peace and stability along the Line of Control, refrain from actions or statements that could impact regional stability, and to support confidence-building measures that will reduce tensions between the two states. I also will press Pakistan to continue to take action against terrorist leaders and groups seeking to destabilize the region.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you work with U.S. representatives in India and with the Government of Pakistan to pursue greater rapprochement between India and Pakistan?

*Answer.* Longstanding U.S. policy is that the pace, scope, and character of any dialogue on bilateral disputes is for India and Pakistan to determine. If confirmed, I will urge Pakistan to uphold the February 2021 Indian-Pakistani commitment to observe the ceasefire on the Line of Control. I will also work with my counterpart in Mission India to urge all parties to maintain peace and stability along the Line of Control and refrain from actions or statements that could negatively impact regional stability. This includes preventing acts of terrorism and taking action against terrorist groups that agitate tensions. We must also work with both countries to support confidence-building measures that will reduce bilateral tensions.

*Question.* On December 9, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson applauded Pakistan's decision to not attend the Democracy Summit, calling Pakistan "a real iron brother." China likes to use that term "iron brother" when referring to Pakistan, and in this case it seems framed as if Pakistan is aligning with China against the United States and our push for democratic values throughout the world. How would you characterize the relationship between China and Pakistan?

*Answer.* China's close ties with Pakistan date back to the sixties. Those ties do not preclude the United States from also having a productive partnership with Pakistan. The Pakistani people have an interest in working with and growing Pakistan's relationship with the United States. The United States is a key partner for Pakistan's private sector, and we have been Pakistan's largest export market for decades. The United States enjoys strong people-to-people ties with Pakistan through the diaspora, civil society, educational exchanges, and beyond. Additionally, Pakistan's stated aspirations of a "geo-economics" driven foreign policy demonstrates its interest in diversifying its relationship beyond Beijing.

*Question.* Do you feel Pakistan's young democracy can withstand pressure from authoritarian China seeking to undermine its institutions?

*Answer.* Pakistan has a tradition of vibrant parliamentary politics and a large, active civil society. More work needs to be done to ensure all Pakistanis are able to safely exercise their human rights and other fundamental freedoms, such as freedoms of press and of expression, key to robust democratic participation. If confirmed, I will stand strongly in support of strengthening democratic institutions in Pakistan.

I believe the Pakistani people have a strong interest in doing business and growing Pakistan's relationship with the United States. The United States is a key partner for Pakistan's private sector, and we have been Pakistan's largest export market for decades. The United States enjoys strong people-to-people ties with Pakistan through the diaspora, civil society, educational exchanges, and beyond. If confirmed, I will continue and expand U.S. Government efforts on these issues with the Government of Pakistan, civil society, minority populations, and the private sector.

*Question.* What can the United States do to support Pakistan's democracy and counter Chinese misinformation?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Pakistani leaders to strengthen Pakistan's democratic institutions by advocating for greater transparency and accountability, as well as for recognition of its citizens' human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of the press. If confirmed, I will stand strongly in support of strengthening democratic institutions in Pakistan. I will also continue U.S. support for civil society development, focused on boosting democratic resilience and increasing media literacy, while partnering with the Pakistani Government in addressing regional security and political concerns.

*Question.* China has long made Pakistan its poster child for its Belt and Road debt financing scheme, with quick money through opaque terms under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Beijing is now Pakistan's largest creditor, and many of the loans have failed to provide the promised boost to Pakistan's development, only raising costs for the people of Pakistan. Probably the best proof we have that there is trouble brewing has been the recent press reports coming out of China stating there is no debt crisis in Pakistan. How do you view Chinese lending to Pakistan? Has it led to genuine development for the people of Pakistan?

Answer. PRC global lending, including to Pakistan, frequently fails to meet international standards for openness, inclusivity, transparency, and governance. Unsustainably high financial obligations that are at odds with those standards risk undermining Pakistan's economic stability and limit opportunities for Pakistani workers and businesses. If confirmed, in my engagements and activities in Pakistan, I would emphasize that the U.S. approach to development underscores the importance of economic independence, fair competition, and sustainable development, as well as quality and transparent investments.

*Question.* As Chinese lending to Pakistan has waned in the past year as more Pakistanis recognized the costs and risks, are there opportunities to pursue more fundamental development and economic reforms?

Answer. Pakistan's stated aspirations of a "geo-economics"-driven foreign policy demonstrates interest in diversifying its relationship beyond China. If confirmed, I stand ready to work with Pakistan on introducing economic reforms to improve the business and investment climate.

*Question.* What do you assess is the appetite within Pakistan to make difficult economic reforms to ensure genuine development?

Answer. Pakistan remains a challenging environment for foreign investors. Weak rule of law, opaque decision making, disproportionate taxation, limited enforcement of intellectual property rights, and overly burdensome regulation are all problems regularly encountered by foreign investors. I believe there is recognition in Pakistan that enacting reforms to improve its business climate is needed. I commend Pakistan's recent commitments to implement macroeconomic reforms as outlined in Pakistan's IMF program, which will increase central bank autonomy and help get the country's macroeconomic situation on a more sustainable path. If confirmed, I will encourage Pakistan to continue to address its investment climate, security, regulatory, and fiscal challenges to address U.S. businesses' concerns.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ERIC M. GARCETTI BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately. Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

2008

*Answer.* I share your concerns about Anomalous Health Incidents (AHIs) and agree these incidents must be taken seriously. If confirmed, my top priority will be the health, safety, and security of Department personnel and family members serving in Mission India. I understand the interagency community is actively examining a range of hypotheses but has made no determination about the cause of these Anomalous Health Incidents or whether they can be attributed to a foreign actor. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

If confirmed, I look forward to coordinating with colleagues at Mission India and in Washington to safeguard Mission personnel and ensure prompt treatment should any incidents occur.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, you have my commitment that I will follow the Department's protocols on reporting and addressing these incidents through the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF) and ensure any affected individuals receive prompt access to the medical care they require.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will prioritize meeting with RSO and medical staff to ensure the safety of Mission India's personnel, which will be my responsibility as Chief of Mission.

*Question.* Despite efforts by New Delhi to reduce its overall dependence on Russian arms, I remain deeply concerned about the S-400 sale and Russia-India defense ties. Both Indian and Russian officials have now said that deliveries of the S-400 have already begun. The presence of the S-400 systems, and the Russian personnel who will presumably have to be present to monitor, train and service them, could compromise U.S. technology should India seek to purchase advanced fighter aircraft from the United States. Do you commit to trying to dissuade India from accepting the S-400 and other Russian military hardware? How do we convince our Indian friends that Vladimir Putin is not a good long-term security partner?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue to press India to continue to diversify away from Russian arms purchases. Since 1990, India has taken considerable steps to diversify its defense supplier base away from Russia and expand indigenous production. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense to accelerate this trend, including by highlighting U.S. reliability and maintenance support, bolstering interoperability, and increasing offers of advanced U.S. platforms and co-development opportunities. I will also work to ensure U.S. technologies are safeguarded, if confirmed. If confirmed, I will underscore that closer cooperation with Russia does not align with the strategic interests and values shared by the United States and India.

*Question.* Helping India reduce its carbon emissions is critical in the global fight against climate change. The Biden administration took a good first step earlier this year by launching the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership. How will you bolster and promote the U.S.-India climate partnership once in New Delhi?

*Answer.* Deepening climate and clean energy cooperation with India is a top priority for the Biden-Harris administration. Recently, the U.S. Development Finance Corporation announced a \$500 million investment to support U.S. firm First Solar's efforts to expand solar panel manufacturing in India. If confirmed, I pledge to form a close relationship with key Indian interlocutors to deepen climate cooperation and will work closely with Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Kerry to seize clean energy opportunities, including solar, civil nuclear, wind, and hydrogen. Advancing our new bilateral cooperation mechanisms—the Climate Ambition and Finance Mobilization Dialogue (CAFMD) and the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP)—will be one of my key priorities.

*Question.* India is central to dealing with the China challenge, given its size, strategic location, and democratic orientation. India has the opportunity to play a decisive role in the Indo-Pacific but needs help improving some of its capabilities. How

2009

can we deepen U.S.-India security and defense ties? What capabilities does India need to be able to play a greater role in the Quad?

Answer. U.S.-India security cooperation has been underpinned by growing interoperability and information sharing, sales of U.S. platforms, and complex multi-service exercises. If confirmed, I will work to accelerate these lines of effort, including in the critical area of maritime security. I will also explore opportunities to expand security cooperation among India and other like-minded partners, including Quad partners, while recognizing that the Quad's primary function is not security related. I will encourage India's continued robust, multi-level Quad engagement across multiple ministries and seek opportunities to provide U.S. support and assistance, as appropriate, to facilitate India's efforts, if confirmed.

*Question.* As the world's largest democracy, India has a responsibility to protect the fundamental rights of their citizens. The Government's track record on this issue is poor to say the least. The Indian Government under Prime Minister Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has veered toward illiberalism through its approach to press and media freedoms, its abuse of India's anti-terrorism law, and its intolerance toward opposition voices. Much of the logic of the U.S.-India partnership is based on India as a democracy, sharing in our values, not just a counterweight to China. Will you communicate to our friends in New Delhi that a closer partnership with the United States demands a principled commitment to democracy? How will you communicate this U.S. commitment to the Indian Government?

Answer. As I have demonstrated throughout my career, respect for human rights is a core priority of mine. If confirmed, I will engage the Indian Government closely on our shared democratic values, underscoring the importance the United States places on the recognition and protection of human rights. If confirmed, I will also closely engage Indian civil society for their expertise on these issues and to hear their concerns.

*Question.* How will you ensure that U.S. prioritization of human rights and democracy is not lost in the focus on our security relationship with India?

Answer. The U.S.-India strategic partnership is multi-dimensional, and human rights and democratic values must play a role in every part of our partnership, including our security relationship. If confirmed, I will continue the work of Mission India to encourage the Indian Government to maintain the respect for human rights as an important dimension of our security relationship.

*Question.* Democracies have a responsibility to protect the fundamental rights of their citizens, including religious minorities. Mobilization of Hindu nationalist elements against Muslim and other minority communities have weakened Indian democracy. Authorities often fail to investigate or hold perpetrators accountable for attacks and crimes against Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and members of other minorities are regularly met with impunity. The National Register of Citizens for Assam (NRC) and the Citizenship Act of 2019 both have been implemented to prevent Muslims from obtaining or strip Muslims of Indian citizenship, while the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act has been used to detain and prosecute members of the Sikh community. How will you promote religious tolerance and freedom as ambassador, particularly given that individuals affiliated with the BJP are often responsible for many of these abhorrent policies? How will you follow up on issues outlined in the USCIRF report?

Answer. The Biden administration is dedicated to protecting and promoting the right of freedom of religion or belief. If confirmed, I will engage with members of diverse religious communities in India to demonstrate the importance of freedom of religion or belief as a core priority of the Biden administration and listen to their perspectives on religious freedom in India. I will also raise concerns regarding religious freedom directly with senior Indian Government officials and encourage the Indian Government to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all.

*Question.* India is not a signatory to the Hague Abduction Convention, nor are there any bilateral agreements in force between India and the United States concerning International Parental Child Abduction (IPCA). According to the State Department's 2021 report on international child abductions, India does not adhere to any protocols with respect to IPCA and continues to demonstrate a pattern of non-compliance. Indian authorities regularly fail to work with the Department of State toward the resolution of pending abduction cases. In January 2020, the Department of State proposed the formation of a U.S.-India Joint Committee on IPCA as a bilateral forum to facilitate cooperation on addressing IPCA issues. The Government of India has not yet agreed to participate in the Joint Committee. Will you commit to

personally urging the Government of India to agree to the Joint Committee on IPCA and to accede to the Hague Abduction Convention?

*Answer.* International Parental Child Abduction (IPCA) is a top priority for the State Department and our leading consular challenge with India. If confirmed, I will partner with the Bureau of Consular Affairs to press the Government of India to resolve pending IPCA cases, improve cooperation with the United States on IPCA including via dedicated bilateral conversations between our experts on consular issues, and encourage India's accession to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction to regularize cooperation. I welcome partnering with Congress to encourage the Indian Government to make progress on this challenging issue impacting our most vulnerable citizens.

*Question.* The majority of child abduction cases in India from U.S. residents, including with my constituents in New Jersey, have not been resolved. Will you do everything in your power to ensure that internationally abducted children of U.S. residents be returned to their habitual country of residence, including by personally raising these matters with Indian officials?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, I commit to personally raising IPCA with Indian officials. As a parent myself, I recognize the pain of parents separated from their children as a result of international parental child abduction.

*Question.* India has proposed intermediary guidelines and data localization measures across many critical sectors which would restrict, and in some cases preclude, the ability of U.S. companies to do business in India. Ambassador Tai recently met with her Indian counterpart under the Trade Policy Forum (TPF) and both sides have committed to establish an action plan in 2022. How will you use the TPF, in addition to other U.S.-India economic dialogues, to raise this issue as well as other important IP and digital issues?

*Answer.* Reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers for U.S. companies seeking to do business in India is essential to increasing bilateral trade and creating resilient supply chains. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with my USTR colleagues to implement any TPF action plans and pledge to raise U.S. trade and economic concerns directly with senior Indian leaders, including these important concerns regarding the intermediary guidelines and data localization. I also plan to advocate for closer consultations with U.S. and Indian businesses on data-related legislation and regulations, if confirmed.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ERIC M. GARCETTI BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, India was identified as Tier 2 due to lack of overall inadequate anti-trafficking efforts, including high acquittal rate for traffickers and fewer convictions for traffickers. How will you work with the Indian Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* As Mayor of Los Angeles, I have worked with the local community and law enforcement to combat trafficking and reintegrate survivors in their communities. If confirmed, I will engage relevant Indian Government ministries on the importance of both of our countries working together to combat human trafficking. As a bulk of anti-trafficking efforts in India take place at the state and local level, I will strongly work with the Mission to engage state governments on the importance of anti-trafficking efforts, as well, including through leveraging projects funded through our foreign affairs assistance.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, it was clear that India has significant religious freedom issues. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* As diverse and pluralistic democracies, the United States and India share a common identity underscored by the importance of religious freedom in our constitutions. Nonetheless, both of our countries face challenges related to religious freedom, and, if confirmed, I will engage closely with India's religious minorities to learn more about their perspective on these challenges. I will also raise concerns regarding religious freedom directly with senior Indian Government officials. If confirmed, I look forward to coordinating closely with Ambassador-at-Large Hussain and will greatly value the Office of International Religious Freedom's expertise on our engagement on religious freedom issues in India.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, India was identified as having serious human rights abuses and issues including tolerance of violations of religious freedom, forced and compulsory child labor, restrictions on freedom of the press and expression including threats of violence against journalists, impunity for officials, and more. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* I have fought for human rights throughout my public service career and believe human rights are a core priority of our foreign policy. If confirmed, I will ensure human rights are central to my engagements with senior Indian leaders by regularly raising human rights concerns and having frank, open discussions to explore how both of our democracies can better protect and respect human rights. I will also engage closely with members of civil society across India to better understand their concerns and underscore U.S. support for their important work.

*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* I understand that Mission India has a robust relationship with numerous Indian civil society organizations specializing in many important areas, such as freedom of expression, gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, and anti-trafficking efforts, among many others. I understand the important information that Mission India learns from its engagement with civil society informs State Department policy and our Congressional reporting. If confirmed, I will prioritize the robust enhancement and prioritization of these engagements with a diverse array of civil society organizations across India and look forward to meeting with civil society organizations personally.

*Question.* Please detail your planned engagement with the Indian Government regarding the protection of religious minorities, including Muslims?

*Answer.* Freedom of religion is protected under the Indian Constitution and religious pluralism is central to India's cultural identity. If confirmed, I plan to regularly meet religious leaders and organizations across many of India's religious communities, including India's diverse Muslim community, to demonstrate the United States' commitment to religious freedom and learn from the perspectives of India's religious minority communities. If confirmed, I pledge to raise religious freedom concerns with Indian officials and encourage the Indian Government to uphold our shared values of pluralism and tolerance.

*Question.* India is currently in the first year of a two-year term on the Security Council to further their long-standing goal of becoming a permanent member. There are a number of issues that the U.S. and India do not agree on, including the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Cross Border mechanism. This past summer, the mechanism was renewed for one more year but not without significant obstacles to do so including a no vote by India. If confirmed, do you commit to engaging with the Indian Government on this important issue and communicating the U.S. position that this mechanism is a vital lifeline for millions of Syrians that must be renewed?

*Answer.* The United States fully supports the Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Cross Border Mechanism. If confirmed, I will work with our Indian partners to encourage their support for this important initiative.

*Question.* The Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (MSP) in the IO Bureau at the State Department is leading a whole-of-government effort to identify, recruit, and install qualified, independent personnel at the U.N., including in elections for specialized bodies like the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). There is an American candidate, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who if elected would be the first American and first woman to lead the ITU. She is a tough race that will require early, consistent engagement across capitals and within the U.N. member states. If confirmed, do you commit to demarching the Indian Government and any other counterparts necessary to communicate our support of Doreen?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with our Indian partners and coordinate with my colleagues in the IO Bureau and others across the U.S. interagency to continue our support and advocate for Doreen Bogdan-Martin. I will also seek to deepen bilateral cooperation to advance shared priorities on critical telecommunications issues, if confirmed.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to aiding the MSP office in efforts to support U.S.-desired candidates within the U.N. system?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will closely coordinate with my colleagues in the MSP office in the IO Bureau, U.S. interagency, and like-minded countries to advance efforts to elect qualified, independent U.S.-desired candidates for U.N. bodies.



2012

*Question.* Do you commit to pressing India on tech protection/mitigation if it moves forward the S-400 transaction?

*Answer.* Yes. The protection of U.S. defense technologies is critical, and if confirmed, I will work closely with the Department of Defense on this matter.

*Question.* Do you commit to ensuring India takes appropriate technology protection/mitigation if the administration decides to issue a CAATSA waiver for India?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strongly encourage the Indian Government to refrain from major new purchases of Russian military equipment that could risk mandatory sanctions under CAATSA Section 231. I cannot prejudge whether a specific transaction would result in sanctions, and the Secretary of State has not made any determination regarding the significance of any transaction involving India. Technology protection talks are a regular feature of our engagement with the Government of India, and if confirmed, I will continue to support technology protection/mitigation.

*Question.* The U.S. and India have concluded a few agreements on co-development of technology, including the co-development of UAVs. What other opportunities are there for co-development with India? What challenges still remain to our technology cooperation with India?

*Answer.* The U.S.-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) is our primary mechanism for pursuing defense co-development opportunities with India. DTTI continues to explore several potential projects, including for lightweight small arms. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department of Defense and private sector to explore new opportunities for U.S.-India defense industrial collaboration and co-development.

*Question.* Do you commit to pressing India to be more helpful to the United States on Diego Garcia issues?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the Department of Defense and like-minded countries to engage the Government of India as appropriate.

*Question.* How do you balance our defense interests with human rights and other values-based concerns?

*Answer.* No single issue defines the U.S.-India partnership and even close partners can have differences. If confirmed, I plan to engage on the full spectrum of issues in our comprehensive strategic partnership, including human rights.

*Question.* How do we build on the progress made in the wake of last year's Chinese border attacks? How can we provide more relevant and timely support to India?

*Answer.* The United States fully supports India's efforts to safeguard its sovereignty. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues its efforts to strengthen and deepen the United States' strategic partnership with India, including in defense and security cooperation. I will support direct dialogue, a reduction in tensions, and a peaceful resolution to the border dispute, if confirmed.

*Question.* Do you commit to updating Congress, particularly the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on the status of U.S. nuclear civil cooperation with India?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to updating Congress, including the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on U.S.-India civil nuclear cooperation, including progress on the construction of U.S. nuclear power plants.

*Question.* There are six nuclear power plant projects being discussed with India. What is the status of these six projects?

*Answer.* I understand the United States continues to work with the Government of India and Westinghouse Electric Company (WEC) to support the construction of six AP1000 reactors at Kovvada in southern India. I understand negotiations have been delayed because of a multitude of factors. If confirmed, I will continue advocacy efforts on behalf of WEC.

*Question.* How would you describe the China-India relationship?

*Answer.* I understand India is deeply concerned about the People's Republic of China's economic coercion in the Indo-Pacific, its close relationship with Pakistan, and its aggression and destabilizing behavior along the Line of Actual Control.

*Question.* What do you foresee happening along the China-India border in the short- or medium-term?

*Answer.* The United States was encouraged by India and People's Republic of China's agreement on the limited disengagement of front-line troops in February 2021.

If confirmed, I will continue to support direct dialogue, a reduction in tensions, and a peaceful resolution to the border dispute.

*Question.* How should the U.S. respond or support allies and partners when they face political and economic coercion from China?

*Answer.* The United States supports a free and open Indo-Pacific region where every nation can prosper without fear of coercion. Our relationship with the People's Republic of China is cooperative when it can be, competitive when it should be, and adversarial when it must be. I believe it is critical for the United States to stand by allies and partners when facing political and economic coercion, including consulting them closely on the elements of support they require.

*Question.* What risks does the close Pakistan-China relationship present to India?

*Answer.* India remains very concerned about military cooperation between the People's Republic of China and Pakistan and the potential for coordinated aggression on two fronts, including an increase in cross-border terrorism and negative impacts on regional stability. If confirmed, I will work with our Indian partners on how the United States can best support regional stability and security.

*Question.* How does our withdrawal from Afghanistan change India's security environment and shift India's security priorities?

*Answer.* I understand India is concerned about potential terrorist threats emanating from Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the political situation in Afghanistan has created more uncertainty and instability in South Asia. If confirmed, I will work to deepen our counterterrorism partnership with India and consult Indian officials closely on matters related to Afghanistan, recognizing India's significant investments in Afghanistan over the past two decades.

*Question.* Describe your concerns in the short- and medium-term about the India-Pakistan relationship.

*Answer.* I welcome the sustained ceasefire along the Line of Control but remain concerned about the potential for an outbreak of violence sparked by extremist groups seeking to undermine regional stability. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my counterpart in Islamabad on these concerns.

*Question.* What will you do to support U.S.-India cooperation on counterterrorism?

*Answer.* The U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group and Homeland Security Dialogue remain the primary mechanisms to deepen counterterrorism cooperation with India. I understand the United States and India enjoy a growing intelligence sharing partnership. If confirmed, I will work to accelerate these efforts.

*Question.* India has been particularly concerned about U.S. sanctions in Burma and how they might negatively affect Indian businesses in Burma. How would you balance these interests?

*Answer.* The United States is working closely with India to address the political and humanitarian crisis in Burma. We share an overall objective to end the violence, support Burma's path to democracy, and reach a peaceful resolution that respects the will of the people of Burma. If confirmed, I plan to coordinate closely with my colleagues in the Bureau of East Asian Pacific Affairs and my counterpart in Rangoon to expand coordination with India on Burma.

*Question.* Do you commit to working closely with the U.S. Ambassadors in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* What would be your primary goals on the economic front in India?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my primary economic goal is to strengthen the bilateral trade and investment relationship with India. Greater economic exchange will create well-paying jobs in both of our countries to the benefit of both of our populations.

*Question.* What are the key asks we should be making of India in terms of economic reform?

*Answer.* I understand India has made progress in strengthening its market economy through structural economic reforms such as adopting the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, consolidating numerous and often contradictory labor laws, improving the ease of doing business through trade facilitation, and expanding and improving infrastructure. If confirmed, I would suggest efforts to reform the economy should include increasing regulatory transparency and certainty through more uniform application of public notification and public com-

ment requirements for legislation, regulations, and draft rules to better incorporate input from stakeholders—such as workers, domestic and international companies, and non-governmental organizations. It is particularly important for India to consult with stakeholders in developing regulations that will continue to foster innovation and growth in digital trade and the technology sector. If confirmed, I would work with Indian officials to encourage sound regulatory policies, reduce trade barriers between our countries and improve market access for U.S. companies.

*Question.* India has a strategic energy agreement with the U.S. and has made lofty climate goals. Yet India's energy sector is still in its transition phase, and in the interim energy sources such as natural gas will become increasingly important for India. Do you commit to ensuring the Biden administration's focus on climate does not unfairly prejudice Indian energy goals and needs?

*Answer.* India has long advocated for a “just transition,” and I understand and agree with the importance of climate solutions that are fair and equitable. There are hundreds of millions of Indians living in poverty, who have done almost nothing to contribute to global warming yet will be most exposed to its negative effects. I understand USAID has several multi-million-dollar programs that are focusing on climate adaption and resilience, and, if confirmed, I look forward to engaging with our development specialists in Mission India. We recognize the complex environment within which India, as a huge and diverse developing nation, is transitioning its economy to a carbonless future. If confirmed, I look forward to working with India to support its target of having 500 GW of non-fossil power generation capacity installed by 2030 and its 2070 net-zero goal.

*Question.* Do you commit to working with India on natural gas, especially based on your experience in Los Angeles using natural gas as a transition fuel, as you indicated in your meeting with SFRC staff? If so, how will you advance this priority should you be confirmed?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my primary goal on climate matters is to support the Indian Government's goal of reaching 500 gigawatts of non-fossil energy by 2030. While India may need to build natural gas infrastructure as it transitions away from coal and, if confirmed, I am open to exploring working with India in this regard, I would want to make sure that there was a strong developmental impact and ensure that infrastructure is constructed in such a way to be compatible with next-generation fuels, such as green hydrogen.

*Question.* USTR is expected to travel to India this month. What should our trade priorities with India be? What deliverable would you like to see come out of this meeting?

*Answer.* USTR Tai visited India in late November to re-launch the U.S.-India Trade Policy Forum with Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal. By all accounts, the meeting was productive and will lay the groundwork for future enhancements to our trade relationship. I understand that both sides agreed that regular engagement under the Trade Policy Forum would help in addressing outstanding bilateral trade concerns and allow the two countries to explore important, emerging trade policy issues. I understand there was consensus to finalize work on several market access issues for U.S. and Indian agricultural items, and both sides discussed important economic matters related to medical devices, digital services, and electronic payment services.

*Question.* What are some opportunities we have with India on supply chain issues? What are going to be the challenges of looking to India as a source for non-PRC supply chains given some of the difficulties of investing and doing business there?

*Answer.* India shares our interest in secure and resilient supply chains. It has a major opportunity to expand manufacturing in areas like semiconductors, consumer electronics, and batteries, but this will require additional steps by the Indian Government to complete its ongoing infrastructure buildout to reduce logistics costs and promote greater predictability and transparency in the business environment. If confirmed, I will urge the Indian Government to address ease of doing business concerns while undertaking advocacy for U.S. firms.

*Question.* How will the Biden administration cooperate with India on 5G, digital security, and other emerging technology issues? Please be specific.

*Answer.* High technology cooperation with India is an important priority for the Biden administration. I understand the NSC Senior Director for Technology recently traveled to New Delhi to discuss potential ideas for cooperation, including on semiconductors, quantum computing, and artificial intelligence. I also understand the

2015

Quad has launched a new working group on critical and emerging technologies. If confirmed, I will fully support these efforts and work to identify new areas for technological cooperation.

*Question.* India has imposed new restrictions on U.S. tech companies, such as requiring them to hire representatives to redress formal grievances from the Indian Government. India has threatened to jail employees of these companies. It's tightening content rules, etc. Is there anything you think that can be done about this?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to engage on these concerns as some of India's policies in the digital and e-commerce space are problematic for U.S. companies and could set negative precedents for other countries. If confirmed, I plan to continue to raise these concerns with Indian officials at the appropriate ministries. I will also continue engagement with Indian and U.S. businesses and civil society regarding their concerns over these regulations, such as their impact on freedom of expression, if confirmed.

*Question.* What are your views on the purpose of the DFC?

*Answer.* I believe that the DFC is one of our most important foreign policy tools and is absolutely critical to supporting the American private sector abroad. This is especially true in a country like India, which has a growing and increasingly vibrant private sector, but remains an investment climate that can be challenging. DFC can be the actor that bridges that gap by encouraging companies to invest in projects they might not invest in otherwise. It is also sustainable for the American taxpayer: DFC/OPIC have consistently earned money for our Treasury. I know that DFC already has a significant portfolio in India, and, if confirmed, I would work to deepen and expand its work in India.

*Question.* DFC is investing significantly in India's solar industry. Will you prioritize working with the DFC as appropriate to ensure solar projects in India do not rely on PRC forced labor? Will you work with DFC to avoid purchasing solar equipment from the PRC for these projects?

*Answer.* I understand that DFC recently announced board approval for the First Solar project, which will provide \$500 million in financing for a 3.3 gigawatt solar facility near Chennai. This would be the largest debt investment in DFC's history. First Solar uses a unique manufacturing process that does not rely on technologies used by solar supply chains that are associated with forced labor in Xinjiang. If confirmed, I commit to working with DFC and other U.S. Government agencies to encourage a diversification of solar supply chains outside the People's Republic of China.

*Question.* Will you commit to leveraging the economic corps and other parts of the U.S. Mission to identify other types of energy projects in India, not just in the solar industry?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* What are some of the other main areas development finance can make an impact in India?

*Answer.* Development finance can make an impact in India in a range of sectors. In India, we have development finance programs directly through DFC, and also indirectly through the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and other multilateral institutions. I understand there are ongoing projects in affordable housing, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and transportation.

*Question.* What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission India?

*Answer.* While I cannot yet comment on the morale of Mission India, I do look forward to working closely with our dedicated diplomats as Chief of Mission, if confirmed. If confirmed, maintaining high morale throughout Embassy Delhi and our four Consulates will be a key priority of mine.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission India?

*Answer.* As Mayor of Los Angeles and throughout my public service career, I have learned the importance of engaging directly with my teams to learn from their perspectives. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging closely with the Mission India team immediately upon my arrival for their recommendations on how I can maintain high morale throughout the Mission.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission India?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I intend to closely consult leadership at the White House, Department of State, and my team in Mission India to ensure our mission and vi-

2016

sion across Mission India advances the strategic priorities of the Biden administration and the well-being of the peoples of the United States and India in line with our strategic frameworks.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I believe that an organization works best when all employees feel valued and respected. I consider myself a caring and collaborative manager with an open-door policy. I work hard and expect the same of others, but I always underscore the importance of making the workplace welcoming and enjoyable. I am not a micro-manager, but I do want to understand every aspect of the organization to best value the individual and collective contributions of my team.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

*Answer.* I have been proud to lead the city of Los Angeles which has more than 50,000 employees, many of whom are City workers for their entire careers. Our career workforce is dedicated to public service, and I work to empower them with the tools they need to succeed. I am used to motivating and directing a dispersed and diverse workforce that comes from multiple agencies and is located in multiple geographical areas, similar to the context of the U.S. Mission to India. I also believe that part of my job and part of our collective responsibility is to be more efficient and more cost effective. I feel that managing the City of Los Angeles through the COVID economic crisis has prepared me well for the management and organizational challenges facing me in Mission India, if confirmed.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting my team across Mission India on day one to gain a strong understanding of Embassy operations and culture and learn how I contribute and strengthen both as Chief of Mission.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I do not believe this behavior is ever acceptable or constructive, whether in public or private. If confirmed, I pledge to conduct myself in a way that honors the American public and the Biden administration.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* I understand no relationship is more vital at a diplomatic mission than the one between an ambassador and his/her deputy chief of mission (DCM). If confirmed, I intend to have a close working relationship with my DCM on all issues, including policy, Mission morale and welfare, and Mission maintenance.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will greatly value the expertise of my DCM on all issues and look forward to working closely together in advancing U.S. foreign policy and the welfare of Mission India although I have not yet specifically delineated such responsibilities.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens. If confirmed, will you encourage Mission India diplomats to engage in-person with the Indian people outside of U.S. Embassies and consulates?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed, this will be an important priority across all of Mission India. If confirmed, I also will look forward to meeting in-person with people of all backgrounds both in New Delhi and across India.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in India? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* India has a vibrant cultural and media environment shaped by its world-famous film industries, literary, dance, music, and artistic traditions, and dynamic television and press outlets. I understand that many cities in India, like Los Angeles, are filled with millions of highly resourceful and talented youths who are highly engaged with American social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram,

2017

WhatsApp, and YouTube. Our countries are linked by robust people-to-people networks, driven by student scholarship and exchange programs, along with workers and diaspora communities in the United States, and increasing receptivity to U.S. attitudes and messages. I would imagine one of India's greatest strengths can be a challenge for public diplomacy outreach: configuring our outreach for a very large and populous country with widespread ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. If confirmed, I look forward to closely working with our public diplomacy experts in Mission India on these matters.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would greatly value the expertise of our Public Affairs Section in tailoring public diplomacy messages for diverse Indian audiences. I would expect that our Public Affairs Section would work in tandem with the Bureau of Global Public Affairs, the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, and functional bureaus across the Department of State to ensure the Mission is well-connected with the messaging priorities of the Biden administration and leverage the additional analytical resources provided by the Department in Washington.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel. If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* I share your concerns about Anomalous Health Incidents (AHIs). If confirmed, my top priority will be the health and welfare of Mission India personnel and their families. I understand the interagency community is actively examining a range of hypotheses but has made no determination about the cause of these Anomalous Health Incidents or whether they can be attributed to a foreign actor. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

If confirmed, I commit to taking this issue seriously and look forward to receiving further briefings on this issue and coordinating with colleagues in New Delhi and in Washington to safeguard Mission personnel and ensure prompt treatment should any incidents occur.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission India personnel?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will share with information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and Mission India personnel.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to receiving further briefings on these incidents before departure for New Delhi as this will be an important priority for me.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other Embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* If I am confirmed, you have my commitment that I will follow the Department's protocols on reporting and addressing these incidents through the Health Incident Response Task Force (HIRTF) by maintaining detailed records of the incident.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

Answer. If confirmed, I will closely listen to the concerns among U.S. and locally employed staff across Mission India regarding these anomalous health incidents and work closely with Department stakeholders such as the Bureau of Medical Services to ensure these concerns are addressed.

*Question.* Please provide an update on the status of U.S. civil nuclear cooperation with India.

Answer. I understand Department and interagency officials continue to discuss areas of civil nuclear cooperation with Indian authorities although several important projects, such as the installation of nuclear power plants, have stalled because of nuclear liability concerns from the Indian Government. If confirmed, I will work to advance progress on civil-nuclear cooperation.

*Question.* We understand there are six nuclear power plant projects being discussed with India. What is the status of these six projects?

Answer. The United States continues to work with the Government of India and Westinghouse Electric Company (WEC) to support the construction of six AP1000 reactors at Kovvada in southern India. I understand negotiations have been delayed because of a multitude of factors. If confirmed, I will continue advocacy efforts on behalf of WEC.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ERIC M. GARCETTI BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* In recent years, the U.S.-India relationship has blossomed. Since the 2017 clashes near Doklam in Bhutan, we have seen a renewed willingness in India to align strategically with the United States to counter an increasingly revisionist China. If confirmed, how will you strengthen this relationship and U.S.-India defense coordination?

Answer. As evidenced by the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue and the multitude of senior-level engagements, U.S.-India defense and security cooperation is a central pillar of the overall strategic partnership. As Major Defense Partners, U.S.-India security cooperation in recent years has been underpinned by growing interoperability and information sharing, sales of U.S. platforms, and complex multi-service exercises. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense to accelerate these efforts, including in the critical area of maritime security.

*Question.* Specifically, if you are confirmed, how would you advise the United States to support India in maintaining the security of its northern border?

Answer. The United States fully supports India's efforts to safeguard its sovereignty. If confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues at the Department of Defense to ensure we can meet India's military requests for assistance, including those related to information sharing, spares/munitions, and cold weather gear. I will also support bilateral dialogue and efforts to reduce tensions along the border.

*Question.* During Vladimir Putin's visit to India to announce the shipments of the SD-400s, India and Russia also signed 28 agreements to expand their bilateral trade. As you know, India historically sought close ties with the Soviet Union in order to balance against its tense, and sometimes hostile, relations with China. But in recent years, instead of the Sino-Soviet split that existed during the Cold War, Russia and China are increasingly aligned. How do you reconcile India's growing cooperation with the members of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with its warm relations towards Russia?

Answer. India has long sought a multitude of international partners to maintain flexibility and autonomy in its foreign policy. While this will continue to be a tenet of Indian foreign policy, India is also committed to deepening cooperation with partners who share its vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, particularly the United States. If confirmed, I plan to pursue opportunities to highlight to the Indian Government and people that partnerships with the United States and like-minded partners best further India's security and strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific.

*Question.* In your opinion, can India continue to be a reliable partner to counter the Chinese Communist Party if it continues to maintain warm relations with Russia, one of the CCP's partners in undermining U.S. interests?

Answer. The U.S.-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership stands on its own merits. If confirmed, I pledge to deepen our partnership across all areas, mini-

mize areas of divergence, and ensure our two democracies continue to stand as two central pillars of a free and open Indo-Pacific that protects democratic values.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would you recommend the Biden administration do with regard to the Indian-Russian relationship?

Answer. India has a long-standing relationship with Russia, going back to the Cold War. While I believe India and Russia's interests are diverging, it will take time for the relationship to fully reflect these changes. If confirmed, I will urge India to continue its policies of relying less on Russia as a defense supplier and refrain from major new purchases of Russian military equipment and underscore that closer cooperation with Russia does not align with the strategic interests and values shared by the United States and India.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you press the Indian Government to fulfill its defense needs from companies in the United States, Japan, or Australia, rather than from Russia?

Answer. Since 1990, India has taken considerable steps to diversify its defense supplier base away from Russia and expand indigenous production. If confirmed, I will work with the Department of Defense to accelerate this trend, including by highlighting U.S. reliability and maintenance support, bolstering interoperability, working with like-minded partners, and increasing offers of advanced U.S. platforms and co-development opportunities.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. ERIC M. GARCETTI BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Do you agree that our competition with China should be the primary, driving factor in our strategic decision making with regard to our relationship with India?

Answer. U.S.-India ties have deepened significantly over the last two decades. While the United States and India coordinate closely on shared concerns regarding the People's Republic of China, our broad strategic partnership is deeply rooted in a range of strategic priorities, including burgeoning economic and energy ties and a shared commitment to tackling global challenges like climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The September 24 summit between President Biden and Prime Minister Modi, and frequent meetings between senior officials from both of our countries, underscores the high-level U.S. commitment to our strategic partnership with India in numerous areas of strategic importance.

If confirmed, I intend to coordinate closely with India on our mutual concerns regarding the People's Republic of China in addition to our other shared strategic priorities.

*Question.* India has a long, established relationship with Russia that predates our current Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) sanctions policy. What are your views on India's defense relationship with Russia?

Answer. Despite a legacy defense relationship dating to the Cold War, India has over the past three decades taken steps to diversify its foreign defense suppliers, turning to Israel, France, and increasingly the United States. India is also focused on bolstering its domestic defense industry through co-development projects and indigenous production. Since 2005, U.S. defense sales to India have increased from near zero to more than \$21 billion. The United States and India have also concluded four major defense enabling agreements and regularly hold complex multi-service exercises. If confirmed, I will work to increase bilateral defense cooperation and urge India to continue diversifying from Russian arms including by highlighting U.S. reliability and maintenance support, bolstering interoperability, and increasing offers of advanced U.S. platforms and co-development opportunities. If confirmed, I will underscore that closer cooperation with Russia does not align with the strategic interests and values shared by the United States and India.

*Question.* How do you believe India would respond to U.S. sanctions over the S-400 or any of its other defense deals with Russia, which include fighters, warships, and submarines?

Answer. Historically, India has responded negatively to unilateral sanctions. If confirmed, I will continue to press India to continue to diversify away from Russian arms purchases that could be subject to mandatory CAATSA sanctions. I cannot pre-judge sanctions decisions for any specific transaction prior to the Secretary of State's determination of significance.



*Question.* Do you worry that sanctions could push India away from the United States?

*Answer.* Any potential sanctions would risk undermining the broader, extremely positive trajectory of the U.S.-India strategic partnership.

*Question.* If confirmed, how would you seek to strengthen our relationship with India to ensure that they remain a strong partner in the region and beyond?

*Answer.* The United States and India are bound by our shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, growing defense and security ties, common goals for clean energy and climate, and robust people-to-people and economic linkages. If confirmed, I plan to build upon these strengths and the work of my predecessors to ensure the U.S.-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership remains on a strong and positive trajectory.

*Question.* How would you hope to coordinate actions and unity around a Quad strategy with all of the other players, including for example U.S. representatives in Tokyo, Canberra, the NSC and State Bureaus?

*Answer.* The Quad is a central pillar of U.S. engagement in Indo-Pacific and a valuable structure to solve common challenges. Our Quad working groups span everything from climate and critical technologies to vaccines and maritime security. If confirmed, I will seek out new opportunities to deepen Quad cooperation with Indian officials engaged on Quad policy and pledge to coordinate closely with my colleagues across the U.S. Government, including in Canberra and Tokyo. I will also work with my Quad Ambassadorial counterparts in New Delhi, as well, if confirmed.

*Question.* U.S. exporters and investors face non-transparent and often unpredictable regulatory and tariff regimes and some U.S. goods and services have limited access to the market. India has the highest average applied tariff of any G20 country and among the highest bound tariff rates in the World Trade Organization. What would be your priorities for making commerce easier between the United States and India?

*Answer.* U.S.-India trade and investment has expanded rapidly over the past decade, but I believe that there is great potential to further expand our trade relationship. If confirmed, I would work closely with the U.S. Trade Representative and Department of Commerce to use every tool in our economic toolkit to advance U.S. commercial interests and support President Biden's Foreign Policy for the Middle Class. We need to work intensively to improve market access and reduce regulatory barriers because expanding our commercial relationship will create good, well-paying jobs for Americans and Indians alike.

*Question.* India's state and territorial governments generally hold greater power than their U.S. state counterparts. U.S. companies face varying business and economic conditions across India and must have a regional strategy to succeed in the country. If confirmed, how would you seek to create a unified business environment for U.S. companies that reduces barriers for entry into the Indian market?

*Answer.* Just like the United States, India has a federal system of government, and different states have different natural resource endowments, tax regimes, and investments rules. If confirmed, I would advocate for India to develop consistent regulatory policies at a national level that provide a level playing field for U.S. firms. I would also seek to visit as many of India's states and union territories as possible to engage diplomatically at the sub-national level to support U.S. commercial interests. As Indian states compete for U.S. investment, one way to encourage business-friendly policies is to highlight the efforts of those Indian states and sub-national governments that have done a particularly effective job of providing a sound regulatory environment for U.S. investment.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO DR. AMY GUTMANN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

2021

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. Yes. I share your deep concern and compassion for all those affected. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. HIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

Answer. Yes. Again, if confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

*Question.* We are clearly at a critical juncture with regard to Russia. There still may be a window to deter Putin from deciding to invade Ukraine. But we must be clear about what awaits Russia if it chooses that unwise path. And, we know that deterrence measures are more impactful when we coordinate with our allies.

- If confirmed, what will be your strategy for engaging Berlin, and building coalitions to deter Kremlin aggression against our allies in Ukraine and elsewhere?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with German officials to pressure Moscow and develop a policy agenda on Ukraine. The United States consults closely with Germany and other Allies and partners to condemn Russia's military build-up and destabilizing efforts in Ukraine. The United States joined Germany in a December 12 G7 statement calling on Russia to de-escalate and abide by its international commitments on transparency of military activities. The United States also joined a December 14 NATO statement that aggression against Ukraine would have massive consequences for Russia. The United States supports France and Germany's efforts to achieve full implementation of the Minsk Agreements via the Normandy Format.

#### *Rebuilding U.S.-German Relations*

*Question.* U.S.-German relations were tested under the last administration. Personal insults and tariff threats overshadowed the importance of a strategic transatlantic partnership that benefits both nations. What is your assessment of the current state of U.S.-German relations and how will you work to ensure that this will be a lasting relationship that can endure through future challenges?

Answer. U.S.-German relations are strong and getting stronger. Germany welcomed the Biden administration's emphasis on transatlantic reengagement and its return to the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Agreement, and its efforts to achieve Iranian compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. If confirmed, I will build on this momentum and on our 76-year friendship to strengthen a strategic transatlantic partnership that benefits both nations. I will respectfully address challenges and cooperate with the new German Government coalition to advance our common interests and shared values.

*Question.* German partnership in NATO is essential for transatlantic security. I found it reassuring that the new German Government recommitted to nuclear sharing in its coalition agreement, and I appreciate Germany's leadership in NATO's multinational battlegroup Lithuania. As NATO works to update its Strategic Concept in advance of the 2022 Madrid Summit, how can we work with Germany in developing a comprehensive strategy to address hybrid threats and to deter Russia?

Answer. Emphasizing communication and information sharing will be key in developing a comprehensive strategy that is able to meet hybrid threats and deter Russia. The Strategic Concept will also enable us to build a more common threat perception with Germany, who has been and remains a committed NATO Ally. In addition to developing a common strategy, it is also important that we show strength and consensus on existing NATO agreements and policies. Discouraging Germany from joining as an observer to the TPNW meeting is one way to accom-

plish this. Recent events in Ukraine and the evolving situation in Belarus only serve to reinforce the fact that we must develop a common strategy to meet emerging threats.

*Question.* The new German Government’s coalition agreement commits to working out a “comprehensive China strategy” that considers German values and interests in the systemic rivalry with China. Both within the context of the U.S.-EU Dialogue on China and bilaterally, how can we further engage Germany on building economic and technological resilience, diversifying and securing supply chains, and addressing economic coercion?

*Answer.* Germany has played a large role in helping shape EU China policy, supporting the U.S.-EU Dialogue on China framework and the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council—a forum to coordinate approaches to key global trade, economic and technology issues, and to deepen transatlantic trade and economic relations based on shared democratic values. Germany’s presidency of the G7, starting in January 2022, will be another opportunity to strengthen our cooperation in addressing shared PRC-related concerns. If confirmed, I will engage our German partners to cooperate more closely on tackling the PRC’s economic coercion and take joint action to uphold a rules-based international order.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DR. AMY GUTMANN BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Germany was identified as Tier 2 due to lenient sentencing of traffickers, investigating fewer suspected traffickers and remaining without a national victim identification and referral mechanism for all forms of trafficking.

- How will you work with the German Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* Germany takes human trafficking seriously and is a steadfast partner on the issue. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and German authorities to encourage cooperation and regularly raise trafficking in persons at the highest levels of the German Government. I will urge the German Government to take further concrete actions to address the recommendations from this year’s Trafficking in Persons Report. Specifically, I will encourage the Government of Germany to increase efforts to identify victims among vulnerable groups, ensure all victims have access to services, increase awareness of the severity of the crime and the merit of significant sentences for convicted traffickers, and increase efforts to identify victims of labor trafficking.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022].* If confirmed, I will work with the German Government on increased prosecution and victim protection efforts. I will urge the Government to increase their investigation and prosecution efforts, particularly for labor trafficking, and to raise awareness of the severity of the crime and the merit of significant sentences for convicted traffickers. I will also work with Germany to identify victims among vulnerable groups, including foreign migrants and asylum-seekers; ensure all victims have access to services; increase efforts to identify victims of labor trafficking; and ensure equitable treatment of victims by creating a national identification and referral guideline for all forms of trafficking across all states.

*Question.* Other countries in the region struggle with anti-trafficking efforts but progress is being made. How can you work with other regional U.S. Ambassadors to improve counter trafficking measures regionally?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my fellow U.S. Ambassadors in the region to encourage joint engagement and actions in raising trafficking in persons at the highest levels of government, bilaterally, and at the EU.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022].* If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my fellow U.S. Ambassadors in the region to address trafficking in persons at the highest levels of government—bilaterally, and at the EU. I will encourage regional implementation of trafficking-related EU directives and other high-level concrete actions that, if implemented regionally, would improve efforts to combat human trafficking. This includes the adoption of anti-trafficking national action plans for all forms of trafficking, the establishment of independent national rapporteurs, the adoption of robust anti-trafficking laws, and the establishment of national coordination committees for all forms of trafficking.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, incidents of serious religiously motivated crimes were rampant and on the rise. Societal respect for religious freedom is wavering with a 13 percent rise in crimes since the previous reporting period, amounting to over 2,032 anti-Semitic crimes in Germany. What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the Office of International Religious Freedom to bolster religious freedom in-country?

- What actions will you take as Ambassador to work with the host government and civil society to improve religious freedom on the ground?

*Answer.* Germany takes religious freedom seriously. Germany's constitution guarantees freedom of religion, and other laws and policies also contribute to the generally free practice of religion. Unfortunately, there are reports of escalating societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice, including a significant increase in antisemitic incidents in 2020. Major human rights issues included crimes involving violence motivated by antisemitism and crimes involving violence targeting members of ethnic or religious minority groups motivated by anti-Muslim hatred or other forms of right-wing extremism. The Government took steps to investigate, prosecute, and punish officials in the security services and elsewhere in government who committed human rights abuses. If confirmed, I look forward to working together with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, as well as the Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and to broadly engage civil society to bolster respect for freedom of religion and the rights of members of religious minority groups.

*Question.* It was noted in the chapter on Germany in the International Religious Freedom report that the U.S. Embassy was developing ways to promote tolerance and communication among religious groups. If confirmed, please explain what you believe some of these might be.

*Answer.* The United States and Germany are strong allies in advancing religious freedom, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Mission Germany frequently engages with diverse communities in Germany, including the Afro-German community, LGBTQIA activists, Muslim leaders, and Jewish clergy, to promote tolerance and communication. In June 2021, Secretary Blinken and former German Foreign Minister Maas launched a U.S.-Germany bilateral dialogue on Holocaust issues. If confirmed, I look forward to contributing to that dialogue, and I also will encourage Mission Germany to take full advantage of this environment to advance our values and interests with all sectors of the German populace.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Germany's human rights issues included violence motivated by islamophobia and anti-Semitism, as well as property restitution issues for Holocaust survivors. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* The German Government takes its historical responsibility seriously and has been a committed partner on combatting Holocaust denial and revisionism. The United States and Germany signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a new Holocaust Dialogue during Secretary Blinken's June 2021 visit to Berlin.

Germany is also dedicated to fighting currently rising antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred and has been quick to condemn violence and other acts of racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism. The new April 2021 "Act on Combating Right-Wing Extremism and Hate Crimes" requires social networks to assess and potentially restrict illegal content and to report online hate crimes to the Federal Criminal Police. Online threats will now be treated the same as in-person threats. If confirmed, I will publicly and privately reiterate to the Government the importance of this issue and identify areas where the United States can cooperate with the Government and with Germany's Jewish and Muslim communities to combat antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred, working in coordination with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom as well as the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.

*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with civil society organizations to help us assess human rights issues, develop programs, and advocate for stronger policies and reforms. The U.S. Embassy in Berlin enjoys strong and longstanding relationships with civil society on human rights and democracy issues. I will work to strengthen those relationships to advance our concerted efforts in support of human rights.

Civil society has played an important role in promoting accountability of elected leaders, driving meaningful reform, supporting the rights of members of minority

groups, and supporting access to justice for vulnerable communities. To cite one extremely significant example, civil society organizations and groups play an essential role in fighting against the worldwide rise of antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred. I will work with the German Government to advocate for creating a safe space for civil society organizations and groups such that members of minority groups do not face intimidation, coercion, or other forms of invidious discrimination.

*Question.* How will you work with the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues on restitution issues?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues to advocate for restitution of or compensation for property confiscated during the Holocaust era or subsequently nationalized during the Communist era, consistent with the Terezin Declaration commitments made at the conclusion of the Prague Holocaust Era Assets Conference in June 2009. Germany has been a reliable partner in addressing restitution and I will ensure that we continue to hold them to account. Germany provided more than \$1 billion in 2020 to Holocaust survivors disproportionately affected by the pandemic due to age and economic status and agreed in 2021 to new pensions for survivors via the Claims Conference.

*Question.* The Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (MSP) in the State Department's bureau of International Organizations is leading a whole-of-government effort to identify, recruit, and install qualified, independent personnel at the U.N., including in elections for specialized bodies like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). There is an American candidate, Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who if elected would be the first American and first woman to lead the ITU. She is a tough race that will require early, consistent engagement across capitals and within the U.N. member states. If confirmed, do you commit to demarching the German Government and any other counterparts necessary to communicate our support of Doreen?

*Answer.* Electing Doreen Bogdan-Martin as the next Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in September 2022 is a top priority for the United States and for me personally. Germany supports Ms. Bogdan-Martin's candidacy for Secretary-General and has also presented a candidate for Director of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector. If confirmed, I will work closely with German officials to urge other ITU members to support Ms. Bogdan-Martin's candidacy and will deepen bilateral cooperation to advance shared goals on critical telecommunications issues.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to aiding the MSP office in efforts to support U.S.-desired candidates within the U.N. system?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with the IO/MSP office, the U.S. interagency, and likeminded countries to advance efforts to elect qualified, independent U.S.-desired candidates for U.N. bodies, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Human Rights Committee, which monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). In consultation with Congress and the Executive Branch, I will strive to advance U.S. priorities on key multinational bodies, and I will work with the international community to meet our shared commitment to promoting respect for democracy and human rights.

#### *Malign Influence*

*Question.* In your hearing, you mentioned that every foreign gift and contract is reviewed by the legal team at the University of Pennsylvania. What role did you play in seeking, reviewing, or accepting foreign gifts and contracts?

*Answer.* As President of the University of Pennsylvania, I direct the creation of broad policies and procedures for accepting foreign gifts and contracts that ensure that the gifts and contracts are in compliance with the law and consistent with the interests of the University and the country. In implementing these policies and procedures, I rely on such offices as Development and Alumni Relations, the Division of Finance, the Office of Research Services, and the Office of General Counsel, as well as the various schools and centers within the University, each of which have their own administrative structures.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2011].* *The creation of broad policies and procedures for the review of foreign gifts and contracts that I direct as President of the University of Pennsylvania applies to solicitation (seeking) and accepting foreign gifts and contracts as well. Such policies and procedures ensure that the solicitation, reviewing, and acceptance of gifts and contracts are in compliance with the law and consistent with the interests of the University and the country. As noted in my prior*

*response, in implementing these policies and procedures, I rely on such University offices as Development and Alumni Relations, the Division of Finance, the Office of Research Services, and the Office of General Counsel, as well as the various schools and centers within the University, each of which have their own administrative structures.*

*Question.* Other than not accepting a Confucius Institute, what actions can you point to as President of the University of Pennsylvania that you took monitor, review, conduct oversight of, or otherwise scrutinize foreign donations and contracts coming into the university? Please be specific.

*Answer.* Since my appointment as President of the University of Pennsylvania in 2004, I have always directed the University to comply with applicable laws and institutional policies and procedures, including the review of foreign donations and contracts. During my presidency, the University has strengthened and further developed its policies and procedures regarding gift acceptance, export controls, reporting of foreign gifts and contracts, and research oversight.

Regarding foreign donations, the University revised its processes in 2020 so as to apply additional scrutiny regarding prospective gifts. For example, the revised processes noted specifically that “international gifts are of particular concern where there is not adequate transparency,” and that prior to soliciting a gift of \$25,000 or more consideration should be given to whether “the donor is a foreign government, head of state or otherwise under the control of a foreign government.”

With respect to export controls, during my presidency the University has engaged with relevant federal agencies to fully develop strong internal policies and has over time enhanced its efforts to build export control knowledge and capacity throughout Penn’s academic research community. The University is a leader in this field and has sponsored national export control conferences attended by many other research institutions. Penn will next sponsor a national export control conference in May 2022.

Regarding foreign donations and contracts subject to Section 117 of the Higher Education Act, under my presidency the University’s Division of Finance developed a robust compliance program involving multiple University offices as well as the University’s schools and centers. Furthermore, as developed under my presidency, all gifts from, and contracts with, foreign entities and individuals are screened against U.S. restricted party lists prior to the acceptance of any donation or execution of a contract. The University also performs its own due diligence using public sources to determine if prospective donors have engaged in conduct that would create a reputational risk to the University or are proposing a gift inconsistent with the University’s mission.

Finally, the University reaffirmed its policy prohibiting classified research and has remained steadfast in its refusal to compromise academic freedom or national security interests.

*Question.* As President, did you or did you direct your senior leadership team to take steps to reduce the number and amount of donations and contracts coming from the People’s Republic of China as more information about malign Chinese influence in universities came to light in the last several years?

*Answer.* The University followed its policies, practices, and the law in reviewing foreign donations and contracts, including donations and contracts originating in the People’s Republic of China, utilizing further processes and screening protocols as described in the response to question #10. As awareness of malign influence increased within the higher education community, Penn instituted additional internal vetting and assessment protocols for heightened scrutiny of donations from foreign donors.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022].* The processes and screening protocols described in my prior response to question #10 resulted in declining certain gifts and contracts originating from the PRC. For example, in September 2018, as a result of the University’s enhanced processes and protocols, Penn removed Huawei, a Chinese telecommunications and consumer electronics manufacturer, and its affiliates from its list of approved contractors eight months before the Bureau of Industry and Security of the U.S. Department of Commerce placed Huawei on the Entity List in May 2019. Additional examples include Penn declining sponsored research in 2015 from Futurewei, a U.S. Huawei controlled entity, to perform research that had been proposed to but not funded by the NSF, and Penn declining postdoctoral funding for electrocatalysis research from the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China in 2019.

*Question.* Were you aware of the malign Chinese influence in U.S. universities that have come to light in the last several years? If so, what sources did you draw information from?

Answer. Given that malign influence in U.S. universities from the Government of the People's Republic of China has been widely acknowledged in recent years, I have been increasingly concerned and aware of the impact such influence could have on the University of Pennsylvania. My information regarding the malign influence of the PRC has been drawn from research and reports, media sources, conferences, professional associations, and information sharing within the higher education community, and as briefed by senior University administrators. For example, Penn's Division of Public Safety regularly liaisons with the Federal Bureau of Investigation regarding a variety of topics of mutual interest. My service from 2005 to 2009 on the National Security Higher Education Board, which advised the Federal Bureau of Investigation on issues related to higher education, provided further information relevant to the issue of malign influence. My concern and awareness of malign foreign influence, as informed by the resources described above, resulted in my decision in 2009 to decline acceptance of a Confucius Institute at Penn.

*Question.* Do you believe that universities would be willing to forgo taking donations and contracts from China and other authoritarian countries?

Answer. Although I cannot speak for all universities, I certainly believe that universities would forego donations and contracts that compromise U.S. national security interests and present substantive threats to academic freedom and the free exchange of knowledge and ideas.

*Question.* How can the U.S. Government and universities work together to reduce the amount of money coming into U.S. universities from authoritarian countries?

Answer. Although I cannot speak for all universities, consideration could be given to the U.S. Government engaging with organizations such as the American Council on Education, the Association of American Universities, the American Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities to discuss appropriate standards and reporting requirements for any receipt of gifts, contracts, or sponsored research from countries with authoritarian regimes and governments.

*Question.* Do you believe the level of transparency and reporting required by institutes of higher education regarding foreign donations and contracts is sufficient, given the challenges posed to the United States by authoritarian nations like China? Please explain your position.

Answer. Given the recently revised reporting and disclosure requirements of Section 117 of the Higher Education Act, as well as the regulatory requirements for export control compliance and related areas, I believe the present level of transparency and reporting required of institutions of higher education is sufficient, subject to ongoing assessment and review by Congress and federal agencies so as to be appropriately responsive to national security interests and related concerns. To further ensure appropriate transparency and reporting, clarifying guidance from the U.S. Department of Education for Section 117 of the Higher Education Act would be welcomed by many in the higher education community.

*Question.* Can you please clarify what you meant in the following statement you made during your hearing regarding anonymous donations?: "The anonymity is what the Department of Education in its reporting is required by law to do." It is not my understanding that the Department of Education is required to report foreign donations and contracts to universities as "anonymous." If this is not what you meant to convey, what did you mean?

Answer. Prior to 2020, Section 117 of the Higher Education Act did not require disclosure of the identity of donors or contracting partners to the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE). For that reason, gifts reported by Penn were identified in the report as "anonymous." The donors were known to Penn; they just were not reported because that was not required. In 2020, the regulations were revised to require that names and addresses for reportable foreign gifts and contracts be submitted to the U.S. DOE as part of the Section 117 report, although the names and addresses were now required to be kept confidential by U.S. DOE. The University has complied with the revised regulations.

*Question.* You mentioned that none of the donations and contracts to the University of Pennsylvania are allowed to threaten academic freedom or national security. Do you think it is in the national security interests of the United States to provide executive education programs to a Chinese Government agency responsible for foreign talent recruitment (the State Administration of Foreign Experts), as the University of Pennsylvania did?

Answer. Academic and educational exchanges with foreign countries, entities, and businesses are an effective way to model American principles, systems, and values; such exchanges between American higher education institutions and foreign countries thereby promote and strengthen our national interests. By engaging with foreign countries and their governments, Penn is not endorsing their beliefs, philosophies, or political systems. Furthermore, as I stated in the December 14, 2021, hearing with the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the University of Pennsylvania would not enter into contracts that would threaten national security or academic freedom.

Wharton's executive education program for the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs was a two-week leadership program that included a day in Washington, D.C., and/or New York City. The program was sponsored by Mary Kay Cosmetics, China.

*Question.* Do you think it is in the national security interests of the United States to provide executive education programs to Chinese state-owned enterprises that are under the direct administration of an agency of the Chinese central Government and involved in "One Belt, One Road," such as China Merchants Bank, as the University of Pennsylvania did?

Answer. As one of the world's leading business schools, Penn's Wharton School provides executive education programs and services to businesses and organizations around the world. These programs are grounded in American free-market principles, with content developed and taught by Wharton faculty. As Penn does not engage in classified research, at no time would any such executive education program share information that might compromise the country's national security interests.

Wharton's executive education program for China Merchants Bank was a three-week program that incorporated academic topics from Wharton's MBA program.

*Question.* Do you think it is in the national security interests of the United States to accept a restricted gift, as the University of Pennsylvania did in 2021, from a source in China to establish an artificial intelligence program at the university, given what we know about China's technology ambitions and policies?

Answer. This question refers to a 2021 gift from a graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania as noted on the University's Section 117 report. That gift is for the support of an academic program in business analytics based solely in the Wharton School. All of the work in this program is done by Wharton faculty and students and is consistent with principles of academic freedom which requires that the studies and advances made be published and available in the public interest.

*Question.* According to Department of Education data and your responses to SFRC pre-hearing questions, the University of Pennsylvania provided executive education to 10 Chinese state-owned enterprises between 2014 and 2019. What U.S. interests were served in providing this education?

Answer. As stated above, Penn's Wharton School provides executive education programs and services to businesses and organizations around the world. These programs are grounded in American free-market principles, with content developed and taught by Wharton faculty, and model American principles, systems, and values. As Penn does not engage in classified research, and is steadfast in its commitment to academic freedom, at no time would any such executive education program share information that might compromise the country's national security interests.

*Question.* Please provide additional information on the \$1 million restricted gift dated May 20, 2021, from China that "supports the development of the Artificial Intelligence Program at the Wharton School." This is listed on the Department of Education's website, but the data provided by the University of Pennsylvania contains a different description, preventing SFRC from corroborating the two data sets.

- Who is the source of this gift?

Answer. A \$1 million gift dated May 20, 2021, is from Mr. Tao Zhang. Mr. Zhang is a 2002 graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

*Question.* For what purpose is the artificial intelligence program being established?

Answer. The Wharton Artificial Intelligence for Business Initiative, announced by the Wharton School in May 2020, is for teaching and research in the nascent field of artificial intelligence related to business analytics. The Initiative is for the support of students and faculty of the Wharton School and the business community. The Wharton Artificial Intelligence for Business Initiative is part of Analytics at Wharton. A description of Wharton's Artificial Intelligence for Business Initiative



can be found at <https://ai.wharton.upenn.edu/>. A description of Analytics at Wharton can be found at <https://analytics.wharton.upenn.edu>.

*Question.* Are any individuals from or entities incorporated in the People's Republic of China involved in the activities of the artificial intelligence program?

*Answer.* The Wharton Artificial Intelligence Program for Business Initiative and Analytics at Wharton are operated by the Wharton School and led by Wharton faculty, and are for the support of students and faculty of the Wharton School and the business community. Penn does not engage in classified research and or engage in programs that contravene Penn policy or compromise national security interests.

*[Additional Information—11/1/2022]. Wharton Artificial Intelligence for Business and Analytics at Wharton are operated solely by the Wharton School. I confirm that I am not personally aware of any individuals with ties to the Government of the PRC, or entities incorporated in the PRC, that are involved in the activities of Wharton Artificial Intelligence for Business or Analytics at Wharton. It is worth noting again that the University of Pennsylvania does not engage in classified research or engage in programs that contravene Penn policy or compromise national security interests.*

*Question.* In the first round of pre-hearing questions, you stated that—to the best of your knowledge—the University of Pennsylvania never received a donation from or signed a contract with any part of the Chinese Communist Party, the Government of the People's Republic of China, or from entities under the direct control of the Party or Government. The University of Pennsylvania's Department of Education filings show contracts with a Chinese Government agency and several major state-owned enterprises. Do you stand by the responses in your first round of pre-hearing questions?

*Answer.* Yes. As stated above, and per my written responses of September 21, 2021, I answered all questions to the best of my personal knowledge. As I noted in the December 14, 2021 U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing, the University has received donations of over \$10 billion during my presidency, with a very small fraction of that amount—less than 1 percent—originating from China. The Wharton School in particular also enters into numerous contracts with corporate entities all around the world. Given the scale and sheer number of donations to the University, and contracts with Wharton, I have very little personal knowledge of the overwhelming majority of specific gifts or contracts. However, as I also noted during the December 14, 2021, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing, the limited knowledge I now have regarding any University contracts with any Chinese entities was developed during my preparation for the December 14, 2021, hearing, and was subsequent to my September 21, 2021 written responses.

*Question.* In the information provided to SFRC by the University of Pennsylvania, there is listed approximately \$468,000 in contracts for executive education for Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd. There is an additional \$369,000 listed for Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd. In an online search, SFRC could not verify either company's name or address. Please provide a description of these entities, including major shareholders.

*Answer.* The Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd., is located at 1F, No. 258, Pingyang Road, Minhang District, in Shanghai, China. The company engages in technology development, consultation, transfer, and services in information technology and software development. The University is unaware of major shareholders.

The Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd. is located at Unit 401, Kaiyuan Tower, No. 7001 North Ring Road Futian District, in Shenzhen, China. The company engages in import and export of goods and technologies, economic information consultation, and marketing planning. The University is unaware of major shareholders but understands that the company may be organized under Hao Run Holdings.

*Question.* What is the Gu Analytics Fund?

*Answer.* The Roger Gu Analytics Fund was established in 2020 for the purpose of providing financial support for research and programmatic activities of Analytics at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. The fund is administered by the Vice Dean of Analytics and the Dean of the Wharton School. A general description of Analytics at Wharton can be found at <https://analytics.wharton.upenn.edu>.

*Question.* What is the Yun Wang and Beibei Jiang Presidential Professorship?

*Answer.* The Yun Wang and Beibei Jiang Presidential Professorship was established in 2018 to support recruitment and retention of tenure-track faculty, with

preference for appointments in the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. The professorship is currently vacant.

*[Additional Information—11/1/2022]. I have no personal knowledge of these individuals and thus have no knowledge as to whether either is employed by or has substantial ties to the CCP, the Chinese Government, or any entity under the direct control of the CCP and/or the Chinese Government.*

*Question.* The University of Pennsylvania's 2021 filing lists Nanyang Technological University as paying a \$44,000 contract. Nanyang Technological University is a university in Singapore, but University of Pennsylvania filings list an address in Nanjing, China. Please explain this discrepancy.

*Answer.* This entry is a coding error. The correct contracting party for this 2020 entry is Nanjing University of Science and Technology in Nanjing, China.

*[Additional Information—11/1/2022]. The contract in question is in fact with Nanjing University, China, not Nanjing University of Science and Technology. The \$44,000 contract is for a subscription to Wharton Research Data Services, which is described at <https://wrds-www.wharton.upenn.edu/pages/about/data-vendors/factset/>. I had no involvement in soliciting, concluding, implementing, or overseeing this contract, which was not a donation, and I am not aware of any individuals with ties to the Chinese Government or military that were the beneficiaries of this contract.*

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of how the Chinese Communist Party and PRC Government works in Germany to advance its interests and to counter U.S. and allied interests. Please provide some specific examples.

*Answer.* German-PRC ties are characterized by cooperation, competition, and systemic rivalry. Bilateral relations remain heavily focused on trade, investment, and major industrial supply chain lines, all of which still depend on China. There is increasing concern in Germany over Beijing's theft of intellectual property, forced technology transfers, lack of market reciprocity, and targeted acquisitions of German companies in sensitive sectors. The PRC Government runs disinformation campaigns globally, including in Germany, using social media and other means. If confirmed, I will work with Germany to track and expose PRC disinformation and influence campaigns, and to inform and educate consumers of media about malicious state actors pushing forward false narratives. The United States counters these campaigns by bringing these activities to light and identifying state actors and/or proxies for who they are.

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of the nature and extent of malign or undue PRC influence in Germany's institutions of higher education and in academia more generally. What are the biggest challenges in this area, in your view?

*Answer.* There are 19 Confucius Institutes (CIs) located throughout Germany in each of the Mission's consular districts. Each CI is run in cooperation between a local university, a PRC university, and the PRC Government's international education agency. But these are not merely centers of cultural and linguistic exchange. CIs are being used for non-traditional intelligence collection and influence operations. The PRC often leverages CIs to attempt to curb free speech and enable PRC monitoring of Chinese students and scholars at universities.

*Question [updated]. Please describe your understanding of challenges China presents to German universities and academics other than Confucius Institutes*

*[Additional Information—11/1/2022]. German and Chinese academic institutions are increasingly bound by cooperative agreements—close to 1,500 at last count. This demonstrates a higher risk tolerance of the security threats posed by conducting research in cooperation with the People's Republic of China. As this cooperation increases, so do the pressures for German academics and academic institutions. While many German scholars signed the solidarity agreement in 2021 in response to Chinese sanctions against European lawmakers, academics, and nongovernmental organizations, many others did not, perhaps in fear of retribution or losing support for their research projects. Across numerous fields, the PRC employs foreign talent recruitment programs that use concerning provisions, such as requirements to obfuscate the source of funding, which undermine academic and scientific exchanges and can also skew funding decisions and decrease opportunities for researchers from U.S. and partner nations. If confirmed, I will continue to engage the Germans on the dangers posed by collaboration with the PRC. The German Government and German universities must become our partners in protecting sensitive STEM research and production as they relate to weapons technology, semi-conductor production, and vaccine development among other critical areas.*

*Question.* Please describe your understanding of any steps taken by the German Government to address malign or undue influence in Germany's institutions of higher education.

*Answer.* The German Government, through public institutes of higher education, has started to push back against the level of influence exerted by Confucius Institutes (CIs). The Universities of Dusseldorf and Hamburg expressed concerns about active Chinese Community Party influence at the CIs and concerns over research freedom and integrity when they suspended their cooperation agreements in 2020. In 2021 two German universities strongly denounced cancellations of public readings at their CIs and dozens of politicians and educators publicly joined in the rejections. The readings were cancelled due to pressure from a Chinese university and Chinese Government officials.

*Question [updated].* Would like more detail for this question on issues other than Confucius Institutes.

*[Additional Information—11/1/2022].* In response to growing concerns over negative Chinese influence on academic freedom in Germany, the German Rectors' Conference published "guiding questions" on how universities should approach academic cooperation with Chinese institutions. This guidance encourages the balancing of opportunity and risk while remaining aware not to jeopardize Germany's academic principles. Germany also announced this summer a doubling of its funding towards independent China research which would allow universities to extend their work in this field free of funding from the CCP.

*Question.* What do you think are some of the greatest obstacles to addressing this challenge [malign or undue PRC influence in Germany's institutions of higher education] in Germany?

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022].* There is continued demand among young Germans to study Mandarin language and attend cultural programming at Confucius Institutes (CIs). CIs promote fully funded and partially funded exchange programs to China to encourage "non-traditional" exchanges. CIs also often supplement language instruction at German universities at little or no cost to the university itself, which creates an incentive for universities to continue cooperation, especially those that do not already have Chinese language instructors on staff or independent China or Asian studies programs. Germany must develop alternative routes to understand China that are not dependent on PRC Government soft power tools and propaganda, such as CIs.

*Question [updated].* PRC influence in universities and academia extends beyond Confucius Institutes. Please describe your thoughts what must be done on other challenges. One example is the lack of transparency around foreign donations to German universities, including donations from China.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022].* There is continued demand among young Germans to study Mandarin language and attend cultural programming at Confucius Institutes (CIs). Many German federal state universities are excluded from Freedom of Information legislation. I would like to see Germany develop alternative routes to understand China that are not dependent on PRC Government soft power tools and propaganda, such as CIs or restrictive cooperative agreements. If confirmed, my Embassy colleagues and I will work closely with the new German Government as it develops a comprehensive China strategy to address the PRC threat to academic freedom and the appropriation of sensitive technology through PRC ties to German research and education institutions.

*Question.* Other than engaging with your counterparts, what are some concrete ideas you have on cooperating with Germany on malign foreign influence from the PRC, if confirmed?

*Answer.* Germany is an important partner in upholding the international rules-based system and opposing PRC efforts to undermine international institutions and their foundational values, principles, and rules. If confirmed, I will work closely with German leaders to reinforce the integrity and foundational principles of international organizations, support the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council, strengthen investment screening, counter disinformation from the PRC, and call out PRC human rights abuses. Germany's leadership of the G7 starting in January 2022 will be another opportunity to strengthen our cooperation in addressing shared PRC-related concerns alongside G7 partners.

*Question.* If confirmed, what are the key areas related to China that you will focus on in terms of cooperation with and messaging to Germany?

**Answer.** Germany is an important partner in upholding the international rules-based system and opposing PRC efforts to undermine international institutions and their foundational values, principles, and rules. If confirmed, I will work closely with German leaders to promote and coordinate a values-driven policy agenda that, as a high priority, addresses our mutual concerns on the PRC's unfair trade practices; offers quality infrastructure development and financing to third-countries; and stands up for human rights in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong.

**Question.** What are areas where you believe the United States and German positions on China are already in alignment?

**Answer.** The United States and Germany share the view that our relations with the PRC are multifaceted and complex, with cooperative, competitive, and adversarial aspects. Germany has joined the United States on numerous occasions to rebuff the PRC's efforts to reshape and undermine international institutions and values. The United States works closely with Germany to advocate for human rights in China, and if confirmed, I will advocate and coordinate with the German Government on issues of mutual concern, particularly as they relate to Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022]. The United States and Germany share the view that our relations with the PRC have cooperative, competitive, and adversarial aspects. Germany has joined the United States on numerous occasions to rebuff the PRC's efforts to reshape and undermine international institutions and values. Our countries agree that the PRC's attempts to bully Lithuania are unacceptable. These actions threaten the global rules-based order and target U.S. and European companies. I agree we must strengthen our economic resilience by diversifying our supply chains and resolutely countering all forms of economic blackmail. Together we condemn the genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, and advocate for human rights in China.*

**Question.** What are areas where the views and policies of the two countries are not in alignment, and what will you do to address these areas, if confirmed?

**Answer.** The United States and Germany both recognize there are adversarial, competitive, and cooperative aspects to our relationships with the PRC. Engaging consistently with Germany in a focused dialogue on PRC is key to maintaining strategic alignment. Our shared values will be a foundation for charting a common course of action. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Germans so that our countries stand strongly together in challenging areas that require a competitive or adversarial approach to the PRC, such as taking action on human rights abuses by the PRC Government.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022]. As with any close friends, Germany and the United States' approaches occasionally diverge. Differences between the United States and Germany on PRC policy, however, are largely stylistic rather than substantive. In the past, the Germans have taken a more private approach to diplomacy on some PRC issues and have been reticent to publicly admonish the PRC, preferring instead to register concerns privately. However, the German Government has been increasingly vocal in calling out the PRC's troubling actions, including condemning human rights abuses in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Hong Kong and supporting EU human rights sanctions. Working closely with Germany in a focused dialogue on PRC is key to maintaining alignment on key strategic priorities. Our shared values will be a foundation for charting a common course of action. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Germans so that our countries stand strongly together in challenging areas that require a competitive or adversarial approach to the PRC.*

**Question.** What are your views on how the new coalition government in Germany has thus far described its policy on China?

**Answer.** In line with the EU, Germany sees the PRC as a partner, economic competitor, and systemic rival. The new German Government has made clear that it seeks a values-based foreign policy, with human rights and respect for international law as central pillars. I welcome that Chancellor Scholz's coalition government seeks "close transatlantic coordination on China policy" and cooperation with other like-minded countries to "reduce strategic dependencies." If confirmed, I look forward to coordinating closely with German counterparts on the full range of issues related to the PRC.

**Question.** What do you find encouraging, and what do you find discouraging about the new coalition government's policy on China?

**Answer.** PRC-German ties are characterized by cooperation, competition, and systemic rivalry. Bilateral relations remain heavily focused on trade, investment, and

major industrial supply chain lines, all of which still depend on China. However, the new German Government has made human rights and international law central elements of its foreign policy in its coalition agreement. The coalition agreement also includes language on resolving maritime disputes peacefully, preserving the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, and supporting Taiwan's participation in international organizations. If confirmed, I look forward to working with German counterparts to advance these shared goals.

*Question.* As I alluded to in my opening statement, Chiefs of Mission are at the end of the day responsible or accountable for everything in their Embassy, regardless of their level of direct day-to-day involvement. This is the natural consequence of being in charge. Do you share this view, and is that how you will approach your duties as Chief of Mission? If so, please describe how your leadership and management style reflects this.

*Answer.* I share this view, and if confirmed this is certainly how I will approach my duties as Chief of Mission. Throughout my career, I have demonstrated an ability to work productively with colleagues of all backgrounds in a constructive manner. I regularly engage with members of my team and always seek to create a space for open dialogue and diversity of thought. I will work hard to foster an environment of respect. I believe in both setting high standards and leading by example. There is nothing more valuable than our team, and I will dedicate myself to their professional development and to helping our employees grow and advance. If confirmed, I am committed to working collaboratively and productively with the Country Team.

*Question.* Do you support a greater role for Germany in the Indo-Pacific region?

*Answer.* Yes. Germany is one of our closest partners on a range of global issues and could play a greater role in enhancing security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. The administration welcomed the recently released EU Indo-Pacific strategy and supports European partners taking a greater role in the Indo-Pacific region both bilaterally and through NATO. The administration also welcomed Germany's deployment of the frigate Bayern to join the monitoring of U.N. sanctions on the DPRK, as well as support for freedom of the seas and a rules-based international order.

*Question.* What are specific areas where greater German engagement would advance U.S. and shared interests in the region?

*Answer.* Germany is a key partner in upholding the international rules-based system, and supporting democracy, transparency, and human rights around the world. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with Germany on a values-driven Indo-Pacific policy that is aligned with U.S. interests. We can best tackle PRC human rights violations and economic coercion when we call out these violations with a unified voice and take concerted actions together. Germany has strong investment screening mechanisms for critical infrastructure and defense. We can also continue to bolster our security cooperation following Germany's December 2021 deployment of a frigate to the Indo-Pacific, which included a transit through the South China Sea and participation in the DPRK sanctions monitoring mission. We should also welcome a role for Germany in voicing its support for international maritime law, particularly in the South China Sea.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not advise Secretary Blinken, the President, or any other official to sacrifice other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Germany and other NATO Allies and like-minded partners to strengthen Transatlantic efforts to mitigate the long-term effects of climate change. The United States has made clear to the PRC that climate change is a global crisis we must all face together and that we reject attempts by the PRC to link cooperation on climate change with any other issues.

*Question.* Do you commit that you yourself will not take any steps to trade other U.S. interests for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Germany and other allies and like-minded partners to strengthen transatlantic efforts to mitigate the long-term effects of climate change. The United States has made clear to the PRC that climate change is a global crisis we must all face together and that we reject attempts by the PRC to link cooperation on climate change with any other issues.

I will work with Germany to stand with us against PRC attempts to link climate change with unrelated issues.

*Question.* Do you commit that you will not encourage the German Government to sacrifice shared transatlantic interests and values for the sake of an agreement with or promises from China on climate change?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Germany and other allies and like-minded partners to strengthen transatlantic efforts to mitigate the long-term effects of climate change. Shared transatlantic values and interests, including human rights, will remain at the core of our efforts on climate change. The United States has made clear to the PRC that climate change is a global crisis we must all face together and that we reject attempts by the PRC to link cooperation on climate change with any other issues. I will work with Germany to stand with us against PRC attempts to link climate change with unrelated issues.

*Question.* The administration has declared that Nord Stream 2 is a Russian malign influence project and a bad deal for Europe. The undersea pipeline makes land-fall and drives strong business interests in Germany, putting the country at the center of this issue.

- What role do you believe the U.S. Ambassador should play in negotiations with Germany over security concerns for Europe with regard to Nord Stream 2?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I believe my role will be to reiterate to Germany that the United States sees Nord Stream 2 as a Russian geopolitical project and a bad deal for Germany and for Europe. I will engage closely with senior German officials, in consultation with relevant U.S. officials, to push for rapid progress on implementation of the July 21 joint statement to ensure Germany continues supporting Ukraine and continues developing options to respond if Russia uses energy as a weapon. I will also make sure the German Government is aware of our views on the broader energy security situation in Europe and the need for a rapid transition out of reliance on Russian natural gas.

*Question.* Do you believe that Germany's decision to continue construction, and now testing and certification of the pipeline makes other European nations more vulnerable to Russian influence and coercion?

*Answer.* Nord Stream 2 is a bad deal for the United States and a bad deal for Germany and the rest of Europe. My understanding is that the German regulator has suspended certification procedures for Nord Stream 2 until the Nord Stream 2 AG submission is compliant with the European Union's Third Energy package—including unbundling and third-party access regulations. As part of U.S. engagement with Germany on Nord Stream 2, the July 21 joint statement commits the United States and Germany to work together to advance negotiations on continuing transit of Russian gas through Ukraine beyond 2024.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022]. Nord Stream 2 is a bad deal, and it continues to be viewed primarily a geopolitical project designed to undermine the security of Eastern European partners, particularly Ukraine. The new German Government remains committed to and is making progress on implementing the July 21 "Joint Statement of the United States and Germany on Support for Ukraine, European Energy Security, and our Climate Goals." My understanding is that the German regulator has suspended certification procedures for Nord Stream 2. I believe the new German Government has also made it clear that additional Russian aggression against Ukraine would further call into question the pipeline's future.*

*Question.* Do you believe threatening to prevent the operation of Nord Stream 2 will persuade Russia to withdraw their threat to invade Ukraine?

*Answer.* Russian officials, in particular President Putin, have a strong, emotional position on Ukraine that is based on their one-sided understanding of Russian history and view of the collapse of the Soviet Union as a tragedy that must be reversed. They have a desire to "take back" Ukraine that is stronger than specific considerations around Nord Stream 2. It seems unlikely that stopping the pipeline alone would cause Russia—and President Putin—to abandon the threat to further invade Ukraine.

*Question.* Do you agree to work to prevent Nord Stream 2 from becoming operational should Russia further invade Ukraine?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with senior U.S. and German officials to persuade Germany that it should put a stop to Nord Stream 2 if Russia further invades Ukraine. Senior German officials have publicly said that Russia would face severe political and economic consequences for renewed military action against Ukraine

and I would work to hold them to those statements and work jointly with Germany to develop very strong measures to impose costs on Russia for its malign behavior.

*Question.* Have you read the July 21, 2021 Joint Statement between Germany and the United States?

Answer. Yes, I have read the Joint Statement between Germany and the United States.

*Question.* The joint statement states: “This commitment is designed to ensure that Russia will not misuse any pipeline, including Nord Stream 2, to achieve aggressive political ends by using energy as a weapon.”

- What is your understanding of the definition of “use of energy as a weapon”?

Answer. The commitment to work together in the event Russia uses energy as a weapon is at the heart of the July 21 joint statement. It is my understanding that talks between the United States and Germany are currently ongoing on how to define the use of energy as a weapon and how to respond to such a situation. If confirmed, I will work to ensure Germany understands the United States’ position on Russia’s use of its leverage in the European energy market and how to push back effectively. If confirmed, I would ensure the United States negotiating team has my full support in developing this joint approach with Germany.

*Question.* How would you define whether or not Nord Stream 2 is involved in “the use of energy as a weapon”?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work closely with United States Government energy experts to evaluate implications of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline on European energy security and possible Russian use of energy as a weapon. I would engage at senior levels of the German Government to ensure they understand the United States position on the pipeline and are following through aggressively on the commitment in the July 21 joint statement to ensure there are consequences if Russia uses energy as a weapon, as our two governments decide that term should be defined.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the German Government’s definition of the “use of energy as a weapon”?

Answer. I am not privy to the details of current diplomatic engagements between Germany and the United States surrounding Nord Stream 2 and Germany’s precise definition of the use of energy as a weapon. If confirmed, I would work hard to develop a joint understanding with Germany on the use of energy as a weapon and potential responses.

*Question.* How do you believe the German Government would define whether or not Nord Stream 2 is involved in “the use of energy as a weapon”?

Answer. At this point, I am not privy to diplomatic discussions with Germany and do not know exactly how the German Government would define whether Nord Stream 2 is involved in the use of energy as a weapon. If confirmed, I would work closely to impress on Germany the U.S. position that the pipeline is a bad deal and work to ensure rapid implementation of the July 21 joint statement that commits the United States and Germany to work together to respond if Russia uses energy as a weapon, as our two governments decide that term should be defined.

*Question.* If there is a determination that Russia has used Nord Stream 2 as a weapon, will you support efforts to shut down the pipeline?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to implement U.S. policy which states that Nord Stream 2 is a bad deal and undertake every effort to limit the negative impact of an operational pipeline. This administration has been clear in its opposition to Nord Stream 2 and the ideal solution would be for the pipeline to be shut down, if that is possible. If confirmed, I will support ongoing efforts to limit its potential negative impact and to ensure gas continues to flow through Ukraine.

*Question.* How will you work with the German Government to help them address the situation and aid Poland in finding a solution to this crisis?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with Germany, Allies, and partners to develop a policy agenda on Poland and Belarus based on shared values. Belarus continues to break international law and OSCE commitments. I appreciate Poland’s leadership (along with Latvia and Lithuania) in confronting the challenges created by the Lukashenka regime. The United States recognizes the right of the governments impacted by the actions of Belarus, including Poland, to secure their borders. The United States announced on December 2 a fifth tranche of sanctions in close coordination with the EU, Allies, and partners, holding accountable the Lukashenka regime for hybrid operations and ongoing attacks on democracy and human rights.

*Question.* How will you ensure that Germany upholds its international and EU obligations to uphold the rights of migrants?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Germany to promote close coordination and develop a policy agenda based on shared values. I am deeply concerned by the Lukashenka regime's inhumane actions and strongly condemn its callous exploitation and coercion of vulnerable people, including migrant smuggling across its borders into states of the European Union. By exploiting vulnerable individuals and villainizing democratic countries, the regime in Belarus seeks to pressure its neighbors into ending EU sanctions and other efforts to hold the regime accountable. If confirmed, I will work with German leaders to promote close coordination and develop a policy agenda based on shared values.

*Question.* How will you work with your fellow U.S. diplomats in other EU countries to encourage their governments to work together to find a solution?

Answer. If confirmed, not only will I work hard to ensure our cooperation continues, I also will look for ways to strengthen our partnership. As long as the regime in Belarus violently represses human rights, holds political prisoners, and undermines the democratic aspirations of the Belarusian people, I will work with Allies and partners to increase pressure and call for accountability. If the regime seeks sanctions relief, the steps are clear: end the ongoing crackdown, release unconditionally all political prisoners, hold accountable perpetrators of abuses, and engage in a genuine, inclusive dialogue with the Belarusian opposition and civil society that will lead to new free and fair presidential elections under international observation.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work with the German Government to ensure they uphold our mutual support for nuclear deterrence?

Answer. I welcome the new German Government's continued commitment to participate in NATO's nuclear mission, as stated in its coalition agreement. The United States strongly discourages NATO Allies, including Germany, from participating as observers in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). NATO's stated policy maintains the TPNW is "inconsistent with the Alliance's nuclear deterrence policy, is at odds with the existing non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, risks undermining the NPT, and does not take into account the current security environment." If confirmed, I will continue to reinforce the importance of Germany's support for NATO as a nuclear alliance.

*Question.* What is your understanding of the German Government's support for a "Sole Purpose" nuclear declaratory policy in the U.S., and additionally, in NATO?

Answer. I am not aware of any public statements German officials have made on the subject. Throughout DOD's ongoing Nuclear Posture Review, the Biden administration has conducted extensive consultations with Allies and partners, including Germany. Feedback from these consultations will help inform the President's decision on declaratory policy. The President has called our extended deterrence guarantees a "sacred obligation" and has repeatedly stressed that our commitment to our treaty allies is ironclad. I am confident that the result will ensure that the United States will have the capabilities needed to deter aggression, assure our Allies, and respond if deterrence fails.

*Question.* Do you believe that the administration's Nuclear Posture Review and consideration of a transition to a "Sole Purpose" or "Fundamental Purpose" nuclear doctrine sends a message to allies, like Germany, that they should consider policies that would reduce nuclear deterrence?

Answer. Throughout the Nuclear Posture Review, the Biden administration has conducted extensive consultations with Allies and partners, including Germany, to solicit their views. Those viewpoints will help inform the President's policy making. As President Biden has called our extended deterrence guarantees a "sacred obligation" and has repeatedly stressed that our commitment to NATO is ironclad, the President will only choose a declaratory policy which enhances our security and that of our Allies. The President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance also makes clear "that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible."

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022]. As part of the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) process, the Biden administration is conducting extensive consultations with U.S. Allies, including Germany, and the views expressed, including concerns about "no-first-use" or "sole purpose," will weigh heavily in the administration's decision making. President Biden has called Article 5 a "sacred obligation" and has repeatedly stressed to all Allies that our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad. The President's Interim National Security Strategy also makes clear "that our extended deter-*



*rence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible.” While I am not part of the NPR review, I am confident it will ensure that the U.S. will have the capabilities needed to deter aggression and respond if deterrence fails. If confirmed, I commit to working closely with Germany to understand how the NPR may impact Germany national defense strategy.*

*Question.* While Germany has made strides toward meeting its NATO defense spending obligation, it still falls far short of 2 percent of its GDP. How will you work with the German Government to ensure they meet their NATO spending obligations as soon as practicable?

*Answer.* Germany is a steadfast NATO Ally. If confirmed, I will urge Germany to increase defense spending to 2 percent of GDP to meet NATO capability targets and fulfill force contributions pursuant to the Wales Pledge. Ongoing events in Ukraine and the developing situation in Belarus are powerful reminders of why Allies must share the burden of their collective defense. Trustworthy information, intelligence-sharing, and communication will be critical to increasing shared threat perceptions.

*Question.* While Germany has recently installed its new coalition government, marking an end to the Merkel era. How will you work to establish new relationships with officials in the new Government?

*Answer.* Germany remains a strong Transatlantic partner and NATO Ally. Our shared values form the foundation for our strong cultural, economic, and security ties. I welcome Germany’s new “traffic light” coalition government comprised of Social Democrats (SPD), Greens, and Free Democrats (FDP). If confirmed, I will seek to continue the rhythm of early and frequent engagement. Secretary Blinken congratulated new Foreign Minister Baerbock by phone shortly after her December 8 swearing-in, and the two held a bilateral meeting two days later at the G7 Foreign Minister Ministerial in Liverpool. President Biden also congratulated Chancellor Scholz and kicked off this new partnership by phone.

*[Additional Information—1/11/2022]. If confirmed, I will set meetings with the Chancellor, Foreign Minister, and other key cabinet members for as soon as possible after I arrive in Berlin. I will also make a point to visit all five U.S. consulates early in my tenure and meet with local officials; given that many powers in Germany are held at the local level. Beyond senior government officials, I will make sure to engage with other political, economic, and cultural leaders throughout Germany and ensure the team at U.S. Mission Germany does so as well at appropriate levels. I will convey U.S. positions on key issues such as Ukraine/Russia, Nord Stream 2, and China and will listen carefully to what my German counterparts have to say so we can build an even stronger partnership.*

*Question.* What challenges do you anticipate you will face with the new government?

*Answer.* I welcome the new coalition’s pro-Transatlantic approach to foreign policy and, if confirmed, will cooperate closely with Chancellor Scholz’s new government. I understand the United States worked closely and productively with the new chancellor in his previous role as vice chancellor and finance minister. Because our two countries are such deep and longstanding friends and democracies, we will continue to work together across different administrations led by different parties—in both our countries. We have major immediate challenges to tackle together, including climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, countering Russian aggression, and calling out PRC human rights violations and economic coercion.

*Question.* What are the forefront issues you plan to address when you arrive at post?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my first priority is the safety and security of my staff and U.S. citizens overseas, and to carry out the policies of the U.S. Government. Externally, Germany and the United States face myriad challenges, on which I will start to work immediately. This includes combatting the COVID-19 pandemic, stepping up our ambition on climate change, and coordinating united responses to Russia and China—including calling out their human rights abuses, economic coercion, corrupt acts, and threats to European security.

*Question.* U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Germany?

*Answer.* Strong morale is critical to advancing U.S. policy priorities. Unfortunately, the pandemic and reports of anomalous health incidents have challenged that morale. If confirmed, I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure

we maintain an atmosphere where our staff feels safe, heard, and comfortable bringing serious issues to the leadership's attention. I will promptly conduct personal outreach to staff, promote training and professional development, and offer Mission and Department resources. Through clear and open communication, and practicing an open-door policy, I will ensure my team knows their safety and security are my highest priority.

*Question.* U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID. How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Germany?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to build and preserve morale by supporting my team, maintaining open lines of communication, and leading by example. As a strong believer in an open-door policy, I will make myself accessible to my staff, and I will lead and participate in community-building initiatives. I will treat my team with respect and professionalism and give them the tools they need to succeed. I believe all members of Mission Germany are one talented, hard-working, and dedicated team working for the success of the U.S.-Germany relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people. If confirmed, I will strive to inspire my team through clear and empathetic leadership, support, and communication.

*Question.* U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID. How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Germany?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to establish a strong team with a clear understanding of our goals and objectives, maintain open and transparent communications through broad information sharing, and prioritize the safety of the Mission community—both American and local staff. I will treat the team with respect and professionalism and give them the tools to succeed. I believe all members of Mission Germany are one talented, hard-working, and dedicated team working for the success of the U.S.-Germany relationship and the interests of the United States and the American people. If confirmed, I will strive to inspire my team through clear and empathetic leadership, support, and communication.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

Answer. I have a collaborative and responsive management style. I believe in leading by example, sharing information, empowering my team, keeping an open mind to fresh ideas, and providing clear guidance and timely decisions. I regularly engage with members of my team and seek to create a space for open dialogue and diversity of thought.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

Answer. As I understand it, the State Department continuously reviews its priorities, organization, and staffing relevant to the needs of each mission. If confirmed, I will ensure that we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities. Although I will advocate for critical resources necessary for carrying out our team's mission, I will also always take with the utmost seriousness my responsibility to be a judicious steward of public funds.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire Mission Germany team and to establish a coordination plan with the various sections and agencies. I will strive to create opportunities for regular engagements with the Mission community, ensuring I stay aware of community concerns and the state of morale.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

Answer. Absolutely not. It is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private. Indeed, it is totally counterproductive to our mission and it runs counter to my core values of mutual honor and respect.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will strive to establish a strong, positive, and supportive relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission, one in which we are each other's trusted partners, confidantes, and alter egos in successfully managing and leading the Mission.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to having a close working relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). I look forward to the DCM being fully engaged and informed on all aspects of policy and Mission management. I would be honored to work with and learn from the DCM, an accomplished career diplomat who has successfully led the Mission as Charge d'Affaires since the departure of the previous ambassador.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens. If confirmed, will you encourage Mission Germany diplomats to engage in-person with the German people outside of U.S. Embassies and consulates?

*Answer.* Yes. I understand and greatly appreciate that U.S. diplomats, including those working at Mission Germany, have done a remarkable job to get outside our Embassy and consulate walls and advance U.S. objectives to accomplish our Mission by meeting local actors in diverse settings and environments. If confirmed, I will encourage the Embassy team to maximize opportunities to advance our interests with all sectors of the German populace. I will also lead by example.

*Public Diplomacy: An Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts*

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in Germany? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* Public diplomacy is a vital part of our mission. Established in 1952, the U.S.-Germany Fulbright program is one of the oldest, largest, and most innovative Fulbright programs in the world. Germany is an intense, dynamic media environment; while television and major print dailies still hold the broadest audiences and influence, German media has continued its own shift toward digital. The Embassy and Consulates constantly interact with reporters, editors, and editorialists from outlets across the spectrum. The Mission's digital engagement efforts are evolving to continue engaging Germany's current and future opinion leaders, particularly the "digital native" generation who consume news online rather than from TV or print.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Unity of message is important in foreign policy, so when it comes to public messaging on policy issues, Mission Germany should and does depend on guidance from Main State. Using their understanding of the local context, the public diplomacy team in Mission Germany blends amplification of department or administration messaging with effectively tailoring Washington's messages to achieve the greatest impact with local audiences. If confirmed, I will continue to deploy public diplomacy staff and resources to analyze, engage, inform, and influence German audiences in support of U.S. foreign policy goals.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Yes. There is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Germany personnel?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and Mission Germany personnel.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

Answer. I have received an unclassified briefing on anomalous health incidents. If confirmed, I commit to receiving additional, classified briefings on the incidents before I depart for my post.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other Embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I will maintain detailed records of the incident and share it with the State Department and others to contribute to the investigation.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

Answer. If confirmed, I will take every measure to keep our staff safe and secure and would take any report of an anomalous health incident very seriously. I will do my best to ensure those affected receive the attention they deserve, that incidents are investigated fully, and that we work with the appropriate offices and agencies to ensure required reporting, investigation, potential countermeasures, and provision of medical care. I will also openly share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and the Mission community.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DR. AMY GUTMANN BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* I am encouraged by recent statements from the new German Government indicating it will reconsider the EU-China Investment Treaty, a recognition of the growing strategic rivalry with China. How can the United States build on our growing consensus with the Government of Germany about the threat that China poses to international security and stability?

Answer. If confirmed, among my highest priorities will be working to counter threats to our international security and stability. Specifically, I will work closely with Germany to rise to threats and challenges posed by the PRC. We also share a positive vision for this vital region. Germany's 2020 Indo-Pacific strategy outlines plans to expand defense cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners and calls for more economic transparency, sustainability, and fair competition. As the United States finalizes our own national Indo-Pacific Strategy, we will seek to bolster the United States' and Germany's strategic and security ties with Indo-Pacific partners; diversify and strengthen our economic ties with the region; and jointly tackle global challenges like climate change and protecting human rights.

*Question.* If confirmed, what steps would you take to coordinate with Germany on countering Chinese aggression in Germany and Europe more broadly?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with German officials and civil society to deepen U.S.-German cooperation on addressing China's problematic influence in Europe. I will advocate for the importance of a strong and unified position in countering Chinese aggressive actions. Germany played a leading role in shaping a more assertive China policy in the EU and supports the Trade and Technology Council, and the U.S.-EU Dialogue on China framework. Germany pushed for an EU-level investment-screening mechanism and has increasingly countered the threats the PRC's aggressive actions pose to the rules-based international order. Germany's 2022 G7 presidency will be another opportunity to strengthen our cooperation on shared PRC-related concerns.

*Question.* In light of the growing threats from Russia and Belarus in the region, how would you characterize U.S.-German military engagement and cooperation?

Answer. Germany is a staunch NATO ally and host to the largest number of U.S. forces permanently based in Europe. As you are aware, on February 19 President Biden ended the active-duty force cap of 25,000 U.S. troops in Germany. The cooperation between our military authorities is close at every level. The United States, Germany, and all NATO Allies are discussing ongoing concerns about Russia's actions in and around Ukraine, and the evolving situation in Belarus. Allies have delivered a unified message, including as recently as December 16 with a public statement on Russian actions and proposals.

*Question.* Germany has reportedly blocked some Ukrainian requests to NATO for defensive weapons systems, fearing Russia may view it as a provocation. Germany's insistence on continuing with Nordstream 2 also undermined Ukraine's security, and Ukraine now views Germany's commitment to Ukraine territorial integrity with suspicion. How do you assess Germany's relationship with Russia?

Answer. Germany is a vital Ally in deterring Russian aggression. The foreign minister warned Russia of serious economic and political consequences for any further violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. Germany is concerned certain military support for Ukraine could provoke Russia, and seeks to tamp Russian aggression through the Normandy Format. Despite economic ties to Russia (including Nord Stream 2), Germany strongly condemns Russia's human rights abuses. Given Russia's aggressive actions and threats - including amassing troops at the Ukraine border - Germany's demonstrated willingness to take a strong economic and political stance against Russia is significant and critically important.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your message to the Government of Germany regarding Ukraine's territorial integrity and recent Russian provocations?

Answer. To deter Russia from taking further aggressive moves against Ukraine, our support for Ukraine's territorial integrity must be strong and steadfast. Our actions vis-à-vis Russia will be more forceful and effective if they include our European Allies. If confirmed, I will engage early and at high levels with the new German Government on Russia's troop buildup around Ukraine. I will coordinate closely across the United States Government to ensure we are sharing all appropriate information with Germany. I will work with senior U.S. and German officials as we develop plans to support Ukraine, engage in diplomacy with Russia and Ukraine to find achieve a peaceful resolution, and develop tough economic measures to deter Russian aggression.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO DR. AMY GUTMANN BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* If confirmed, you would be arriving at a delicate point in U.S.-German relations and in Germany's relations with its European neighbors. The German Government's position in favor of Putin's Nord Stream 2 pipeline has badly undermined its relations with European Union countries across the board, and especially to its east. This summer, the Biden administration decided to waive sanctions, administration officials said there was no reason to impose sanctions because there was no way to stop Nord Stream 2's completion. Sec. Blinken testified to Congress that it was a "fait accompli."

Recently, administration officials have completely flipped on their assessments. Recently, NSA Sullivan said that Nord Stream 2 was "leverage for the West, because if Putin wants to see gas flow through that pipeline, he may not want to take the risk of invading Ukraine." Sec. Blinken said on Sunday that Nord Stream 2 "doesn't have any gas flowing through it right now. it's a source of leverage on Russia because to the extent President Putin wants to see gas flowing through that pipeline. it's very unlikely or hard to see that happening if Russia has renewed its aggression on Ukraine."

- Do you assess that Nord Stream 2 can be prevented from coming online?

Answer. Nord Stream 2 is a bad deal for Germany and for Europe. Given that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline was over 90 percent complete when the Biden administration took office, the administration assessed it would not be possible to stop its physical construction. As I understand, the German national regulatory authority must still certify the Nord Stream 2 pipeline before it can achieve full operation. If confirmed, I will work hard to reduce the risks posed by Nord Stream 2 to European energy security and to ensure Germany fully implements the July 21 joint





**Part 2—Section 117 of the Higher Education Act Public Records,  
University of Pennsylvania Foreign Funding Disclosure Reports**

**Data Sources: Foreign Gifts and Contracts Reporting System (new data) and  
Postsecondary Education Participants System (legacy data)**

**Date Range: University of Pennsylvania public records  
(January 1, 2020–October 5, 2021)**

Amount	Receipt Date	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Restricted Transaction Description	Institution Owned By Foreign Source	Legacy Data
\$2,000,000	6/23/2020				No	No
\$500,000.00	3/30/2020				No	No
\$2,500,000	6/22/2020				No	No
\$499,977.00	6/23/2020				No	No
\$250,000.00	6/17/2020				No	No
\$125,000.00	6/22/2020				No	No
\$125,000.00	6/23/2020				No	No
\$125,000.00	6/24/2020				No	No
\$125,000.00	6/25/2020				No	No
\$250,000.00	6/29/2020				No	No
\$350,000.00	11/24/2020				No	No
\$350,000.00	8/28/2020				No	No
\$500,000.00	5/6/2021				No	No
\$10,000.00	6/29/2021				No	No
\$250,000	3/30/2021				No	No
\$1,000,000	5/20/2021				No	No
\$40,386.08		8/1/2020	8/31/2020		No	No
\$41,083.00		9/1/2020	9/1/2020		No	No
\$41,626.76		10/1/2020	10/31/2020		No	No
\$42,320.32		11/1/2020	11/1/2020	*	No	No
\$42,773.08		12/1/2020	12/31/2020	**	No	No
\$43,196.72		1/1/2021	1/31/2021		No	No
\$43,411.20		2/1/2021	2/28/2021		No	No
\$43,101.52		3/1/2021	3/31/2021		No	No
\$42,712.88		4/1/2021	4/1/2021		No	No
\$43,589.00		5/1/2021	5/31/2021		No	No
\$43,795.92		6/1/2021	6/1/2021		No	No
\$45,596.10		11/1/2020	11/30/2020		No	No



**Part 2—Section 117 of the Higher Education Act Public Records,  
University of Pennsylvania Foreign Funding Disclosure  
Reports—Continued**

**Data Sources: Foreign Gifts and Contracts Reporting System (new data) and  
Postsecondary Education Participants System (legacy data)**

**Date Range: University of Pennsylvania public records  
(January 1, 2020–October 5, 2021)**

Amount	Receipt Date	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Restricted Transaction Description	Institution Owned By Foreign Source	Legacy Data
\$45,828.25		12/1/2020	12/31/2020		No	No
\$46,265.70		1/1/2021	1/31/2021		No	No
\$46,239.90		2/1/2021	2/28/2021		No	No
\$46,070.40		3/1/2021	3/31/2021		No	No
\$46,220.70		4/1/2021	4/30/2021		No	No
\$46,597.80		5/1/2021	5/31/2021		No	No
\$46,386.90		6/1/2021	6/30/2021		No	No

\* Supports research of type 2 diabetes in the Perelman School of Medicine

\*\* Supports the development of the Artificial Intelligence Program at the Wharton School

## University of Pennsylvania Donations and Contracts— Partial List of Entities and Relevancy

- State Administration of Foreign Experts: During its operation, this group was responsible for recruiting foreign talent to the People's Republic of China, including in scientific and technological fields. It has since been eliminated and its duties absorbed by China's Ministry of Science and Technology.
- Shanghai Institute of International Studies: This organization is a government-affiliated think tank.
- Bank of Communications: This company is a bank with significant state investment. According to its website, major shareholders include China's National Social Security Fund (overseen by a government agency that reports to the State Council of the People's Republic of China), and China SAFE Investment Ltd. (the Hong Kong branch of China's sovereign wealth fund).
- China Construction Bank Corporation: This company is a state-owned bank.
- China Everbright Group: This company is a state-owned financial conglomerate. Its major shareholders include state-owned sovereign wealth fund subsidiary Central Huijin Investment Ltd. and China's Ministry of Finance.
- China Merchants Bank: This bank is a subsidiary of China Merchants Group, a state-owned firm under the direct supervision of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC).
- Guanghua School of Management: This is a school in a state educational institution (Beijing University) under the administration of the Ministry of Education. The leadership of the school includes a Party Secretary and two Deputy Party Secretaries.
- Shanghai Advanced Institute of Finance: This institute resides within Shanghai Jiao Tong University. The dean of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania sits on the board, alongside six Chinese government officials. The Chairman of the Board is the Vice Mayor of Shanghai. The institute's governance structure includes a Party Secretary. Shanghai Jiao Tong University itself is administered by China's Ministry of Education and the State Administration for Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense.
- SAIC Motor HK Investment Limited / Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation: This is a state-owned automotive enterprise. The majority of the members of the board of directors, the board of supervisors, and leadership are members of the Chinese Communist Party. This fact is advertised prominently on the company's website.
- Zhejiang University: This is a state university under the administration of the Ministry of Education. Its leadership includes a Party Secretary and a committee for the Vice Secretary of the Party.

- Beijing Longfor Properties Co., Ltd.: There is evidence of state ties by senior executives of this company.
- China Minsheng Banking Co., Ltd.: This is a mixed ownership bank with evidence of state-tied shareholding. Various senior executives are members of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, All China Youth Federation, All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, and other groups directed by the Chinese Communist Party. The Vice Chairman of the Board of Supervisors formerly was employed by the United Front Department of the CPC Central Committee.
- Industrial Bank Co., Ltd.: This bank has significant ties to the government of Fujian Province.
- Ping An Bank Co., Ltd.: This is a state tied company. The second largest investor is the Shenzhen municipal government through its investment arm, and the third largest shareholder is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Chinese government's sovereign investment fund. Its fifth largest shareholder is a state finance firm.
- China Zheshang Bank Co., Ltd.: This is a state tied company. The two largest shareholders are state-owned asset supervision and management commissions. Senior executives have held various positions within the Chinese Communist Party.

University of Pennsylvania  
Section 117 Reporting Year 2020—page 1 of 2

Year Reported	Gift/Contract	Donor/Partner	Address	Amount	Purpose
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Chenwei Gu (Mr.)	1 Long Dong Avenue, Tomson Golf Villas Unit #511, Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$100,000.00	Gu Analytics Fund
2020	Gift	Ge Li, Ph.D.	Pudong New Area, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$25,000.00	Annual Fund
2020	Gift	Ge Li, Ph.D.	House 185, No. 1883 Nong, Hua Mu Road, Regency Park, Pudong District, 201204 Shanghai, China	\$1,000,000.00	Penn Wharton China Center
2020	Gift	Hua Medicine	House 185, No. 1883 Nong, Hua Mu Road, Regency Park, Pudong District, 201204 Shanghai, China	\$1,000,000.00	Wharton Annual Fund
2020	Gift	Hua Medicine	c/o Li Chen, 275 Ai Di Sheng Road, Pudong, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$250,000.00	Diabetes Research
2020	Gift	Hua Medicine	c/o Li Chen, 275 Ai Di Sheng Road, Pudong, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$250,000.00	Diabetes Research
2020	Gift	Qun Wu (Mr.)	Jiangsu Yuyue Medical Equipment & Supply Co., Ltd, No. 2, Zhenxin Rd, Yunyang Ind. Park, Danyang City, 212300 Hainan, China	\$200,000.00	MBA Fellowship
2020	Gift	Qun Wu (Mr.)	Jiangsu Yuyue Medical Equipment & Supply Co., Ltd, No. 2, Zhenxin Rd, Yunyang Ind. Park, Danyang City, 212300 Hainan, China	\$200,000.00	Wharton Annual Fund
2020	Gift	Sylvia Chu (Ms.)	Hopson Development Holdings Limited, 23 West Dawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100022 Beijing, China	\$99,977.00	Wharton Academic Research Building Fund
2020	Gift	Sylvia Chu (Ms.)	Hopson Development Holdings Limited, 23 West Dawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100022 Beijing, China	\$1,250,000.00	Dinan Hall - Wharton
2020	Gift	Sylvia Chu (Ms.)	Hopson Development Holdings Limited, 23 West Dawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100022 Beijing, China	\$750,000.00	Graduate Student Financial Aid
2020	Gift	Sylvia Chu (Ms.)	Hopson Development Holdings Limited, 23 West Dawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100022 Beijing, China	\$500,000.00	Wharton Annual Fund

University of Pennsylvania  
Section 117 Reporting Year 2020—page 2 of 2

Year Reported	Gift/Contract	Donor/Partner	Address	Amount	Purpose
2020	Gift	Yun Wang (Mr.)	Room 1702, Building 3, 258 Puming Road, Pudong New Area, 200120 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Wharton Building Fund
2020	Gift	Yun Wang (Mr.)	Room 1702, Building 3, 258 Puming Road, Pudong New Area, 200120 Shanghai, China	\$125,000.00	Yun Wang and Beibei Jiang Presidential Professorship
2020	Gift	Yun Wang (Mr.)	Room 1702, Building 3, 258 Puming Road, Pudong New Area, 200120 Shanghai, China	\$100,000.00	Yun Wang and Beibei Jiang Presidential Professorship
2020	Gift	Yun Wang (Mr.)	Room 1702, Building 3, 258 Puming Road, Pudong New Area, 200120 Shanghai, China	\$175,000.00	Wharton Building Fund
2020	Gift	Yun Wang (Mr.)	Room 1702, Building 3, 258 Puming Road, Pudong New Area, 200120 Shanghai, China	\$175,000.00	Yun Wang and Beibei Jiang Presidential Professorship
			<b>TOTAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$7,199,977.00</b>	
2020	Contract	E-House (China) Holdings Unlimited	17/F, East Building, Investment Promotion Bureau Plaza, No.333, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$1,206,119.92	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	E-House (China) Holdings Unlimited	17/F, East Building, Investment Promotion Bureau Plaza, No.333, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$1,125,060.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	E-House (China) Holdings Unlimited	17/F, East Building, Investment Promotion Bureau Plaza, No.333, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$257,500.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	E-House (China) Holdings Unlimited	17/F, East Building, Investment Promotion Bureau Plaza, No.333, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$217,500.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	E-House (China) Holdings Unlimited	17/F, East Building, Investment Promotion Bureau Plaza, No.333, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$80,000.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Guangzhou R&F Properties Co., Ltd.	45-54 Floors, Full Center No. 10, Huaxia Road Zhujiang New City, Tian, Guangzhou, China	\$1,163,693.40	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Nanyang Technological University	22 Hankou Road, 210093 Nanjing, China	\$44,000.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Shanghai Advanced Institute of Finance	211 West Huaihai Road, Shanghai, 200030 Shanghai, China	\$1,820,000.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Shanghai Advanced Institute of Finance (SAIF)	211 West Huaihai Road, Shanghai, 200030 Shanghai, China	\$358,323.23	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Shanghai Advanced Institute of Finance (SAIF)	211 West Huaihai Road, Shanghai, 200030 Shanghai, China	\$128,495.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation	No. 489, Weihai Road, Jing An District, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$43,730.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation	No. 489, Weihai Road, Jing An District, 200041 Shanghai, China	\$233,230.00	Wharton Executive Education
2020	Contract	Vipshop Co., Ltd.	Fengjill Dai, No.20 Huaihai Street, Lwan District, Guangzhou, Guangdong, China	\$191,567.90	Wharton Executive Education
			<b>TOTAL CONTRACTS</b>	<b>\$7,468,619.45</b>	

University of Pennsylvania  
Section 117 Reporting Year 2021—page 1 of 2

Year Reported	Gift/Contract	Donor/Partner	Address	Amount	Purpose
2021	Gift	Hua Medicine	c/o Li Chen, 275 Ai Di Sheng Road, Pudong, 201203 Shanghai, China	\$250,000.00	Diabetes Research
2021	Gift	Qun Wu (Mr.)	Jiangsu Yuyue Medical Equipment & Supply Co., Ltd., No. 2, Zhenxin Rd, Yuyang Ind. Park, Danyang City, 212300 Hainan, China	\$100,000.00	Wharton Academic Research Building Fund
2021	Gift	Qun Wu (Mr.)	Jiangsu Yuyue Medical Equipment & Supply Co., Ltd., No. 2, Zhenxin Rd, Yuyang Ind. Park, Danyang City, 212300 Hainan, China	\$200,000.00	MBA Fellowships
2021	Gift	Qun Wu (Mr.)	Jiangsu Yuyue Medical Equipment & Supply Co., Ltd., No. 2, Zhenxin Rd, Yuyang Ind. Park, Danyang City, 212300 Hainan, China	\$200,000.00	Wharton Annual Fund
2021	Gift	Tao Zhang (Mr.)	18 Nassim Hill, #0303, Singapore, 259485, Singapore	\$1,000,000.00	Wharton Data Analytics Research Initiative
2021	Gift	Tao Zhang (Mr.)	18 Nassim Hill, #0303, Singapore, 259485, Singapore	\$10,000.00	Wharton Annual Fund
			<b>TOTAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$1,760,000.00</b>	
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$40,386.08	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$41,083.00	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$41,626.76	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$42,320.32	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$42,773.08	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$43,196.72	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$43,411.20	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$43,101.52	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$42,712.88	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$43,589.00	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shanghai Yanchong Information Technology Co., Ltd.	1618 Yishang Road, Building A, Suite 310, Shanghai, China	\$43,795.92	Wharton Executive Education

**University of Pennsylvania  
Section 117 Reporting Year 2021—page 2 of 2**

Year Reported	Gift/Contract	Donor/Partner	Address	Amount	Purpose
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$45,596.10	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$45,828.30	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$46,265.70	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$46,239.90	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$46,070.40	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$46,220.70	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$46,597.80	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Shenzhen Guoshengyuan Trading Co., Ltd.	Room 1708, 17th Floor, Kaiyuan Building, 7001 North Ring Road, Futian District, Shenzhen, China	\$46,386.90	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Zhongcai Longma (Beijing) Education Consulting Co., Ltd.	Building 2, No.A12, Xidawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100012 Beijing, China	\$4,542.90	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Zhongcai Longma (Beijing) Education Consulting Co., Ltd.	Building 2, No.A12, Xidawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100012 Beijing, China	\$3,689.59	Wharton Executive Education
2021	Contract	Zhongcai Longma (Beijing) Education Consulting Co., Ltd.	Building 2, No.A12, Xidawang Road, Chaoyang District, 100012 Beijing, China	\$554,157.78	Wharton Executive Education
<b>TOTAL CONTRACTS</b>				<b>\$1,399,592.55</b>	

## NOMINATIONS

---

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2021 p.m.**

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:32 p.m., in Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin presiding.

Present: Senators Cardin [presiding], Shaheen, Coons, Kaine, Booker, Schatz, Van Hollen, Johnson, Portman, Young, and Barraso.

Also Present: Senators Warner and Blunt.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

Senator CARDIN. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We have eight extraordinary nominees that are before us today in two panels, and I want to thank Senator Portman for his willingness to help us on this hearing so that we could accommodate these hearings before the end of the year.

Thank you, Senator Portman, for doing this. Both of us have decided to defer our rather lengthy opening statements so that we can hear first from our colleagues that are here that I understand have pressing appointments.

Let me first, if I might, recognize Senator Warner, for an introduction.

### **STATEMENT OF HON. MARK R. WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Portman. It is great to see you. Thank you for the courtesy. We are in the middle of an intel session where we have got a—we are doing a big briefing on China to a series of classified business leaders. I am very, very appreciative.

This is a great panel. I am here to introduce my dear friend, Fabiana Jorge, but—and I hope that Chris Coons will not screw up the introduction of our former colleague, Joe Donnelly.

[Laughter.]

Senator WARNER. The balance of this panel, I know Leopoldo, who will—if Fabiana is confirmed, Fabiana will work with Leopoldo, who is up as director of the Inter-American Development Bank, is a Virginian and I want to give his—my hearty endorsement to him as well.



Fabiana and I go back a long way, 33 years. She and her husband—I knew her husband, Doug Sosnik, before, and while I cannot completely claim that I was the matchmaker of their wedding, I was the person that tried to convince Doug repeatedly to go visit this wonderful country, Argentina, where I lived as an exchange student, and through that visitation, Doug and Fabiana developed a relationship, a marriage. I was proud to be at their marriage in Argentina, and I cannot think of many people I would break away from intel meeting to come and kind of put my two cents in.

I will also add you are going to hear as well, hopefully, later in the second panel from Roy Blunt. This kind of bipartisan affection for Fabiana Jorge is universal for everyone who knows her. She has been in this country 32 years. She is an expert not only on Latin America, she is an expert on issues around, particularly, pharmaceuticals and drugs and flow of trade between Latin America and our country.

I can speak enormously of her intellect, her values, her, in many ways, kind of classic American immigrant story as someone who is coming over to our country—citizen—and wants to give back and wants to make a contribution.

I cannot think of anyone that would be better suited to be the associate director at the Inter-American Development Bank than Fabiana Jorge and I will ask my colleagues to give her favorable consideration when she is up in the second panel, and I very much appreciate the committee's courtesy letting me even jump in front of my friend, Chris Coons.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Warner. We appreciate those comments. It is always nice to have you before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Senator Coons will get all the time before our committee as a member of our committee, and we all had to fight as to who was going to introduce Senator Donnelly, and Senator Coons won out. So Senator Coons?

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE**

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Cardin. Thank you, Senator Portman. I am glad I won this fight.

This is a wonderful panel with another group of skilled and talented nominees by this administration, all of whom I support, a number of whom I have worked with previously and know and look forward to supporting in their next chapter in their service.

But I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to introduce today my friend and our former colleague here in the Senate, Joe Donnelly of Indiana. Joe was a born in New York but had the wisdom to go to the University of Notre Dame in South Bend. Once there, he never left. He met and married his sweetheart, Jill. The two of them went on to become Double Domers and lifetime members of the Notre Dame family.

Joe got his law degree from the University of Notre Dame, stayed and practiced in the South Bend area. A successful lawyer and businessman, he ran for and won Indiana's Second District congressional seat, represented that seat from 2007 to 2013.

A colleague of ours here in the United States Senate from 2013 to 2019, Joe served on the Armed Services, Banking, and Agriculture Committees. But, frankly, more importantly, in my view, was the heart and the attitude that Joe brought to his service here. He was recognized by the Center named for Richard Lugar, former Senator from Indiana, as one of the most bipartisan Senators. He worked hard to bring us together, Democrats and Republicans, in order to represent Hoosiers well.

He is a proud father of Molly and Joe, Jr., a dedicated and loyal member of his community. I recently had the blessing of an opportunity to be with him at a 9/11 commemorative in his home community, and to see and hear the ways in which he was greeted and celebrated and recognized by folks he had previously represented was a reminder that Joe has never forgotten where he is from.

I will close by saying this. We send our very best around the world as diplomats, and when we send someone from the world of elected politics sometimes there is a question about whether they also meet that test of being the best to represent us.

Joe is going to represent us. Senator Donnelly is going to represent us at the Holy See. And like another friend of mine, a former colleague, former Senator who bears the same name, Joe Donnelly is someone who has lived his faith. As a child, when he was 10 his mother passed and his father and his family leaned hard on their faith and wrapped their arms around each other to get through that toughest of times.

And I have known Joe Donnelly to be a man who has been inspired by his faith to meet the needs of the world and his neighbors in the moment and who has been sustained by his faith in moments of both joy and challenge.

I think we will send our very best to the Holy See to represent us at the Vatican when we confirm Senator Joe Donnelly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Coons. We appreciate that introduction very much.

We understand that Senator Kaine, who will be here shortly, wants to do an introduction for Ms. Taylor and Mr. Martinez. We will have those introductions when Senator Kaine is here.

Let me, first, welcome all of our nominees. We thank you very much for your willingness to serve our country. We know this is a sacrifice for public service not only for yourself but also for your families. We thank you very much for your willingness to serve.

We have two panels because of the numbers today. We have two nominees for very important ambassadorships in our country, Ambassador Hill for the Republic of Serbia. Serbia is a critical nation in a very difficult part of the world. We know in the Balkans today we still have unfinished business in regards to the full integration of these countries.

Serbia has been on an inconsistent path for integration into Europe and still represents a concern as to what is going to happen in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the Republic of Srpska looking to Serbia as a support group to prevent the full reforms necessary for the stability in Bosnia.

We will be interested in learning Ambassador Hill's priorities and how we can improve our relationship with Serbia but also improve the stability of that region.

In regards to the Holy See, we, certainly, welcome Senator Donnelly, our former colleague here. The Holy See is a partner for the United States in promoting universal values and human rights, and I will be interested as to how you see our mission at the Holy See reinforcing our concerns about challenges that we see around the world on human rights and dealing with poverty issues.

We have critical nominees in regards to other ambassadorships. We have the—our representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council with the position of Ambassador. We welcome Michèle Taylor to our committee.

The Human Rights Council has received a great deal of attention in this Congress. We recognize that there have been different views among administrations as to the U.S. participation in the Human Rights Council because of its outrageous discrimination against the State of Israel and the way that it has highlighted that country.

We recognize, though, that there are many trouble spots around the world and we would welcome your thoughts as to how the Human Rights Council can deal with the human rights crises that we see in so many countries around the world from Yemen to Ethiopia to Burma to China. Clearly, there is a role for U.S. leadership in the United Nations Human Rights Council.

And then, lastly, on the first panel we have Alice Albright, who has been nominated as the Chief Executive Officer to the Millennium Challenge Corporation, one of our most important tools to deal with countries that share our values but need help in regards to transformational economic programs. So we look forward to your leadership and your thoughts as to how we can better utilize that particular tool.

On our second panel, and I will introduce our second panel a little bit later, we have four nominees that are all engaged in regards to our economic programs: the Director of the Trade and Development Bank, Director of the African Development Bank, Executive Director of International American Development Bank, and alternative Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

With the second panel we will be concentrating on the economic tools that we have available for a more prosperous and stable world.

Before turning to our nominees, let me first turn to our ranking member, Senator Portman.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROB PORTMAN,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO**

Senator PORTMAN. Great. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the nominees who are before us today for your willingness to step forward and serve your country, many of you again.

It is a diverse panel. I look forward to diving into some of the issues that your new roles might present.

Senator Donnelly, welcome back to the Senate. It was great speaking with you last week. I cannot improve upon the introduc-

tion you just received from Senator Warner so I will leave it at that.

Ms. Albright, as we discussed last week, I am a strong supporter of MCC—the Millennium Challenge Corporation. I like what they do in terms of relying on a rigorous analytical approach to aid, ensuring that it is smart development and that it is metrics based and focused on getting the best results for both the partner country and U.S. taxpayers. I look forward to talking about that.

Ambassador Hill, good to see you. You are no stranger to this committee, this time looking to reenter diplomatic service in another global hotspot, I see.

We have worked together in the past. I have enjoyed that. As I recall, we first met in Poland about 15 years ago at the Ambassador's residence this time of year. I recall your Christmas tree up in the residence.

I appreciate your service as Ambassador to South Korea and, of course, as Assistant Secretary for East Asia at State. I particularly appreciate the help you gave me during a very difficult time when a young man, Otto Warmbier, from my hometown was wrongly detained and horribly treated by North Korea.

Ms. Taylor, thank you and your family for your willingness to serve. I will say up front that I am very concerned about the bias I see at the U.N. Human Rights Council. My colleague, Senator Cardin, just mentioned this.

That body, in my view, has consistently discriminated against our ally, Israel, and I want to talk to you about that and look forward to your thoughts on how you would use your voice, if confirmed, to speak out against that kind of double standard and discrimination.

With that, again, thanking you for your willingness to step forward to serve our country, I turn it back to you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Portman.

We will now hear from our four nominees. Let me introduce them and they will be asked to give opening statements. Try to do it within five minutes. Your full statements will be made part of our record.

Ambassador Christopher Hill is a career member of the Foreign Service. Before he retired in 2010, Ambassador Hill served as U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Korea, Poland, and Macedonia, as well as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, and headed the U.S. delegation to the Six Party Talks on North Korea.

For 10 years, Ambassador Hill was dean of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies and then chief adviser to the Chancellor for Global Engagement and a professor of the practice of diplomacy at the University of Denver. He has given his career to foreign service.

Michèle Taylor is a board member of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights and served as its Power to Inspire Chair and Development Chair. Ms. Taylor has been an active member of the Committee on State Sponsored Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial, a member of the Committee on Conscience, and a member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Council. Ms. Taylor earned her BA from Miles College and her MA from Boston University.

Ms. Alice Albright is the chief executive officer of the Global Partnership for Education's secretariat and served in the Obama administration from 2009 to 2013 as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

Prior to this, Ms. Albright was the chief financial investment officer at the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization and worked as a banker focusing on emergency markets.

At the Global Office for Vaccine Immunization, Ms. Albright led the innovative finance program enhancing the delivery and financing of vaccines to poor countries around the world.

Then, lastly, our former colleague, Senator Joe Donnelly, I am pleased to see you back before the United States Senate. Mr. Donnelly served as a United States Senator from Indiana from 2013 to 2019, was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 2007 to 2013 representing Indiana's Second Congressional District.

He was a member of the Afghanistan Study Group and has been a professor at the University of Notre Dame and very ably introduced by our colleague, Senator Coons.

With that, we will hear from Ambassador Hill.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER R. HILL OF RHODE ISLAND, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

Ambassador HILL. Thank you very much, Ranking Member Portman, for those kind remarks about our background, and with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce my wife, who is sitting behind me, Julie Hill, here who is a retired school teacher from Florida.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia.

I am humbled by the trust President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me to represent the American people. I hope to earn your trust as well and, if confirmed, would work closely with you and with your staff to advance U.S. interests in Serbia.

Years ago, I began my Foreign Service career in Belgrade, and later, I participated in a process that culminated in peace talks in Senator Portman's home state of Ohio—that is, in peace talks in Dayton, Ohio—and those peace talks had ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I returned to the region as the U.S. Ambassador to Macedonia, took on additional responsibilities at the time as Special Envoy to the Kosovo crisis in 1998 and '99, and I have done my best to be well prepared to serve as the chief of mission in Serbia and to advance U.S. priorities there. I would be truly honored to serve as U.S. Ambassador in Serbia.

Serbia is a lynchpin for stability and progress in the Western Balkans. The United States, together with our European partners, continues to support Serbia's development as a modern, prosperous European country at peace with its neighbors.

Serbia's progress is integral to achieving U.S. strategic goals and revitalizing our European alliances, support democracy and the rule of law, promote economic cooperation, and address global and regional challenges. The United States remains committed to deepening our bilateral relationship with Serbia through further political, economic, and security cooperation.

As we celebrate—as our two countries celebrate 140 years of diplomatic relations, I look forward to strengthening people-to-people ties, working with youth and civil society, and sharing the American experience in Serbia.

If confirmed, I will lead a government wide effort to advance key U.S. priorities in Serbia. The United States supports Serbia's own stated strategic priority of accession to the European Union.

To this end, Belgrade must accelerate its serious reforms to meet EU standards and we look forward to the EU to recognize that progress has been made and reaffirm that membership is, indeed, possible. With U.S. technical support, Serbia has made significant steps, particularly economic and fiscal management. But, clearly, more needs to be done.

The United States continues to support Serbia's progress in other areas, including battling corruption, improving the rule of law, and strengthening democratic institutions.

If confirmed, I will encourage electoral transparency and fairness ahead of the April 2022 elections. I will try to reinforce the importance of media freedom and support the crucial role of civil society.

A diverse political landscape and a free and independent press are critical to Serbia's success as a European democracy. Most importantly, and as a prerequisite for eventual EU accession, Serbia must normalize its relationship with Kosovo.

The United States strongly supports the EU-facilitated dialogue as the best chance for both countries to resolve outstanding differences. As President Biden has stated, the U.S. believes mutual recognition is the best way to go forward.

Serbia's European potential and strength in its regional stability and security is vital. If confirmed, I will encourage Serbia to engage vigorously and urgently to find a way forward with its neighbor.

If confirmed, the safety and security of Americans and the U.S. mission personnel will be my top priority. I will continue our longstanding efforts to push for full investigation into the 1999 murder of the Bytyqi brothers, three American citizens executed while in Serbian police custody.

I am committed to pressing the Serbian Government to ensure that those involved are brought to justice regardless of rank or position.

I will work to invigorate Serbia's economic future by encouraging policies that bolster its international investment, climate, strengthen its infrastructure, improve its energy diversity, and, importantly, I will try to help Serbia build resilience to malign and external influences, including from Russia and China.

Serbia has enormous potential with an educated and talented workforce, and I think there is a large role for U.S.-based firms to play in Serbia. If confirmed, I will continue to support American companies exploring those opportunities.

Finally, if confirmed, I will build on the positive momentum of recent bilateral defense consultations, the first in five years to expand mutually beneficial defense cooperation.

Serbia is an important partner of the United States, particularly through its 15-year state partnership with the Ohio National Guard. While not a NATO member, Serbia is active in Partnership for Peace and a global security contributor to one—as one of Europe’s largest per capita troop-contributing countries.

It would be an honor to lead the U.S. mission in Belgrade and work with the Government and people in Serbia.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you and I do welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Hill follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER HILL

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Biden’s nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia. I am humbled by the trust President Biden and Secretary Blinken have placed in me to represent the American people. I hope to earn your trust as well, and if confirmed, would work closely with you to advance U.S. interests in Serbia.

Thank you for this opportunity to recognize my wife, Julie, who shares my excitement about the prospect of this assignment. Years ago, I began my foreign service career in Belgrade. Later, I participated in the process that culminated in Peace Talks in Dayton, Ohio, that ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I returned to the region as U.S. Ambassador to Macedonia and took on additional responsibilities as Special Envoy to the Kosovo Crisis in 1998–1999. I believe I am well prepared to serve as Chief of Mission in Serbia and advance U.S. priorities there. I would be truly honored to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Serbia.

Serbia is a linchpin for stability and progress in the Western Balkans. The United States, together with our European partners, continues to support Serbia’s development as a modern, prosperous, European country, at peace with its neighbors. Serbia’s progress is integral to achieving U.S. strategic goals to revitalize our European alliances, support democracy and the rule of law, promote economic cooperation, and address global and regional challenges. The United States remains committed to deepening our bilateral relationship with Serbia through further political, economic, and security cooperation. As we celebrate 140 years of diplomatic relations, I look forward to strengthening people-to-people ties, working with youth and civil society, and sharing the American experience with Serbia.

If confirmed, I will lead a government-wide effort to advance key U.S. priorities in Serbia. The United States supports Serbia’s own stated, strategic priority of EU accession. To this end, Belgrade must accelerate serious reforms to meet EU standards, and we look to the EU to recognize progress made and reaffirm that membership remains possible. With U.S. technical support, Serbia has made significant steps, particularly in economic and fiscal management.

The United States continues to support Serbia’s progress in other key areas, including fighting corruption, improving the rule of law, and strengthening democratic institutions. If confirmed, I will encourage electoral transparency and fairness ahead of April 2022 elections, reinforce the importance of media freedom, and vocally support the crucial role of civil society. A diverse political landscape and a free and independent press are critical to Serbia’s success as a European democracy.

Most importantly—and a prerequisite for eventual EU accession—Serbia must normalize its relationship with Kosovo. The United States strongly supports the EU-facilitated Dialogue as the best chance for both parties to resolve outstanding differences. As President Biden stated, the United States believes “mutual recognition” is the best way to unlock Serbia’s European potential and strengthen regional stability and security. If confirmed, I will encourage Serbia to engage seriously and urgently to reach a compromise.

If confirmed, the safety and security of Americans and U.S. Mission personnel would be my top priority. I will continue the push for a full investigation into the 1999 murder of the Bytyqi brothers, three American citizens executed while in Serbian police custody. I am committed to pressing the Serbian Government to ensure that those involved are brought to justice, regardless of rank or position.

I will work to invigorate Serbia's economic future by encouraging policies that bolster its international investment climate, strengthen its infrastructure, improve its energy diversity and security, and build resilience to malign external influence, including from Russia and China. Serbia has enormous potential, with an educated and talented workforce—U.S.-based firms have invested well over \$4 billion in Serbia in the past 20 years and employ around 20,000 people. If confirmed, I will continue to support American companies exploring opportunities in Serbia.

Finally, if confirmed, I will build on the positive momentum of recent bilateral defense consultations—the first in five years—to expand mutually beneficial defense cooperation. Serbia is an important security partner for the United States, particularly through its 15-year State Partnership with the Ohio National Guard. While not a NATO member, Serbia is active in the Partnership for Peace program and a global security contributor as one of Europe's largest per capita troop-contributing countries to peacekeeping operations in both EU and U.N. missions.

It would be an honor to lead the U.S. Mission in Belgrade and work with the Government and people of Serbia and our international partners on these priorities.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you. I welcome your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Ambassador Hill.  
We will now hear from Ms. Taylor.

**STATEMENT OF MICHELE TAYLOR OF GEORGIA, NOMINATED  
TO BE UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE U.N.  
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR  
DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE**

Ms. TAYLOR. Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Portman, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

My sincerest thanks in advance to Senator Kaine for what I know will be a kind introduction and, thank you, Senator Cardin, for making one yourself.

I am deeply honored to be here and grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence and support.

I would like to thank my family for their love, faith, and unwavering encouragement. My two children, Zach, who is with me today, and his partner, Raymond, and my daughter, Zoe, and her husband, Christian, are a constant source of inspiration.

Most importantly, I am thankful to my husband, Kenneth, who is also with me today, who lifts me up at every opportunity.

I am the proud daughter and granddaughter of Holocaust survivors. Today, December 14th, is the anniversary of the death of both my mother and grandmother, and I know that they and my grandfather would be so proud to see me appearing before you today.

Mr. Chairman, my family legacy is one of survival. I feel a responsibility to serve as a champion for everyone whose rights are threatened so that what happened to my mother's family does not happen to others.

I am proud of my Jewish identity, and the rise of global anti-semitism and anti-Israel bias have only made me more resolute to embrace it.

I am also grateful to my father, Nick Nichols, who, thankfully, is able to watch from California today, for raising me with the belief that my gender should in no way limit my opportunities or diminish my accomplishments. This helped shape my lifelong dedica-



tion to the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity and my belief in the power of partnership.

Public service is an honor and responsibility I have embraced throughout my life, including when I was appointed by President Obama to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council where I worked on genocide and atrocity prevention as a member of the Committee on Conscience.

As a board member for the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, I have brought my voice to today's human rights challenges, local, national, and global.

If confirmed, I would bring with me to the U.N. Human Rights Council my experience and a determination to defend the human rights of all individuals. I would take on this important role with my eyes wide open.

The Council is the most important multilateral venue designed to promote international human rights but its flaws and failings are real. Among those flaws is a persistent inexcusable bias against Israel, the only nation in the world assigned a permanent agenda item at the Council.

As long as it persists, I will take every opportunity to demand an end to the bias, to insist on the fair treatment of Israel, like any other country, and the elevation of genuine human rights challenges on the Council's agenda.

This includes tirelessly underscoring our objection to the open-ended Commission on Inquiry targeting Israel. The Council's membership is, clearly, part of the problem. Nations such as Venezuela with abysmal human rights records have no place on a council dedicated to promoting those rights and protecting those defending them. And in the absence of a U.S. presence on the Council, China has assumed an outsized voice, despite its own human rights record.

I understand the difficulty in reforming the Council's membership rules. But, if confirmed, I will lead an effort to encourage credible nations from all regions to step forward to serve on this body and deny those seats to human rights abusers.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, when Secretary of State Blinken announced the President's decision that the United States would, again, seek election to the Council, he laid out these very concerns.

He also underscored the very real importance and utility of a functional Human Rights Council, which, at its best, prompts investigation of abuses in places such as Syria and North Korea, which gives voice to those working against racism, intolerance, and religious persecution, and promotes concrete action to advance respect for the human rights of women, LGBTQI+ persons, and minorities.

I understand the skepticism of those who believe the United States should not legitimize this very imperfect body with its presence, and I know that, if confirmed, there will be struggles.

But I also know that conversations about global human rights are poorer without an American voice. Human rights defenders around the world are more vulnerable if the United States is not a present forceful leader in venues such as the Human Rights

Council, and I know from experience that more can be accomplished in active partnership than in principled absence.

The President and Secretary Blinken have placed human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy. If confirmed, I will be a relentless advocate for American interests at the Human Rights Council and in defense of the human rights that should be enjoyed by all.

Thank you. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Taylor follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHÈLE TAYLOR

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the United States Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council. Thank you also to Senator Kaine for his generous introduction. I am deeply honored to be here and grateful to the President and Secretary Blinken for their confidence and support.

I would like to thank my family for their love, faith, and unwavering encouragement. My two children and their partners, Zach and Raymond and Zoë and Christian, are a constant source of inspiration. Most importantly, I am thankful to my husband, Kenneth, who lifts me up at every opportunity. I am the proud daughter and granddaughter of Holocaust survivors and I know that my mother and her parents would be so proud to see me standing before you today.

Mr. Chairman, my family legacy is one of survival; I feel a responsibility to serve as a champion for everyone whose rights are threatened so that what happened to my mother's family does not happen to others. I am proud of my Jewish identity, and the rise of global antisemitism and anti-Israel bias have only made me more resolute to embrace it.

I am also grateful to my father, Nick Nichols, who is watching today, for raising me with the belief that my gender should in no way limit my opportunities or diminish my accomplishments. This helped shape my lifelong dedication to the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity and my belief in the power of partnership.

Public service is an honor and responsibility I have embraced throughout my life, including when I was appointed by President Obama to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, where I worked on genocide and atrocity prevention as a member of the Committee on Conscience. As a board member for the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, I have brought my voice to today's human rights challenges—local, national, and global.

If confirmed, I would bring with me to the U.N. Human Rights Council my experience and a determination to defend the human rights of all individuals. I would take on this important role with my eyes wide open. The Council is the most important multilateral venue designed to promote international human rights, but its flaws and failings are real. Among those flaws is a persistent, inexcusable bias against Israel—the only nation in the world assigned a permanent agenda item at the Council.

As long as it persists, I will take every opportunity to demand an end to this bias, to insist on the fair treatment of Israel like any other country, and the elevation of genuine human rights challenges on the Council's agenda. This includes tirelessly underscoring our objection to the open-ended Commission of Inquiry targeting Israel.

The Council's membership is clearly part of the problem. Nations such as Venezuela, with abysmal human rights records, have no place on a Council dedicated to promoting those rights and protecting those defending them. I understand the difficulty in reforming the Council's membership rules, but if confirmed I will lead an effort to encourage credible nations from all regions to step forward to serve on this body and deny those seats to human rights abusers.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of this committee: when Secretary of State Blinken announced the President's decision that the United States would seek election to the Council, he laid out these very concerns. He also underscored the very real importance and utility of a functional Human Rights Council, which at its best prompts investigation of abuses in places such as Syria and North Korea, which gives voice to those working against racism, intolerance, and religious persecution, and promotes concrete action to advance respect for the human rights of women, LGBTQI persons, and minorities.

I understand the skepticism of some who believe the United States should not legitimize this imperfect body with its presence, and I know that if confirmed there will be challenges.

But I also know that conversations about global human rights are poorer without an American voice. Human rights defenders around the world are more vulnerable if the United States is not a present, forceful leader in venues such as the Human Rights Council. And I know from experience that more can be accomplished in active partnership than in principled absence.

The President and Secretary Blinken have placed human rights at the center of U.S. Foreign Policy. If confirmed, I will be a relentless advocate for American interests at the Human Rights Council and in defense of the human rights that should be enjoyed by all.

Thank you. I welcome your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Ms. Taylor, for your comments.  
We will now hear from Ms. Albright.

**STATEMENT OF ALICE ALBRIGHT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION**

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, and members of the committee. I thank you so much for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am so deeply honored to have been nominated by President Biden to serve as the next Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation. If confirmed, I look forward to working with what appears to be a very talented and committed team at MCC to advance the delivery of the agency's mission to ensure that it is well positioned to address the challenges of our time.

I would like to commend the staff at MCC who have helped me to prepare for this hearing, as well as several of MCC's former CEOs who have generously offered their time and advice.

I would also like to thank the many Senators from this committee and their staffs with whom I have had a chance to meet prior to this hearing. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to staying in touch and working closely with you over the months and years ahead to ensure that you are kept abreast of MCC's progress in issues.

And, finally, I would like to thank my wonderful family and dear friends who are here today for all the—and online for all their support and encouragement over the many years.

And Mr. Chairman, if you will allow, I would like to introduce my wonderful older son, David, who is here representing our families.

I am deeply honored by the prospect of leading an innovative and effective agency that delivers on a singular mission, to reduce poverty through economic growth. MCC is focused on good governance and accountability as well as the agency's commitment to country ownership and institutional capacity building creates a more stable and secure world with more opportunities for inclusive economic growth both at home and abroad.

This is an exciting time for MCC as the agency approaches its 20th anniversary. MCC's selective evidence-based approach and partnership focus delivers durable impact in key sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, and water in well-governed low and lower middle income countries around the world.

With cost-effective projects and a dedicated staff of technical experts, MCC incentivizes partner governments to undertake significant reforms to create the right conditions to support sustained economic growth that endures long after MCC's investments are concluded.

I have spent my career in international finance and development. Early on, I was trained as a banker and worked in the emerging markets at a time when many regions were encountering seismic shifts in their access to finance.

I witnessed firsthand the impact the Latin American debt crisis had on the region, the opportunities that arose from the transition for South Africa to a post-apartheid economy, and the impact that the fall of the Iron Curtain had on Eastern European economies.

What I learned was that working hand in hand with governments and the private sector would make a difference in helping countries in those regions develop and evolve.

More recently, I have devoted 16 years to global development challenges. I have held leadership positions in two global public-private partnerships, one in global health and in my current position as the chief executive of the Global Partnership for Education where we work closely with the U.S. as the major donor. At GPE, we work to ensure that children in the poorest countries have access to a quality basic education.

I have also held a leadership position at the U.S. Export-Import Bank. I have worked closely with the U.S. and other donor and developing country governments, the private sector and foundations, civil society, and others to secure better outcomes and improved and healthier lives.

Over the years, I have visited dozens of countries and met with their leaders, health and education ministers, finance ministers, parliamentarians, health workers, teachers, to get a full understanding of priorities, implementation challenges, and what was happening on the ground.

It is this working in partnership that makes the difference in advancing development goals, and, if confirmed, how I hope to lead as the CEO of MCC.

MCC is a gem within the U.S. Government foreign assistance toolkit. If confirmed, it will be a true honor to join the team there and work with Congress and this committee over the years ahead.

I thank you so much for your consideration of my nomination and would be happy to answer any questions that you have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Albright follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALICE ALBRIGHT

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, members of the committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Biden to serve as the next Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with what appears to be a very talented and committed team at MCC to advance the delivery of the agency's mission and to ensure that it is well positioned to address the challenges of our times.

I would like to commend the staff at MCC who have helped me prepare for this hearing as well as several of MCC's former CEOs who have generously offered their time and advice.

I would also like to thank the many Senators from this committee and their staffs, with whom I have had a chance to meet prior to this hearing.

Should I be confirmed, I look forward to staying in touch and working closely with you over the months and years ahead to ensure that you are kept abreast of MCC's progress and issues.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and dear friends, many whom are here today, or online, for all of their support and encouragement over many years.

I am deeply honored by the prospect of leading an innovative and effective agency that delivers on its singular mission to reduce poverty through economic growth.

MCC's focus on good governance and accountability, as well as the agency's commitment to country ownership and institutional capacity building, creates a more stable, secure world with more opportunities for inclusive economic growth at home and abroad.

This is an exciting time for MCC as the agency approaches its 20th anniversary. MCC's selective, evidence-based approach and partnership focus delivers durable impact in key sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture and water in well-governed low, and lower-middle income countries around the world.

With cost-effective projects and a dedicated staff of technical experts, MCC incentivizes partner governments to undertake significant reforms to create the right conditions to support sustained economic growth that endures long after MCC's investments conclude.

I have spent my career in international finance and development. Early on, I was trained as a banker and worked in the emerging markets at a time when many regions were encountering seismic shifts in their access to finance. I witnessed first-hand the impact that the Latin American Debt Crisis had on the region, the opportunities that arose from the transition for South Africa to a post-apartheid economy and the impact that the fall of the Iron Curtain had on Eastern European economies. What I learned was that working hand in hand with governments and the private sector would make a difference in helping countries in those regions develop and evolve.

More recently, I have devoted 16 years to global development challenges. I have held leadership positions in two global public private partnerships, one in global health and in my current position as CEO of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), where we work closely with the U.S. as a major donor. At GPE, we work to ensure that children in the poorest countries have access to a quality basic education. I have also held a leadership position at the U.S. Export Import Bank.

I have worked closely with the U.S. and other donor and developing country governments, the private sector and foundations, and civil society to secure better outcomes, and improved and healthier lives.

Over the years, I have visited dozens of countries and met with their leaders, health and education ministers, finance ministers, parliamentarians, health workers, teachers, and beneficiaries to ensure a full understanding of priorities, implementation challenges, and what was happening on the ground. It is this working in partnership that makes the difference in advancing development goals and, if confirmed, how I hope to lead as the CEO of MCC.

MCC is a gem within the U.S. Government foreign assistance toolkit. If confirmed, it will be a true honor to join the team there and work with Congress and this committee over the years ahead.

I thank you for your consideration of my nomination and would be happy to answer any questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much, Ms. Albright.

We will now hear from Senator Donnelly.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH DONNELLY OF INDIANA, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE HOLY SEE**

Senator DONNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman—Senator Cardin—Ranking Member Senator Portman, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you. I am honored to have been nominated to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, and I thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

I want to thank my wife, Jill, for her support and help and friendship throughout this journey—she would be here except that she is helping to take care of our young granddaughter, Josephine; our daughter Molly, her husband Mike, and their daughter, Josephine; son, Joe, Jr., and his wife, Jesseca; my sisters and brother, and so many other friends who have touched my life over the years.

I want to thank the people of Indiana for having given me the chance to represent them in the United States House of Representatives and in the United States Senate.

I felt privileged to have that opportunity and to have such examples to model myself after as my mom, my dad, my second mom, Joan, Father Ted Hesburgh—the former president of the University of Notre Dame—mentors like Congressman John Brademas and Senate giants like Richard Lugar and Birch Bayh of Indiana, whose legacy was caring, duty, competence, and love of country.

I believe my service in the House and Senate has helped prepare me for this posting to represent the United States. If confirmed, I will work with the representatives of the Holy See to make progress on the critical issues facing our country and the world.

If confirmed, I plan to bring the same public service ethic, collaborative mindset, and focus on delivering for the American people that define my time in Congress to the task of expanding and deepening our partnership with the Holy See.

The Holy See is unique among states with an influence that reaches across the globe. More than 1.3 billion Catholics worldwide and millions of non-Catholics take inspiration from Pope Francis' leadership.

Additionally, hundreds of Catholic-affiliated NGOs, charities, religious orders, and lay organizations provide health care and education, build peace, and make personal connections with people in every part of the world.

The United States and the Holy See have had formal diplomatic relations since 1984. But our relationship runs much deeper than that, back to the very founding of our country when George Washington dispatched our first envoy to the Papal States in 1797.

If confirmed, I see three core priorities. First, promoting peace and security. If confirmed, my foremost priority will always be the safety and security of Americans, including the personnel and family members assigned to Embassy Vatican.

But our shared interest in promoting peace and stability extends much further. Vatican diplomats and Catholic organizations serve as effective mediators to end conflicts, promote peace, and advocate for the release of political prisoners.

If confirmed, I would seek to strengthen our quiet diplomacy with the Vatican to resolve crises peacefully.

Second, advancing human rights. Promoting human rights and human dignity lies at the heart of the U.S.-Holy See partnership. The Holy See is a leader in defending religious freedom and promoting interfaith dialogue.

Under Pope Francis' leadership, the Vatican has prioritized efforts to combat human trafficking, and Catholic organizations and religious orders provide essential care and services to human trafficking victims all over the world.

Pope Francis has condemned antisemitism and violence against Jews. With threats to human rights rising in many parts of the world, our cooperation with the Vatican is increasingly important.

Third, tackling the climate crisis. Pope Francis has been a vocal advocate for protecting the environment and addressing climate change, including through his second encyclical. Vatican City and Catholic organizations are working hard to implement Pope Francis' climate vision in their own operations by reducing waste and emissions.

If confirmed, I look forward to identifying new ways to collaborate with the Holy See to raise global ambitions to tackle the climate crisis. I would feel fortunate to be a part of the team with the incredibly talented individuals who work at the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See and all the other dedicated folks who serve our beloved country.

As a former member of this body, I also eagerly look forward to partnering with Congress to further U.S. priorities with the Holy See.

If confirmed, I enthusiastically await engaging Vatican officials, sharing ideas, and deepening our collaboration as we work together to build a brighter future.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Senator Donnelly follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH DONNELLY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a privilege to appear before you. I am honored to have been nominated to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, and I thank President Biden and Secretary Blinken for their confidence in me.

I want to thank my wife Jill for her support and help and friendship throughout this journey: our daughter Molly, her husband Mike, and their daughter Josephine; son Joe Jr., and his wife Jessica; my sisters and brother; and so many friends who have touched my life over the years.

I want to thank the people of Indiana for having given me the chance to represent them in the United States House of Representatives and in the United States Senate. I felt privileged to have that opportunity, and to have such examples to model myself after as my mom, dad, and second mom Joan, Father Ted Hesburgh, the former President of the University of Notre Dame, mentors like Congressman John Brademas from my former Congressional District, and Senate giants like Richard Lugar and Birch Bayh of Indiana, whose legacy was caring, duty, competence, and love of country.

I believe my service in the House and Senate has helped prepare me for this posting to represent the United States. If confirmed, I will work with the representatives of the Holy See to make progress on the critical issues facing our country and the world. If confirmed, I plan to bring the same public service ethic, collaborative mindset, and focus on delivering for the American people that defined my time in Congress to the task of expanding and deepening our partnership with the Holy See.

The Holy See is unique among states, with an influence that reaches across the globe. More than 1.3 billion Catholics worldwide—and millions of non-Catholics as well—take inspiration from Pope Francis' leadership. Additionally, hundreds of Catholic-affiliated NGOs, charities, religious orders, and lay organizations provide healthcare and education, build peace, and make personal connections with people in every part of the world. The United States and the Holy See have had formal diplomatic relations since 1984, but our relationship runs much deeper than that, back to the very founding of our country when George Washington dispatched our first envoy to the Papal States in 1797. If confirmed, I see three core priorities:

*First, promoting peace and security.* If confirmed, my foremost priority will always be the safety and security of Americans, including the personnel and family members assigned to Embassy Vatican. But our shared interest in promoting peace and

stability extends much further. Vatican diplomats and Catholic organizations serve as effective mediators to end conflicts, promote peace, and advocate for the release of political prisoners. If confirmed, I would seek to strengthen our quiet diplomacy with the Vatican to resolve crises peacefully.

*Second, advancing human rights.* Promoting human rights and human dignity lies at the heart of the U.S.-Holy See partnership. The Holy See is a leader in defending religious freedom and promoting interfaith dialogue. Under Pope Francis' leadership, the Vatican has prioritized efforts to combat human trafficking, and Catholic organizations and religious orders provide essential care and services to human trafficking victims all over the world. Pope Francis has condemned antisemitism and violence against Jews. With threats to human rights rising in many parts of the world, our cooperation with the Vatican is increasingly important.

*Third, tackling the climate crisis.* Pope Francis has been a vocal advocate for protecting the environment and addressing climate change, including through his second encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (lau-DAH-toh SEE). Vatican City and Catholic organizations are working hard to implement Pope Francis' climate vision in their own operations by reducing waste and emissions. If confirmed, I look forward to identifying new ways to collaborate with the Holy See to raise global ambitions to tackle the climate crisis.

I would feel fortunate to be part of a team with the incredibly talented individuals who work at the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See, and all the other dedicated folks who serve our beloved country. As a former member of this body, I also eagerly look forward to partnering with Congress to further U.S. priorities with the Holy See. If confirmed, I enthusiastically await engaging Vatican officials, sharing ideas, and deepening our collaboration as we work together to build a brighter future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Donnelly.

First, I have a few questions that speak to the importance that this committee places on responsiveness of all officials in the executive branch and that we expect and will be seeking from you.

I would ask each of you to provide either a yes or no answer to these questions. This will be preliminary to the customary five-minute rounds.

Do you agree to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to engage in meaningful consultation while policies are being deployed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Let the record show that all four of the nominees answered yes to all four of the questions.

Ms. Taylor, I think you have been saved. Senator Kaine is here. Let us see whether your thanking him for such nice comments, in fact, was justified or not.

Senator Kaine?

**STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator KAINE. Mr. Chair, thank you and my deep congratulations to this very esteemed panel. It is so good to see Senator Don-



nelly, my longtime friend, and Mr. Chair, I have the pleasure of saying a word about another longtime friend, Michèle Taylor, and I apologize for being late, but thank you for giving me this opportunity.

And if you would additionally indulge me, I would also like to say a word about one of the nominees on panel two because I am not going to be able to be here for panel two so I would try to do both at once, if that is acceptable.

Senator CARDIN. That is fine. Certainly.

Senator KAINE. Two very qualified nominees, Michèle Taylor to be the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council, and then Leopoldo Martinez, who is here, a great friend, to be U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Fund.

First, Michèle. Longtime friend, hails from Georgia, community volunteer, educator, outdoorswoman, and tireless human rights champion. She served as a board member of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, longtime member of the board of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council where she served diligently, motivated by her mother, who was a Holocaust survivor.

Michèle has decades-long experience in working in politics advancing opportunity and empowerment for women and girls, especially members of the LGBTQ community.

In 2014, under the direction of the White House, Michèle helped to generate the report on the 20th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act through the Office of the Vice President, now President Biden.

She continues to give back to students, business executives, and veterans as a course director and lead instructor for North Carolina Outward Bound School. I have known Michèle and her family, including her children, now for about a dozen years and for many years—I have known her for a long time and I know she will represent the Senate—the United States very, very well in this capacity.

She has a tenacious spirit wrapped in a diplomatic spirit, and both of those traits—tenacity and diplomacy—will help her be a strong voice for the United States on the Human Rights Council, elevating pressing human rights causes within the institution and also pushing back against the anti-Israel bias that has plagued that institution for years. I urge the committee to support her strongly.

And if I might say about my wonderful friend, Leopoldo Martinez of Virginia, for the position of United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank, it is great to have a Senator here in Joe Donnelly but it is also great to have a parliamentarian here. Leopoldo Martinez, in an earlier chapter of his life, was a parliamentarian in Venezuela.

He has had a long and distinguished career in both public service and the private sector. He is a Venezuelan-American immigrant. He will come to the role with a breadth of knowledge, having spent over three decades working tirelessly in support of U.S. relations with Latin America and the Caribbean.

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges that our hemisphere faces and, in particular, Latin America and the Caribbean are severe. Latin America and the Caribbean have about

8 percent of the global population, 30 percent of COVID deaths in the world.

From worsening economic inequality to the health care challenges to the rising tide of authoritarianism across the Americas, there is no better person equipped to deal with the region's challenges with empathy, humility, and dedication. And, again, Leopoldo Martinez has not just seen it, he has lived it and he understands some of these challenges and feels them very, very deeply.

His personal story makes him uniquely qualified. After his family fled Venezuela nearly two decades ago, he has dedicated his life to giving back to that country and supporting democracy and human rights there and throughout the hemisphere. I am confident that his life experience as well as his professional background and deep intellect makes him an absolutely perfect pick to be the U.S. Executive Director for the Inter-American Development Bank and I urge my colleagues to support him.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Kaine. We appreciate that very much.

We will now have some questions in regards to the first panel and let me start with Ms. Taylor. I had a whole series of questions I was going to ask you but your statement was pretty clear about your understanding of our concerns about the Human Rights Council.

I fully understand the importance of participation rather than not participating. But when you are in a body that has a bias in the way that they have organized against Israel, it makes it difficult for us to understand the credibility of the Human Rights Council to its primary function.

And I appreciate the comments that you made. I also serve on the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum board and I know the importance of that assignment, and we have not only contributed by being on the Council but also being exposed to the real challenges of history and the current challenges on the rise of anti-semitism.

And a lot of the bias that we see in the Human Rights Council, although it is anti-Israel it also has roots in antisemitism. It is a challenge for our participation on this Council to really make significant progress in promoting our values but also for this important council to play a meaningful role in regards to human rights abuses around the globe.

You know the membership. You know its history. What, realistically, can you achieve by your participation on behalf of the United States, if confirmed?

Ms. TAYLOR. Thank you so much for that question and for reaffirming the challenge that I have ahead, which I am fully prepared to take on.

I think I will start with the Israel question. I think there are very, very real things that I could do, if confirmed, at the Council. One of them is, just to start with, we have left a very vulnerable country because Israel has not walked away from the Council as we did, vulnerable and alone and standing up to bullies without a lot of support.

To start with, we would show up for her and I, in particular, if confirmed, would show up strongly for her. You know, the other thing that I think it is important to do with respect to Israel, she is the only country with a standing permanent agenda item on the agenda of the Council but should be treated like every other country, and we have been successful in the past and I would make it a priority to move any considerations about Israel out of Agenda Item Seven and into the other agenda items where they belong, just like every other country is treated, and, again, we have had some success with that.

And then, lastly, I think one of the most important things that we can do—and, again, we have had success—is recruiting countries that can be partners and allies to the United States in our agenda at the Human Rights Council to run for seats at the Council.

We had great success with a country, the Marshall Islands, that has turned out to be not only a champion with us in bringing forward resolutions supporting the issues that we care about but has also really stood up to China, and I look forward to bringing other countries on board that will do the same.

And then the other thing that we can do, of course, is to continue to support resolutions that elevate the issues that we really care about and want to see elevated at the Council.

We should be focusing more on places like Ethiopia, Burma, the Xinjiang region and what is happening with the Uighur population there, et cetera. I could go on. Sadly, there are many.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that response.

Ambassador Hill, I agree completely with your focus on Kosovo and the need for Serbia to take action on recognition. But as I mentioned in my opening comments, I am also concerned about the Republic of Srpska's belief that Serbia is their support entity for their holding out for a unity type of a government in Serbia itself.

Tell me how you see this unfolding with the U.S. mission in advancing the security and peace in the Balkans, recognizing Kosovo but also Bosnia's challenges, moving forward.

Ambassador HILL. Thank you for asking that, Mr. Chairman.

I think with respect to Bosnia, Serbia is a signatory country of the Dayton Peace Accords and they need to be held to that. Obviously, the situation in Bosnia has become more problematic. We have seen Srpska trying to take steps to get out of, for example, judiciary issues and the common military. The Serbian president, Alexander Vucic, has made very clear there is not going to be any change and he absolutely supports continuation of these institutions.

But I think this will continue, frankly, to be a work in progress and I think we need to work very closely with the Serbs on our common position that we need to support Bosnia's unity, and I think the Serbs are under no illusion that we would look for some kind of change in Bosnia, any kind of unilateral such change. And so I think we will have to work very closely with them and make it clear that the Republika Srpska's future is in Bosnia, not in some other entity.

Senator CARDIN. I agree with that. But the Dayton Accords were never meant to be the final answer to Bosnia. I recognize that Ser-

bia was the signatory not living up even to some of those commitments.

Ambassador HILL. Yeah.

Senator CARDIN. But we have got to move beyond that with constitutional reform within Bosnia for its future, and Serbia could play an important role in that making that a reality.

Ambassador HILL. If confirmed, I would expect and look forward to considerable discussions within Belgrade about the—our mutual interest in a successful Bosnia and I think we can find common ground with the Serbian Government with the Serbian leadership on this point.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Portman is in an extremely generous mood today as far as yielding time. We have been joined by Senator Roy Blunt, who would like to make an introduction and Senator Portman has agreed to withhold the questioning at this stage for Senator Blunt's introduction.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROY BLUNT,  
U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI**

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator Cardin and Senator Portman. I know that the nominees are eager for your questions, particularly, our former colleague, Senator Donnelly, can hardly wait to answer questions and I am glad to have this privilege to take a minute of their time as I get a chance to join Senator Warner, who earlier introduced our good friend, Fabiana Jorge.

I want to thank you for letting me be here to talk about her nomination to be United States alternate Executive Director of Inter-American—the Inter-American Development Bank. I am, certainly, honored to join in welcoming her to the Senate today.

Our families are close friends and have been since our sons started pre-kindergarten together about a dozen years ago. I have spent a lot of time with Fabiana at soccer games and their house and our house and other places, and so I come with some strong sense of who she is as a person.

To everything she does she brings integrity, a desire to help others. She is always well prepared and I think she is well prepared for this job. She has had three decades of experience in international business and trade and I think that will make her incredibly valuable as an addition to the leadership of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Fabiana founded a global consulting firm that focuses on protecting intellectual property and access to medicine. She has extensive experience involving several international trade agreements, including the USMCA.

She holds a Bachelor's degree, and this might have been pointed out already, and a Master's degree in business administration from Columbia University. Her Bachelor's degree is in political science and with a specialty in international relations from Catholic University in Buenos Aires. She served as an adjunct professor at the University of El Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

I have no doubt, if confirmed, she will be incredibly successful and effective in this job. It is a real honor for me to have a few minutes today to share that with you and I look forward to sup-

porting her confirmation on the floor and hope that the committee is able to move quickly and, in spite of everything, the Senate also would be able to move quickly and get this nominee confirmed.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Blunt, it is a pleasure to have you before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We thank you for being here today. Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator Cardin. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Portman is recognized.

Senator PORTMAN. Great, and thank you, Senator Blunt. We look forward to having an opportunity to ask some questions of Fabiana in a moment.

Ms. Taylor, I noticed that when the United States reentered the U.N. Human Rights Council that Tony Blinken made a powerful statement. He said that the Council suffers from serious flaws, including disproportionate attention on Israel and membership of several states with egregious human rights records.

He said, "The U.S. must push back against attempts to subvert the ideals upon which the Human Rights Council was founded," end quote. So you have some help from the Secretary of State in doing what you have talked to Senator Cardin about.

You touched on some of the things you would do to end the Council's anti-Israel bias. They have shown an unyielding and continued bias against Israel and Senator Cardin and I have been involved in this issue for some time.

Since 2006, when it was founded, they have passed over 90 anti-Israel resolutions. By the way, that is more resolutions than they have passed condemning Iran, Syria, North Korea, China, Cuba, and Venezuela combined.

They have, as you indicated earlier, put Israel on Agenda Item Seven so it will be on the agenda at every single meeting.

I guess my question to you is sort of the follow-on to what you have already said. You said you will take steps to try to address these concerns. But what if the Council fails to change? What will the repercussions be from the United States? What should they be?

Ms. TAYLOR. Thank you for that question, and you are absolutely right that there have been more resolutions against Israel than any other country and, again, I would argue that we have made really significant impact when we are present at the Council.

The number of resolutions is far less. This egregious open-ended Commission of Inquiry was founded when we were not members of the Council. I cannot change the permanent agenda item, if confirmed, immediately.

But, again, I think that we can continue to force those issues to come under other agenda items and prove that Agenda Item Seven is not necessary and then, again, look for those partners and allies who, when we might be ready to collectively present a resolution to get rid of Item Seven, would be ready to stand with us.

Senator PORTMAN. Okay. You know, I served at one point on the Subcommittee on Human Rights in Nice and Geneva under U.N. auspices, and it was an honor to do that representing our country.

But I felt like much of what I did there, and this was before I had gotten involved in elected politics after the first Bush White House, but a lot of what I did was to talk to countries that should

have been allies of ours about the fact that they should not be going along with some of these egregious activities, particularly, overlooking the human rights violations in some countries that I just mentioned.

How would you work to change the voting practices of some of these American allies who far too often vote in support of the Council's discriminatory anti-Israel agenda? Specifically, will you be making more of an issue of these votes as a part of our bilateral relationship with those allies?

Ms. TAYLOR. Absolutely.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with bilateral ambassadors in all of the countries that we have good relationships with and, as you said, should be our partners and allies.

We have to show up, and I know that there are differences of opinion about whether we serve this body better by abstaining from membership and, therefore, calling out the challenges versus that engagement.

I think if we are not at the table we are on the menu, and so we need to be there and we need an Ambassador there. We were blindsided by a Yemen vote because, again, those partners and allies that we expected we did not have someone there building those relationships and making sure that we were all on the same team.

If there, I would work very hard, again, with both our bilateral Ambassadors and with the representatives from those countries to build those partnerships and make sure that they know that America is back and that we are there to support one another on the Council.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you. I think our—both our mics are off, which is fine. We can just yell across the room.

[Laughter.]

Senator PORTMAN. But I hope you will ensure if we are at the table that we are aggressively at the table so that our allies are not part of the menu either.

Ms. Albright, I appreciated our conversation last week. I am glad you are here. I am concerned, as I told you in our call, about some of the politicization of the approach toward development finance institutions.

There was a diplomatic cable sent recently to the U.S. embassies saying that the United States would unilaterally be ending support for most overseas fossil fuel projects while committing the Development Finance Corporation and the Millennium Challenge Corporation to spending over 50 percent of its future budget on projects that are directed to climate change.

Look, I am not opposed to institutions supporting climate solutions. But I strongly believe that this is a change that undermines the founding principles of the MCC—Millennium Challenge Corporation—for which you are being nominated by predetermining project selection and it writes our bilateral partners out of the process.

They are going to make their own decisions, and, interestingly, this past weekend I was in Ohio at what is dubbed as the most efficient natural gas utility power station in the entire world. It is a brand new natural gas power-generating facility, replacing coal-fired plants, therefore, reducing emissions substantially.

This natural gas plant, by the way, is going to start mixing hydrogen, which has zero emissions, into its mix of fuels and it would not be able to be considered as part of the MCC's work if it were in one of these developing countries.

My question for you is the same one I posed to you when we talked. Do you share my concerns that these programmatic changes made to the MCC project selection process is politicizing the agency and do you agree that we should stick to the fundamental principles of how MCC has selected projects in the past?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you very much, Senator Portman, for your question. You have touched on a fundamental aspect of how MCC works, which is that the countries very much look at the issues that they face. That is at the heart of the constraints to growth process that you are familiar with at MCC.

Increasingly, we see that one of the biggest constraints to growth that countries are facing are climate-related issues, and so an example of a project that MCC has done in this regard is one in the Philippines to help build a road that was then protected in the face of typhoons.

It is not my intention to change how the agency works in this regard. At the moment, the agency does have a coal-free policy. The administration has announced some executive orders just in the last day or so that the agency will have to take a look at and we will continue to have a case by case basis in this regard. And I very much look forward to being in touch with your office and the other offices to continue to be in touch on this very important issue.

Senator PORTMAN. Okay. That is not a satisfying answer for me. Again, I think MCC has a huge role to play and I am a big supporter, as you know. But if we are going to use this as the overlay—we are going to say that no fossil fuel project can be supported—by the way, China is happy to support those projects as are other countries, and some of these projects are going to reduce emissions substantially. I mentioned natural gas, including LNG projects that could be U.S. funded but also that the actual natural gas could be provided by us, which is cleaner-burning natural gas, by the way, than they are going to get from Russia or other places. And you are saying you are okay with that?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Senator, again, I thank you very much also for the example that you have given. I think that MCC—I am not there yet—but, if confirmed, will continue to be—take the matter on a case by case basis and also look at the administration's recent guidance that has been issued.

Senator PORTMAN. That is not in the MCC charter that is part of legislation that we have laid out. Again, I am concerned about that and we have got plenty of work to do, and to tell countries they are not eligible because they are not following a particular prescription, whether it is in this area or other areas, seems to me violates the foundational principles of MCC.

Senator Donnelly, welcome back. The Holy See plays a unique role in so many ways in organizations like the United Nations and regional organizations like the Organization of American States, the Arab League, African Union.

As Ambassador, what will you convey to the Holy See about working with the United States to advance our shared interests in these multinational bodies?

Senator DONNELLY. That the United States will be a continually strong partner with the Holy See in promoting human rights, religious freedom, fighting against human trafficking, working for climate change, working to make sure that we can promote the interests of people around the world and that they have a partner they can rely on.

And this is a friendship that has been across hundreds of years that we have had extraordinary representation at the Vatican on behalf of our country, and so just when they look they know they have got a friend.

Senator PORTMAN. Just one quick one. Then I want to turn back to my colleague because I am over time here. But there is right now an issue with China, as you know. I think the Holy See would like to work more closely with China. I think they have been told by China they have to sever their ties with Taiwan. If they want to reestablish relations with China, the price of doing that is ending their relationship with Taiwan.

What are your thoughts about this and the Holy See's Chinese relationship and how are you going to deal with it, if confirmed?

Senator DONNELLY. I would urge a strong position in favor of human rights in China to the Vatican and that human rights also reflects religious freedom. We see the Uighurs in Xinjiang where there are constant attacks, where they have been put in camps.

We see the Chinese Communist Party trying to make sure that they are the ones who choose who the next Dalai Lama is. We see in the Catholic Bishops that they have been in the middle of that for a number of years now and religious freedom would indicate, as it does in our country, that people in the church pick who their bishops are.

And so what I would say to them is stand strong for religious freedom. Stand strong for human rights. Taiwan has been an exceptional friend to the Vatican. I have not seen anything that indicates they are moving away from relations with Taiwan, but Taiwan has been a faithful and strong partner to them.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you very much, and I am going to get back to my colleagues now.

But, Ambassador Hill, of course, I have lots of questions for you, which I may send some for the record, but mostly just to say, given your extraordinary background, I am pleased that you have agreed to reenter the role of a diplomat and I look forward to working with you.

Ambassador HILL. Thank you very much.

Senator CARDIN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would just begin by echoing Senator Portman's comments, Ambassador Hill. I am delighted that you are rejoining the diplomatic arena and, particularly, that you are being nominated to be Ambassador to Serbia.

And let me—I meant to begin by congratulating each of you on your nominations and saying I look forward to working with you, if confirmed, to address the many challenges that you will face.



And, Ambassador Hill, I do want to start with you because, obviously, the Western Balkans are very important to Europe and maintaining peace in the Western Balkans has been challenging over the years, as they have been the source of several of the conflicts that have spread far beyond the region.

Can you talk a little bit about how, as Ambassador, you would see your role in trying to encourage Serbia to be a constructive member of the Western Balkans, particularly with respect to what is happening in Bosnia?

Ambassador HILL. Yes, Senator. I think there are a number of issues that concern me about contemporary Serbia and the contemporary Balkans. One, of course, the chairman already raised, which was the issue of Bosnia and the continued efforts of politicians in the Srpska region of Bosnia to suggest that they have a different future than the future that has been already laid out.

NATO was never—I am sorry, Dayton was never supposed to be some immutable future for everybody. The point was that you cannot do this unilaterally. If people want to make changes, changes can be made but they need to be made together and we are not seeing that from the Serb Republic. We are seeing Mr. Dodik, really, operating on his own in a way that I think is very deleterious for the entire country.

First of all, I think it is very important that we have clear-eyed conversations with the Government in Belgrade to make them understand that our level of effort with respect to Bosnia, our level of effort with respect to the entire Western Balkans, continues to be very serious and we will look very carefully to see who is helping to steer things in the right direction and, perhaps, who is not. I think Bosnia is absolutely crucial to how we can work with Serbia in the future.

The second area, of course, is Kosovo. There has been some progress in talks but there has also been a kind of frustrating lack of progress in talks. The European Union has made very clear to Serbia that it has conditioned eventual membership for Serbia on the basis of whether they can work these issues out.

It is to say that the European Union does not want to bring in problems that countries have with their neighbors. They want that countries that do aspire to membership and do eventually achieve membership do so in the context of good relations with their neighbors.

I think working with the Government in Belgrade and trying to be helpful in resolving some of these issues with Kosovo, I think, will be very important.

And thirdly, I would like to mention the fact that for some 75 years, I mean, ever since, really, the end of World War II we have looked at Belgrade as a special place where we do not want to see a growth of Russian influence there.

What we are seeing today is precisely the kind of issue that we need to be vigilant about and prepared to do something about. It is particularly worrisome to see Serbia, for example, looking to make purchases for their military, purchases that are necessary. They are trying to have a first-class military.

But it is worrisome to see that they look to the Russians for some of this. It is also worrisome to see that some of their infrastructure

needs—and they have great infrastructure needs—they look to China to help satisfy those.

We need not only to be vigilant but we need to be prepared to see—to show them that we offer a better model. We offer better alternatives for them. It is not enough to simply say there are problems in accepting Chinese or Russian proposals. That in and of itself will not be enough. We need to show that what we have is better and better for Serbia, and that would be my intention, if confirmed.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Very well said. I appreciate that and look forward to being able to work with you.

I am out of time, Mr. Chairman. But can I ask one more question from Senator Donnelly?

You are being nominated to take over a really exciting position as Ambassador to the Vatican and I wanted to get your thoughts. One of the things that I admire most about Pope Francis is his commitment to refugees, and I know he just came back from the island of Lesbos, where I had a chance to visit in 2015 right in the middle of the height of the Syrian crisis and the migration crisis across Europe.

And I wondered if you could talk a little bit about how you see your role as Ambassador and the United States' role in working with Pope Francis and the Vatican in support of refugees, which has become a huge challenge in Europe, in the United States, across the world.

Senator DONNELLY. It is an extraordinary challenge, Senator, and thank you for the question.

I remember when I was in the Senate that I was at the Syrian refugee camps at the Kilis border in Turkey, and to see the damage and destruction done to those people by the Assad regime took your breath away.

And so there are people not only there but, obviously, around the world, refugees, who the church's mission is to look out for the poor, to look out for those with the least among us.

If you—we are all familiar with the Bible verse, “Whatever you do for the least of us you do for me,” and that is what Pope Francis is trying to carry out, and I actually think when we work closely with the Vatican on this issue it also helps to protect our own country.

It helps to promote safety and security here when this is an issue that is—that has good people working on it trying to find solutions and trying to find answers for these families who, in almost every single case, just want to make sure that their family is safe, that their children can have food, and that they have a future.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

It is my understanding that there is no further questions. I just wish to acknowledge that we were joined on WebEx by Senator Booker, Senator Van Hollen, Senator Young, Senator Johnson, and Senator Schatz was here.

There being no further questions at this particular time, there may be questions for the record. We would ask that you respond

to them as quickly as possible, and we will now go to our second panel.

[Pause.]

Senator CARDIN. Let me welcome our four nominees, and thank you for your willingness to serve our country. We thank you and we thank your families because we know this is a shared sacrifice.

Let me acknowledge the four of you in this order. If you will then make opening statements. We hope you keep it within five minutes. Your full statements will be made part of the record.

We have, first, Ms. Oren Whyche-Shaw, who happens to come from the state of Maryland—and that is not the reason I am introducing her first, although maybe it is—was the Deputy Assistant Administrator for the African Bureau of the Coordinator for President Obama's Partnership and Growth in the Trade Africa Initiative at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

She also served as the Director of the Office of African Nations and a senior advisor in the Multilateral Development Bank Office at the Department of Treasury. Ms. Whyche-Shaw has lived and worked internationally in more than 50 countries for over 30 years. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in theoretical mathematics and French from Capital University in Columbus, Ohio.

Ms. Enoch Ebong, who currently serves as the Acting Director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency as acting director, Ms. Ebong leads the agency's partnership with the U.S. private sector to develop sustainable infrastructure and foster economic growth in emerging economies.

She has also served in several previous roles in the agency, most recently as the general counsel as well as Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer.

She earned a JD from the University of Michigan Law School and a Master's in communication from the University of Michigan, a Master's in history from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

We then have Mr. Leopoldo Martinez, who is the founder of the Center for Democracy and Development in the Americas. He served on the Small Business Legislative Commission of the Commonwealth of Virginia and currently sits on the University of Mary Washington's Board of Visitors and the Sorensen Institute at the University of Virginia. He has also served in the transition committee for Virginia Governor Ralph Northam.

Mr. Martinez has worked with large international law and accounting firms and has extensive experience advising Fortune 500 companies, private equity funds, Multi-Latino corporations, international business, and nonprofit organizations.

And then we have Ms. Fabiana Jorge, Jorge is the Founder and President of MFJ International, LLC, a global consulting firm which specializes in international business, trade, intellectual property, drug supply chain and access to affordable medications. Jorge also served as the Editor of the Journal of Generic Medicines from 2009 to 2014.

Ms.

As part of her work at MFJ, Jorge wrote a report in 2020 for the Inter-American Development Bank on how Latin America and the Caribbean could play a critical role in strengthening the U.S. drug supply chain while creating economic development in the region.

She also worked on related matters for other international organizations including the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (U.N.-ECLAC) and for the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO).

Prior to establishing her own firm, Jorge served as Principal and Director of Latin American Affairs Practice for the firm Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand (today DLA Piper) from 1994 to 2000 and as Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Division of The Rendon Group from 1991 to 1994. From 1987 to 1990, Jorge held several positions at the Argentine Ministry of Economy, Secretariat of Foreign Trade, including as Assistant to the Undersecretary for Trade.

She was an adjunct professor at the University of El Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she was born. She holds a Bachelor's degree in political science with a specialization in international relations from Catholic University in Buenos Aires and an MBA from Columbia University.

We have four very well qualified individuals. We will start first with Ms. Whyche-Shaw to be United States Director of the African Development Bank for a term of five years.

First, I will yield to Senator Portman.

Senator PORTMAN. Let me just give a brief opening. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to the nominees who are before us.

We have got a very distinguished panel on some very important issues. International banking and development institutions are a critical aspect of our national security as a country. Smart, focused, and tailored programs by these institutions help combat poverty and promote democratic values through providing reliable development assistance.

They also play a crucial role right now, in particular, in providing developing nations an alternative—a viable alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative, which saddles countries often with insurmountable debt and uses that debt as leverage to exact geopolitical concessions.

It is extremely important that you are here today and you are willing to step forward. It is an experienced group. I do want to say to Ms. Whyche-Shaw your Ohio connection at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, makes me biased toward you.

[Laughter.]

Senator PORTMAN. And then we have a Michigan law grad. I am also a Michigan law grad. Ms. Ebong, thank you for being here as well, and I cannot talk as much about that connection since I am an Ohioan and a Buckeye. But I appreciate that great education.

And to the others, welcome. We have to acknowledge that Fabiana Jorge got more introductions than anyone else today at the hearing, which must mean something.

And so not to leave you out, Leopoldo Martinez Nucete, your background is also very impressive and we look forward to hearing from you all.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Ms. Whyche-Shaw, you may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF OREN E. WHYCHE-SHAW OF MARYLAND, NOMINATED TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS**

Ms. WHYCHE-SHAW. Thank you, Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Portman, and esteemed members of this committee. I am honored to have the opportunity to speak with you today and I am equally honored to have been nominated by President Biden as the next United States Executive Director of the African Development Bank.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to pause to recognize some members of my family who instilled in me the critical values that have brought me to this point in my career: my mother, Mildred Randall-Whyche, a role model of family values and caring, my father, William Whyche, a World War II veteran who taught me to work hard, do my best no matter what the task, and my beloved husband, Lieutenant Colonel Shaw, an Air Force Academy graduate who served for several years at the Strategic Air Command and, subsequently, at the National Security Agency, where he was the Vice Chair of the SIGINT Committee, and, finally, my sister, who is watching this hearing today, Stephanie Whyche, who has been my steadfast supporter my entire life.

Africa has been a central theme of my life and my career. My first contact with the continent was when I was selected to go to Zaire on a technical team supporting a World Bank loan. The role was my first brush with international development. Subsequently, I joined the United States Agency for International Development to support the financial sector expansion in Tunisia.

I fostered exploration of U.S. private sector investment opportunities for companies such as Dole and General Motors. As Citibank vice president for Africa and Eastern Europe, I successfully negotiated the conditionality with the International Monetary Fund for the purchase of Cote d'Ivoire's entire cocoa harvest on behalf of Hershey. Based on my work in Tunisia, USAID chose me as its first private sector advisor for West and Central Africa based in Cote d'Ivoire.

In Abidjan, I also served as the private sector advisor for the U.S. executive director at the African Development Bank. I worked as the director for the private sector unit at the African Development Bank and I also, when I returned to the United States, was selected as Treasury Department's director for the Office of African Nations.

I am particularly proud that while at Treasury I supported development of President George W. Bush's African Mortgage Market Initiative, which resulted in an interagency effort to spur growth of housing finance for middle income Africans, building upon the experience and the expertise of the U.S. housing industry.

In 2008, I was asked to join and support USAID's first leadership role in a G-7 session. Finally, before I left in 2020, I served as the USAID Africa Bureau's Deputy Assistant Administrator for West Africa during the Ebola epidemic and then as the Deputy Assistant Administrator for southern Africa during the outbreak of the COVID pandemic.

Africa is a continent of exceptional opportunity with a dynamic young population and natural resources. But as we all know, there

are daunting challenges. African countries can only succeed in meeting these challenges by drawing upon the efforts and the ingenuity of the totality of the populations including women, minorities, and underrepresented groups.

African countries must adopt greater transparency and accountability to attract sustainable foreign as well as domestic investment. Such reforms are necessary to address corruption and confront the threat of unsustainable financing from nontransparent players.

The African Bank is in a particularly good position to assist these countries meet these challenges. But that said, the African Bank must also follow through on institutional reforms to boost capacity, enhance oversight and accountability, bolster financial stability, and improve selectivity.

If confirmed, I will draw upon my experience in the private sector, the public sector, and not for profit sectors to advocate for these reforms and their consistent implementation.

I am honored by this nomination and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee to advance U.S. interest in Africa and the mission of the African Development Bank for both mutual benefit.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination this afternoon and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Whyche-Shaw follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF OREN E. WHYCHE-SHAW

Good afternoon, Chairman, Ranking Member, and esteemed members of this committee, I am honored to have the opportunity to appear before you today. I am equally honored to have been nominated by President Biden as the next United States Executive Director of the African Development Bank.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to pause to recognize members of my family who are not here today, but who have instilled in me the critical values which have brought me to this point in my career. My mother, Mildred Randall-Whyche, who was a role model of humility, family values, and caring. My father, William Whyche, a World War II veteran who taught me curiosity, and to work hard and do my best, no matter what the task and gave me a global perspective. My loving husband, Lt. Colonel William Shaw, an Air Force Academy graduate who served for several years at the Strategic Air Command and subsequently, at the National Security Agency. He and I shared an appreciation for the importance of critical thinking, the benefits of maintaining a cool head in a crisis and the love of country. And finally, a warm thank you to Stephanie Whyche who is my loving and supportive sister and friend.

For over thirty years, Africa has been a central focus of my life and career. My first contact with the continent was when I was selected to go to Zaire as part of a technical assistance team supporting a World Bank loan. That role was my first brush with Africa and international development. Subsequently, I joined the United States Agency for International Development to support financial sector expansion efforts in Tunisia. There I led the project that resulted in the first zero coupon, split maturity bond ever issued on the continent. I fostered exploration of U.S. private sector investment opportunities for U.S. companies such as Dole and General Motors. Later, in my role as a Citibank Vice President for Africa and Eastern Europe, I successfully negotiated the conditionality with the International Monetary Fund for the Hershey Company's proposed purchase of Cote d'Ivoire's entire cocoa harvest using a debt swap.

Based on my work in Tunisia, USAID chose me as its first private sector advisor for West and Central Africa based in Cote d'Ivoire. In Abidjan, I also served as the private sector advisor to the U.S. Executive Director at the African Development Bank. I was Deputy Director at the African Development Bank's Private Sector unit for two years. When I returned to the United States, I served as Director for Africa for a not-for-profit that helps people lift themselves out of poverty by harnessing the

power of the private sector by building competitive farms, businesses, and industries.

I subsequently was selected as the Treasury Department's Director for the Office of African Nations. I am particularly proud that while at Treasury, I was able to help develop President George W. Bush's African Mortgage Market Initiative, which resulted in an interagency effort to spur growth of housing finance for middle income Africans building upon the experience and expertise of the U.S. housing industry. I was equally honored to support the agency's first leadership role for a G7 session. Finally, before I left USAID, I served first as the Africa Bureau's Deputy Assistant Administrator for West Africa during the Ebola epidemic and then, as the DAA for Southern Africa during the outbreak of the COVID pandemic.

As we know, Africa is a continent of exceptional opportunity with a dynamic young population supported by abundant land, sea, and energy resources. Building on those resources requires meeting the continent's needs such as: infrastructure in health, education, agriculture, energy; transportation to create jobs; boosting inclusive growth; adapting to and mitigating the threat of climate change; and reducing poverty. African countries can only succeed in meeting the challenges they face by drawing upon the efforts and ingenuity of the totality of their populations especially women, minorities, and under-represented groups.

African countries must adopt greater transparency and accountability to attract greater, sustainable domestic and foreign investments. Such reforms are also necessary to confront the threat that unsustainable financing from non-transparent actors poses to growth and poverty reduction on the continent.

The African Development Bank, through its broad membership and commitment to high social, environmental, and fiduciary standards, is in a unique position to assist these countries in meeting these challenges. And it is in the best interest of the United States to continue to support the Bank in these efforts. That said, the African Development Bank needs to follow through on institutional reforms to boost its capacity, enhance oversight and accountability, bolster financial sustainability, and improve selectivity to strengthen its effectiveness and efficiency. I will draw on my organizational management and development experience in the private and public sector to advocate for these reforms.

I am honored by this nomination and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with the committee to advance U.S. interests in Africa and the mission of the African Development Bank. I look forward to building on the mutually beneficial relationship between the United States and the African Development Bank.

Thank you for your consideration of my nomination and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your comments.

We will now hear from Ms. Ebong to be Director of the Trade and Development Agency.

**STATEMENT OF ENOH T. EBONG OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Ms. EBONG. Thank you very much, and good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Portman, distinguished members of the committee. I am honored and grateful to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as the Director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge my family, my sisters, Inyang Ebong Harstrup and Ima Ebong, my nephews, Magnus and Haakon Harstrup, and my partner, Keith Taylor, who is with me here today. I am blessed to have their unwavering love and support.

As an immigrant from Nigeria, my presence before you is reflective of the possibilities that exist in this country. It is also reflective of the values that my late parents, Ime and Rose Ebong, instilled in my sisters and me.

My father was a public servant who worked to shape Nigeria's economic development as a newly independent country in the

1960s. My mother worked in the private sector and focused on human capital development, or as she put it, making sure people were equipped to both contribute and succeed.

My parents taught me the value of public service and making a difference in other people's lives. Most of all, they showed me the value of a good education and the importance of being able to put that education to good use. That is why they encouraged me to come to America for opportunity.

These are the values that drew me to this country and these are the values that I have exhibited throughout my life and career. If confirmed, these are the values that I will bring to USTDA.

USTDA is a foreign assistance agency with a mandate to support U.S. jobs. That makes it truly unique. USTDA is the only U.S. Government agency that focuses exclusively on project preparation with the express goal of positioning U.S. companies to meet the infrastructure needs of our partners overseas.

USTDA has excellent results. Currently, the agency generates \$117 in U.S. exports for every program dollar spent. USTDA has supported more than \$76 billion in U.S. exports since its founding in 1992. This includes small business exports from 370 communities across the United States. I am proud of my role supporting USTDA and these results.

After completing law school at the University of Michigan, I worked at an international law firm with a focus on business and finance. This prepared me to join USTDA in 2004 as the attorney advisor for the Africa team. As a career civil servant, I rose through the ranks of the agency, serving as a general counsel and then Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer. I also served briefly as the agency's acting director.

I am personally and professionally committed to USTDA. I am proud of my association with its highly talented and motivated staff that has driven the agency's incredible results. They have made USTDA the most innovative and effective U.S. Government agency.

In fact, USTDA was recognized as one of the best places to work in the U.S. Government for three consecutive years during my tenure as deputy director.

If confirmed, I will bring my deep understanding of USTDA's programs, policies, operations, and talent. I will bring my ability to build, manage, and lead and I will bring the values that my parents have taught me.

My vision for USTDA is one of shared prosperity for our overseas partners and for the United States. If I am confirmed, USTDA will continue to work with U.S. industry and across the U.S. Government to advance high-quality infrastructure overseas and support good-paying jobs here at home.

These efforts will include engaging more of America's small and diverse businesses. USTDA will also use its full range of tools to level the playing field for American companies facing unfair competition in emerging economies.

If I am confirmed, USTDA will remain focused on critical economic sectors, including clean energy and transportation. The agency will also work toward connecting millions more people to



the internet and providing improved patient care through stronger health care infrastructure in emerging economies.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you, your staffs, and the administration to advance USTDA's mission. I believe that I have the knowledge, experience, and commitment to lead USTDA, to make a difference at home and abroad, and to build global partnerships that will be good for all of us.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ebong follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ENOH T. EBONG

Thank you very much. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Risch, distinguished members of the committee.

I am honored and grateful to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as the Director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge my family: my sisters Inyang Ebong-Harstrup and Ima Ebong; my nephews Haakon and Magnus Harstrup; and my partner Keith Taylor. I am blessed to have their unwavering love and support.

As an immigrant from Nigeria, my presence before you is reflective of the possibilities that exist in this country. It is also reflective of the principles that my late parents, Ime and Rose Ebong, instilled in my sisters and me.

My father was a public servant who worked to shape Nigeria's economic development as a newly independent country in the 1960s.

My mother worked in the private sector and focused on human capital development, or as she put it, making sure people were equipped to both contribute and succeed.

My parents taught me the value of public service and making a difference in other people's lives. Most of all, they showed me the value of a good education and the importance of being able to put that education to good use. That is why they encouraged me to come to America: for opportunity.

These are the values that drew me to this country, and these are the values that I have exhibited throughout my life and career. If confirmed, these are the values that I will bring to USTDA.

USTDA is a foreign assistance agency with a mandate to support U.S. jobs—that makes it truly unique: USTDA is the only U.S. Government agency that focuses exclusively on project preparation, with the express goal of positioning U.S. companies to meet the infrastructure needs of our overseas partners.

USTDA has excellent results. Currently, the agency generates \$117 in U.S. exports for every program dollar spent. USTDA has supported more than \$76 billion in U.S. exports since its founding in 1992; this includes small business exports from 370 communities across the United States.

I am proud of my role supporting USTDA and these results. After completing law school at the University of Michigan, I worked at an international law firm, with a focus on business and finance. This prepared me to join USTDA in 2004, as the attorney-advisor for the Africa team.

As a career civil servant, I rose through the ranks of the agency, serving as General Counsel and then Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer. I also served briefly as the agency's Acting Director.

I am personally and professionally committed to USTDA. I am proud of my association with its highly talented and motivated staff that has driven the agency's incredible results. They have made USTDA the most innovative and effective U.S. Government agency. In fact, USTDA was recognized as one of the best places to work for three consecutive years during my tenure as Deputy Director.

If confirmed, I will bring my deep understanding of USTDA's programs, policies, operations and talent. I will bring my ability to build, manage and lead. And I will bring the values that my parents have taught me.

My vision for USTDA is one of shared prosperity for our overseas partners and for the United States. If I am confirmed, USTDA will continue to work with U.S. industry and across the U.S. Government to advance high-quality infrastructure overseas and support good-paying jobs at home. These efforts will include engaging more of America's small and diverse businesses. USTDA will also utilize its full

range of tools to level the playing field for American companies facing unfair competition in emerging economies.

If I am confirmed, USTDA will remain focused on critical economic sectors including clean energy and transportation. The agency will also work toward connecting millions more people to the internet and improving patient care through stronger healthcare infrastructure in emerging economies.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you, your staffs, and the administration to advance USTDA's mission. I believe that I have the knowledge, experience, and commitment to lead USTDA, to make a difference at home and abroad, and to build global partnerships that will be good for all of us.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you very much for your comments.

We will now hear from Mr. Martinez to be the United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

**STATEMENT OF LEOPOLDO MARTINEZ NUCETE OF VIRGINIA,  
NOMINATED TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A  
TERM OF THREE YEARS**

Mr. NUCETE. Thank you, Chairman.

Good afternoon, Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member, and esteemed members of this committee. I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Executive Director to the Inter-American Development Bank—IDB. I am grateful for President Biden's trust to serve our great nation.

I am joined today by my wife, Analuisa. Her support is immeasurable to me. My children, Leopoldo, Analuisa, Eduardo Ignacio, Alejandro, my parents, Bernardo and Beatriz, my extended family and many Latino leaders I know are tuning via live stream from Florida, Michigan, California, New York, Massachusetts, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Integrity, intellectual curiosity, hard work, and public service are the bedrock values upon which I was raised and I have strived to pass down to my children. Their steadfast support and unwavering fidelity to American values have made my mere presence here possible in the first place.

Our American journey started 16 years ago when my family and I were forced to flee Venezuela and seek refuge here in the United States simply for raising my voice as an outspoken champion for democracy and human rights against a socialist dictatorship.

From the moment the United States opened its doors to my family, we have worked to give back and make this great nation proud. My family story is an affirmation of the American dream and a testament to the promise of our country. Nowhere else would this story be possible.

Following in the footsteps of my grandparents, both key founding figures of what once was a strong and exemplary democracy in Venezuela, I have dedicated a significant portion of my career to public service, mostly—most recently serving in the University of Mary Washington, the University of Virginia, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Throughout my private and public sector career, I have worked firsthand with the inter-American system and participated in complex negotiations and initiatives for development and political rec-

conciliation, all key competencies necessary to serve and excel as the U.S. Executive Director to the Inter-American Development Bank.

When I was a law school professor in Caracas and as a visiting scholar at Harvard Law School, I argued and advocated in my teachings that the United States has a critical role to play in ensuring the success of the Inter-American Development Bank. I believe that has only been solidified since those days.

With over three decades of working on U.S.-Latin America relations, our robust network of stakeholders across the region, I am prepared starting on day one to work with Congress, particularly this committee, the executive branch, the IDB leadership, to create opportunities for equitable economic growth and to deepen economic relations with our hemispheric partners.

I will bring to this role my extensive professional credentials in the legal, economic, and financial sectors. I have significant experience on project finance, sovereign borrowing, debt restructuring, institutional economic reforms, social impact entrepreneurship.

In addition, as an international lawyer and consultant, I possess valuable experience throughout the Americas working with large international law and accounting firms, Fortune 500 companies, private equity firms, Multi-Latina corporations, international businesses, and nonprofit organizations centers.

Senators, if confirmed, my highest priority will be to advance United States' strategic interest in the hemisphere by building partnerships and programs for sustainable development in the region.

Fulfilling that mission begins by ensuring Latin America and the Caribbean cannot only recover but build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, the United States, including through the IDB, must lead in the region to reduce poverty and inequality, strengthen inter-American supply chains to outcompete China, facilitate the transition to stronger greener economies, and address the root causes of migration.

Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, since its founding in 1959, the IDB has improved the lives of millions in Latin America and the Caribbean. I welcome the opportunity and the privilege to ensure the United States continues to play a significant role in this institution.

It would be the honor of a lifetime to represent our nation as the United States Executive Director at the Inter-American Development Bank. In addition to bringing my vast body of work and technical expertise, I would also bring to this role the hopes and dreams of immigrants and political refugees that have contributed so much to our country.

It would also be an honor to be the first Venezuelan-American immigrant to be appointed and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to a position of leadership and trust in our Government.

Clear-eyed about the challenges before us and driven by boundless opportunities to make a difference, I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration to my nomination and I look forward, Senators, to answering any questions you may have.

Gracias. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nucete follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF LEOPOLDO MARTINEZ NUCETE

Good afternoon, Chairman, Ranking Member and esteemed members of this committee: I am deeply honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as the U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). I am grateful for President Biden's trust to serve our great nation.

I am joined today by my wife Analuisa, my children Leopoldo Henrique, Analuisa, Eduardo Ignacio, and Alejandro Antonio. My parents Bernardo Martinez and Beatriz Nucete de Martinez, in addition to my extended family, are tuning in via livestream from Florida, Michigan, New York, and Venezuela.

Integrity, intellectual curiosity, hard work and public service are the bedrock values upon which I was raised and have strived to pass down to my children. Their steadfast support and unwavering fidelity to American values have made my mere presence here possible in the first place. Our American journey started 16 years ago, when my family and I were forced to flee Venezuela and seek refuge here in the United States, simply for raising my voice as an outspoken champion for democracy and human rights against a socialist dictatorship. From the moment the United States opened its doors to my family, we have worked to give back and make this great nation proud. My family's story is an affirmation of the American dream and a testament to the promise of our country—nowhere else would this story be possible.

Following in the footsteps of my grandparents—both key founding figures of what once was a strong and exemplary democracy in Venezuela—I have dedicated a significant portion of my career to public service, most recently serving the University of Mary Washington, the University of Virginia, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Throughout my private and public sector career, I have worked firsthand with the inter-American system and participated in complex negotiations and initiatives for development and political reconciliation—all key competencies necessary to serve and excel as the U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

When I was a law school professor in Caracas, and as a visiting scholar at Harvard Law School, I argued and advocated in my teachings that the U.S. has a critical role to play in ensuring the success of the Inter-American Development Bank—a belief that has only been solidified since those days.

With over three decades of working on U.S.-Latin America relations and a robust network of stakeholders across the region, I am prepared—starting on day one—to work with Congress, particularly this Committee, the Executive Branch, and IDB leadership to create opportunities for equitable economic growth and to deepen economic relations with our hemispheric partners. I will bring to this role my extensive professional credentials in the legal, economic and financial sectors, where I have significant experience on project finance, sovereign borrowing and debt restructuring, institutional and economic reforms, and social impact entrepreneurship. In addition, as an international lawyer and consultant, I possess valuable expertise throughout the Americas working with large international law and accounting firms, as well as Fortune 500 companies, private equity funds, Multi-Latina corporations, international business, and non-profit organizations.

If confirmed, my highest priority will be to advance U.S. strategic interests in the hemisphere by building partnerships and programs for sustainable development in the region. Fulfilling that mission begins by ensuring Latin America and the Caribbean can not only recover, but build back better from the COVID-19 Pandemic. To that end, the United States, including through the IDB, must lead in the region to reduce poverty and inequality; strengthen inter-American supply chains to outcompete China; facilitate the transition to stronger, greener economies and address the root causes of migration.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch, and members of the committee, since its founding in 1959, the IDB has improved the lives of millions in Latin America and the Caribbean. I welcome the opportunity and privilege to ensure the United States continues to play a significant role in this institution—particularly relating to the policies and financial engagements that can strengthen our leadership in the region.

It would be the honor of a lifetime to represent our Nation as the U.S. Executive Director at the IDB. In addition to bringing my vast body of work and technical expertise, I would also bring to this role the hopes and dreams of immigrants and political refugees who have contributed so much to our country. It would also be an honor to be the first Venezuelan-American immigrant to be appointed and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to a position of leadership and trust in our Government.

Clear-eyed about the challenges before us, and driven by the boundless opportunities to make a difference, I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of my nomination. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Gracias—thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Martinez. We appreciate your testimony.

We will now hear from Ms. Jorge to be the United States alternative Executive Director of the International American Development Bank.

**STATEMENT OF MARIA FABIANA JORGE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NOMINATED TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

Ms. JORGE. Thank you, Senator. And before I start, I want to thank very much Senator Warner and Senator Blunt for their kind introductions today.

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Portman, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am humbled and honored to have been nominated by President Biden to serve as the alternate U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

I am the youngest of seven children, born and raised in Argentina. From a very young age, my parents, my school, and my religion reinforced the importance of trying to make the world a better place. I am deeply thankful to my parents and siblings for their unconditional love and the values they taught me.

I was in sixth grade in March 1976 when a military coup d'etat took place in Argentina and I remember the discussion that my parents had that night about what was about to come.

By the end of its rule, the dictatorship had kidnapped, tortured, and killed over 30,000 people. This experience changed me in a profound way and has deepened my love for the United States, our democracy, our freedoms, and the opportunities we have to work hard and to live the American dream.

I began my career in Argentina as a trade negotiator and a professor at a university. I organized the first seminars on political campaigns after the fall of the military government. That is how I met the love of my life, my husband, Doug, who is here with me today. Just a few weeks ago, we celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. I am so grateful to God for the family that we have built together with our wonderful children, Christopher, Phillip, and Nicole.

During my first decade in the United States, I opened and ran Latin American and Caribbean practices for two firms. At one of these firms, Verner Liipfert, or DLA Piper as it is known today, I was blessed to work with leaders on both sides of the aisle, such as former Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen and Senator Bob Dole.

For the past 21 years, I have been the owner of a consulting firm representing clients on matters regarding trade, international business, and access to affordable medicines. I learned to work with different stakeholders, to build coalitions, and to appreciate the importance of seeking common agendas independently of where each person was coming from.

As this committee knows, the COVID-19 pandemic has devastated Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2020, while global

GDP contracted 3.5 percent, the region's GDP decreased on average by 7 percent with some individual countries experiencing a significantly higher rate.

Poverty in Latin America rose 12.5 percent, affecting more than 33 percent of the population. Over 200 million people are now poor in the region. As of December 6, the region had 18 percent of the COVID-19 cases worldwide and 29 percent of the deaths, even though Latin America and the Caribbean represent only 8.4 percent of the global population.

If confirmed, I look forward to advancing U.S. interests in Latin America and the Caribbean by helping our partners recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. To foster political stability in Latin America and the Caribbean, we need to ensure sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job creation by fostering more regional integration, a better enabling environment for the private sector, stronger macroeconomic policies, and better governance, including anti-corruption, institutional capacity, respect for the rule of law, and democratic norms.

This is particularly true given the efforts of China and Russia to increase their influence in Latin America. The Inter-American Development Bank is uniquely positioned to make a difference by providing development financing that reduces poverty and inequality and, if confirmed, I will work closely with this committee to advance our national interest in stability and progress in the region.

Latin America and the Caribbean should be key strategic partners for the United States on economic and security issues. If confirmed, I will work with the Biden administration, Congress, and the professionals at the IDB to help the region prosper and play a new and important role in the global value chain.

Chairman Cardin, Ranking Member Portman, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you again for your consideration and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Jorge follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARIA FABIANA JORGE

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am humbled and honored to have been nominated by President Biden to serve as the Alternate U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

I am the youngest of seven children, born and raised in Argentina. From a very young age, my parents, my school and my religion reinforced the importance of trying to make the world a better place. I am deeply thankful to my parents and siblings for their unconditional love and the values they taught me.

I was in sixth grade in March 1976 when a military coup d'état took place in Argentina and I remember the discussion that my parents had that night about what was about to come. By the end of its rule, the dictatorship had kidnapped, tortured, and killed over 30,000 people. This experience changed me in a profound way and has deepened my love for the United States, our democracy, our freedoms, and the opportunities we have to work hard and to live the American Dream.

I began my career in Argentina as a trade negotiator and a professor at a university. I organized the first seminars on political campaigns after the fall of the military government. That is how I met the love of my life, my husband Doug, who is here with me today. Just a few weeks ago we celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. I am so grateful to God for the family that we have built together with our wonderful children Christopher, Phillip and Nicole.

During my first decade in the United States, I opened and ran Latin America and Caribbean practices for two firms. At one of these firms, Verner Liipfert or DLA

Piper as it is known today, I was blessed to work with leaders on both sides of the aisle, such as former Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen and Senator Bob Dole. For the past 21 years, I have been the owner of a consulting firm representing clients on matters regarding trade, international businesses, and access to affordable medicines. I learned to work with different stakeholders, to build coalitions, and to appreciate the importance of seeking common agendas, independently of where each person was coming from.

As this committee knows, the COVID-19 pandemic has devastated Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2020, while global GDP contracted 3.5 percent, the region's GDP decreased on average by 7 percent, with some individual countries experiencing a significantly higher rate. Poverty in Latin America rose 12.5 percent, affecting more than 33 percent of the population. Over 200 million people are now poor in the region.

As of December 6, 2021, the region had 18 percent of the COVID-19 cases worldwide and 29 percent of the deaths even though Latin America and the Caribbean represent only 8.4 percent of the world population. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing U.S. interests in Latin America and the Caribbean by helping our partners recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and develop greater resilience to pandemics.

To foster political stability in Latin America and the Caribbean, we need to ensure sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job creation by fostering more regional integration, a better enabling environment for the private sector, stronger macroeconomic policies, and better governance, including anti-corruption, institutional capacity, respect for the rule of law and democratic norms. This is particularly true given the efforts of China and Russia to increase their influence in Latin America. The Inter-American Development Bank is uniquely positioned to make a difference by providing development financing that reduces poverty and inequality and, if confirmed, I will work closely with the committee to advance our national interest in stability and progress in the region. Having worked with the IDB, I am well-equipped to serve as Alternate ED, as I understand the Bank's potentially transformational role in generating economic growth through its work.

Latin America and the Caribbean should be key strategic partners for the United States on economic and security issues. If confirmed, I will work with the Biden administration, Congress, and the professionals at the IDB to help the region prosper and play a new and important role in the global value chain.

Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member Risch and distinguished members of the committee, thank you again for your consideration and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator CARDIN. Again, thank you for your comments, and to all four of you, thank you for sharing your life experiences and how you have used that in order to strengthen our community. We appreciate that and your desire to serve our nation.

I have some preliminary questions that are asked of all nominees before this committee about the cooperation with our committee. I would ask that you answer simply yes or no.

Do each of you agreed to appear before this committee and make officials from your office available to the committee and designated staff when invited?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to keep this committee fully and currently informed about the activities under your purview?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to engaging in meaningful consultation when policies are being developed, not just providing notification after the fact?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Do you commit to promptly responding to requests for briefings and information requested by the committee and its designated staff?

[All witnesses answer in the affirmative.]

Senator CARDIN. Let the record show that to each of these four questions all four nominees responded in the affirmative. I am going to reserve my time and yield now to Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to begin with Ms. Ebong. And you may have heard some of the discussion in the earlier hearing with respect to influences by Russia and China in Eastern Europe and particularly in the Western Balkans, and I wonder, in your view, how do USTDA's investments in Eastern Europe, energy projects in Poland, 5G infrastructure in Turkey, how do those help lessen dependence on energy and digital infrastructure from Russia and China, and can you also talk about how you would prioritize those kinds of projects?

Ms. EBONG. Thank you very much, Senator, for your question. USTDA's objective is to provide sound alternatives for our partners all over the world in the developing and middle income countries, particularly those alternatives that are reflective of the best that U.S. companies have to offer.

And so with respect to Eastern Europe, in fact, just today we had signed a grant with Ukraine to provide a complete regulatory analysis with respect to making available small modular nuclear technologies, small modular reactor technologies, new technologies that are being advanced and developed now.

Our goal is to be at the point that technologies are being developed and find the way to access—to provide our companies access so that we can provide our partners alternatives that are based in partnership, based in mutual benefit, based in the best solutions that we have to offer.

In terms of prioritizing, we look to our partners to understand their needs, to U.S. industry to understand where they are in terms of their developments, and we look to the guidance that is available from the administration and from our works, working with the committees as well.

Senator SHAHEEN. This is really a question for you and for Ms. Whyche-Shaw because one of the efforts that we have undertaken for several administrations now is to recognize the role of empowering women in the economic life of countries.

And as you are thinking about investments, as you, Ms. Whyche-Shaw, are thinking about investments in Africa, how can we do more to encourage supporting women-run businesses and how do we see those as an investment that will pay dividends not just in terms of the businesses themselves but in terms of contributing back to the communities that women are living in?

Ms. WHYCHE-SHAW. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

As I indicated in my statement, African countries—the only way they are going to be able to truly meet the needs of their people, to have the economic development that we all hope for, is by using the totality of their populations and women are, certainly, 50 percent.

During my career, I have had a passion for dealing with women, credit, business. As a White House Fellow working at the FTC, I produced a film, "Women and Credit," that was shown in every Small Business Administration office throughout the country.

I was a member of the board of the North Carolina Planned Parenthood and, subsequently, on the Federation of Planned Parent-



hood board in New York, as chair of Plan USA, which is a large—relatively large not for profit organization. It was a pleasure for me to manage the pivoting of that organization from a more general economic development to an organization that is now focused on the empowerment of women and girls.

And, finally, I am on the board of the World Bicycle Relief, a smaller not for profit working primarily in Africa, which is providing access to transportation for women and girls, predominantly, so that girls can go to school, so that women can have access to health care services.

In terms of what I could do and what the bank should be doing, if confirmed, it is assuring that policies, that programs, are not only highlighting the importance and the requirement that women and girls be part of those discussions but also making sure—and this, for me, has always been a critical issue—it is not just the policies, the regulations, the strategies.

It is the consistent application, and so the oversight that the board can have, if confirmed, as a member of that board make sure that there is consistent application through our oversight so that women and girls can be equal partners in the development of their economies, of their communities, of the world is something that I will, certainly, continue to do. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Senator BARRASSO?

Senator BARRASSO. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Whyche-Shaw, I had a couple of questions for you and it focuses on something we talked about, the global inequity of energy.

There are 2.6 billion people around the world who cook using open fires or stoves fueled by wood, by charcoal, and by dung. In sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated nine out of 10 people cook with these sources.

As a result, close to 4 million people die prematurely every year from illness attributed to indoor air pollution from cooking. Cook smoke is described as the most deadly of all indoor pollutants.

On May 6th, 2021, *The Economist*—I think I mentioned this article to you before—I have the article here. Mr. Chairman, I ask to put this into the record.

Senator CARDIN. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

Senator BARRASSO. The headline of the article is “Donors Make it Harder for Africans to Avoid Deadly Wood Smoke: Making the Cleanest the Enemy of the Clean.” The article makes a point that one big obstacle is that donors in rich countries—the United States—are reluctant to back investment in any fossil fuels, even though the alternatives to natural gas are wood and charcoal and they are worse for the environment and for the cooks and for the children.

But that is the policy of this administration. This is exactly what the Biden administration is doing. Last week, media reports indicated the Biden administration has ordered U.S. agencies to immediately stop financing of carbon-intensive energy projects overseas, period.

The people of Africa, the world's poorest, are, in effect, being asked to bear the costs. I look at this and say how many more people living today in Africa is the Biden administration willing to let die in the name of a renewable energy goal and not allowing them to move to cleaner energy?

Ms. WHYCHE-SHAW. Thank you, Senator. The issue of energy is, certainly, something that is a critical factor for economic development, not just economic development but also for access to social services, health. You need refrigeration, which means you need energy.

I agree with you that energy is, certainly, something that has to be looked at because Africa has a paucity of energy—energy generation, distribution, and usage.

It is my understanding that the African Development Bank is looking and support a wide variety of energy projects. If confirmed, I would, certainly, look at every project based on the merits and the needs of the country, the overall context of the African Development Bank strategy in that country as well as taking guidance from my colleagues at Treasury on the implementation of the administration's strategy for fossil fuels.

We are not—the African Development Bank—I cannot speak because I am not in the administration and—

Senator BARRASSO. My time is running out so if you could just let me get to a next—go ahead.

Ms. WHYCHE-SHAW. Okay. I was going to say that the African Development Bank, while we are the second largest shareholder, we do not have a veto. I can, certainly, explain and present the administration's view, but it will be the members, the shareholders, that will determine whether or not projects are being approved or not.

Senator BARRASSO. All of Africa, a population of 1.3 billion people, accounts for a little more than 3 percent of total global electricity generation. In comparison, Americans use more electricity playing video games than all of Nigeria, a nation of 200 million people.

Despite the energy poverty issues, the administration—the Biden administration—is refusing to help finance and support traditional energy projects, and this administration, this president, is asking countries in Africa to leapfrog—that is their term—over traditional energy resources to power itself with solar, wind, and renewables only. We used those sources to build our economy but we are not allowing African nations the same opportunity.

Why is this administration blocking countries living in poverty in Africa, some of the most impoverished nations in the world, from using traditional energy sources to build their economies? These people are living there and suffering today.

Ms. WHYCHE-SHAW. Senator, you are absolutely right. I was not involved. Obviously, not being in the administration, I was not involved in the discussions of the policies that were put in place.

But I will, certainly, be conferring with my colleagues at Treasury and would be happy to get back to you with the responses.

Senator BARRASSO. Mr. Chairman, if I may, one last question.

Because African countries are speaking out against these policies by the administration. Recently, the president of Senegal explained that ending gas financing for Africa, he described it as a fatal blow.

He says at a time when several African countries are preparing to exploit their significant gas resources, the end of funding for gas sector under the pretext that gas is a fossil energy would bear a fatal cost to their emerging economies.

Senegal has significant reserves of natural gas. The development of its energy sector is a fundamental pillar of the country's economic development. I think we visited by the time—my trips to Ethiopia, the reason that women die in childbirth is because they do not have the energy for to use the devices that they need to help that woman through the birthing process.

On October of this year, the president of Uganda wrote an opinion editorial in the Wall Street Journal. Said solar and wind force poverty on Africa. This is the U.S. forcing poverty on Africa. He said, Africa cannot sacrifice its future prosperity for Western climate goals. The president of Uganda explained, this stands to forestall Africa's attempts to rise out of poverty, which requires, as you said, reliable energy.

African manufacturing is going to struggle, he says, to attract investment and, therefore, to create jobs without consistent energy sources.

I would just—if confirmed, I ask would you ensure that the bank promotes an all-of-the-above energy policy rather than something which will condemn people to live a life in poverty that is inescapable for them?

Ms. WHYCHE-SHAW. Senator, if confirmed, I, certainly, would not support policies that would keep people in poverty forever. I mean, that is not why the African Development Bank or why we are members of the African Development Bank.

And, again, I will confer with my colleagues at Treasury to get back with you.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Senator Barrasso.

I just saw—in response somewhat to Senator Barrasso's point, I was in Glasgow and know of our efforts to work with the African nations in regards to their energy needs, and one of the issues that was brought up frequently is that the developed world really needs to put its technology and resources behind the development of the developing world if we expect that they are going to make the type of sacrifices that are necessary in order to meet our greenhouse gas targets.

I think, Senator Barrasso, you raise some very important points, and I know that is going to be part of an overall strategy that we have in the developing world to make sure that they are treated fairly. I appreciate the response.

I want to raise one additional issue—and you are all going to get saved by the bell. We have a vote on the floor. And that is, particularly, in our hemisphere, Mr. Martinez and Ms. Jorge, I am concerned about the rising corruption within our own hemisphere.

The impunity rates in our hemisphere and many countries are just outrageous. The governmental corruption growth in several countries are very well documented. We need to make sure that

our participation in our hemisphere to help people do not fuel corruption or oligarchs that are stealing the resources from their own people.

I would ask that you develop a strategy, an anti-corruption strategy, as part of our participation to make sure that the efforts that we make are not diluted because of the advantages going to corruption and corrupt leaders.

And if you have a comment on that, briefly, I would be welcome to take it. Otherwise, we will continue this conversation at a later point.

Mr. NUCETE. Thank you, Senator. I would like to take the opportunity to welcome your concern and your comment, and express to you that is also a concern I share with you and many members of this committee.

Corruption is a corrosive force throughout the region and in the world, and we have to combat corruption in every front. I think IDB has developed best practices to make sure that corruption is not in presence in any decision or bidding process or selection of contractors, providers, the bank works with, and also to make sure that the countries implement reforms that ensure anti-corruption practice.

I would also say that IDB offers, Senator, a very important tool to ensure that we fight corruption across the region, which is institutional policy lending projects.

We can work in reforming the judiciary, helping institutions throughout the Americas to be ready to support anti-corruption practices throughout the region.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that response.

Yes, Ms. Jorge?

Ms. JORGE. Thank you, Senator. I would like to add to that that I agree with you a hundred percent. I think corruption is a cancer of society, democracy, inequality.

But I would like to mention that the Biden administration last week in the Summit of Democracies released an anti-corruption plan and I am really looking forward to working with the administration and with Congress and with the bank, because if we do not address this issue, the impact that we are going to have will be very, very minor.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you for that.

And, again, I thank all four of our witnesses for their willingness to serve our country and for your responsiveness at this hearing.

The record will stay open until the close of business Wednesday, tomorrow, December 15th, for questions for the record. We would ask that you respond as promptly as possible and as completely as possible to any questions that might be asked by members of this committee. That goes for both panels. Will get there the close of business tomorrow.

And with that, there being no further business, the committee will stand adjourned with our thanks to our nominees.

[Whereupon, at 4:35 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

---

## Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. CHRISTOPHER R. HILL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

### *Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately.

- Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. Anomalous Health Incident (AHIs) have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

- If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

- Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. Again, if confirmed there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

*Question.* Kosovo and Serbia's EU-facilitated dialogue has seemed to yield little fruit, especially in recent months. The two sides did not meet in November, as they were unable to agree on what topics to discuss. Serbia hoped to discuss implementation of the 2013 Brussels Agreement and the creation of an Association of Serb-Majority Municipalities, while Kosovo pushed to discuss 1600 missing Kosovo Albanians following the end of the 1998-1999 war.

- How will you push the Serbian Government to be a more constructive partner in the EU-facilitated dialogue?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work to build on the progress the current and prior administrations have made in the Western Balkans to advance regional security, stability, and economic prosperity. If confirmed, I will emphasize with Serbian authorities the importance of honoring previous commitments and the necessity of compromise and flexibility as well as of improved cooperation between Serbian and Kosovo officials in support of normalization of relations. President Vucic has repeatedly stated he understands the Dialogue is the only way forward. I will reinforce with Serbian authorities that EU membership for Serbia is the best guarantee of long-term regional prosperity and peace, and that the EU-facilitated dialogue is essential to this strategic goal.

- How can the U.S. better support the EU-led dialogue?

*Answer.* The United States has a key role to play in helping the parties reach an agreement to establish fully normalized relations, and closely coordinates with EU counterparts on the Dialogue. If confirmed, I will work closely with the EU and Serbian authorities to advance the Dialogue as the mechanism for Serbia to normalize relations with Kosovo through implementation of the provisions of the 2013 Brussels Agreement and, ultimately, a comprehensive normalization ideally based on mutual recognition. This is essential for enduring stability in the Western Balkans. I commit to reinforcing with Serbian officials, and the Serbian public, the continued importance of compromise to achieve normalization for Serbia's strategic goals of EU membership and regional prosperity.

*Question.* Serb member of Bosnia and Herzegovina's presidency, Milorad Dodik, has intensified attacks on the Office of High Representative, and continues to threaten to separate the Republika Srpska from Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has

also called for a Bosnian Serb army, and called the labeling of the Srebrenica massacre as genocide, “untrue,” and “biased.”

- How will you encourage the Serbian Government to exert its influence to tone down this rhetoric, and protect the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Answer. The United States and the EU are increasingly concerned by the inflammatory rhetoric and actions of Milorad Dodik and Republika Srpska (RS) officials, which undermine the Dayton Accords. The Biden administration has engaged Serbia’s leadership to join calls against RS secession and withdrawal from state institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage President Vucic to sustain clear and vocal public and private support for the Dayton Accords and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as he has done.

*Question.* The U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control recently sanctioned leaders of the Zvonko Veselinovic Organized Crime Group, as well as the vice president of Kosovo’s Serb List, Milan Radoicic. OFAC said that the Veselinovic group “engaged in a large-scale bribery scheme with Kosovo and Serbian officials who facilitate the group’s illicit trafficking of goods, money, narcotics, and weapons between Kosovo and Serbia.” President Vucic commented on the sanctions announcement, expressing that authorities would launch an investigation into them if the allegations were serious.

- Given the response from President Vucic, how do you assess the role of targeted sanctions in the United States’ strategy in the Western Balkans?

Answer. Sanctions are an important tool to support our broader goal to combat corruption, and other illicit activity, and promote stability and democratic institutions in the region. The recent release by the White House of the first-ever U.S. Government Strategy on Countering Corruption; the expansion of the U.S. sanctions regime for the Western Balkans, which expressly authorizes economic sanctions in connection with corruption and other destabilizing activities; and the recent designation of the Veselinovic crime group under the Global Magnitsky sanctions program, demonstrate that the Biden administration takes this goal very seriously. Such tools have demonstrated positive impact globally and in this region, including leading to local investigations, anticorruption reforms, and media and civil society attention.

*Question.* The U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control recently sanctioned leaders of the Zvonko Veselinovic Organized Crime Group, as well as the vice president of Kosovo’s Serb List, Milan Radoicic. OFAC said that the Veselinovic group “engaged in a large-scale bribery scheme with Kosovo and Serbian officials who facilitate the group’s illicit trafficking of goods, money, narcotics, and weapons between Kosovo and Serbia.” President Vucic commented on the sanctions announcement, expressing that authorities would launch an investigation into them if the allegations were serious.

- How can sanctions be used to hold others accountable for crime and corruption in Serbia?

Answer. The administration has prioritized fighting corruption as a key U.S. national security interest and has taken actions to elevate this priority. The recently signed Western Balkans-related E.O. modernized the sanctions program, in part by expanding the list of sanctionable activities to better address current challenges facing the Western Balkans. These challenges include corruption and other activities that degrade key democratic institutions or aim to obstruct the implementation of key international agreements. Corruption threatens economic equity, global anti-poverty and development efforts, and democracy itself. Sanctions are one of many tools that promote accountability, combat impunity for those involved in corruption, and deter future criminal activity.

*Question.* The Serbian Government has used COVID-19 as an excuse to further threaten media freedom, arresting those like Ana Lalic for reporting on conditions in a hospital in Novi Sad. Freedom House assesses there to be an environment of self-censorship in journalism in Serbia after Lalic’s arrest, and warns of increased surveillance of journalists by Serbia’s Security Information Agency. Online journalists face an increasingly toxic environment in which to report, characterized by threats, harassment, and criminal liability.

- How will you work to support independent media in Serbia, and push the Serbian Government to reverse this concerning trend in media freedom?

Answer. If confirmed, I will reinforce the importance of a free media and of actions to protect the safety of journalists with Serbia’s political leaders and the Ser-

bian public and speak out publicly and privately in defense of investigative journalists and media organizations who are shining a light on corruption. A free and independent media is critical for any democratic society, just as it is for Serbia's EU accession. I am concerned by Serbia's deteriorating media environment, including threats against journalists, opaque media ownership, frivolous lawsuits against journalists by government officials, and politically motivated editorial pressure. If confirmed, I will continue to support independent media through programs to strengthen investigative journalism and the professionalism of media outlets, as well as improve transparency—in all aspects, including ownership.

#### *Elections in Serbia*

*Question.* Representatives of the European Parliament and the Speaker of the Serbian Parliament agreed in September on sixteen measures to improve election conditions in advance of the Serbia's April 2022 elections. However, many of these recommendations have not been implemented on the timeline planned, and civil society groups have questioned whether these recommendations would create conditions for free and fair elections.

- How do you assess Serbia's prospects for electoral reforms? How will you engage the Government, if confirmed, to push for free and fair elections in April, and beyond?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will engage interlocutors across the political spectrum to encourage constructive dialogue between the Government and opposition and a media environment that allows opposition voices to be heard. It is important that the serious and legitimate concerns which citizens have raised be properly addressed, including allowing democratic debate, pushing back against voter coercion and vote-buying, and improving the electoral system. Many of the calls for reforms have merit, including calls to ensure free and fair elections, stronger protections for freedom of expression, including by journalists, and fair access to state-supported media outlets for all candidates. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to broaden political representation and increase the capacities of political parties and civil society to help ensure free and fair electoral conditions.

#### *Sexual Assault*

*Question.* I am deeply concerned by reports of cases of sexual assault and rape going uninvestigated, and government efforts to defame survivors like Danijela Stajnfeld that choose to share their stories publicly. How will you work to hold Serbia accountable for its commitments under the Istanbul Convention, and shift the dialogue on these issues to a more constructive place?

*Answer.* The United States takes seriously the issue of gender-based violence (GBV). Serbia has made progress in creating the legal framework to combat GBV, but it needs to bolster services for survivors, strengthen partnership with civil society organizations, improve courtroom practices, and reach historically marginalized groups. GBV remains a significant problem in Serbia. If confirmed, I will continue Embassy Belgrade's advocacy and outreach—including its recent well-publicized "16 Days of Activism against GBV" campaign—to support efforts to prevent all forms of GBV. I will urge the Serbian Government to protect survivors of GBV from discriminatory threats and intimidation, including during and after any legal proceedings.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO HON. CHRISTOPHER R. HILL BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* In the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Serbia was identified as Tier 2 due to lack adequate efforts and resources to aid victims of trafficking in country. How will you work with the Government to address these issues if you are confirmed as Ambassador?

*Answer.* The Embassy works closely with and provides foreign assistance to anti-trafficking civil society groups and actively urges the Government of Serbia to address several priorities, such as investigation, prosecution, and conviction of traffickers, including complicit officials, and impose adequate penalties. This assistance also focuses on proactive victim identification, as well as victim-centered approaches and access to justice measures. If confirmed, I will engage with U.S. and Serbian stakeholders to advance cooperation on this issue. I will urge the Serbian Government to increase proactive identification and assistance for victims, particularly

among vulnerable groups, and encourage consistent and sufficient funding for victim services.

*Question.* In the 2020 International Religious Freedom report, Serbia was identified having significant religious freedom issues, including a rise in antisemitic crimes.

- What is your assessment of this particular issue and if confirmed, how will you work with the office of the Ambassador At Large to bolster religious freedom in-country?

*Answer.* Antisemitism and Holocaust distortion are world-wide phenomena and rising at an alarming rate. Although levels of antisemitism are lower in Serbia than in some other parts of Europe, I view any increase in antisemitism with serious concern. If confirmed, I will reiterate to the Serbian Government the importance of this issue and work to empower civil society on the ground who are tirelessly working on these issues. I will work with the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, and the Office of International Religious Freedom to identify areas where the United States can further cooperate with the Government and Serbia's Jewish community to combat antisemitism, confront Holocaust revisionism, and bolster respect for the freedom of religion or belief.

*Question.* Serbia still has not adopted the IHRA working definition of Antisemitism. If confirmed, will you press the Serbian Government on adopting this important term and working definition?

*Answer.* In February 2021, Serbia adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism and passed a law establishing a Holocaust Memorial Center at Staro Sajmiste, the site of a former WWII-era concentration camp located in Belgrade. In 2016, Serbia became the first country to adopt a law on the restitution of heirless and unclaimed Jewish property seized during the Holocaust, consistent with the 2009 Terezin Declaration, which it endorsed. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage the Serbian Government to follow through on its commitments regarding Holocaust issues.

*Question.* What efforts will you direct your Embassy to take to promote dialogue between religious groups and subsequently between religious groups and the Serbian Government to promote tolerance and cooperation?

*Answer.* The Serbian constitution guarantees the freedom of religion or belief. Embassy Belgrade consistently engages with all religious communities to promote religious tolerance and diversity, regularly highlighting these programs and events via the Embassy's social media accounts. Some religious groups and NGOs criticize the Government for granting special privileges to religious groups it defines as "traditional," such as tax exemptions, that "non-traditional" groups do not receive. If confirmed, I will continue to meet with members of Serbia's religious communities and the Government to address the status of religious freedom and interreligious cooperation in Serbia and to promote interfaith and intra-faith dialogue.

*Question.* In the 2020 Human Rights Report, Serbia was identified as having serious human rights issues including serious restrictions on free expression and the press, including violence, threats of violence, and unjustified arrests and prosecutions against journalists; numerous acts of government corruption, and more. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address these instances with the host government?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will reinforce the importance of a free media and of the safety of journalists with Serbia's political leaders and the Serbian public and speak out publicly and privately in defense of investigative journalists and media organizations. A free and independent media is critical for any democratic society, just as it is for Serbia's EU accession. I am concerned by Serbia's deteriorating media environment, including threats against journalists, opaque media ownership, frivolous lawsuits against journalists by government officials, and politically motivated editorial pressure. If confirmed, I will continue to support independent media through foreign assistance programs that strengthen investigative journalism, as well as press for transparency in all aspects, including ownership.

*Question.* How will you direct your Embassy to work with civil society organizations to improve the human rights situation on the ground?

*Answer.* U.S. foreign assistance programs in Serbia to improve the human rights situation include grants to civil society organizations working on anti-corruption and government transparency, media freedom, and access to the justice system, as well as minority protection and advocacy issues. New programs focused on people with



disabilities and the LGBTQI+ community will increase support to these populations. If confirmed, I look forward to building on these efforts and working with civil society to promote democracy, anti-corruption, rule of law, human rights, and global norms. U.S. Embassy Belgrade has strong relationships with civil society organizations, and I commit to working closely together to promote and protect human rights and other shared values. If confirmed I will also engage with the Government of Serbia to stress the importance of a robust civil society for democracy and urge the Government to engage with civil society and take into account civil society's views on issues that affect them.

#### *Dayton Accords*

*Question.* The Dayton Accords are now 26 years old, and some Balkan leaders begun to casting doubt on their efficacy. Some minor reforms have been made to the document, but Dayton largely functions as it did a generation ago. We have heard that the reform of ethnic restrictions on the tri-part presidency and other ethnically restricted offices are one avenue for change that has been identified by the State Department. What are some other ways that the Dayton Accords could be reformed?

*Answer.* The Dayton Accords successfully put an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and have helped maintain the peace there for over 26 years. The United States remains fully committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of BiH. The State Department continues to work closely with the EU on efforts to advance key rule of law, economic, anti-corruption, and electoral reforms in BiH. If confirmed, I will engage Serbia's leaders to use their influence—in cooperation with U.S. and EU partners—to support the reforms necessary for BiH to implement rulings of the European Court of Human Rights and build a more democratic and prosperous future for all citizens of BiH.

*Question.* Do you believe the discussion of reforms to the Dayton framework could, as some allege, pose a risk to stability in the region?

*Answer.* Solutions for reform and advancement are available now, such as those in the EU's Key Priorities. The United States, in collaboration with EU partners, is focused on building consensus for step-by-step reforms. These include limited constitutional changes, to fully implement rulings of the European Court of Human Rights, and to achieve a more democratic, less corrupt, economically viable, and secure Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). If confirmed, I will engage with Serbia's leaders and together with the U.S. Ambassadors to BiH and Croatia to work to support the reforms necessary to build a prosperous future for all citizens of BiH.

#### *Coordination Within the State Department*

*Question.* If confirmed, you will join a team of career diplomats already working in the region as Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ambassadors, and Special Envoy. How will you coordinate efforts within the region with other State Department officials to maximize the effectiveness of U.S. involvement in Serbia and the Western Balkans?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to establishing close and productive working relationships with Deputy Assistant Secretary and Special Representative for the Western Balkans Gabriel Escobar and U.S. Ambassadors throughout the Western Balkans to advance a European future for all the countries of the region, cement democratic norms and the rule of law, and deepen regional cooperation based on common values and a shared future. The security and economies of the Western Balkans are inextricably linked, with Serbia playing a pivotal role as the largest population and largest economy. If confirmed, I commit to communicating and consulting frequently with my regional counterparts and Washington to collectively advance U.S. policies.

*Question.* What are some specific frameworks you would like to develop with your State Department colleagues in the region to ensure you have a unified approach to issues facing the region?

*Answer.* Regional cooperation and consistency of the U.S. approach is imperative in the interlinked Western Balkans. The United States has a key role in helping these countries to resolve residual legacy issues such as missing persons, war crimes, and historical revisionism, as well as cross border policy priorities such as those affecting ethnic minority populations in neighboring countries, migration, crime and corruption, counterterrorism, and regional economic cooperation. For these reasons, if confirmed, I commit to building positive and productive relationships with both Washington and colleagues throughout the region through regular

communication, consultation, and policy discussions to strategically approach cross border issues.

#### *Anti-Corruption*

*Question.* The Balkan sanctions regime was revised by the Biden administration this summer to shift the focus from prevention of violence to the prevention of corruption. The administration also just released the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption and announced the sanctioning of a Kosovar-Serbian Organized crime ring, the Zvonko Veselinovic Organized Crime Group, and its affiliates, under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

- How would you implement the anti-corruption strategy in Serbia in the context of other Western Balkan nations?

*Answer.* Corruption remains the most significant rule of law issue in Serbia and the Western Balkans. It weakens public confidence in Serbia's institutions and democratic processes, discourages investment, makes Serbia vulnerable to malign external actors, and threatens Serbia's EU accession progress. On December 9, Secretary Blinken also announced the establishment of a State Department Coordinator on Anticorruption, who will integrate and elevate the fight against corruption across all aspects of U.S. diplomacy and State Department foreign assistance, and to lead the State Department's implementation of the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption. If confirmed, I will work closely with the State Department Coordinator to effectively implement the U.S. anti-corruption strategy in the Serbia and Western Balkans context, and will continue to target U.S. foreign assistance to support Serbia's anti-corruption units in law enforcement and the judiciary, public procurement reform, and civil society and media in their critical oversight role. Sanctions, visa restrictions, and other accountability tools including President Biden's modernized Western Balkans-related E.O., are also important tools to address threats to stability and democratic institutions.

*Question.* Do you believe the imposition of sanctions on organized crime rings, human rights abusers, or other persons involved in corruption is a useful tool in Serbia? Please explain why you see such sanctions as efficacious or not.

*Answer.* Yes. Sanctions are an important tool to address corruption, organized crime, and human rights violations. They demonstrate U.S. commitment to promote accountability and disrupt and deter malign activity, they can limit the freedom and impunity with which corrupt actors operate, and they can provide the basis and impetus for regional authorities to launch their own investigations to hold these actors to account. If confirmed, I will support the implementation of U.S. sanctions and other accountability tools as useful components of a broader policy aimed at countering threats to national security posed by particular activities, groups, individuals, and organizations.

#### *Illegal Immigration*

*Question.* One issue facing Serbia includes illegal immigrants arriving from the Middle East. Those who manage to enter Serbia move on and contribute to the larger migration problem facing Europe, while others have been refused entry and pushed back from the border, causing crises in neighboring countries. How will you engage with the Serbian Government to confront migration issues?

*Answer.* Unresolved global conflicts prompted the movement of over 1.5 million refugees and migrants through the Western Balkans in 2015 and 2016. Serbia today hosts approximately 5,000 refugees, asylum-seekers, and migrants, mainly from Afghanistan and Syria. From FY 2016-FY 2021, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration provided nearly \$48 million in humanitarian aid for programs in the Balkans. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. Government efforts, in coordination with local partners such as UNHCR and civil society, to help the Government of Serbia strengthen its asylum system and integrate humanitarian assistance into economic development and institutional protection programs.

*Question.* One issue facing Serbia includes illegal immigrants arriving from the Middle East. Those who manage to enter Serbia move on and contribute to the larger migration problem facing Europe, while others have been refused entry and pushed back from the border, causing crises in neighboring countries. How can this issue be a barrier to EU integration?

*Answer.* As part of its EU accession requirements, Serbia needs to undertake reforms required by chapter 24 of the EU *acquis communautaire*, which sets out common rules for border control, visas, external migration, and asylum. According to the EU's 2021 progress report, Serbia helped manage the mixed migration flows towards the EU and played a constructive role in cooperating effectively with its

neighbors and EU member states. It also continued to effectively implement the integrated border management strategy and its action plan. If confirmed, I will reinforce the importance of further international cooperation to address migration.

*Question.* One issue facing Serbia includes illegal immigrants arriving from the Middle East. Those who manage to enter Serbia move on and contribute to the larger migration problem facing Europe, while others have been refused entry and pushed back from the border, causing crises in neighboring countries. How could this issue benefit from greater EU involvement, and what form would EU assistance in Serbia take?

*Answer.* The Serbian Government runs migrant and asylum centers, primarily supported by EU Instrument for Pre-Accession special measure funds, that provide basic amenities. Few migrants are interested in seeking asylum in Serbia. However, upon arrival, most migrants express interest in international protection and assistance prior to moving onward along well-defined smuggling routes into Western Europe. If confirmed, I commit to engage with the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; the EU; UNHCR; and non-governmental organizations actively working on this issue to ensure donor coordination and identify solutions to migration flows.

*Question.* One issue facing Serbia includes illegal immigrants arriving from the Middle East. Those who manage to enter Serbia move on and contribute to the larger migration problem facing Europe, while others have been refused entry and pushed back from the border, causing crises in neighboring countries. How could finding a proper domestic solution to this issue benefit Serbia's EU aspirations?

*Answer.* The Serbian Government runs migrant and asylum centers providing basic amenities to these individuals while they are in Serbia. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Serbian Government and other local entities to improve Serbia's asylum/migrant system in line with EU standards. It is important that the Government of Serbia accelerate the reforms necessary to meet these EU standards, and U.S. foreign assistance is helping it do so. As Serbia closes additional EU accession chapters, it will move closer to our shared goal of eventual EU membership for Serbia.

#### *Kosovo*

*Question.* The Serbia-Kosovo relationship continues to face many obstacles, with the most recent issue being over mutual recognition of license plates. What are the greatest obstacles to normalizing relations between Serbia and Kosovo?

*Answer.* Relations between Serbia and Kosovo remain difficult, and unresolved issues frequently lead to tensions that affect people on both sides of the border. These differences and the lack of normalization of their relations hinder their respective European paths, slow regional reconciliation and cooperation, and deter potential business investors. The United States has encouraged both Serbia and Kosovo to engage meaningfully, constructively, and urgently with each other to address and finally resolve their differences, primarily through the EU-facilitated Dialogue. If confirmed, I will commit to reinforcing with Serbian officials and the Serbian public the continued importance of fully normalizing relations with Kosovo.

*Question.* As Ambassador, how would you pursue progress in the Serbia-Kosovo relationship, and what issues would you prioritize first when you arrive at post?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would prioritize reinforcing United States' support for the EU-facilitated Dialogue as the most effective way to reach a locally owned, legally binding, and comprehensive agreement. The United States believes this should be based on mutual recognition. The United States is not dictating what that agreement must entail; that is up to the parties. If confirmed, I would also encourage Serbia to approach the Dialogue seriously and with urgency, focus on diplomacy, and be creative and flexible in reaching a compromise deal, which will improve the lives of citizens in Serbia and Kosovo alike.

#### *Bosnia and Herzegovina*

*Question.* Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik has been vocal about his efforts to establish government offices and military forces separate from the Bosnia Federation and Herzegovina, which poses serious threats to stability in the country and the region. As Ambassador, how will you engage with the Serbian Government and encourage them to support stability in Bosnia with regard to such destabilizing actions in Republika Srpska?

*Answer.* The United States and the EU are increasingly concerned by the inflammatory rhetoric and actions of Milorad Dodik and Republika Srpska (RS) officials,

which undermine the Dayton Accords. The Biden administration has engaged Serbia's leadership to join calls against RS secession and withdrawal from state institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage President Vucic to sustain clear and vocal public and private support for the Dayton Accords and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as he has done to date.

*Question.* Do you believe that, as some have insinuated, Mr. Dodik's antics are encouraged by Belgrade or Moscow?

*Answer.* No matter the origin or rationale for President Dodik's behavior, it is unacceptable. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina remains essential to regional stability. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage President Vucic to sustain clear and vocal public and private support for the Dayton Accords and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Kremlin's interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not align with U.S. interests, as it sows instability in the region and seeks to keep the Western Balkans from its chosen path of moving closer to Europe.

#### *Transatlantic Integration*

*Question.* The Western Balkans have stalled on integration with the rest of Europe. What are the greatest obstacles to advancing Serbia's integration with Europe and EU accession?

*Answer.* Since formally opening accession negotiations with the EU in 2014, Serbia has made significant reforms. Serbia has more to do, particularly in areas such as fighting corruption, improving the rule of law, strengthening democratic institutions and civil society, expanding the economy, improving the media environment, addressing climate change and other environmental issues such as waste management, air quality, and the protection of Serbia's rivers, and reforming its energy sector. Normalization of relations with Kosovo is also an important condition for Serbia's EU accession. If confirmed, I will continue to advance the U.S. policy of supporting Serbia's stated goal of EU membership which will fully anchor Serbia into its rightful place in Europe. I will also continue foreign assistance programs that catalyze related reforms.

*Question.* What is your understanding of EU members' hesitation to strengthen ties with Serbia?

*Answer.* The EU's strongest carrot motivating reforms has been, and will remain, accession. Prospects for accession need to be tangible and achievable, and progress can be incremental but should be steady. Western Balkan leaders must do more than reiterate public commitments to achieving EU membership -- they must take real actions and press ahead with difficult reforms, particularly on rule of law and transparency, as well as on alignment with common EU foreign policy. Accelerating reforms will bolster the Western Balkan countries as serious credible candidates for EU membership. When countries deliver on reforms, EU member states should deliver on their promise by moving these countries forward on their respective accession paths.

*Question.* What is your understanding of Serbia's hesitation to fully throw itself into undertaking the reforms that are necessary for it to become an EU member?

*Answer.* Many of the reforms required for Serbia's EU accession, including normalization of relations with Kosovo, require significant work and take time. If confirmed, I will emphasize with Serbian leaders and the Serbian public the importance of further progress on reforms, and of active participation in the EU-facilitated dialogue with Kosovo, because this will improve lives in Serbia, Kosovo, and the whole region. The United States wants to see Serbia develop as a modern, prosperous European country that enjoys strong relations with all its neighbors and demonstrates full respect for the rule of law, democracy, and the rights of all its citizens.

*Question.* How would you work to advance Serbia's prospects for European integration and EU accession, and what issues would you prioritize first when you arrive at post?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue supporting Serbia's EU accession progress in areas such as fighting corruption, improving the rule of law, strengthening democratic institutions and civil society, expanding the economy, improving the media environment, and reforming its energy sector, among other issues. I will reinforce that the United States and Serbia share a common strategic goal in advancing membership in the European Union for all of the countries of the Western Balkans. I will continue to demonstrate that shared purpose by providing Serbia with needed technical assistance and capacity building to advance its accession.

*Russian Influence*

*Question.* Serbia has one of the most favorable relationships with Russia in Europe. This is concerning for both Serbia's well-being, as well as the stability of the Western Balkans itself. What are the greatest risks posed by Russian influence in Serbia, both for the country itself and the region?

*Answer.* Moscow wields influence in Serbia through political, economic, military, cultural, media, and other means and looks to expand its influence throughout the Western Balkans, including in Serbia, and to keep the region from integrating with Western institutions. To this end, Russia sees instability in the Western Balkans as in its interest, although this undermines Serbia's interest in a stable, prospering region. Furthermore, Russia exploits its position as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council with veto power to maintain leverage over Serbia, opposing Kosovo's independence and blocking Kosovo's international integration. If confirmed, I will commit to honest, frank conversations with Serbian leaders about Russia's true intentions.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to confront Russian influence in Serbia?

*Answer.* The United States and Russia have starkly different visions for the future of Serbia and the region. Moscow actively sows friction and distrust because it sees such division as in its interest. In contrast, U.S. interests are cementing democratic norms, rule of law, and cooperation based on common values and a shared future. If confirmed, I will encourage Serbian authorities to make policy choices that reflect Western values and continue making the case that Russia does not support Serbia's own strategic goals. Serbia's future lies with Europe, and the U.S. is committed to helping it get there. This path leads through democratic reforms, especially strengthening rule of law, democratic institutions, and media freedom.

*Question.* What tools does the U.S. have to guide Serbia away from strengthening ties with Russia and encouraging transatlantic integration?

*Answer.* I will continue to use Countering Russian Influence Fund (CRIF) foreign assistance to bolster Western Balkans countries' abilities to respond. If confirmed, I would encourage the administration's strategy, which includes sustained high-level engagement by U.S. officials, creative project financing options, and strong commercial advocacy for U.S./European firms to counter the Kremlin's malign influence. Supporting Serbia's European future will help Serbia undertake important democratic reforms and cement Western values. Bolstering U.S.-Serbia economic and defense cooperation will highlight positive alternatives to partnership with Russia (and China).

*Question.* Please discuss your understanding of the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church on politics in Serbia.

*Answer.* The Russian Orthodox Church retains significant influence within the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). The Orthodox faith is central to Serbian national identity and to spiritual, cultural, and political life in Serbia as well as in Serb communities in neighboring countries. The SOC is one of Serbia's most trusted institutions, and almost 85 percent of Serbia's public are members of the church. The SOC wields significant social and political influence and consistently takes a conservative stance on recognition of Kosovo. The protection and status of Orthodox religious sites in Kosovo and Montenegro remain highly sensitive and subject to foreign influence; this is something that I will monitor carefully along with my fellow Ambassadors to the region.

*Question.* Hungary has emerged as one of the EU's strongest proponents of joining Serbia to the EU. Hungarian President Orbán has also increased his engagement with Serbian President Vucic. What do you believe are the reasons for Hungary's growing interest in Serbia?

*Answer.* Serbia and Hungary signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement in September 2021, Serbia's only such agreement in the region. The neighboring countries enjoy warm relations based on growing economic ties and an apparent personal affinity between President Vucic and Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán. Hungary has been a leading and vocal supporter of Serbia's EU accession. Ethnic Hungarians enjoy strong minority rights in the autonomous province of Vojvodina in the north of Serbia. As neighbors they share strategic interest in the economic growth of the region. If confirmed, I will work to channel these interests on a positive trajectory.

*Chinese Influence*

*Question.* China has identified the Balkans as an opportune region to establish its political-economic presence in Europe. Serbia has already engaged in multiple

“Belt-and-Road” projects, namely Chinese-built infrastructure projects funded by unsustainable loans. What are the greatest risks posed by PRC influence in Serbia, both for the country itself and the region?

*Answer.* The PRC’s role in Serbia (and the region) is expanding rapidly. Through a combination of opaque loans and investments, the PRC is building infrastructure in Serbia and capturing strategic industries like mining and steel production. The PRC takes advantage of the desire of some officials for expedited, no-questions-asked investment and financing to secure entry points into the EU market. It also takes advantage of the existing lack of transparency in Serbia’s public procurement system to sign non-transparent deals for infrastructure projects and other economic cooperation.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to confront Chinese influence in Serbia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will encourage Serbian authorities to reassess whether China’s interests align with Serbia’s own strategic goals. Serbian leaders should conduct a thorough accounting of PRC infrastructure projects to assess their economic viability and their adherence to Serbia’s environmental and labor regulations. If confirmed, I will advise Serbia’s leaders to ensure that all foreign investment and economic support—including from China—advances Serbia’s own goals of sustainable economic growth and EU membership. I will use foreign assistance tools such as the Countering Chinese Influence Fund and caution Serbia to examine closely PRC investments in critical infrastructure that could expose citizens to security or data privacy risks.

*Question.* What tools does the U.S. have to guide Serbia away from predatory business deals with China and promote fair deals with businesses from the U.S. and our democratic partners?

*Answer.* The United States can help improve Serbia’s investment climate and, through support for greater regional interconnectedness, foster a market that offers high quality alternatives to PRC investment. It is also important that U.S. businesses have a level playing field to operate in Serbia and the region. Infrastructure financing through DFC and EXIM, for example, are invaluable tools, and Serbia’s commitments to decarbonize its energy sector and broader economy will broaden opportunities for U.S. and European green energy firms. If confirmed, I will press Serbia to ensure American firms market opportunities equal to those afforded to PRC and other foreign firms.

*Question.* What are barriers to foreign investment in Serbia, and how can concerns behind them be addressed in order to attract more foreign investment?

*Answer.* While Serbia has made great strides, it needs to accelerate the implementation of structural reforms and improve corporate governance and its business environment. This will generate investment opportunities, broad-based economic growth, and improved living standards for all. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. Embassy Belgrade’s support for implementation of Serbia’s reform agenda to strengthen the rule of law, combat corruption, and encourage transparent and accountable government to protect the rights of U.S. exporters, suppliers, and investors doing business in Serbia. I will continue efforts to improve protection of intellectual property rights and to address trade barriers that interfere with the growth of U.S. exports.

*Question.* The China-built Budapest-Belgrade Railway remains under construction. What are your views of this project?

*Answer.* Whether to accept PRC financing and investment is a sovereign decision, and the United States respects Serbia’s right to decide for itself. However, the Biden administration has been clear that Serbia and other countries should only consider certain PRC offers with eyes wide open. The PRC takes advantage of the desire of some officials for expedited, no-questions-asked investment and financing, as well as non-transparent procurement processes, to secure entry points into the EU market. For example, Chinese firms have led several major recent transportation projects, including the Belgrade-Budapest high-speed railway, through non-public, non-transparent bilateral deals.

*Question.* The China-built Budapest-Belgrade Railway remains under construction. What positive or negative effects will it have for Hungary?

*Answer.* Reports indicate the PRC intends to link the Budapest-Belgrade railway to the deep seaport of Piraeus in Greece, providing direct access for Chinese goods to enter Europe. The Hungarian Government has faced criticism for signing a Chinese loan worth more than \$2 billion in 2020 to undertake the project and classified the terms of the loan on the pretense of national security. An oligarch aligned with

Hungarian PM Orban eventually won the tender to construct the railway perpetuating a system of corruption pervasive in Hungarian public tenders. Opaque deals with foreign state-owned firms on critical infrastructure on the territory of a NATO Ally and EU member could raise security concerns for Hungary itself and for our partnerships.

*Question.* The China-built Budapest-Belgrade Railway remains under construction. What positive or negative effects will it have for Serbia?

*Answer.* Serbia has limited national security-focused tools, like investment screening or procurement processing, that could mitigate potentially harmful economic activities. PRC firms, among several other major recent transportation infrastructure projects, secured the Belgrade-Budapest high-speed railway project through non-public, non-transparent, bilateral deals. The United States has encouraged Serbia to seriously consider whether such proposed projects would be economically viable, whether Serbia's own environmental and labor regulations would be respected, and whether PRC investments in critical infrastructure would expose Serbia and its citizens to security or data privacy risks or hinder its EU accession progress.

*Question.* The China-built Budapest-Belgrade Railway remains under construction. What positive or negative effects will it have for the Balkans region?

*Answer.* To have positive impacts on the region—increased productivity and regional interconnectivity—transportation infrastructure projects such as railway construction should be coordinated with broader EU efforts and meet quality standards. They must also be commercially viable. To date, however, the Budapest-Belgrade Railway project has lacked transparency and its high costs call into serious question its long-term commercial viability. This much is certain: once completed, this project will place parts of the region's critical infrastructure in the PRC's hands, ultimately deepening the region's entanglement in the 16+1 and Belt and Road Initiative and creating serious vulnerabilities of foreign interference.

*Question.* The China-built Budapest-Belgrade Railway remains under construction. What positive or negative effects will it have for the EU?

*Answer.* EU regulations and standards require that large infrastructure projects be awarded through a public tender. In 2016, the EU opened an infringement procedure against Hungary and asked it to be more transparent and to organize a public tender for the railway contract, thus minimizing the risk of corruption. Hungary eventually released a public tender but a government aligned oligarch won the contract, further entrenching the cronyism that is rampant in Hungary. Opaque deals with foreign state-owned firms on critical infrastructure or technology on the territory of a NATO Ally and EU member could also raise security concerns first for Hungary itself and also for our common partnerships.

*Question.* The China-built Budapest-Belgrade Railway remains under construction. What positive or negative effects will it have for NATO?

*Answer.* The extensive financial, logistical, and engineering support provided by PRC firms on this project will create vulnerabilities in what could be a major transportation artery in a NATO Ally. If confirmed, I will work with other U.S. Ambassadors in the region to inform its leaders of the abundant risks associated with outsourcing vital infrastructure to PRC entities.

*Question.* U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Serbia?

*Answer.* The American and local employees at Embassy Belgrade have dealt with significant challenges posed by COVID-19. I am grateful for their tremendous service in overcoming these challenges. If confirmed, I will prioritize meeting with and supporting Embassy employees to understand and mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the mission. If confirmed, the health and safety of the personnel and family members of Embassy Belgrade will be my first priority, and I look forward to working with the incredibly talented team of locally employed staff, U.S. Direct Hires, and their families, and to ensuring that everyone on my team understands they are valued and have my support.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Serbia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with my Deputy Chief of Mission and senior staff to foster an atmosphere in which all employees know that they can bring serious issues to us and that they are being heard at the highest levels. If confirmed, I will work to ensure everyone on my team is treated professionally, their rights are respected, and they are safe and secure. I will conduct personal outreach to Em-

bassy staff when I arrive. If confirmed, I will promote training and professional development, and ensure that all staff members are aware of the employee and family support resources that the Department offers to assist employees.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across Mission Serbia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will foster a strong team with a clear understanding of our goals and objectives, maintain continuous and transparent communications throughout the Mission by sharing information, promote diversity and inclusion, seek ways to build morale, and support and ensure the safety and community of the Mission community—including both American and local staff. I will treat the team with respect and professionalism and seek to provide them the tools they need to do their jobs. We are all one team, working together to advance the U.S.-Serbia relationship, and in the interests of the American people; I will ensure this collaborative service focus is central to our work.

*Question.* Management is a key responsibility for chiefs of mission. How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I value respect, professionalism, open communication, and creative thinking. I welcome divergent points of view. I strive to provide clear decisions and guidance as needed to lead. I am committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce that fully represents and supports many different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives to provide a productive and effective workplace for all that advances U.S. policy goals.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available, and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my commitment will be to ensure we use our available resources as effectively as possible to advance our top policy priorities for the U.S.-Serbia relationship. I will draw upon the experience, expertise, and advice of Embassy staff when making resource allocation decisions. If necessary, I will advocate for additional resources to better carry out our mission.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, one of my first actions as Ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Belgrade to fully understand their roles and responsibilities and how I can best support, guide, and advocate for them. I will schedule opportunities for regular coordination, consultation, and planning of Embassy operations. I will also create opportunities for more informal meetings and events with members from across the Embassy community, so that I build and maintain strong awareness of community concerns and the state of Embassy morale. I will rely on the experience, expertise, and advice of the talented U.S. Direct Hire and Locally Engaged staff to help determine how I can best integrate into and enhance Embassy operations.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* No, it is never acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to a positive and productive relationship with the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) centered on trust and collaboration. If confirmed, I hope to establish a positive relationship where my Deputy Chief of Mission will be my trusted partner and confidante whom I can depend on and work closely with to ensure the success of the overall Mission.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to building a collaborative working relationship with my Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) and consulting with the DCM across the range of issues. If confirmed, I will entrust the DCM with responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Mission. The DCM should also keep abreast of policy issues in order to serve as Chargé d'Affaires in my absence, so I will ensure that the DCM is fully involved in policy issues and decision-making.



*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens. If confirmed, will you encourage Mission Serbia diplomats to engage in-person with the Serbian people outside of U.S. embassies and consulates?

*Answer.* I agree that it is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of the Embassy to meet with local stakeholders, including host government officials, non-governmental organizations, and citizens from all facets of society. If confirmed, I will demonstrate the importance of getting outside of our Embassy by example, provided pandemic health and safety guidelines allow it. If confirmed, I hope to exchange ideas with people from all parts of Serbian society to hear their views, promote our shared goals, and expand the people-to-people bonds that are the foundation of our strong bilateral relationship. I will encourage colleagues and official visitors to do the same, conditions permitting.

*Question.* Public diplomacy is an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy efforts. What is the public diplomacy environment like in Serbia? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* Embassy Belgrade's Public Diplomacy Section uses the full array of public diplomacy tools to engage with Serbians across all facets of society: including, media engagement; the U.S. Speaker Program; English language instruction; educational and professional exchanges; alumni; cultural and sports diplomacy programs; grants to local non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and educational advising. Disinformation, harmful foreign influence, and the COVID-19 pandemic pose challenges to public diplomacy outreach. Conditions permitting, U.S. diplomats will increase in-person engagements. If confirmed, I look forward to using traditional and social media in addition to in-person programs to engage with the Serbian public.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work with the public diplomacy team to closely coordinate the efforts of Washington and Belgrade-based public diplomacy professionals to maintain a unified approach, highlighting the key U.S. messages and policies in Serbia and globally. I will leverage public diplomacy tools to enhance security cooperation, expand economic relations, support Serbia's EU accession path and positive relations with its neighbors, and deepen people-to-people ties. I will work to counter adverse influence and disinformation through traditional media and social media engagements, institutional outreach, and personal interactions, tailoring our messaging and activities to Serbian audiences for the strongest impact.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel. If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Yes. There is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with the workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel. If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Serbia personnel?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and Mission Serbia personnel.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

Answer. I have received an unclassified briefing on anomalous health incidents. If confirmed, I commit to receiving additional, classified briefings on the incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I will maintain detailed records of the incident and share it with the State Department and others to contribute to the investigation.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

Answer. If confirmed, I will take every measure to keep our staff safe and secure and would take any report of an anomalous health incident very seriously. I will do my best to ensure those affected receive the attention they deserve, that incidents are investigated fully, and that I work with the appropriate offices and agencies to ensure required reporting, investigation, potential countermeasures, and provision of medical care. I would share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and the mission community.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. CHRISTOPHER R. HILL BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Under the Trump administration, we began to see some movement on the longstanding dispute between Kosovo and Serbia. The September 2020 meeting at the White House between Serbian and Kosovo leaders was a welcome sight and paved the way to normalize economic relationships. If confirmed, what steps would you take as Ambassador to build on these successes and improve communication between Kosovo and Serbia?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work to build on the progress prior administrations and the Biden administration have made in the Balkans. Past commitments have created tangible benefits for citizens of both Serbia and Kosovo: improved trade, cooperation on streamlined customs and border procedures to facilitate transit of goods and people, greater opportunity for engagement, and increased economic planning. It is important that Serbia and Kosovo honor in good faith all previous commitments, that they remain flexible and prepared for necessary compromises, and that they make progress through the EU-facilitated Dialogue to improve technical cooperation and trust in support of the goal of comprehensive normalization of relations, ideally based on mutual recognition.

*Question.* How can the United States coordinate better with EU efforts in mediating between Kosovo and Serbia?

Answer. While not at the table, the United States has played a consistent, strong role in helping the parties reach an agreement to establish fully normalized relations. The administration closely coordinates with EU counterparts. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the EU to advance the Dialogue as the mechanism for implementation of the provisions of the 2013 Brussels Agreement and, ultimately, a comprehensive normalization ideally based on mutual recognition. This is essential for enduring stability in the Western Balkans. I commit to reinforcing with Serbian officials, and the Serbian public, the continued importance of compromise and normalization for achieving Serbia's strategic goals of EU membership and regional prosperity.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO MICHÈLE TAYLOR BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Anti-Israel Bias*

*Question.* I believe that the U.S. is best positioned to counter anti-Israel bias on the U.N. Human Rights Council when it is a member of that Council. I have been heartened by the Biden administration's steps to counter anti-Israel bias at the U.N. in general and I fully expect that work to continue with our renewed membership on the Human Rights Council.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to counter anti-Israel bias on the Council? What specific changes do you think the Council ought to make and what to you see as the U.S.'s most effective points of leverage to enact those changes?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and the Council's problematic membership. When we have had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and we have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

*Question.* What steps will you take to remove Israel as a permanent agenda item on the Council?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to:

- reduce the overall number of Israel-related resolutions at the Council;
- continue recent progress in minimizing the items considered under Agenda Item 7 by shifting consideration of Israel into other agenda items where they will be treated as every other nation;
- make clear U.S. opposition to all anti-Israel mandates and aim to reduce the impact of such mandates; and
- bolster the number of countries aligned with U.S. views on the need to permanently tackle the Council's bias against Israel.

*Question.* What steps can the U.S. take, both at the U.N. and bilaterally, to change the voting practices of U.S. allies that have voted in support of the Council's biased agenda and resolutions against Israel?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work intensively with our allies to bolster their support in combatting the Council's anti-Israel bias. We have also seen that when the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to effectively engage with our allies and other partners to make real progress, including encouraging and supporting countries with better records to run for seats.

*BDS Movement*

*Question.* I remain concerned by efforts by the U.N. Human Rights Council to promote the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) movement against Israel, especially the establishment and publishing of a database of companies conducting business in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to end efforts such as these on the Council, which promote boycotts against Israel?

*Answer.* The United States opposed the creation of the database and release of the report, as mandated by the Human Rights Council in 2016, and continues to oppose any work to update it. The United States has not provided and has no intention to provide any information to OHCHR for the database. If confirmed, I will also encourage other countries not to provide any information for the database. The United States continues to engage with the High Commissioner in Geneva to make its views and opposition clear and to push for retraction of the database. If confirmed, I will continue this effort.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHELE TAYLOR BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* If confirmed, what will your priorities be as the Ambassador to the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC)?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would bring with me to the U.N. Human Rights Council my experience and a determination to defend the human rights of all individuals. I would work tirelessly to restore U.S. leadership on the Council in order to defend Israel and diminish the Council's anti-Israel bias. I would seek new partnerships to advance reform of the Council's membership, and I would return the United States to the center of the human rights debate, where we can fight racism, intolerance, and religious persecution, promote concrete action to advance respect for the human rights of women, LGBTQI persons, and minorities, and give the necessary attention to the world's worst human rights offenders.

*Question.* Do you believe that the UNHRC is the appropriate body to discuss the promotion or creation of "new" human rights, like the right to a "safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment?" If not, why not? If yes, why?

*Answer.* I understand that the United States, including through its delegation to the HRC, has consistently reiterated that there are no universally recognized human rights specifically related to the environment; that we do not recognize the HRC's action to recognize a new right to a safe, healthy and sustainable environment; and we do not believe that an HRC resolution is an appropriate means of attempting to elaborate a new and undefined right.

*Question.* Since its inception, the UNHRC has passed 95 resolutions condemning Israel, a U.S. Ally, more than any combination of other countries. Bashar al Assad's brutal regime in Syria has only garnered 36 condemnations for its use of barrel bombs, chemical weapons, torture, diversion of aid, and more. The People's Republic of China, a genocidal regime attempting to erase ethnic minorities in its country, has zero. If confirmed, how will you work to counter this unbalanced and discriminatory approach to human rights?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel and the Council's problematic membership. When we have had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and we have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

We have also seen that when the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats. More broadly, if confirmed, I would work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's (PRC) efforts to erode respect for human rights in favor of its authoritarian aims and will work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years.

*Question.* Do you believe that regimes like those in Syria, China, Russia, Iran, and others deserve to be condemned in this body?

*Answer.* When President Biden announced that the United States would seek election to the Council, he underscored the importance and utility of a functional Human Rights Council, which at its best prompts investigation of abuses in places such as Syria and North Korea, gives voice to those working against racism, and related intolerance, promotes concrete action to advance respect for the human rights of women, LGBTQI persons, and members of minority groups, including religious minority groups. If confirmed, I will be an unrelenting voice for those whose rights are threatened and will seek every appropriate opportunity to shine a light on the conduct of human rights offenders, including in Syria, the People's Republic of China, Russia, and Iran.

*Question.* In May, the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) created a new so-called commission of inquiry to investigate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The new commission's mandate is much broader in scope chronologically, geographically, and substantively than the mandates of its predecessors, including the infamous and deeply flawed Goldstone Commission. In July, the UNHRC announced the appointment of three exceptionally anti-Israel persons to serve as the three members of the commission. Based on its mandate and members, the commission appears poised to

falsely allege that Israel is guilty of the crime of apartheid, based on an invented new definition of that crime. The Biden administration has chosen to reengage with the UNHRC, with Secretary Blinken asserting that despite the Council's flawed record on Israel "the best way to improve the Council is to engage with it and its members in a principled fashion." Blinken committed that the U.S. would be at the Council "table using the full weight of our diplomatic leadership" and said we "strongly believe that when the United States engages constructively with the Council, in concert with our allies and friends, positive change is within reach." Yet the mandate and membership of the new UNHRC commission of inquiry represents a chance for the worse rather than the better.

- If confirmed as the top U.S. diplomat in Geneva, are you going to use the full weight of our diplomatic leadership to stop the UNHRC from libeling Israel as engaged in apartheid?

Answer. Yes. I am committed to working with Israel and our other allies and partners to reduce and eventually eliminate the HRC's attacks on Israel. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the United States uses the full weight of our diplomatic leadership, in Geneva and in our bilateral and multilateral missions around the world, to address the Human Rights Council's longstanding anti-Israel bias.

*Question.* If yes, how specifically would you plan to fight this battle?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to:

- reduce the overall number of Israel-related resolutions at the Council;
- continue recent progress in minimizing the items considered under Agenda Item 7 by shifting consideration of Israel into other agenda items where they will be treated as every other nation;
- make clear U.S. opposition to all anti-Israel mandates and aim to reduce the impact of such mandates; and
- bolster the number of countries aligned with U.S. views on the need to permanently tackle the Council's bias against Israel.

*Question.* If yes to question 5, what are you prepared to do to ensure the farce of this Commission of Inquiry does not move forward on the Biden administration's watch?

Answer. The United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the conflict in Gaza in May, 2021. The session exemplifies the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians.

If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with the treatment of other U.N. member states. If confirmed, I will also engage regularly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to the Commission.

*Question.* The UNHRC is in desperate need of reform. If confirmed, please detail your plan of engagement to undertake those reforms, including removing Agenda Item 7.

Answer. The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. When the U.S. has had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will continue recent progress in moving consideration of Israel out of Agenda Item 7 and into the regular Council agenda with all other U.N. member states, thus rendering Item 7 unnecessary and underscoring its illegitimate intent. I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep off some of the countries with the worst human rights records and to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats. More broadly, if confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's (PRC) efforts to erode respect for human rights in favor of its authoritarian aims and will

work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years.

*Question.* Growing CCP influence in the U.N. and subsequently on the Council is of grave concern. As we try to push back on such influence, the CCP has made significant inroads both in the council and within the U.N. to block and tackle ideas that do not comport with CCP thought. Please explain your intended strategy for combatting malign influence in the council.

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's (PRC) efforts to erode respect for human rights in favor of its authoritarian aims and will work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years. I will also build partnerships to prioritize needed reforms to alter positively the composition of the Council, including encouraging and supporting countries with better records to run for seats.

Finally, I believe we must push back against the PRC's efforts to elevate the concept of societal rights, which threatens to undermine the traditional notion of international human rights centered on the rights of the individual. This attempted normative erosion runs counter to the notion of human rights articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the binding U.N. human rights conventions.

*Question.* Do you commit, if confirmed, to aiding the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (MSP) in the State Department's Bureau of International Organizations who is leading a whole-of-government effort to identify, recruit, and install qualified, independent personnel at the U.N., including in elections for specialized bodies like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)?

*Answer.* Yes, if confirmed I look forward to supporting the efforts of this office however possible and appropriate.

*Question.* Do you commit to helping in MSP's efforts as it relates to Americans in junior positions at and within UNHRC?

*Answer.* I believe the JPO program offers a unique opportunity for the United States to invest in the career development of qualified young Americans and made needed progress in expanding the number and distribution of Americans working in international organizations. If confirmed, I will actively support efforts by the Department of State to identify opportunities for JPOs, including in venues such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

*Question.* U.S. missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID. What is your understanding of morale throughout Mission Geneva?

*Answer.* As U.S. Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council, I will not be responsible for mission operations in Geneva. However, it is my understanding that morale at the Mission is high, particularly in light of our imminent return to the Council as an elected member. If confirmed, I look forward to joining this excellent team and benefitting from its extraordinary expertise.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across all of Mission Geneva?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to supporting Mission leadership in its efforts to guide, encourage, and recognize the exceptional community of professionals in Geneva. That includes working closely with the human rights team to ensure they have clear direction regarding our objectives at the Human Rights Council, are treated with the utmost respect, and enjoy an appropriate work-life balance.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across the entire U.S.-U.N. HRC team?

*Answer.* My interactions to date with State Department professionals working on human rights issues gives me great confidence that the United States is poised to lead on these issues at the Human Rights Council, and do so with confidence, energy, and focus. If confirmed, I will invest that confidence in the team, benefit from its wisdom, and guide it proudly.

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I would describe myself as both motivational and encouraging as a manager. Success is important to me but is not measured merely in outcomes. I strive to create an environment where all members of my team feel valued for their contributions and supported in their personal goals. I have a record of both achievement and creating collaborative environments in diverse communities. I am espe-

cially proud of my ability to find common ground with people from a wide spectrum of ideologies and opinions.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

*Answer.* I understand that resource constraints, including human resources, may be a challenge during my tenure, if confirmed. However, I believe in setting ambitious goals and cultivating team excitement accordingly. The U.S. return to the Human Rights Council will require considerable effort, and I will lead by example without creating undue strain on the professional staff. I am committed to taking an active role in helping to support the career goals of each of my team members and will work with them to find opportunities for professional development.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* As U.S. Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council, I will not be responsible for mission operations in Geneva. However, if confirmed, I will be excited at the prospect of meeting and working with the extraordinary team at Mission Geneva and will lean heavily upon their expertise and wisdom as I assume this challenging assignment.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* Under no circumstances.

*Question.* “Anomalous health incidents,” commonly referred to as “Havana Syndrome,” have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel. If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Absolutely, and while I will not have Mission management responsibilities as the U.S. Representative to the HRC if confirmed, I will lend my support however possible to ensure the health and wellbeing of the Mission personnel, especially, but not limited to, my direct reports.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to Mission Geneva personnel?

*Answer.* While I will not have Mission management responsibilities as the U.S. Representative to the HRC, I will certainly contribute as appropriate to these conversations.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* Yes, I received a related briefing during the Ambassadorial Seminar.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed as U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council, I will not have Mission management responsibilities. However, I will support Mission leadership in these matters as possible and appropriate.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* Although I will not have mission oversight responsibilities if confirmed as the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council, I do believe I can contribute to positive, inclusive communications within the team, and I look forward

to working with Mission leadership to explore that potential role as possible and appropriate.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHÈLE TAYLOR BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* Through the annual appropriations bills passed during the Trump administration, Congress has included provisions that prohibit U.S. funding for the U.N. Human Rights Council unless the Secretary of State determines reports to Congress that participation in the Council is in the national interest of the United States.

- What is your view on this provision?

Answer. Specifically defunding the U.N. Human Rights Council is neither an appropriate nor an available option. The Council's funding is drawn from assessed contributions provided to the U.N. Secretariat, which uses those contributions to support a wide range of U.N. operations. President Biden is committed to paying our nation's assessed contributions in full and on time. He has also determined that participating in the Human Rights Council is in the national interest, and I strongly support that determination.

As I noted in my statement to the committee, I believe firmly that that conversations about global human rights are poorer without an American voice and without American leadership. The President has made clear his belief that the Human Rights Council is a venue where the United States can and must lead, and I know from my experience working with human rights defenders more can be accomplished in active partnership than in principled absence. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to rebuild American leadership on the Council.

*Question.* How, if at all, does it impact U.S. influence in Council operations?

Answer. I believe that paying U.S. assessed contributions in full and on time is a key aspect of demonstrating U.S. leadership in international organizations and denying our competitors easy opportunities to suggest diminishing American commitment to global challenges.

*Question.* What is the extent of U.S. influence on the Council?

Answer. There is no doubt in my mind that U.S. influence on the Council diminished considerably during the period of our absence. If confirmed, I will use my position and the U.S. return to the Council to restore our nation's place at the center of the global human rights conversation.

*Question.* Has the U.S. addressed issues of U.S. concern, such as the need for reform and the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel, and if so, how successful have these efforts been?

Answer. The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. When the United States has had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and have seen changes such as a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats. More broadly, if confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's (PRC) efforts to erode respect for human rights in favor of its authoritarian aims and will work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to push the Council to condemn the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang?

Answer. I firmly believe that the United States advances our national interests best when we have a seat at the table in the multilateral system, including the Human Rights Council (HRC). By raising our voice, and working with like-minded partners, we have used the Council platform to shine a light on Beijing's ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang and human rights abuses in



Tibet and Hong Kong. If confirmed, I will be tireless in my efforts to sustain focus on the PRC's human rights conduct and the hypocrisy of its presence on the Council.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHÈLE TAYLOR BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The Biden administration itself acknowledged that the Human Rights Council needs reforms to its agenda, membership, and focus when it chose to rejoin the council earlier this year. If confirmed, what specific reforms will you push for at the Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. When the U.S. has had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and have seen changes like a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel. If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates.

When the United States plays an active and constructive role on the Council, we have been able to engage with our allies and partners to keep off some of the countries with the worst human rights records and to encourage and support countries with better records to run for seats. More broadly, if confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. friends and allies to push back on the People's Republic of China's efforts to erode respect for human rights in favor of its authoritarian aims and will work to expand space for civil society engagement in the Council's work, something the PRC has worked to restrict in recent years.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you fight anti-Israel bias at the U.N. Human Rights Council?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to:

- reduce the overall number of Israel-related resolutions at the Council;
- continue recent progress in minimizing the items considered under Agenda Item 7 by shifting consideration of Israel into other agenda items where they will be treated as every other nation;
- make clear U.S. opposition to all anti-Israel mandates and aim to reduce the impact of such mandates; and
- bolster the number of countries aligned with U.S. views on the need to permanently tackle the Council's bias against Israel.

*Question.* Following the launching of thousands of rockets at Israel from Gaza this May, the Human Rights Council took the step of establishing a permanent commission of inquiry to investigate Israel, the only such permanent agenda item of the council. What are your thoughts on the commission? Should the U.S. cooperate with commission?

*Answer.* The United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the conflict in Gaza in May, 2021. The session exemplifies the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended Commission of Inquiry distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. It also reminds us of what can happen when American leadership at the Council is absent and underscores the importance of our recent election and the need for a Senate-confirmed Ambassador in this crucial position.

If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with other U.N. member states. If confirmed, I will also engage regularly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to the Commission.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO MICHÈLE TAYLOR BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* The U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has been subject to bipartisan criticism for endemic anti-Israel bias. It has in recent years taken a leading role in promoting economic measures against Israeli Jews and in territories where Israeli Jews live. The Human Rights Council has published a blacklist of companies doing business in the West Bank and East Jerusalem—including American companies. The move puts these companies at severe reputational and potentially even legal risks, pursuant to American statutes prohibiting participation in such boycott efforts.

- What specific changes should the UNHRC pursue to mitigate its anti-Israel bias?

*Answer.* The United States is committed to seeking reforms of the U.N. Human Rights Council, particularly with respect to the Council's disproportionate focus on Israel. When the U.S. has had a seat at the table, we have been able to advocate on Israel's behalf, and have seen changes such as a reduction in the number of resolutions targeting Israel.

If confirmed, I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. I will work tirelessly to:

- reduce the overall number of Israel-related resolutions at the Council;
- continue recent progress in minimizing the items considered under Agenda Item 7 by shifting consideration of Israel into other agenda items where they will be treated as every other nation;
- make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates and aim to reduce the impact of such mandates; and
- bolster the number of countries aligned with U.S. views on the need to permanently tackle the Council's bias against Israel.

*Question.* How long do you assess it will take you, if confirmed, to secure these specific changes mitigating the UNHRC's anti-Israel bias?

*Answer.* I cannot offer a specific timeline. However, I can assure you that, if I am confirmed, the United States, and I personally, will work tirelessly to diminish anti-Israel bias on the Council.

*Question.* What specific steps do you intend to take to ensure that the Council retracts databases and other lists seeking to pressure companies into curtailing activities with Israel?

*Answer.* The United States opposed the creation of the database and release of the report, as mandated by the Human Rights Council in 2016, and continues to oppose any work to update it. The United States has not provided and has no intention to provide any information to OHCHR for the database. If confirmed, I will also encourage other countries not to provide any information for the database. The United States continues to engage with the High Commissioner in Geneva to make its views and opposition clear and to push for retraction of the database. It is also my understanding that the database has not been updated.

If confirmed, I will continue this effort.

*Question.* How long do you assess it will take you, if confirmed, to ensure that the Council retracts databases and other lists seeking to pressure companies into curtailing activities with Israel?

*Answer.* I cannot offer a specific timeline. However, I can assure you that, if I am confirmed, the United States, and I personally, will continue to engage regularly with the High Commissioner in Geneva to urge the retraction of this database and push to ensure that the database is not updated.

*Question.* What specific steps do you intend to take to ensure that the Council removes Israel as a permanent agenda item?

*Answer.* As noted above, if confirmed I will prioritize working closely with U.S. friends and allies, as well as non-traditional partners, to address the Council's problematic anti-Israel bias and will engage regularly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to problematic anti-Israel mandates. In particular, I will work to:

- reduce the overall number of Israel-related resolutions at the Council;

- continue recent progress in moving consideration of Israel out of Agenda Item 7 and into the regular Council agenda with all other U.N. member states, thus rendering Item 7 unnecessary and underscoring its illegitimate intent; and
- make clear U.S. opposition to all anti-Israel mandates and aim to reduce the impact of such mandates.

*Question.* How long do you assess it will take you, if confirmed, to ensure that the Council removes Israel as a permanent agenda item?

Answer. I cannot offer a specific timeline. However, I can assure you that, if I am confirmed, I will be unrelenting in this effort.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO MICHÈLE TAYLOR BY SENATOR BILL HAGERTY

*Question.* In May 2021, the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) moved to create the permanent Commission on Inquiry (COI) on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Unlike prior UNHRC commissions that examined specific Israeli-Palestinian clashes in the West Bank and Gaza, this COI is set to exist in perpetuity, is mandated to search for violations in pre-1967 Israel as well as in the disputed territories, and appears to be designed to reach the false conclusion that Israel is committing apartheid.

Moreover, the UNHRC announced the appointment of Navi Pillay as chair of the COI. While serving as U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008 to 2014, Pillay repeatedly and caustically accused Israel of committing war crimes, and declared that “the Israeli Government treats international law with perpetual disdain.” Indeed, in May 2012, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Congressman Eliot Engel (D-NY) opposed Pillay’s extension as U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, saying Pillay had “repeatedly demonstrated bias against the State of Israel.”

In December 2021, the United States voted at the U.N. General Assembly’s Fifth Committee to support an Israel-authored amendment to defund the COI.

- Ms. Taylor, do you agree that it was outrageous and counterproductive for the U.N. Human Rights Council to create the Commission on Inquiry (COI) in May 2021, and that the United States therefore should do everything in its power to work with Israel and other like-minded nations to deny funding and staff to the COI and ultimately to disestablish the COI?

Answer. I agree that it was counterproductive for the U.N. Human Rights Council to create the Commission of Inquiry (COI), and I understand that the United States strongly opposed the special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council following the conflict in Gaza in May 2021. The session exemplifies the Council’s disproportionate focus on Israel. The establishment of an open-ended COI distracts from the diplomatic work necessary to provide greater dignity, freedom, and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. It is also a demonstration of the risks of absents American leadership at the Council and underscores the importance of our recent election to it.

If confirmed, I will work closely with Israel and likeminded partners to influence the scope and timeline of this Commission as part of broader efforts to ensure Israel is treated fairly by the Human Rights Council, in line with the treatment of other U.N. member states. If confirmed, I will also engage regularly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to the Commission.

*Question.* If confirmed to serve as United States Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council, do you commit to make the denial of funding and staff to the COI and the ultimate disestablishment of the COI at top priority?

Answer. During the Fifth Committee budget negotiations that concluded in December 2021, the United States successfully pushed for a reduction of resources for the COI, including a 25 percent reduction in the number of associated positions. While the mandate for the COI is open-ended, funding and staffing levels for human rights mandates must be approved on an annual basis. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Israel and other partners to decrease the scope and timeline of this Commission and address the COI’s unprecedented open-ended mandate in Geneva. If confirmed, I will also engage regularly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make clear U.S. opposition to the Commission.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
 SUBMITTED TO ALICE ALBRIGHT BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Joint Development/Strategic Mandate*

*Question.* Development finance is an important tool to realize U.S. foreign policy objectives and can be especially effective in countering malign influence of China and other adversary nations. Most developing countries would prefer to work with the U.S. and our private sector partners, as opposed to the PRC's predatory development financial institutions.

- How will you work to balance development and strategic outcomes through MCC's investments?

Answer. The role China plays around the world is a top concern of mine.

MCC's grant-based programs are designed to be cost-effective investments shaped by evidence-based analysis to ensure measurable returns on investment. The MCC model encourages country partners to double down on good governance, democratic consolidation, and anti-corruption efforts as a pre-requisite to investments.

Country selectivity, evidence-based decision-making, and transparency are elements of a "best practice" development approach that enable sustainable results and stand in contrast to approaches taken by other development actors, including China. If confirmed, I would continue this approach at MCC, and I would welcome continued engagement with you and your staff on this issue.

*COVID-19 Recovery*

*Question.* The USAID OIG found that the impacts of COVID-19 will reduce the number of MCC eligible countries by 3 (to 81 total). MCC has reported that "efforts are underway to account for the impact of COVID-19 on targeted outcomes of MCC's programs."

- Can you please discuss the status of these efforts?

Answer. I am committed to addressing the ongoing challenges created by the pandemic while ensuring that MCC's programs and policies continue to be the best fit for the evolving moment we find ourselves in. A component of that is making sure that MCC's programs in implementation, many of which, it's my understanding, face unprecedented delays due to public health restrictions and other impacts of the pandemic, exercise the appropriate time extension to successfully complete the intended work and secure the intended benefits to reduce poverty through growth.

*Threshold Oversight*

*Question.* A September OIG report found that MCC lacked a process for assessing progress of the overall Threshold Program. As such, MCC cannot fully measure the effectiveness of the Program or determine how it contributed to assessing candidates for future MCC compacts.

- How is MCC fixing this to ensure the benefits of the Threshold Program are being maximized and that the program is working as intended?

Answer. I can firmly assure you that I am committed to the success of the Threshold Program and will look for ways to maximize the value of this program if I am confirmed. I am also very supportive of the principal of measuring program effectiveness, and while I am not yet aware of the specific responses that management will consider in response to the audit's recommendations, I am confident that MCC staff are also firmly committed to rigorous measurement and to program effectiveness. I look forward to working with you given our shared commitment.

*Renewable Energy Storage*

*Question.* The USG development community has made several announcements to bolster renewable energy development abroad, including MCC's Burkina Faso Compact II consisting of The Strengthening Electricity Sector Effectiveness Project, the Cost-Effective and Reliable Electricity Supply Project, and the Grid Development and Access Project. Energy storage is essential to ensure consistent renewable energy output.

- How do you think MCC can be utilized to facilitate energy storage projects like the MCC Burkina Faso Compact II project?

Answer. MCC works alongside partner countries to examine needs across the energy sector, build country capacity, and make needed reforms. MCC works with country partners to develop energy infrastructure that is consistent with master plans and that is supported by the right policy and institutional environment to be economically sustainable and attractive for private sector investment. The agency

also leverages private sector financing and expertise by developing and structuring opportunities to crowd in investors, often in collaboration with other donors.

If confirmed, I will look to continue to follow MCC's evidence-based model to advance the agency's investment portfolio, consistent with their core principles of country ownership and data-driven analysis.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ALICE ALBRIGHT BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Millennium Challenge Corporation Model*

*Question.* Since its creation by Congress in 2004, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has set a global standard for effective foreign assistance and, in the process, has distinguished itself from other U.S. foreign assistance agencies and efforts. For example, MCC is distinctly different from USAID in many respects, not the least of which includes its statutory mission to reduce poverty through economic growth, as well as its commitment to transparency, selectivity, and accountability for results. If confirmed, will you commit to upholding the following foundational principles of MCC, as enshrined by statute:

- That the MCC remains unconstrained by administration initiatives, directives, and earmarks;

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with MCC staff, Congress, and the administration to leverage MCC's focus on good governance and accountability, as well as the agency's approach to country ownership and institutional capacity building, to further the MCC's goal to reduce global poverty and create a more stable, secure world with more opportunities for inclusive economic growth.

- That the agency partners with countries selected through a transparent and competitive process on the basis of their measurable commitment to democratic governance, investing in people, and economic freedom?

*Answer.* Yes

- That the agency invests in country-led efforts to address binding constraints to growth, as identified through a rigorous economic constraints analysis?

*Answer.* Yes

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to remaining politically agnostic through compact development and to allowing the data to guide investment?

*Answer.* Yes

*Question.* How will you balance your own personal views on education as the foundation of development against this long-standing principle?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will continue MCC's singular focus on reducing poverty through economic growth, using rigorous data and a country-driven approach, to identify a country's binding constraints to economic growth.

*Question.* How does MCC's recently announced, self-imposed, carbon cap impact its ability to remain politically agnostic while assessing the key constraints to economic growth in a partner country and subsequently designing compacts?

*Answer.* MCC's recently announced commitment on climate does not establish a carbon cap, but rather, commits the agency to strengthening how it takes climate change into account in its programs consistent with its model, its focus on key constraints to economic growth, and its mission of poverty reduction. MCC's partner countries exercise program ownership, with partner governments taking the lead in setting priorities for MCC investments in close consultation with citizens and civil society organizations. It's my understanding that countries MCC works with have their own economic and climate-related goals and challenges and work with MCC to develop and implement sustainable projects across a range of sectors in order to drive economic prosperity.

If confirmed, I will ensure that MCC continues to follow its model and that any climate-related investments MCC makes will continue to adhere to this core principle of country ownership.

*Question.* A shrinking pool of eligible partner countries has led some to suggest that MCC should alter its selection criteria. This includes proposals to alter the income categories for eligible partner countries, allow for investments in impoverished cities or regions within otherwise wealthy countries, add or eliminate certain third party indicators used on MCC scorecards, alter or eliminate the eligibility "hard

hurdle” for corruption, and/or allow for three or more additional compacts with previous partners.

- If confirmed, what measures would you recommend to ensure that MCC maintains a credible pool of eligible partner countries while still upholding its foundational principles?

Answer. This is something I will certainly plan to review if confirmed. The global poverty picture and our understanding of the nature of development need is changing, and I want to ensure that MCC’s systems are still the right ones 17 years after MCC was created.

Should changes be necessary, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staff to determine what, if any, potential legislation would be needed.

*Question.* Will you commit to working in good faith with Congress to address data lags, which may skew eligibility?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support MCC staff in ensuring that MCC’s analytical tools and products remain cutting edge and use the most up-to-date evidence and data possible. I would welcome continued engagement with you on these issues.

*Question.* Will you also commit to continuously working to identify the most reliable indicators of corruption?

Answer. Yes

*Question.* Will you also commit to continuously working to refine the manner in which MCC calculates economic rates of return?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support MCC staff to ensure the agency uses the most-up-to-date Economic Rate of Return calculations.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to working in a bipartisan manner with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including by providing timely, accurate, and complete information on the development, implementation, and impact of MCC-supported compacts and threshold programs, including with regard to financial commitments, obligations, and expenditures?

Answer. Yes

#### *Waste, Fraud, and Abuse*

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to upholding a zero tolerance policy for waste, fraud, and abuse in the programs under your purview?

Answer. Yes

*Question.* the sexual exploitation and abuse of the communities they are meant to serve?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will uphold MCC’s Counter-Trafficking in Persons policy, which clearly states that the Agency has a zero-tolerance policy that applies to both MCAs and contractors.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring full and complete compliance with current law, which prohibits the use of U.S. foreign assistance to perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning, support involuntary sterilizations, or lobby for or against the legalization of abortion overseas?

Answer. If confirmed, I will comply with current law, including the “Prohibition on use of funds for Abortions and involuntary Sterilizations” in the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003.

#### *Climate and Energy Poverty*

*Question.* Understanding that a lack of access to reliable and affordable energy is a key constraint to growth for roughly two-thirds of the population of sub-Saharan Africa, MCC has invested \$2.5 billion in projects that reduce energy poverty and advance the objectives of the Power Africa initiative. When the Power Africa Initiative was authorized by Congress in 2016, it was with the explicit intent that the each of the contributing agencies, including MCC, would pursue an “all of the above strategy” to reduce energy poverty. Since that time, multiple African countries have told the Committee that they need natural gas to reduce poverty while making the transition to cleaner energy sources. Yet, thus far, the Biden administration has signaled that natural gas cooperation with developing countries will not be a priority area, and MCC’s self-imposed carbon cap may prevent it from involvement in future natural gas projects.

- Do you believe in the “all of the above” approach to reducing energy poverty? If not, why not?

Answer. It's my understanding that, other than MCC's publicly stated "coal-free policy," the agency would consider supporting an energy project consistent with their core principles of country ownership and data-driven analysis.

If confirmed, I will look to continue to follow MCC's evidence-based model to advance the agency's investment portfolio.

*Question.* Do you believe that climate is the most important issue facing the United States?

Answer. No.

I believe that climate change is one of several pressing issues currently confronting the United States.

*Question.* Do you believe that MCC should primarily be funding climate-related projects?

Answer. MCC should prioritize projects that adhere to its singular focus on reducing poverty through economic growth, using rigorous data and its country-driven approach, to identify a country's binding constraints to economic growth.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that MCC is not used as a tool to advance climate change initiatives at the expense of its mandate to reduce poverty through economic growth?

Answer. If confirmed, I will look to continue to follow MCC's evidence-based model to advance the agency's investment portfolio, consistent with their core principles of country ownership and data-driven analysis.

*Question.* Former Secretary Kerry has said that climate change is a "standalone issue" in U.S.-China relations. But he subsequently said that "life is full of tough choices in the relationship between nations" and that our priority "first and foremost" must be to save this planet. He made these comments in response to an interview question between trade-offs related to climate and human rights. Since then, he has stated that human rights issues in China are "not in his lane."

- What are your views on these comments?

Answer. Human rights should not be compromised. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staff while at MCC on this issue.

*Question.* What would your approach be if you were faced with a project related to climate but could cause human rights concerns?

Answer. Again, human rights should not be compromised, and MCC's policies and procedures reflect this.

*Question.* The Secretary of State is responsible for the conduct of foreign policy and exercises authority over the provision of U.S. foreign assistance, including by virtue of his seat on the Board of the MCC.

- What degree of influence, if any, should Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry exercise over the MCC and the countries and projects it selects for support?

Answer. MCC's corporate governance is established in the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 and implemented through the Board-adopted bylaws. The MCC Board is comprised of both public sector and private sector members, with bipartisan representation. The Secretary of State or his designee is the Chair of MCC's Board of Directors. If confirmed, I will direct MCC to follow the governance structure and parameters enumerated in the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003.

*Question.* Do you believe it would be appropriate for Special Envoy Kerry to exercise that influence directly, or via the Secretary of State (by virtue of his position on the Board of the MCC)?

Answer. MCC's corporate governance is established in the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003. If confirmed, I will direct MCC to follow the governance structure and parameters enumerated in that Act.

### *Supply Chains*

*Question.* Do you believe that the MCC should support projects that source solar panels from China, despite the knowledge we have about forced labor in China's solar technology supply chains?

Answer. I understand that MCC's policies and contract documents include provisions that prohibit forced labor, including within supply chains—and MCC's due diligence and oversight approaches support compliance with these provisions.

If confirmed, I would continue this policy and would welcome continued engagement with you on these issues.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that MCC-supported supply chains do not touch forced labor in any way, shape, or form?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will follow MCC's policies and contract documents, which include provisions that prohibit forced labor, including within supply chains.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ALICE ALBRIGHT BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* With few exceptions, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) can only provide funding to projects in low and lower-middle income countries. While I appreciate that this is to ensure that American taxpayer's money goes to countries most in need, I believe this restriction needlessly disadvantages the United States in competing with the Chinese Communist Party's malign Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). While MCC has relatively little flexibility in choosing its funding recipients, the BRI has free rein to trap any country in a pernicious cycle of predatory loans and defaults that builds projects that do more to benefit the Chinese Communist Party and its armed wing, the People's Liberation Army, than they do the countries in question.

- Are you in favor of loosening the national income restriction so that MCC is better positioned to provide nations in Asia, Latin America, and Africa with an alternative source of investment to the Belt and Road Initiative?

*Answer.* This is something I will certainly plan to review if confirmed. The global poverty picture is changing, and I want to ensure that MCC's systems are still the right ones 17 years after MCC was created.

Should changes be necessary, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staff to determine what, if any, potential legislation would be needed.

*Question.* If confirmed, would you recommend that MCC provide funding for projects in upper- middle-income countries in Latin America and Asia that are currently the targets of significant CCP investment, such as Panama, Chile, or Malaysia?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will certainly review MCC's income category restrictions. I am committed to constructive engagement in these regions. Should changes be necessary, I look forward to working with you and your staff to determine what, if any, potential legislation would be needed.

*Question.* Country management of MCC compacts is intended to bolster partner governments' capacity, but shifting management to the partner government may diminish U.S. control over implementation. MCC has proven willing to rescind funding over its disapproval of countries' implementation. The Government of Ghana, for example, recently terminated a private sector concession for power distribution, drawing criticism for breach of contract and leading MCC to terminate \$190 million of its compact with Ghana.

- If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that partner governments maintain U.S.-funded investments, particularly infrastructure, after a compact is completed?

*Answer.* MCC's model rests on country ownership, including the transfer of knowledge and processes through which a successful project is run. Much of this is instituted through the country "Accountable Entities"—referred to as MCAs. If confirmed, I would ensure MCC continues working with host governments to reinforce the importance of their ongoing commitment to maintaining US-funded infrastructure and preserving the MCA best practices beyond the life of the compact, and that partner countries continue the oversight, management, funding, and monitoring and evaluation of MCC projects post close-out date. I would also maintain a clear and consistent message to countries that to be considered for subsequent MCC programs, the MCC Board requires countries to maintain prior MCC program investments. I understand that this has been a significant incentive for countries in the past.

*Question.* Is it important to contract locally for project implementation to ensure a sustaining presence after compact conclusion, or should U.S. dollars from MCC go to U.S. firms instead?

*Answer.* MCC's commitment to country ownership—one of its founding principles—means that countries are full partners in developing the agency's time-limited investment programs and take the lead in program implementation, including the acquisition of program related products and services. Program procurements, grants,



and public-private partnerships are solicited, awarded, and administered by partner country accountable entities—or Millennium Challenge Accounts, also known as MCAs. Procurements comply with MCC’s Program Procurement Guidelines, which are based on international procurement standards. MCC oversees these procurement processes to ensure that contracts are open, transparent, free of corruption, and provide best value to American taxpayers. All contracts awarded by MCC partner countries are based on fair and open international competition, which creates a level playing field where companies, including U.S. companies and small businesses, can compete and win.

*Question.* To what extent does MCC’s mission to promote market-led governance conflict with the necessity of respecting governments’ right to set their own policies? If confirmed, how would you balance these two principles?

*Answer.* MCC was founded on the idea that its grant resources are most effective in those countries with sound policy environments as defined in its founding statute. I understand that private sector companies also view a country’s performance on the MCC scorecard, and the presence of MCC in a country, as significant signals that a country is open for business. MCC is a voluntary program and country governments always have the right to follow the development path they deem best. My responsibility, if confirmed, will be to the most efficient and effective use of U.S. taxpayer resources. I strongly believe that MCC’s current balancing of the important considerations you raise is the right one within that context.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ALICE ALBRIGHT BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* How would you compare and contrast MCC Compacts with China’s Belt and Road Initiative?

*Answer.* MCC competes with its model, not the dollar amount. The agency’s high-quality assistance responds to countries’ real poverty needs by providing grants to address specific “binding constraints” to economic growth, which frequently include critical infrastructure needs. MCC’s programs are designed to be cost-effective investments shaped by evidence-based analysis to ensure measurable returns on investment.

The MCC model encourages country partners to double down on good governance, democratic rights, and anti-corruption efforts as pre-requisites to undertaking externally financed infrastructure investments. MCC’s country selectivity, evidence-based decision-making, and transparency are elements of a “best practice” development approach—a model often cited as a “gold standard” in development—that enables sustainable results without adding to a country’s debt burden, in contrast to approaches taken by China.

*Question.* What is your sense about the transparency and efficacy of MCC grants compared with the BRI?

*Answer.* MCC has been at the forefront of promoting transparency in international development. MCC was the highest ranked bilateral donor in the world in the 2020 Aid Transparency Index, the only independent measure of aid transparency among the world’s major development agencies. The agency also received the highest score of all federal agencies in Results for America’s 2021 Invest in What Works Federal Standard of Excellence, which showcases how agencies use data and evidence to drive decision-making and improve lives. MCC works transparently with its country partners to identify programs that are broadly recognized as critical for genuine and lasting economic development by people in our countries.

For MCC, collecting and publishing data on all its investments allows it to track progress toward targets and course-correct if needed. Moreover, relying on data to deliver and produce results ensures that the American people are getting a good return on their investment.

MCC employs technically rigorous, systematic, and transparent methods of projecting, tracking, and evaluating the impacts of its programs. While I am not currently in a position to comment directly on BRI, if confirmed, I look forward to working with MCC staff to continue the agency’s success on transparency.

*Question.* China has been actively fighting against Nepal’s MCC compact, including reports that Chinese intelligence officials have been actively spreading misinformation about the MCC process in Nepal. If confirmed, how would you work with Nepalese officials to ratify the MCC compact and move forward with our partnership there?

Answer. Since compact signing in September 2017, the Government of Nepal has been working towards entry-into-force, which requires satisfaction of certain conditions precedent, including that the Compact be ratified by a majority vote in Parliament. It's my understanding that Nepal has made significant progress in meeting the conditions precedent on multiple fronts, but has yet to ratify the compact despite political commitments by the Government of Nepal to do so.

In addition, the effort of ratification has been complicated by impacts of COVID-19, political instability, and a targeted mis- and disinformation campaign by detractors of the compact, including from some of its neighbors according to press reports.

With these developments, it's my understanding that MCC is conveying to the Government that prompt ratification is essential, and MCC is closely monitoring developments.

If confirmed, addressing misinformation and disinformation about MCC's work and working with the partners across the U.S. Government and the Government of Nepal to advance ratification will be one of my top priorities. I look forward to working with you and the committee on this matter.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSEPH DONNELLY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

*Question.* The Holy See and the United States share a commitment to religious freedom and to prioritizing diplomatic engagement with religious communities as a matter of routine diplomacy. Please describe how you will work with the Holy See to further U.S. religious freedom goals and to ensure that religious actor engagement remains a central feature of U.S. diplomacy.

Answer. Religious freedom is a key fixture of the U.S.-Holy See relationship. When President Biden met Pope Francis at the Vatican on October 29, the two leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to defending freedom of religion or belief around the world. The Catholic Church plays an important role in the civil life of many countries where human rights and religious freedom are under threat. If confirmed, I will represent the policies of the President, including on promoting religious freedom. I will continue to engage with the Holy See on advocacy and policy coordination in countries where religious freedom is under threat and encourage the Holy See to hold those governments to account.

*Question.* Pope Francis' recent joint statement on climate with the Archbishop of Canterbury and His All Holiness Bartholomew was deeply inspiring. His meeting with Grand Ayatollah Sistani in Iraq sent a positive message to millions of Muslims around the world. How will you encourage further interfaith efforts and dialogues on important issues, including responses to humanitarian disasters?

Answer. The Vatican plays a vital role in creating interfaith dialogues and has made strides in recent years through meetings between faith leaders and the Holy See's Pontifical Councils which promote dialogue with people of other faiths and Christian denominations. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage these efforts and, as the United States is the world's largest provider of humanitarian aid, I will work with the Holy See to promote collaboration with Catholic humanitarian organizations in the wake of natural disasters and crises.

*Anomalous Health Incidents*

*Question.* I am very concerned about directed energy attacks on U.S. Government personnel (so-called Anomalous Health Incidents). Ensuring the safety and security of our personnel abroad falls largely on individual Chiefs of Mission and the response of officers at post. It is imperative that any individual who reports a suspected incident be responded to promptly, equitably, and compassionately. Do you agree these incidents must be taken seriously, and pose a threat to the health of U.S. personnel?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Response Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the interagency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring that any reported incident is treated seriously and reported quickly through the appropriate channels, and that any affected individuals receive prompt access to medical care?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that employees who report a possible AHI receive immediate and appropriate attention and care and the incident is reported through appropriate channels.

*Question.* Do you commit to meeting with medical staff and the RSO at post to discuss any past reported incidents and ensure that all protocols are being followed?

*Answer.* Yes. Again, if confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO HON. JOSEPH DONNELLY BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*State Department Management*

*Question.* U.S. Missions across the globe have been under enormous strain over the past few years due to COVID.

- What is your understanding of morale throughout the Mission to the Holy See?

*Answer.* Morale at Embassy Vatican remains generally high despite a challenging two years of living in a pandemic. While Italy was hit very hard in the early days of COVID-19, it now has one of the highest vaccination rates in the world and most daily activities have resumed. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission to address any morale issues that may arise.

*Question.* How do you intend to improve morale across the Mission to the Holy See?

*Answer.* I believe that improving morale in any community requires creating an environment of open, frank communication. I realize that living overseas, even in a wonderful city like Rome, presents challenges for employees and their families. If confirmed, I would work with members of the community to ensure each person feels heard and valued, and that their concerns are addressed. I would use the excellent community liaison office to give everyone in the community a voice.

*Question.* How do you intend to create a unified mission and vision across the Mission to the Holy See?

*Answer.* Our mission to the Holy See benefits from being part of a tri-mission community. By combining management and support functions with the other missions, Embassy Vatican can focus on policy. If confirmed, I would work with the leadership of all three missions to increase the feeling of working towards a common goal, both in and out of the office. I would be an advocate for the needs of Embassy Vatican within this community without forgetting all three missions have the same purpose: to advance U.S. foreign policy.

*Management is a Key Responsibility for Chiefs of Mission*

*Question.* How would you describe your management style?

*Answer.* I believe that communication is the key to successful management. I understand that there are differing, sometimes conflicting, opinions on most topics, and I want to hear those differing opinions. I ask those who work for me to be honest and to let me know when they disagree or see a problem with my thinking. I promote a work environment where everyone is respected and feels empowered to do their best work.

*Question.* If confirmed, how do you believe your management style will translate to an Embassy setting, where resources may not be readily available and your diplomatic workforce consists of career employees?

*Answer.* To me, a workforce of career employees is an asset, not a liability. These are women and men who have spent years working on U.S. diplomacy, and if confirmed, I would work closely with the career employees to advance our nation's interests. I understand that working overseas can be challenging, and that we may have to make tough decisions about how to use resources. If confirmed, I would prioritize the health and safety of my employees, both direct-hire and local staff. I would work with the Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure that the needs and concerns of career staff are being met as we represent the United States to the Vatican.

*Question.* As a political appointee rather than career diplomat, do you believe it is incumbent upon new chiefs of mission to integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture? If yes, how do you intend to do so?

*Answer.* Yes, I believe that a new chief of mission should integrate themselves into Embassy operations and culture. If confirmed, I would work closely with my Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure a smooth transition. I would prioritize meeting the members of Mission Vatican and learning the culture and the processes in place.

*Question.* Do you believe it is ever acceptable or constructive to berate subordinates, either in public or private?

*Answer.* I have a policy of zero tolerance for workplace bullying or harassment. It is never acceptable to berate subordinates, and if confirmed, I would not accept that behavior at Mission Vatican.

*Question.* How do you envision your relationship with your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would work closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission to advance U.S. foreign policy priorities and to ensure the safety and health of our community.

*Question.* If confirmed, what leadership responsibilities do you intend to entrust to your deputy chief of mission?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I would consult closely with the Deputy Chief of Mission about the Embassy's priorities and needs and would create a strategic plan about how best to address them.

*Question.* It is imperative that U.S. diplomats get outside of posts abroad to meet with local actors, including host government officials, non-government organizations, and everyday citizens.

- If confirmed, will you encourage the Mission to the Holy See diplomats to engage in-person with the people outside of U.S. embassies and consulates?

*Answer.* Yes, I would promote an atmosphere of engagement with interlocutors outside of the U.S. community. I believe that in-person interactions are the foundation of diplomatic work and would encourage high levels of involvement outside the mission.

#### *Public Diplomacy is an Important Aspect of U.S. Foreign Policy Efforts*

*Question.* What is the public diplomacy environment like in the Holy See? What public diplomacy challenges do U.S. diplomats face?

*Answer.* In general, the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See enjoys a close and cooperative relationship with Rome-based correspondents of mainstream and religious outlets, and the Vatican's own media outlets. Embassy Vatican can collaborate with print, TV, and radio to draw attention to issues of U.S. and Vatican concern, such as religious freedom, trafficking in persons, improvements in health care, and climate change, as well as message widely via social media to a large audience of people around the globe who follow Vatican affairs.

*Question.* How do you balance the importance of Main State versus the in-country mission when it comes to tailoring public diplomacy messages for foreign audiences?

*Answer.* Missions overseas and Main State work together to craft a shared public diplomacy vision, as well as a comprehensive strategy, to effectively reach, educate, and influence key audiences with our policy messages and public diplomacy initiatives. Once Main State and Embassy Vatican develop the overarching policy direction, post builds in the in-country knowledge and expertise, and the strategy and tactical skills, that will advance policy goals in the local context with foreign audiences. Teamwork and clear communications between Main State and Post public affairs teams are critical for our success in developing effective messaging and influencing audiences.

*Question.* "Anomalous health incidents," commonly referred to as "Havana Syndrome," have been debilitating and sidelining U.S. diplomats around the world for years. They have caused serious, negative consequences for U.S. diplomacy, yet many believe that the Department is not doing enough to care for, protect, and communicate to its personnel.

- If confirmed, do you commit to taking this threat seriously?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, there is nothing I will take more seriously than the health and security of the people who will be working with me. AHIs have been a top priority for Secretary Blinken, who set clear goals for the Health Incident Re-

sponse Task Force to strengthen the Department's communication with our workforce, provide care for affected employees and family members, and better protect against these events in the future as we continue to work closely with the inter-agency to find the cause of these AHIs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to talking as openly as you can to personnel at the mission to the Holy See?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team at the Mission to the Holy See.

*Question.* Have you received a briefing on the anomalous health incidents that have occurred to U.S. Government personnel around the world, including at U.S. Embassies and other diplomatic posts? If you have not, and if you are confirmed, do you commit to receiving a briefing on the incidents before you depart for your post?

*Answer.* I have received an unclassified briefing on anomalous health incidents. If confirmed, I commit to receiving additional, classified briefings on the incidents.

*Question.* In the event of an anomalous health incident among your Embassy personnel or eligible family members, do you commit to maintain detailed records of the incident, and share the information with the State Department and other embassies to contribute to the investigation of how these attacks are affecting U.S. Missions and personnel around the world?

*Answer.* Yes. If confirmed, I will maintain detailed records of the incident and share it with the State Department and others to contribute to the investigation.

*Question.* The past occurrences and ongoing threat of anomalous health incidents among Embassy personnel and their families poses a serious challenge to morale. When personnel at post fear for their safety or doubt that their case will be taken seriously if they were affected, the performance of Embassy operations can suffer. Whether or not anomalous health incidents occur at your Embassy, how will you work to restore and preserve morale that may be lost due to the knowledge these attacks have been occurring at posts around the world?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will take every measure to keep our staff safe and secure and would take any report of an anomalous health incident very seriously. I will do my best to ensure those affected receive the attention they deserve, that incidents are investigated fully, and that we work with the appropriate offices and agencies to ensure required reporting, investigation, potential countermeasures, and provision of medical care. I would share what information I can within the bounds of privacy and security concerns with my team and the mission community.

#### *Human Rights and International Organizations*

*Question.* The Vatican recently extended the Sino-Vatican agreement with the Chinese Government that establishes a process for appointing bishops in China. Under the Agreement, bishops in China are in communion with Rome but also approved by the Chinese Government. The details of this agreement have never been made public. Despite the agreement, Catholic bishops not affiliated with the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association continue to face persecution. Will you and whom-ever is confirmed as Ambassador-at-Large For International Religious Freedom prioritize religious freedom issues in China in your diplomatic engagements with Vatican officials?

*Answer.* The Holy See has a long history of promoting religious freedom, including through advocacy and interfaith dialogue. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Vatican on this issue. I would encourage the Holy See to speak out publicly against the PRC's human rights violations and abuses, including the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs, who are predominantly Muslim, and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups. I would also encourage the Holy See to hold the PRC Government accountable to the terms of the provisional agreement and make the terms of the agreement public to promote accountability for the PRC for its commitments.

---

#### RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO OREN E. WHYCHE-SHAW BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* If confirmed, what will your priorities be as the U.S. Director of the African Development Bank?

*Answer.* If confirmed, my priority will be to exercise the United States voice and vote at the AfDB to promote high development standards; strong, sustainable development outcomes; improved accountability and transparency; and, high additionality in AfDB operations. These priorities will help strengthen the economic management and development outcomes of AfDB operations, which will also enhance U.S. development and national security objectives, create new markets for trade and ensure effective use of U.S. taxpayer dollars.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you work to advance these priorities with the other members of the Bank?

*Answer.* While the United States is the largest non-regional shareholder (second largest overall) and can exercise considerable oversight over AfDB policies and operations, U.S. influence at the AfDB also depends on our ability to build coalitions with likeminded shareholders and work effectively with AfDB Management. I have demonstrated this ability to build coalitions and advance U.S. priorities in Africa throughout my career in both the public and private sector. If confirmed, I commit to exercising the United States' voice and vote to advance U.S. interests at the AfDB in close partnership with our allies, particularly those from the region.

*Question.* In your opinion, other than important and significant financial contributions as the largest non-African shareholder, what does the United States bring to the work of the African Development Bank?

*Answer.* The United States' focus on development outcomes, additionality, transparency and accountability, and strong environmental and social standards contributes to a more sustainable economic development model at the AfDB and better development outcomes for its regional member countries.

*Question.* How will you balance U.S. priorities with those of other non-African members, including China, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia?

*Answer.* The extent of U.S. influence at the AfDB depends on our ability to build coalitions with likeminded shareholders and draw on our experience as a long-standing, trusted partner of African countries and the AfDB and advocate for sustainable, inclusive development. If confirmed, I commit to exercising the United States' voice and vote to advance U.S. interests at the AfDB in partnership with our allies and partners to promote U.S. interests over those of other shareholders that may not have similar goals for the institution.

*Question.* As African economies face a tough post-COVID recovery, what should be the Bank's lending priorities vis-à-vis other multilateral regional development banks (MDBs)?

*Answer.* The AfDB should build on its infrastructure expertise to support preparedness through basic infrastructure investments and capacity-building around sustainable infrastructure investment. If confirmed, I will use the United States' voice and vote to target the Bank's resources to critical needs and promote equitable economic opportunity as countries continue to cope with impacts of the pandemic.

*Question.* What should set AfDB apart from other MDBs in this regard?

*Answer.* The AfDB's regional and infrastructure expertise, including in fragile and conflict-affected situations, sets it apart from other MDBs and development partners operating in Africa. If confirmed, I commit to encouraging coordination between the AfDB and other responsible development partners to avoid redundancies in the support provided to African countries.

*Question.* U.S. companies receive a very small share of AfDB procurement—just under 0.5 percent in 2020. Meanwhile, China firms accounted for 37.53 percent of procurement by the Bank.

- Do you believe that this disparity between China and the U.S. regarding procurement should be of significant concern to the U.S.?

*Answer.* I fully share your concern of the need for a more level playing field at the AfDB. If confirmed, I commit to working with the AfDB and U.S. interagency to promote strong procurement and bidding standards and to strongly advocate for implementing procurement policies that focus on lifecycle costs and value-for-money rather than awards to the lowest bidder. I will also advocate for AfDB assistance to build public financial management capacity in African countries, including for public procurement, and strengthen governance and business enabling environments in African countries.

*Question.* What explains this miniscule amount of U.S. companies in AfDB procurement?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working with the AfDB and U.S. interagency to identify barriers that may prevent U.S. companies from securing a greater share of AfDB-funded contracts. Steps to strengthen governance, transparency, and the business enabling environment throughout the continent are important for creating more attractive opportunities for U.S. companies.

*Question.* How can the United States Government, including through the position through which you are nominated, leverage better its companies to receive a larger share of AfDB's procurement?

Answer. I welcome greater participation by U.S. firms in AfDB operations. In my previous position in the AfDB's Private Sector department, I worked with the interagency to broaden communication with U.S. companies about AfDB procurement opportunities. If confirmed, I commit to undertaking efforts to strengthen procurement and bidding standards as well as increase transparency into AfDB operations, as well as measures to build public procurement capacity and strengthen governance and the business enabling environment in African countries, can enhance U.S. competitiveness in AfDB contracts. I will advocate for full implementation of procurement policies that focus on lifecycle costs and value-for-money rather than awards to the lowest bidder.

*Question.* If confirmed, as U.S. Director at the African Development Bank, how will you work with the Bank's largest shareholder Nigeria and Nigerian economist Dr. Adesina, who is currently serving as the president of the Bank, particularly to address issues of corruption, transparency, and sustainability in the Bank's investments?

Answer. Strong institutional governance is essential to maintaining a high standard development institution positioned to contribute to African capacity needs. I understand AfDB Governors will consider updates to the AfDB's policies related to institutional governance, ethics, and whistleblowing and clarify the governance framework. If confirmed, I will exercise the United States' voice and vote, in partnership with likeminded shareholders, to promote policies that strengthen institutional governance of the AfDB and its operations.

*Question.* In what ways may the United States incorporate AfDB into the strategy underpinning the Prosper Africa initiative in terms of the U.S. increasing two-way trade and investment with Africa?

Answer. By promoting high development standards, better accountability and transparency, strong development outcomes, and high additionality in AfDB operations, the United States can benefit from the AfDB's operations in the region as these efforts will create conditions for sustainable economic development that will also open new markets for trade.

*Question.* In November 2020, I published a Senate Foreign Relations Committee majority report entitled "The United States and Europe: A Concrete Agenda for Transatlantic Cooperation on China." The report gave several recommendations on increased transatlantic cooperation, including in Africa, to counter Chinese malign influence more effectively.

- In what ways should the United States partner with important multilateral lending institutions like AfDB to build on likeminded interests in Africa and counter the malign influence of China?

Answer. In addition to being the largest regional source of official development assistance, the AfDB's focus on high development standards and outcomes make it an important institution in Africa's economic development. The United States should use its influence as the largest non-regional shareholder and one of the largest donors at the AfDB, in partnership with other likeminded shareholders, to advance a sustainable economic development model that incorporates transparency and strong governance to set high standards that should be met by all sources of financing.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO OREN E. WHYCHE-SHAW BY SENATOR MITT ROMNEY

*Question.* Critical minerals, like cobalt, lithium, and nickel, are essential for our national security and as components of clean energy technologies. Countries with ambitious climate reduction objectives cannot meet lofty goals for vehicle electrification and renewable energy buildouts without a robust supply of critical minerals. Yet, there is significant mineral concentration for production in only a few countries,

including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with a reported 70 percent of global cobalt production,<sup>1</sup> and China, with the most significant mineral processing. In recent years, China has expanded its footprint in the DRC and now owns all cobalt mining operations in the country, further exacerbating supply chain concentrations.<sup>2</sup>

China's predatory lending practices across the African continent are well documented, especially regarding resource-backed loans for resource-rich nations.<sup>3</sup> Under the guise of local economic growth and development, opaque Chinese loan agreements often result in harmful and unsustainable debt obligations for host nations.

If confirmed as the next U.S. representative to the African Development Bank, how will you work with allies to ensure the Bank's investment policy supports a viable market and diverse supply chain for critical minerals?

Answer. I fully share your concern and, if confirmed, I will advocate that the AfDB, in helping countries achieve their development goals, assist in diversifying regional supply chains and open new markets for trade in critical minerals and other goods so that African countries have alternative trade and investment partners to China. I will also promote in partnership with likeminded shareholders strong procurement and bidding standards at the AfDB to encourage transparency and competitive bidding processes to support diverse markets and supply chains, including for critical minerals. In addition, I commit to exercising the United States' voice and vote, in partnership with likeminded shareholders, to advance sustainable economic development in AfDB operations and policies so that borrowing countries have access to more transparent and affordable financing options.

*Question.* How can the U.S. leverage its position as a non-regional member country in the African Development Bank to counter China's predatory development policies in the region?

Answer. While the United States is the largest non-regional shareholder (second largest overall) and can exercise considerable oversight over AfDB policies and operations, U.S. influence at the AfDB also depends on our ability to build coalitions with likeminded shareholders. If confirmed, I commit to exercising the United States' voice and vote to promote U.S. interests at the AfDB in close partnership with our allies to advance a sustainable economic model based on transparency and strong governance to set high standards that should be met by all sources of finance.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO OREN E. WHYCHE-SHAW BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The African Development Bank reports that it has provided the largest crisis response in its history to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet most of this support has been in the form of loans and comes at a time when many countries are seeking debt relief under the Common Framework. And, of course, this amount pales in comparison to the hundreds of billions most of these same countries owe China under obscure and non-transparent terms.

- How can we ensure that lending is sustainable and does not overly burden developing countries with additional debt they cannot pay off?

Answer. The objective of the AfDB is to spur sustainable economic development and social progress in its regional member countries, thus contributing to poverty reduction. If confirmed, I commit to exercising the United States' voice and vote to advance sustainable economic development in AfDB operations and policies to help African countries avoid overly burdensome debt that does not help them achieve their development goals. This translates to advocating for projects that improve public financial management, support medium term debt management strategies, and contribute to sustainable debt.

*Question.* What steps can the United States take to ensure that multilateral development bank assistance is not used to just pay off Chinese loans?

Answer. I fully share your concern about the increasing debt vulnerabilities many of the poorest countries face and the role of non-transparent creditors in worsening

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iea.org/reports/the-role-of-critical-minerals-in-clean-energy-transitions/executive-summary>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/21/world/us-china-energy.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/02/17/africas-reliance-on-chinese-loans-has-experts-concerned-about-more-debt-defaults.html>



those vulnerabilities. The African Development Bank can play an important role in assisting countries with building debt management capacity, promoting debt transparency through debt data collection and reporting, and supporting countries participating in debt relief initiatives, such as the G-20 Common Framework. If confirmed, I will also work with likeminded shareholders to exercise our collective voices and votes to ensure that AfDB assistance goes toward sustainable development outcomes rather than simply servicing debt payments.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your approaches to engaging with China on debt transparency standards?

*Answer.* As the second largest shareholder and largest non-regional shareholder, the United States can exercise considerable influence over AfDB policies and operations in partnership with likeminded shareholders. I understand the effort to engage with China on debt transparency is occurring in a variety of fora, including through the G-20. If confirmed, I commit to supporting those efforts and working with allies and partners to promote debt transparency. I will also encourage the AfDB to put in place policies to incentivize debt transparency and sustainability, emphasize building institutional capacity and strengthening public financial management in borrowing countries to help move countries toward sustainable economic development.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ENOH T. EBONG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENEDEZ

*Joint Development/Strategic Mandate*

*Question.* Development finance is an important tool to realize U.S. foreign policy objectives and can be especially effective in countering malign influence of China and other adversary nations. Most developing countries would prefer to work with the U.S. and our private sector partners, as opposed to the PRC's predatory development financial institutions.

- How will you work to balance development and strategic outcomes through USTDA's investments?

*Answer.* USTDA has a unique dual mission that allows it to balance the development goals of its overseas partners with the strategic foreign policy goals of the U.S. Government. The agency was created to both a) provide foreign assistance for economic development through the promotion of quality infrastructure and b) support U.S. jobs through exports to the infrastructure projects that the agency develops.

Accordingly, overseas infrastructure project preparation is USTDA's mission and source of expertise. The agency's early-stage engagement is fundamental to American competitiveness and critical to the ability of the agency's overseas project sponsors to develop bankable infrastructure deals that can be financed, implemented, and sustained. Grant-funded project-specific feasibility studies and technical assistance are the key components of USTDA's toolkit, as are pilot projects that demonstrate the scalability and replicability of cutting-edge U.S. technologies in overseas settings. USTDA's commitment to partnership, shared priorities, and quality infrastructure solutions offers a stark alternative to China's predatory development approach and is attractive to the agency's overseas partners.

If confirmed, I will continue to ensure the successful execution of the agency's mandate to work with the U.S. private sector on priority infrastructure projects with potential for U.S. exports in sectors that have clear development impact. These include clean energy, more efficient transportation systems, greater connectivity, and better healthcare outcomes through strong, resilient, healthcare infrastructure. USTDA will continue to engage at the most critical and strategically important stage of the project development cycle when design choices and technology options are being defined and determined. If confirmed, I will ensure that the agency utilizes the U.S. private sector to develop how projects will be designed, financed, and implemented, which is not only critical for creating a level, fair playing field for U.S. companies, but also for developing high-quality infrastructure projects that lead to sustainable economic growth.

The success of USTDA's approach is evident in the fact that the agency has generated approximately \$117 in U.S. exports for every \$1 programmed over the most recent 10-year evaluation cycle. If confirmed, I will review each activity that is brought forward for funding consideration with an eye to both its developmental and strategic impacts, including the commercial opportunity it presents to support U.S. jobs.

*USTDA in the Indo-Pacific and Africa*

*Question.* Under the Trump administration, USTDA sought to expand its overseas presence in Africa and the Indo-Pacific.

- What is the status of this expansion and its impact?

*Answer.* USTDA has a presence in many of the world's most important emerging markets, which is necessitated by the increasing demand for USTDA's products as a countermeasure to Chinese and other malign "development" actors. This overseas presence allows the agency to build stronger relationships with reputable project sponsors, which facilitates the early identification of quality infrastructure projects that can create export opportunities for U.S. companies. USTDA's overseas offices also help develop and monitor the agency's project preparation activities. They help connect sources of implementation financing to USTDA's projects and support the identification of U.S. exports and evaluation of development impacts associated with the agency's activities. USTDA's overseas offices are also a clear demonstration of the U.S. Government's commitment to economic growth in our most strategic emerging market partner countries.

USTDA's overseas presence is divided into two categories: 1) U.S. citizens employed through a personal services contract and 2) locally employed staff through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce.

*Current Presence*

*South Africa:* 1 U.S. citizen, 1 locally employed staff

*Thailand:* 1 U.S. citizen, 1 locally employed staff

*Ghana:* 1 U.S. citizen

*Brazil:* 1 Locally employed staff

*Vietnam:* 1 Locally employed staff

*India:* 2 Locally employed staff

*Nigeria:* 1 Locally employed staff

*Kenya:* 1 Locally employed staff (new position)

*Malaysia:* 1 Locally employed staff (new position)

*Indonesia:* 1 Locally employed staff (new position)

*New Recruitment Efforts*

*India:* 1 U.S. citizen

*Philippines:* 1 U.S. citizen

China's financing of low-quality infrastructure solutions has long plagued emerging markets, adding to their debt burden and leading to failed projects and harmful development outcomes. USTDA's expanded overseas presence offers an alternative. For this reason, USTDA has recently added locally employed staff in competitive markets including Indonesia, Kenya and Malaysia and is in the process of adding personal services contractors in India and the Philippines.

India is a like-minded partner and key pillar of the U.S. Government's Indo-Pacific Strategy. As one of USTDA's largest and most diverse country programs, the agency is prioritizing an expanded local presence to include a personal services contractor. This will increase USTDA's engagement in the market, thereby expanding the U.S. Government's influence at the expense of Chinese foreign policy interests and deepening market opportunities for U.S. companies. The new position will be responsible for USTDA's broader South Asia portfolio and allow for the expansion of the agency's reach and engagement across the subcontinent.

USTDA's personal services contractor in the Philippines will work directly with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is headquartered in Manila. This local presence will enhance USTDA's ability to support the development and design of ADB investments using the agency's project preparation tools. This will facilitate the implementation of quality infrastructure projects that use U.S. goods and services.

*Renewable Energy Storage*

*Question.* The USG development community has made several announcements to bolster renewable energy development abroad, including a recent announcement USTDA made to award a technical assistance grant to the Dominican Republic's Superintendent of Electricity to facilitate the growth of renewable power generation in the country. Energy storage is essential to ensure consistent renewable energy output.

- How do you think USTDA can be utilized to facilitate energy storage projects like the recently announced USTDA project in the Dominican Republic?

*Answer.* The incorporation of energy storage in the power and transportation sectors will be critical for countries to meet their renewable energy targets. The global

market for energy storage systems has advanced considerably over the past several years, and as the prices for batteries continue to decrease, batteries and other forms of energy storage are becoming an economically viable option for countries around the world.

USTDA can support emerging economies by laying the groundwork for the deployment of energy storage systems. For example, USTDA can provide grant funds for technical assistance and feasibility studies to assess the technical and economic viability of energy storage projects or create roadmaps for enabling regulations for battery storage systems, electromobility, and renewable generation projects that involve energy storage. Additionally, USTDA can sponsor pilot projects in partner countries to test energy storage technology applications for the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity. Finally, USTDA can sponsor reverse trade missions to the United States for public and private sector representatives who seek to procure energy storage technologies. These visits include meetings with U.S. suppliers to witness the design, manufacture, and operation of these solutions in the United States.

Under USTDA's Global Partnership for Climate-Smart Infrastructure, USTDA has prioritized clean energy and transportation projects. By leveraging all of its project preparation and partnership-building tools, USTDA will be able to play a robust role in the deployment of energy storage systems in emerging economies across the globe.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ENOH T. EBONG BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* For years, we have seen more and more countries accept financing from the Chinese Communist Party through the predatory Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). While some see this as evidence of other countries choosing to align with the CCP over the United States, the truth is a bit more complicated. For many of these countries, BRI loans are often the only game in town. It's unrealistic for us to expect America or other Western governments to match BRI lending dollar for dollar. Instead, we need to channel the unrivalled capacity and size of the American private financial system to provide an alternative to BRI loans. In many ways, this is exactly what the U.S. Trade and Development Agency was designed to do, but we just aren't seeing this on the ground.

- What is the USTDA currently doing to provide alternatives to BRI lending in other countries?

*Answer.* Consistent with its mandate to a) provide foreign assistance for economic development through the promotion of quality infrastructure and b) support U.S. jobs through exports to the infrastructure projects that the agency prepares, USTDA takes a number of approaches to providing alternatives to BRI lending in other countries:

a. *Quality Infrastructure Project Preparation.* USTDA helps its emerging market partners gain access to both American and global financial systems for their infrastructure development needs. The agency's project preparation activities, including grant-funded technical assistance, feasibility studies, and pilot projects, help to develop bankable infrastructure deals that address the requirements of any lender, whether it is a host country development bank or Government, a multilateral development bank, a private bank, or a U.S. Government institution such as the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. USTDA's project preparation mission complements the needs of American and global financial institutions that seek to invest in well prepared, high-quality infrastructure projects in emerging markets. The agency leverages its relationships with financial institutions around the world to mobilize capital for projects that use U.S. goods, services, and technologies.

b. *Promotion of Sound Procurement Practices.* USTDA's Global Procurement Initiative (GPI) is reforming emerging market public procurement practices that favor low-cost solutions, result in high-debt, and lead to poor quality infrastructure investments. GPI helps public procurement officials establish international best practices and policies that integrate life-cycle cost analysis and best-value determinations into their procurement decisions. This helps open infrastructure tenders to greater international competition and creates a fair and level playing field for U.S. companies. By focusing on total cost of ownership and high-quality infrastructure solutions, the GPI enhances the competitiveness of U.S. companies over the low-cost, low-quality solutions offered by competitors from markets such as China.

c. *Training Grants.* Through its training grant assistance program, USTDA has the unique ability to level the playing field for U.S. companies that face unfair competition from foreign companies. U.S. companies competing for overseas infrastructure projects may find themselves in situations in which a foreign (often Chinese) competitor, with support from its respective host-country government, is offering to the project sponsor some additional form of incentives, below-market prices, concessional financing or other type of benefit(s) or advocacy that goes beyond the technical and financial requirements of the procurement. This can put the U.S. company at a competitive disadvantage.

In such a situation, the disadvantaged U.S. company may request USTDA assistance. Following its robust due diligence process, USTDA may offer the project sponsor specialized training assistance to build its capacity to implement and operate its infrastructure project. The agency's offer would be contingent on the project sponsor's entry into a contract with the U.S. company.

USTDA works in concert with the U.S. Departments of Commerce and State to ensure that its offer of training assistance is coordinated with official U.S. Government advocacy efforts for the U.S. company. This unique program tool has supported numerous successful efforts by U.S. companies to overcome unfair competition from Chinese Government-backed companies.

d. *Collaboration with Like-Minded Partners.* USTDA has developed innovative partnerships with like-minded global partners, which bring a coordinated approach to addressing challenges caused by BRI lending. In November 2017, the agency signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) to jointly support the development of energy infrastructure and strengthen procurement capacities and best practices of national entities in the Indo-Pacific region. In September 2019, USTDA and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to enhance cooperation on infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific region.

Under the GPI, USTDA has worked with METI and multilateral development banks to train more than 1,000 public procurement officials in 15 countries on best practices for maintaining transparency in procurement while achieving best value.

*Question.* If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that USTDA lives up to its mission to "promote economic growth in developing and middle-income countries, while simultaneously helping American businesses to export their products and services, thereby creating U.S. jobs"?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I will develop and maintain strong relationships with U.S. businesses and overseas project sponsors. Their interests, priorities and capabilities will be integrated with USTDA's strategic outlook and statutory mandate to promote private sector participation in infrastructure projects overseas. To achieve this, if confirmed, I will place emphasis on economic sectors with significant U.S. export potential, such as clean energy, transportation, information and communications technology, healthcare infrastructure, and agribusiness.

If confirmed, I will ensure that USTDA continues to conduct rigorous due diligence on its partners to ensure they are reputable, experienced, and capable of implementing the projects that USTDA supports. Of equal importance, the agency will maintain a robust monitoring and evaluation framework that is integrated into individual project, management, and policy decisions. If I am confirmed, USTDA will continue to support activities that have the potential to obtain financing, have a positive development benefit to the host country, and generate significant exports of U.S. goods and services.

As the U.S. Government's overseas project preparation agency, USTDA will also continue to expand and leverage its relationships with global financial institutions to ensure its projects receive the financing needed for implementation. In sum, I will work to ensure that the agency continues to contribute to effective foreign assistance by partnering with host country governments, the private sector, and multilateral institutions to find workable solutions to development priorities that provide benefits to all parties.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD  
SUBMITTED TO ENOCH T. EBONG BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* USTDA can serve a valuable role in bringing transparency and competition to global infrastructure projects. This is sorely needed in a world awash with

opaque and corrupt Chinese deals, particularly in the developing world. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to help position U.S. industry to compete effectively on foreign infrastructure projects against Chinese firms that may be willing to break the rules?

Answer. If confirmed, I would leverage the following tools and approaches to help position U.S. industry to compete against Chinese firms:

a. *Early-Stage Engagement.* Overseas infrastructure project preparation is USTDA's mission and source of expertise. The agency's early-stage engagement is fundamental to the competitiveness of U.S. industry and critical to the ability of the agency's overseas project sponsors to develop bankable infrastructure deals without turning to China.

Grant-funded project-specific feasibility studies and technical assistance are the key components of USTDA's toolkit, as are pilot projects that demonstrate the scalability and replicability of cutting-edge U.S. technologies in overseas settings. USTDA's commitment to partnership, shared priorities, and quality infrastructure solutions offers a stark alternative to China's predatory development approach and is attractive to the agency's overseas partners.

If I am confirmed, USTDA will continue to engage at the most critical and strategically important stage of the project development cycle when design choices and technology options are being defined and determined. If confirmed, I will ensure that the agency utilizes the U.S. private sector to develop how projects will be designed, financed, and implemented, which is not only critical for creating a level, fair playing field for U.S. companies, but also for developing high-quality infrastructure projects that lead to sustainable economic growth.

If confirmed, I will review each activity that is brought forward for funding consideration with an eye to both its developmental and strategic impacts, including the commercial opportunity it presents to support U.S. jobs.

b. *Alternative Sources of Infrastructure Finance.* USTDA offers its partners in emerging economies alternatives to China and predatory Chinese lending practices by helping them gain access to both American and global financial systems for their infrastructure development needs. The agency's project preparation activities help develop bankable infrastructure deals that address the requirements of any lender, whether it is a host country development bank or government, a multilateral development bank, a private bank, or a U.S. Government institution such as the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation. These financial institutions are committed to high-quality infrastructure and procurement procedures that are fair, open, and transparent. This helps level the playing field for U.S. companies.

c. *Promoting Sound Procurement Practices.* USTDA's Global Procurement Initiative (GPI) is reforming emerging market public procurement practices that favor low-cost solutions, lack transparency, result in high-debt, and lead to poor quality infrastructure investments. GPI helps public procurement officials establish international best practices and policies that integrate life-cycle cost analysis and best-value determinations into their procurement decisions. This helps open infrastructure tenders to greater international competition and creates a fair and level playing field for U.S. companies. By focusing on total cost of ownership and high-quality infrastructure solutions, the GPI enhances the competitiveness of U.S. companies over the low-cost, low-quality solutions offered by competitors from markets such as China.

d. *Training Grants.* Through its training grant assistance program, USTDA has the unique ability to level the playing field for U.S. companies that face unfair competition from foreign companies. U.S. companies competing for overseas infrastructure projects may find themselves in situations in which a foreign (often Chinese) competitor, with support from its respective host-country government, is offering to the project sponsor some additional form of incentives, below-market prices, concessional financing or other type of benefit(s) or advocacy that goes beyond the technical and financial requirements of the procurement. This can put the U.S. company at a competitive disadvantage.

In such a situation, the disadvantaged U.S. company may request USTDA assistance. Following its robust due diligence process, USTDA may offer the project sponsor specialized training assistance to build its capacity to implement and operate its infrastructure project. The agency's offer would be contingent on the project sponsor's entry into a contract with the U.S. company.

USTDA works in concert with the U.S. Departments of Commerce and State to ensure that its offer of training assistance is coordinated with official U.S. Government advocacy efforts for the U.S. company. This unique program tool

has supported numerous successful efforts by U.S. companies to overcome unfair competition from Chinese Government-backed companies. This includes emerging economy infrastructure projects that are strategically important to U.S. national security interests in areas such as 5G and undersea fiber optic cable systems.

*Question.* What steps can the United States and international community take to increase transparency in infrastructure procurement overall?

*Answer.* In the last decade, there has been an increased focus by the United States and the international community on public procurement in emerging economies due to the dramatic, negative economic impacts of corruption and failures in public procurement processes. The mounting debt incurred by these countries because of systemic procurement failures and China's malign actions in emerging markets has further widened the global infrastructure gap. To build stronger and more resilient infrastructure and begin to close this gap, the United States and its global partners in the G7 and G20 must take a unified approach to tackle the issue of building quality infrastructure in these markets while simultaneously supporting transparent and fair procurement systems that focus on value for money to break the debt cycle. The two issues of supporting transparent procurement systems and building quality infrastructure are inextricably tied and must be addressed together to produce sustainable infrastructure development.

Quality infrastructure development is at the heart of USTDA's mission. As such, USTDA's project preparation activities are executed according to internationally accepted standards and best practices. This includes life-cycle cost analysis so that the agency's overseas project sponsors understand the total cost of ownership for their infrastructure project.

As stated above, the GPI is another critical tool that USTDA deploys to reform emerging market public procurement practices that favor low-cost solutions, lack transparency, result in high-debt, and lead to poor quality infrastructure investments. The GPI program incentivizes governments to establish strong and transparent procurement oversight bodies so that they can attain quality infrastructure for the best overall value in a manner best serving their people who bear the cost of the investment.

Establishing anticorruption measures and strict monitoring/auditing bodies is a critical necessity in this approach. Countries wishing to receive USTDA's assistance must demonstrate that they have the legal foundation to consider factors other than price in procurement, have strong procurement oversight bodies with a dedication to maintaining transparency throughout the procurement process, and be committed to the professional development of its procurement workforce.

The GPI coordinates closely with the agencies of the U.S. Government that fund anticorruption efforts overseas and strengthen the institutional capacity of key oversight bodies and civil society organizations. These include the U.S. Agency for International Development's Good Governance program; the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Law Development Program; the U.S. Department of Justice's Antitrust Division; the Office of Federal Procurement Policy at the Office of Management and Budget; the General Services Administration; and the Government Accountability Office. The training programs provided by these agencies create the conceptual foundation for USTDA's GPI partner countries to safely transition to more transparent, sophisticated, value-based procurement systems, which are needed to procure complex infrastructure projects.

USTDA also works closely with multilateral development banks (MDB) in the design of its GPI training programs and includes MDB officials as observers in every training program offered. Under the GPI, USTDA has partnered with like-minded foreign counterparts including Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) to demonstrate collective best practices for how to conduct market research, design projects to deliver high-quality outcomes, and manage contracts after award to ensure successful implementation. Working together with these international partners, USTDA has trained more than 1,000 public procurement officials in 15 countries on best practices for maintaining transparency while achieving best value.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO LEOPOLDO MARTINEZ NUCETE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

*Question.* Please provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this specific question:

- If confirmed, do you commit to work with IDB President Claver-Carone to implement the IDB's Vision 2025, Reinvest in the Americas?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working, as appropriate, with IDB President Claver-Carone to advance U.S. priorities for the IDB Group and the region.

*Question.* Please provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this specific question:

- Do you agree that a tenth general capital increase for the IDB would strengthen the Bank's ability to help the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean achieve sustainable and serviceable debt structures?

Answer. Yes, a capital increase could be one way to contribute to the IDB's ability to help some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, but achieving sustainable and serviceable debt structures ultimately depends on a range of policy choices by country authorities. If confirmed, I would work with IDB Management, other shareholders, you and committees of jurisdiction to analyze the financing and policy challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean and how best the IDB could respond.

*Question.* Please provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this specific question:

- In March 2021, Sens. Menendez, Rubio, Kaine, Cassidy, and Cardin filed a bill (S. 616), which would direct the President to take steps to support a tenth general capital increase for the Inter-American Development Bank, and for the U.S. Governor of the Bank to vote in favor such a general capital increase. These mandates are included in the United States Innovation and Competition Act of 2021 (S. 1260). If confirmed, do you commit to support these actions?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, including whether an IDB general capital increase would provide sufficient development benefits for the region. If confirmed, I commit to work with you and committees of jurisdiction on the issue of a potential IDB general capital increase.

#### FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RISCH

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with IDB President Claver-Carone to implement the IDB's Vision 2025, Reinvest in the Americas, which includes presenting a focus on achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth, identifying a pathway to achieve those goals with an emphasis on five clear opportunities, and presenting a value proposition to strengthen the IDB Group's ability to execute?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working with IDB Management and other shareholders to promote sustainable and inclusive growth through a focus on high development standards, strong development outcomes, better accountability and transparency, and high additionality in IDB operations. These priorities will enhance U.S. development and national security objectives in the region and create new markets for trade.

*Question.* Do you agree that a tenth general capital increase for the IDB would strengthen the Bank's ability to help the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean achieve sustainable and serviceable debt structures?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region's capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB's Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region's needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to take steps to support a tenth general capital increase for the IDB, including advancing diplomatic engagement to build support among member countries of the Bank for a tenth general capital increase for the Bank?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region's capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB's Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with

the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region's needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with the IDB Board of Governors to admit Taiwan as a non-borrowing member of the IDB?

*Answer.* I understand that Taiwan has been an important development partner for the region. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury, IDB Management, and other IDB shareholders to advocate for a continued strong relationship between Taiwan and the IDB and the region.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO LEOPOLDO MARTINEZ NUCETE BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* I am extremely concerned about a number of tweets you have made in the last few years that seem to imply an extremely biased and, frankly, incorrect view of the world. The Inter-American Development Bank is a key part of America's relations with the Western Hemisphere. Its leadership will inevitably reflect on the image America presents to the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean.

- On October 26, 2018, you tweeted your support for a sign that called Republicans "pendejos." Do you still stand by your endorsement of this view, and does this view extend to the other politicians in the hemisphere, including those from right-leaning parties?

*Answer.* I deeply regret tweets and retweets I have sent that contained statements that characterized others using partisan or unkind terms. I would like to take this opportunity to apologize. Going forward, I will hold myself to a higher standard, in all circumstances, both public and private. If confirmed, I will administer my office in the same pragmatic, non-ideological manner that I have my entire career. I also pledge to work collaboratively with members of both parties.

*Question.* I understand that you are the CEO of the Center for Democracy and Development of the Americas (CDDA). According to *El Nuevo Herald*, CDDA sponsored an event in Miami in 2015 that encouraged American businesses to invest in Cuba. As we saw this past June, the Diaz-Canel-Castro regime has leveraged the profits it makes from foreign investment to finance its oppression of Cuban protesters. As long as the regime maintains the ability to confiscate wages and profits from ordinary Cuban workers and businesses, economic engagement with the regime only strengthens their hold on power.

- Do you stand by CDDA's support for encouraging American businesses to work with the regime in Cuba?

*Answer.* The "Cuba Summit" was an event that took place in Washington, D.C. It was organized and hosted by "The Economist". Neither CDDA nor I, had input into the content or the panels in the event. As a "marketing partner" of the event, together with other respected organizations such as American University and the United Nations, we were offered the opportunity to highlight the event and bring guests in attendance. The economic opening policy towards Cuba was the existing U.S. policy at the time, and we thought, as we always do regarding issues impacting Latin America and The Caribbean, that CDDA and our stakeholders had to be part of such conversation. The report by *El Nuevo Herald* in Miami was published without our comments, and therefore the editors agreed to publish an explanatory letter by CDDA, with the same visibility the report had, which we include here for the record: <https://amp.elnuevoherald.com/opinion-es/cartas/article39185640.html>

In the current context I support the Biden-Harris administration Policy towards Cuba. The Biden-Harris administration has escalated sanctions against those violating the human rights of protesters in Cuba.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you advocate for providing investment and funding to organizations controlled by the Cuban military?

*Answer.* I have never and will never advocate to provide funding to organizations controlled by the Cuban military.

*Question.* On the Center for Democracy and Development of the Americas' (CDDA) website, it promotes its "firm commitment" to transparency and provides links to CDDA's required financial disclosures. However, those documents do not detail the contributors and funders of CDDA's programs. As CEO, CDDA it is important to know the sources by which your organization has been funded. In 2012, CDDA received an influx of cash, reporting a growth in funding from \$200,000 to



more than \$2.5 million. Please provide a full accounting on the sources of CDDA's funding since 2012.

*Answer.* CDDA is a 501(c)(3) organization that discloses annually on confidential schedules all its donors to the IRS (Schedule B), together with its 990 annual reports, both of which are required by law.

CDDA and I, are seen or characterized by the Chavista-Maduro regime in Venezuela as "enemies of their Revolution", given my role in the opposition while a Congressman in Venezuela; as well as the organization's strong programming to defend the return to democracy and enforcement of human rights in Venezuela, as well as to expose the abuses and corruption of the regime.

Many of CDDA's donors are still in Venezuela or have family there. If their names became public, they could be at grave danger or risk.

*Question.* I have long advocated for a 10th capital increase for the IDB, as others have in the Senate. I think doing so is critical in ensuring the IDB has adequate resources to provide sustainable financing to our partners in the hemisphere. If the IDB were to expand its capital base, do you believe that the increased resources would supplant private credit, or is the region's need for credit larger than local commercial markets can supply?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region's capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB's Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region's needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to working with the IDB's president to secure a 10th capital increase for the bank?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region's capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB's Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region's needs.

#### FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUBIO

*Question.* Thank you for your responses to my questions on the Center for Democracy and Development of the Americas' (CDDA) financial disclosures. I understand and appreciate your commitment to protecting individuals that are regarded by these regimes as enemies. Indeed, the Maduro regime has shown the appetite to go after these individuals even beyond the borders it controls. At the same time, the American people are owed full transparency when confirming nominees to such high-esteemed posts responsible for overseeing taxpayer funds. Do you confirm that none of the donors for the non-profits listed on the biographical note published by the White House and that you are the founder or principal of, are regime sympathizers or sanctioned by the United States?

*Answer.* None of the donors for the non-profits listed on my White House biography, where I am the founder or principal of, are regime sympathizers or sanctioned by the United States.

*Question.* Do you confirm that CDDA has never, nor will ever receive donations from individuals that previously supported the breakdown of democratic government and rule of law in Venezuela during the Chavez and Maduro tenures?

*Answer.* CDDA has never, nor will ever receive donations from individuals that previously supported the breakdown of democratic government and rule of law in Venezuela during the Chavez and Maduro tenures.

*Question.* Has LMN Consulting, IQ Latino, or Latino Victory Project cooperated with any individual with a past history of supporting either the Maduro regime or the previous Chavez administration in Venezuela?

Answer. LMN Consulting, IQ Latino, or Latino Victory Project has not cooperated with any individual, to our knowledge, with a past history of supporting either the Maduro regime or the previous Chavez administration in Venezuela.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO LEOPOLDO MARTINEZ NUCETE BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* The Inter-American Development Bank reports that it has provided the largest crisis response in its history to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet most of this support has been in the form of loans and comes at a time when many countries are seeking debt relief under the Common Framework. And, of course, this amount pales in comparison to the hundreds of billions most of these same countries owe China under obscure and non-transparent terms.

- How can we ensure that lending from the IDB is sustainable and does not overly burden developing countries with additional debt they cannot pay off?

Answer. I believe the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), with its financial capabilities, technical expertise, and convening power, can and should play a leading role across a wide array of development issues across Latin America and the Caribbean. If confirmed, I commit to exercising the United States' voice and vote to advance sustainable economic development in IDB operations and policies to help Latin American and Caribbean countries secure financing in line with their development goals.

*Question.* What steps can the United States take to ensure that multilateral development bank assistance is not used to just pay off Chinese loans?

Answer. I fully share your concern about the increasing debt vulnerabilities many of the poorest countries face and the role of non-transparent creditors in worsening those vulnerabilities. The IDB can play an important role in assisting countries with building debt management capacity, promoting debt transparency through debt data collection and reporting, and supporting countries participating in debt relief initiatives, such as the G-20 Common Framework. If confirmed, I will also work with like-minded shareholders to exercise our collective voices and votes to ensure that IDB assistance goes toward sustainable development outcomes.

*Question.* If confirmed, what would be your approaches to engaging with China on debt-transparency standards?

Answer. As the largest shareholder, the United States can exercise considerable influence over IDB policies and operations in partnership with likeminded shareholders. I understand the effort to engage with China on debt transparency is occurring in a variety of fora, including through the G-20. If confirmed, I commit to supporting those efforts and working with allies and partners to promote debt transparency. I will also encourage the IDB to emphasize building institutional capacity and strengthening public financial management in borrowing countries to help move countries toward sustainable economic development.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO LEOPOLDO MARTINEZ NUCETE BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

*Question.* On January 27, 2021, President Biden issued an Executive Order (EO) 14008, on "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad," which mandated that the U.S. will "immediately begin to develop a climate finance plan, making strategic use of multilateral and bilateral channels and institutions, to assist developing countries in implementing ambitious emissions reduction measures, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against the impacts of climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments and away from high-carbon investments." If confirmed, do you intend to limit U.S. support inside the Inter-American Development Bank for projects related to the use of fossil fuels?

Answer. If confirmed, I will vote according to applicable laws and policies. The IDB can play a vital role in expanding energy access in Latin America and the Caribbean while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. IDB should select energy projects that account for the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of fi-

nancing. IDB should finance projects that utilize technologies that provide energy access and promote energy efficiency, but do not lock Latin American and Caribbean countries into technologies that may soon be obsolete.

*Question.* Please assess the degree to which you believe that further limits on the Inter-American Development Bank's support for investments related to the use of coal, oil, and gas, would affect the Bank's ability to fund active projects aimed at meeting energy demand in Latin America, including your assessment about the demand for such projects.

*Answer.* The IDB can play a vital role in expanding energy access in Latin America and the Caribbean while at the same time supporting ambitious emissions reduction, protecting critical ecosystems, building resilience against climate change, and promoting the flow of capital toward climate-aligned investments. IDB should select energy projects taking into account the full range of costs and externalities over the lifecycle of the project and avoid financing projects that the private sector is capable of financing. IDB should prioritize investments that include options for clean energy, innovation and energy efficiency to meet demand in Latin America and the Caribbean.

*Question.* If confirmed, you will be responsible for implementing policies aimed at addressing, among other things, economic dislocation that the Biden administration describes as root causes of illegal immigration. In June 2018, I stated—regarding long-standing immigration policies—that there is “a court order that prevents keeping the kids with the parents when you put the parents in jail,” and that “when you see Democrats saying don't separate kids from their parents, what they're really saying is don't arrest illegal aliens.” In response to this stance, you published “[A]merican values are far from this rhetoric.” Please describe how you view the role of development in the context of illegal migration?

*Answer.* Migration in the Americas has several causes, which often present themselves as a bundle in a given country at different moments in history: authoritarianism, violence, corruption, lack of economic opportunity, and natural or climate change related disasters.

Investing and creating partnerships throughout the region to address these issues with a holistic approach to promote development, advances the strategic interest of the United States. The stronger the economies across Latin America and the Caribbean, and the more we promote equity, inclusion and social mobility, the better for the United States. It can reverse current migration trends, and increase trade, investments and reliable supply chains within the hemisphere.

The Inter-American Development Bank is well positioned to advance such an agenda throughout the region through its financial assistance and policy advice.

*Question.* Which American values do you believe are in play in the enforcement of domestic statutory constraints and authorities related to 2018-era immigration policies?

*Answer.* Asylum is a form of legal migration into the United States, and the system does not allow for consular asylum petitions. Therefore, people or families, who believe they have a case for asylum protection, have to enter the U.S. to make their case. That is also part of our legal system, and asylum and refuge are embedded in American values, as a nation that has welcomed people from different parts of the world, in different times, seeking refuge and fleeing persecution, wars, violence or oppressive conditions not granting safety and opportunities. We are a nation of immigrants.

I don't think it is necessary to detain and separate a family, which does not represent a threat to American society, instead of releasing them upon detention and giving the migrants their day in Court, in order to listen to their asylum—or other cases they bring—under our laws.

I also think separating minor children from their parents is in serious contradiction with international treaties on human and children rights that we adhere to as a nation. Families seeking asylum (or other forms of migration relief), that do not represent any threat or danger, can be released to the community, and abide by the consequences of their case, without the traumatic consequences of family separation.

As part of an immigrant family that fled persecution out of Venezuela, I understand the hopes and motives, as well as have empathy for the suffering of these families seeking refuge in the United States. Data and history also confirm that they will become an intrinsic part of our society, contributing to our economic growth, while tapping into opportunities that we offer in the United States, without any detrimental consequences to our labor markets.

*Question.* If confirmed, you will be responsible for implementing policies that promote economic development against the backdrop of national and international fiscal policy environments. The policies that you will be responsible for choosing and promoting will also be constrained by—and will have to address—the concrete sociological, religious, and political identities of communities across the Western Hemisphere, including communities of faith. Much of the development assistance policy environment at national and international levels emphasizes participatory development. On April 5, 2016 you published, regarding my speech in the aftermath of the Wisconsin primary, that “Listening to Cruz one realizes his entanglement with religion and irresponsible fiscal recipe [are] as dangerous as Trump.” To what extent do you believe that faith should be disentangled from development?

*Answer.* I absolutely believe that faith-based organizations play an extraordinary and impactful role in assisting with development programs, initiatives and efforts across the Americas. Furthermore, I believe that collaboration of multilateral development banks with faith-based organizations is desirable, if not required. During my professional life I have collaborated with several faith-based organizations, most recently Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

*Question.* Describe the role that you understand faith to play in economic development, both as a constraint and as a contributing factor.

*Answer.* Education and respect for human rights, promoting social mobility in market economies, is the key to development. There is a strong and long history of faith-based NGOs working in collaboration with private sector and governmental organizations dramatically improving the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable populations across the world. I believe they are an indispensable partner in our efforts to promote development, democracy and rule of law around the world.

*Question.* Please describe what you believe to be the proper ‘fiscal recipe’ for regional development.

*Answer.* Macroeconomic stability and fiscal sustainability are key components to a successful regional development strategy. Fiscal sustainability is not just a function of cutting taxes, but rather an adequate balance between fair taxation and a sustainable level of public expenditures as well as investment needed to create conditions for social mobility, equitable and inclusive growth in a market economy, which empowers women, minorities, and vulnerable and marginalized populations.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MARIA FABIANA JORGE BY SENATOR JAMES E. RIACH

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with IDB President Claver-Carone to implement the IDB’s Vision 2025, Reinvest in the Americas, which includes presenting a focus on achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth, identifying a pathway to achieve those goals with an emphasis on five clear opportunities, and presenting a value proposition to strengthen the IDB Group’s ability to execute?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with IDB Management and other shareholders to promote sustainable, inclusive growth and development through focus on high development standards, strong development outcomes, better accountability and transparency, and high additionality in IDB operations. These priorities will enhance U.S. development and national security objectives in the region and create new markets for trade.

*Question.* Do you agree that a tenth general capital increase for the IDB would strengthen the Bank’s ability to help the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean achieve sustainable and serviceable debt structures?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region’s capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB’s Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region’s needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to take steps to support a tenth general capital increase for the IDB, including advancing diplomatic engagement to build support among member countries of the Bank for a tenth general capital increase for the Bank?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region's capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB's Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region's needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with the IDB Board of Governors to admit Taiwan as a non-borrowing member of the IDB?

Answer. I understand that Taiwan has been an important development partner for the region. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury, IDB Management, and other IDB shareholders to advocate for a continued strong relationship between Taiwan and the IDB and the region.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RISCH

*Question.* Please provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this specific question:

- If confirmed, do you commit to work with IDB President Claver-Carone to implement the IDB's Vision 2025, Reinvest in the Americas?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to working, as appropriate, with IDB President Claver-Carone to advance U.S. priorities for the IDB Group and the region.

*Question.* Please provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this specific question:

- Do you agree that a tenth general capital increase for the IDB would strengthen the Bank's ability to help the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean achieve sustainable and serviceable debt structures?

Answer. Yes, a capital increase could be one way to contribute to the IDB's ability to help some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, but achieving sustainable and serviceable debt structures ultimately depends on a range of policy choices by country authorities. If confirmed, I would work with IDB Management, other shareholders, you and committees of jurisdiction to analyze the financing and policy challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean and how best the IDB could respond.

*Question.* Please provide a clear 'yes' or 'no' answer to this specific question:

- In March 2021, Sens. Menendez, Rubio, Kaine, Cassidy, and Cardin filed a bill (S. 616), which would direct the President to take steps to support a tenth general capital increase for the Inter-American Development Bank, and for the U.S. Governor of the Bank to vote in favor such a general capital increase. These mandates are included in the United States Innovation and Competition Act of 2021 (S.1260). If confirmed, do you commit to support these actions?

Answer. It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, including whether an IDB general capital increase would provide sufficient development benefits for the region. If confirmed, I commit to work with you and committees of jurisdiction on the issue of a potential IDB general capital increase.

---

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED  
TO MARIA FABIANA JORGE BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

*Question.* Last month, I joined Senator Menendez in introducing legislation to direct the Biden administration to develop a strategy to secure Taiwan's membership in the Inter-American Development Bank. I think this is an appropriate step given the high level of Taiwan's assistance to countries in the Western Hemisphere.

- What is your opinion of Taiwan's participation in the Western Hemisphere?

Answer. Taiwan can be a useful source of knowledge for Latin American and Caribbean countries given its success as a democracy and its own path of economic development, which allowed it to graduate from receiving development assistance. Taiwan also provides significant development assistance to the countries with which it maintains diplomatic relations.

*Question.* If confirmed, how will you encourage Taiwan's role in the region and to coordinate U.S. efforts with Taiwan?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department of the Treasury, IDB Management, and other IDB shareholders to encourage Latin American and Caribbean countries to engage with Taiwan as a valuable source of knowledge given the success of its economic development and transition to democracy.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you work to secure IDB membership for Taiwan?

*Answer.* I understand that Taiwan has been an important development partner for the region. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury, IDB Management, and other IDB shareholders to advocate for a continued strong relationship between Taiwan and the IDB and the region.

*Question.* In 2017, IDB members agreed to provide an additional \$317 million to keep the IDB's Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) running from 2019 to 2023. Although the United States has historically been the largest contributor to the MIF, it did not contribute to the fund's replenishment.

- In your opinion, how will the lack of U.S. participation in the latest replenishment affect the IDB's operations?

*Answer.* I understand that despite the United States not participating in the MIF's latest replenishment, the United States remains the second highest contributor to the MIF (now known as IDB Lab) behind Japan and is active in the MIF Donors' Committee. I also understand that the replenishment's financing also represented an effort by the region to contribute more to its own development. If confirmed I commit to working with the IDB to address the region's development financing needs and look forward to learning more about the projects supported by the IDB Lab and its development impact.

*Question.* Are you in favor of the U.S. agreeing to a 10th capital increase for the IDB?

*Answer.* It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is working with IDB Management and other shareholders to analyze the development and financing challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the region's capacity to address those challenges, the roles the IDB Group can play in supporting the region, and how the IDB can best use its existing resources in line with a process mandated by the IDB's Board of Governors. If confirmed, I commit to working with Congress and the Department of the Treasury to identify how the IDB Group can best help address the region's needs.

*Question.* If confirmed, do you commit to work with the IDB president to ensure the bank's initiatives are put forth in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean?

*Answer.* If confirmed, I commit to working with IDB Management and IDB shareholders to address economic development challenges across Latin American and Caribbean countries.

*Question.* As the China-Latin America trade and economic relationship has grown over the past several years, China has increased its financial contributions to various IDB financing mechanisms.

- What is your assessment of China's influence in shaping priorities at the IDB?

*Answer.* I share your concern regarding the role of China at the IDB and if confirmed, I will exercise the United States' voice and vote at the IDB in partnership with like-minded countries to uphold IDB's strategic priorities—social inclusion equality, productivity and innovation, and regional economic integration—along with a focus on transparency and strong governance to achieve sustainable economic development across the region as well as broader U.S. interests. This will ensure that the United States and its regional partners maintain the strongest influence over the IDB. I believe that strong U.S. leadership is important in helping the IDB and other multilateral institutions maintain high standards that would help counter the malign influence of China in the region, support sustainable development, and good governance in the hemisphere.

*Question.* Do you believe that increased involvement by the CCP in the IDB is beneficial to the region and to American interests?

*Answer.* As expressed above, I am concerned about China's influence at the IDB and the region and will work with like-minded shareholders to uphold the IDB's focus on sustainable development based on transparency and strong governance, which will help contribute to U.S. development and national security interests in the region and strengthen markets for trade. This will ensure that the United States and its regional partners maintain the strongest influence over the IDB. I believe that strong U.S. leadership is critical in helping the IDB and other multilat-

eral institutions maintain high development standards that would help counter the malign influence of China in the region.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RUBIO

*Question.* Thank you for your support for Taiwan's role in the Western Hemisphere. I agree with you that Taiwan and the IDB should continue to have a strong relationship. This relationship can become much stronger if Taiwan joins the IDB as a full member. That's why I am a cosponsor of Senator Menendez's bill to direct the Secretaries of State and Treasury to initiate a plan to endorse Taiwan as a non-borrowing member of the IDB.

- What is your analysis of the Menendez bill? If you are confirmed, and the bill is enacted, would its provisions support your priorities at the IDB?

*Answer.* I recognize your leadership on this issue. While I have not conducted an analysis of the Menendez bill, I pledge to work very closely with you on this bill if I am privileged enough to be confirmed.

*Question.* If confirmed, will you encourage the Biden administration to support Taiwan's membership in the IDB?

*Answer.* I understand that Taiwan has been an important development partner for the region. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Department of the Treasury, IDB Management, and other IDB shareholders to advocate for a continued strong relationship between Taiwan and the IDB and the region.

*Question.* I understand that you played a role in negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which came into force late last year. The RCEP strengthens trade between the People's Republic of China and key American allies and partners, like Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, and the ASEAN countries. This deeper integration with the PRC often comes at the expense of these countries' economic relationships with the United States.

- Do you believe the creation of RCEP to be a positive development in the Indo-Pacific?

*Answer.* No, I do not believe the creation of RCEP to be a positive development in the Indo-Pacific. My participation was limited to the extent of monitoring and educating on the access to affordable medicines.

*Question.* Why do you think the RCEP excluded Taiwan?

*Answer.* I have not been privy to internal deliberations and discussions as to why RCEP excluded Taiwan.

*Question.* Do you believe the RCEP's intellectual property provisions to be a model to be followed in Latin America?

*Answer.* I have only followed intellectual property provisions as they relate to access to affordable medicines.

*Question.* Thank you for your answers on the PRC's role in the IDB. While I appreciate you sharing my concern with the PRC's role in the IDB, you did not provide your assessment of how the PRC shapes the IDB's priorities.

- Can you please expand on how you think the PRC influences decision-making at the IDB?

*Answer.* As I am not working at the IDB, I don't have knowledge about how the PRC influences decision-making at the institution. However, I am very concerned about the growing influence of the PRC in Latin America.

*Question.* Do you believe the PRC is a force for good in the region?

*Answer.* The U.S. is in a serious strategic competition with the PRC and there are certainly aspects of our relationship that are adversarial. When the PRC bullies our allies, conducts industrial espionage to steal American intellectual property, assaults freedom in Hong Kong, and provides an economic lifeline to corrupt, oppressive regimes in the hemisphere, including those in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, it is acting in adversarial ways.

Many countries use an array of public sector financial institutions to provide financing for development projects across the region, often with a mix of humanitarian and geopolitical goals. The PRC differs from other countries in its strong prioritization of the geopolitical, often at the expense of any plausible humanitarian goals. The PRC's financing often lacks the transparency, due attention to debt sustainability and standards needed for effective and sustainable development. As a result, I understand that project quality can be subpar. The PRC also refuses to engage in coordinated debt relief when it is warranted.

As Secretary Yellen has said, the Biden administration will be willing to make use of the full array of tools to hold the PRC accountable, working with U.S. allies and partners, including through multilateral institutions, to confront the PRC's abusive behaviors. If confirmed, I will do so.

---

AN ARTICLE SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY SENATOR BARRASSO

**The Economist**

May 8th 2021 edition

**Fire Escape**

**Donors make it harder for Africans to avoid deadly wood smoke**

**Making the cleanest the enemy of the clean**

---

May 6th 2021

KASAI

YVONNE KAYAYA has never seen a gas cooker. In a poorly ventilated room in her home in Kasai, Congo, she stews potato leaves over a charcoal stove no bigger than a small stool—as generations before her have done. “I sometimes cook with firewood. If I have money, I always buy charcoal,” she says, unaware that both fuels are clogging up her lungs.

Ms Kayaya is one of the 4bn people who heat their food over a smoky fire. In sub-Saharan Africa nine out of ten people cook with dirty fuel, such as wood, charcoal or kerosene. This is unhealthy. Some 2.5m-4m people die prematurely every year because of indoor air pollution, most of which is from cooking, according to the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA) and the World Health Organisation. Breathing soot is particularly dangerous for infants: worldwide it may cause almost half of all fatal cases of pneumonia among children under five.

There are environmental costs, too. Wood may be renewable, but chopping down trees for firewood or to make charcoal contributes to deforestation. The charcoal industry is one of the main reasons why the rainforest of the Congo basin is shrinking. The damage done to this rainforest, the world's second largest, is not just a tragedy for Congo; it is also one for the world, since the forest removes hundreds of millions of tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere each year.

How Africans can cook more healthily for more than a billion stomachs is a conundrum. The poor need energy to have comfier, more prosperous lives. How can they do so without cooking the planet?

Africa's population is growing faster than any other continent's. It is urbanising faster, too. As people move to cities, they tend to switch from firewood to charcoal, which, because it is made from wood that is then heated by burning more wood, destroys forests still faster.

Since few Africans, whether in cities or villages, have grid-connected electricity, the obvious way to wean them off wood and coal is to encourage the use of bottled gas. India and China have managed to reduce pollution from cooking fires in this way in the past decade. But markets for



gas have been slow to take off in Africa because rural folk in countries like Congo, where almost three-quarters of people live on less than \$1.90 a day, do not see the need to pay for gas when wood is free. "I only cook with wood," says Martin Batumala, a Congolese farmer. "I go and collect it every day on a bicycle with my children."

By contrast, refilling a canister of 12kg with liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) costs \$20, almost as much as farmers make in a month. Charcoal can be bought in small quantities, which makes it easier for the cash-strapped to afford. And cost is not the only consideration. Charcoal creates distinctive flavours, which many people like and do not wish to give up.

Advocates of clean cooking hope eventually to change people's habits. It would be easier if gas were cheaper, but to make it so will require lots more public and private investment. One big obstacle is that donors in rich countries are reluctant to back investment in any fossil fuels, even though the alternatives to gas—wood and charcoal—are worse for the environment, for the cooks and their children.

Opponents of gas note that it contributes to climate change, which is true. They suggest that Africa should "leapfrog" to powering itself primarily with solar, wind and other renewable sources of electricity. But some perspective is in order. The continent is responsible for less than 2% of global carbon emissions. Its people, the world's poorest, are in effect being asked to bear the costs of a sudden energy transition that many rich countries have been reluctant to embark on. Switching millions of Africans away from charcoal and firewood to a cleaner fuel would still mean Africa is helping to reduce carbon emissions, says Mansoor Hamayun, the boss of Bboxx, an international energy company that initially provided only rooftop solar systems in Africa, but now also offers LPG cookers. Gas "is not a perfect choice", he says. "But it's part of a journey to net zero." ■

This article appeared in the Middle East & Africa section of the print edition under the headline "Fire escape"

---